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NCLC NAMES FOUR EDUCATION LEADERS TO EXECUTIVE BOARD

DENVER, CO – The National Center for Learning and Citizenship (NCLC) at the Education Commission of the States (ECS) announced the appointment of four members to its executive board on February 14, 2010. The four new members are: Twyla Barnes, superintendent of Educational Service District 112 in Vancouver, Washington; State Representative Lyla Berg of Hawaii; John Bonaituto, executive director of the Nebraska Association of School Boards; and Assemblywoman Barbara Clark of New York.

“NCLC is honored that these four education leaders have joined the board,” said NCLC director JoAnn Henderson. “Their experience, knowledge and commitment to ensuring all students gain the competencies for 21st century citizenship will help us advance the goals and strategies of NCLC.”

NCLC is a national center at ECS focused on citizenship education and service-learning and is led by a 21-member board. NCLC aims to increase policy support, quality practices and infrastructure to ensure every student in America has an opportunity to gain civic competencies through school and community-based activities.

Twyla Barnes has served as superintendent of the Educational Service District 112 since 1994. The district serves 100,000 K-12 students in 30 school districts in southwestern Washington. She is a member of the Washington K-20 Education Network Board, Washington State University Advisory Board, Clark County Skills Center Administrative Council, and Governor’s Task Force on Children and Youth Service.

Barnes received her Bachelor of Science degree in elementary education from Eastern Montana College and her Master of Education degree in education administration from the University of Alaska. She earned her Ed.D. in education administration from the University of Miami.

Representative Lyla Berg currently serves as vice chair of the Education Committee of the Hawaii House of Representatives and recently was appointed as the Hawaii delegate to the Association of Pacific Island Legislators. In addition to her membership on the NCLC Executive Board, Berg is an ECS Commissioner.

She is currently the moderator for the community-issues talk show, 211, sponsored by Aloha United Way. She also hosts a weekly Hawaii Department of Education teleschool program, Voices and Wings, which helps students develop concepts and actions of citizenship. Berg has served as the state coordinator for the We the People programs of the Center for Civic Education since 2001. She is the owner of Lyla Berg & Associates.

Berg received her bachelor's degree in linguistics from Georgetown University and her Master of Education degrees in curriculum and instruction, and educational administration from the University of Hawaii-Manoa. She earned her Ph.D. in education from the Union Institute in Cincinnati, Ohio.

For the past 10 years, John Bonaituto has been the executive director of the Nebraska Association of School Boards where he represents, trains and serves local school
boards throughout the state of Nebraska. Prior to that, he was the Secretary of the South Dakota Department of Education and Cultural Affairs from 1990-95.

Bonaiuto began his 40-year career in education as an elementary school teacher. He later served in the roles of school principal, assistant superintendent and superintendent. He received his Ed.D. from the University of South Dakota. Bonaiuto is a member of the ECS Steering Committee and has been an ECS commissioner since 1996.

Assemblywoman Barbara Clark has served in the New York Assembly since 1986 and is a member of the Assembly Committee on Education. She currently serves as vice chair of ECS and has been an ECS Commissioner since 1991. Clark is the Assistant Majority Whip of the New York Assembly, is a member of the Majority Steering Committee, serves on the Joint Health Budget Conference Committee, and is chair of the Education Committee of the NYS Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic and Asian Legislative Caucus. She is the former vice chair of the National Conference of State Legislatures' (NCSL) Education, Labor and Job Training Committee, and a former member of NCSL's Human Services Committee.

Prior to her election to the New York Assembly in 1986, Clark was an active member of the parent-teacher associations of the New York City public schools her four children attended. In the legislature, she advocates for parents having a role in education policymaking.

"The addition of these four outstanding individuals to the NCLC Executive Board," said ECS President Roger Sampson, "will help ensure that civics and service-learning are not overlooked in our public school standards and education policies." NCLC Chair Barbara Grohe lauded the new members, saying, "Their commitment to building 21st century skills among today’s young people will ensure that citizenship, civic engagement and service-learning are central to those skills."

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ECS is the only nationwide, nonpartisan interstate compact devoted to education. ECS helps governors, legislators, state education officials and others identify, develop and implement public policies to improve student learning at all levels. A nonprofit organization, ECS was formed in 1965 and is located in Denver, Colorado.

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