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ECS Urges Presidential Candidates to Learn from States about Top Education Priorities

Three Briefing Memos Outline Key Issues Drawn from Education Leaders from 34 States

DENVER, CO – The Education Commission of the States (ECS) today publicly released three briefing memos provided to 2008 U.S. presidential candidates. The briefing memos call for the next president to gain a deep understanding of state educational needs for the U.S. to thrive in a globally competitive economy.

“In early November, we convened a meeting of governors, legislators, state board members, chief state school officers and other state education leaders representing 34 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico to discuss critical education issues. The briefing memos capture the need to: align early learning, K-12 and postsecondary education systems; recognize education as an engine for regional economic and workforce development; and benchmark to international standards while retaining a focus on the ‘whole child’,” notes Roger Sampson, ECS president.

These three issues – identified by key education leaders from across the country – are critical to achieving the nation’s overarching education goals. Presidential candidates have been informed there is substantial bi-partisan interest in working together to produce results on each of these areas. To date, two front runners have shown interest in the memos.”

According to Sampson, presidential leadership could assist states by identifying and removing federal barriers (specifically FERPA limitations); providing incentives and frameworks to meet the goals outlined in the briefing memos; and keeping critical education issues in the national spotlight.

The ECS briefing memos, Setting the ’08 Education Agenda for the Nation, are located at www.ecs.org/newsroom.

The Education Commission of the States (www.ecs.org) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit interstate compact created by the states and the U.S. Congress that helps governors, legislators, state education officials, business leaders and others identify, develop and implement public policies to improve student learning at all levels. ECS is the only nationwide interstate compact devoted to education. It was formed in 1965 and is located in Denver, Colorado.

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Equipping Education Leaders, Advancing Ideas