



**EDUCATION
COMMISSION
OF THE STATES**

Your education policy team.



EDUCATION COMMISSION OF THE STATES **ANNUAL REPORT**

2015



For years, Education Commission of the States was known as a data-based organization that conducted research and produced education policy reports. While we still track policy, conduct research and create insightful reports, we are so much more than just data.

Today, we research, report, counsel and convene.

Education Commission of the States serves as a partner to state policymakers by providing personalized support, and helping education leaders come together and learn from one another. Through our programs and services, policymakers gain the insight and experience needed to create effective education policy.

At Education Commission of the States, we believe in the power of learning from experience. Every day, we provide education leaders with unbiased information and opportunities for collaboration. We do this because we know that informed policy makers create better education policy.





RESEARCH

We create and maintain online databases and resources that allow policymakers to quickly research policies in other states.

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Our **STATE LEGISLATION** database features nearly **44,000** education laws from 1994 to present, searchable by state, topic, past month or year. This signature Education Commission of the States product, updated weekly, contains research on more than **300 topics** in categories such as accountability, assessments, standards/curriculum, financial aid and much more. It allows users to read bill summaries, find bill links and view trends in state policy enactments.



The state legislation database was **redesigned** for easier navigation on the new Education Commission of the States website.



More than **2,200** entries were added to the state legislation database.

Our issue-specific **50-STATE COMPARISONS** allow policymakers to compare their state laws against other states on topics like kindergarten, funding, dual/concurrent enrollment and many others.



We compiled new online 50-State Comparisons for **five key policy areas**:

- 12th grade transitions
- State funding for students with disabilities
- Dual/concurrent enrollment
- English language learners
- Open enrollment

Education Commission of the States maintains an online database with summaries of education-related proposals from **GOVERNORS' STATE OF THE STATE ADDRESSES**.



The database was **updated** with information from the 2015 State of the State addresses and the content is viewable online by state, issue and year from 2011 to present.

Education Commission of the States assists state education leaders with **PERSONALIZED RESEARCH**, typically within 24 hours, when timely, trusted information is needed to inform policy decisions.



Our policy staff completed 666 personalized state information requests. These information requests are one of the most unique and valued ways the staff of Education Commission of the States serves the people behind the policy.



A SAMPLING OF THE MESSAGES WE RECEIVED FROM CONSTITUENTS IN 2015

“THANKS SO MUCH FOR ALL YOUR HELP WITH THE DATA AND INFORMATION ABOUT STATE STANDARDS AND EXIT EXAMS, AND FOR ALWAYS BEING SO PROMPT WITH YOUR REPLIES!”

— New York Times reporter

“THIS IS AMAZING DATA!!!! I CANNOT BELIEVE YOU PULLED THIS TOGETHER SO QUICKLY!”

— Postsecondary education leader

“THIS HAS BEEN FANTASTIC AND VERY HELPFUL FOR OUR DISCUSSIONS. THANK YOU!”

— State department of education official

“I DIDN’T THINK I COULD LOVE ECS ANYMORE. NOW I DO. THANKS FOR THE EXTREMELY RAPID RESPONSE.”

— State board of education member

“THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT I WAS LOOKING FOR AND CONFIRMS WHAT I HAVE FOUND FROM OTHER SOURCES. THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME AND ENERGY ON THIS REQUEST.”

— Legislative assistant to state senator

“JUST A QUICK NOTE WITH A BIG THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP ON OUR COMMON CORE ISSUE. THE MATERIAL YOU SENT WAS EXACTLY WHAT I NEEDED AND THE FACT THAT IT CAME SO QUICKLY WAS AN ADDED BONUS. YOU AND YOUR COLLEAGUES AT ECS ARE TERRIFIC AND VERY MUCH APPRECIATED!”

— Senior counsel, state government

“WOW. THAT WAS QUICK! THANK YOU ... THIS IS A GREAT OVERVIEW AND WILL HELP US WITH OUR INTERNAL BRIEFING.”

— State office of budget and planning

“THANK YOU VERY MUCH. THIS WILL BE VERY HELPFUL AS WE MOVE FORWARD IN DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING A TEACHER SHORTAGE INITIATIVE. I LOOK FORWARD TO EXPLORING THE MANY LINKS AND SHARING IT WITH THE TEAM WE HAVE BEEN WORKING WITH. GREAT WORK. THANKS AGAIN.”

— Office of superintendent of public instruction

STATE FINANCIAL AID REDESIGN PROJECT

With support from USA Funds, Education Commission of the States embarked on a two-year project supporting policymakers as they draft, consider, vote and enact state financial aid policies.



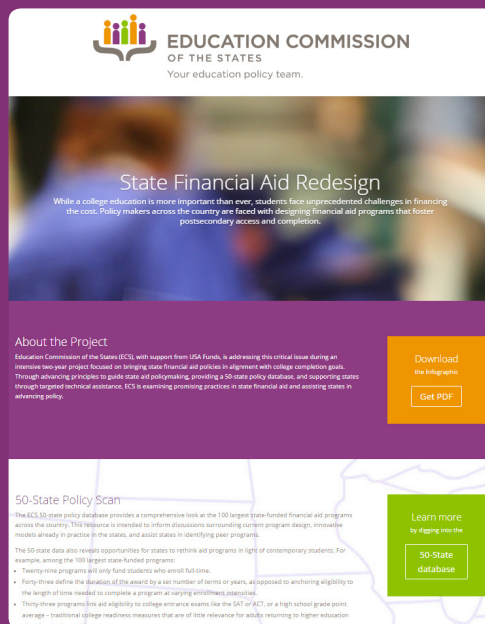
The project team:

- Released a special report on the four principals of state financial aid redesign.
- Hosted a media event at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C releasing the report.
- Created a website dedicated to the project.
- Researched state financial aid policies in all 50 states and created an extensive online, searchable database for state financial aid policies.
- Opened a request for proposals to identify states to provide counsel and intensive targeted assistance.



“I’M IMPRESSED WITH THE NEW FINANCIAL AID REDESIGN SITE AND LOOKING FORWARD TO THE DATABASE OF STATE AID PROGRAMS ... ECS IS DOING GREAT WORK.”

— State postsecondary education leader





REPORT

We regularly issue useful compilations, summaries and/or comparisons of state policies on a wide variety of education topics.

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We regularly issue useful compilations, summaries and/or comparisons of state policies—enacted or pending—on a wide variety of education topics. These reports provide education leaders with concise, factual overviews of specific state policies and are available to download from our website.



We released more than **45 REPORTS** on key policy issues ranging from preschool through postsecondary education. Knowing that every state's challenges are unique and are all very important, our policy experts look at four main categories when constructing reports:

- **Financing:** We understand that identifying and appropriating funding for programs from pre-kindergarten to postsecondary is critical to high-quality education. That's why we address a broad range of funding issues, including preschool funding, K-12 funding, financial aid and performance-based funding.
- **Teaching and Leading:** Every student's success depends on having access to quality educators, which is why we work on the topics of governance, educator preparation and licensure, quality instruction and leadership, and educator evaluation.
- **Learning and Transitioning:** For students to advance from one educational level to the next, they must master rigorous content under the guidance and purposeful coordination of educators. For this reason, we cover issues including 3rd-grade reading proficiency, academic standards, high school graduation requirements and degree and certification completion.
- **Measuring and Improving:** Education systems can be continuously improved when they are reviewed consistently and held accountable for preparing students to succeed. To aid this process, we address topics such as assessments, educator evaluations, student privacy and pre-kindergarten through postsecondary data systems.

A Sample of our 2015 Reports (See Appendix A for a complete list)

FINANCING	TEACHING & LEADING	LEARNING & TRANSITIONING	MEASURING & IMPROVING
State Pre-K Funding: 2014-15 fiscal year	Trends in teacher certification: Equipping teachers to prepare proficient readers	Closing the Achievement Gap: Four states' efforts	Multiple measures for college readiness
State funding mechanisms for English language learners	Questions to consider when creating or modifying charter school laws	Addressing postsecondary access for undocumented students	Assessment Opt-Out Policies: State responses to parent pushback
State approaches to funding dual enrollment	Vergara and the complexities of teacher employment policies	Computer science in high school graduation requirements	Using assessments to inform 12th-grade interventions and accelerations
State funding for students with disabilities	State Homeschool Policies: A patchwork of provisions	Reverse Transfer: The path less traveled	The Civics Education Initiative of 2015



COUNSEL

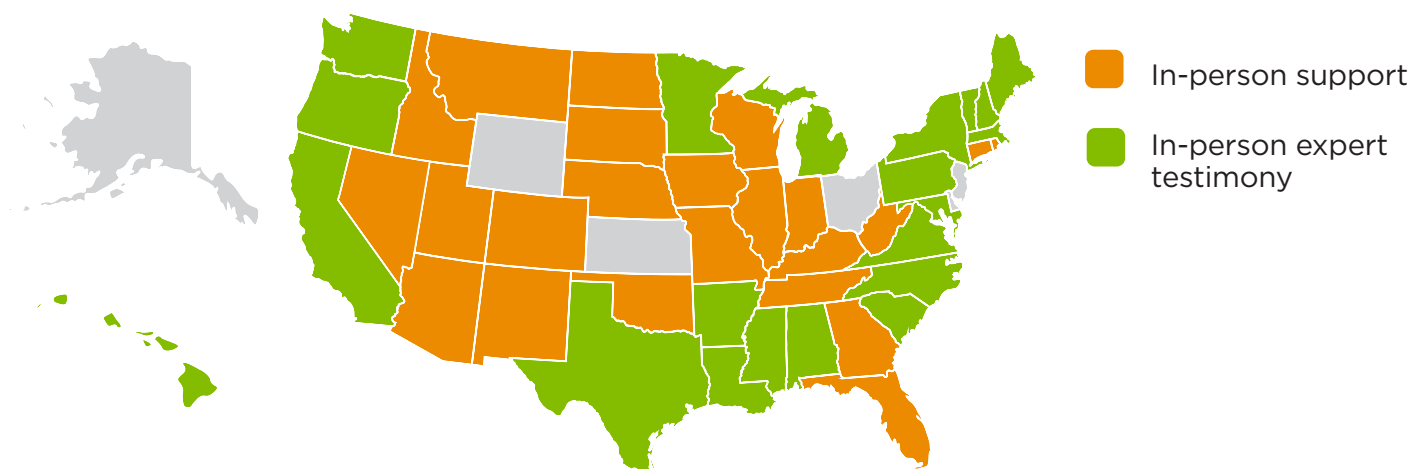
We provide unbiased advice as
third-party experts.

COUNSEL

We provide unbiased advice on policy plans, review and consult on proposed policies, provide expert knowledge for state education work groups and testify at legislative hearings as third-party experts.



We **PROVIDED IN-PERSON SUPPORT** in **22 states** and in-person expert testimony in **23 states**.



A SAMPLING OF MESSAGES PRESIDENT JEREMY ANDERSON RECEIVED FROM CONSTITUENTS IN 2015

"THANK YOU! YOU WERE AWESOME. I REALLY BELIEVE THE DAY WOULD NOT HAVE GONE AS WELL AS IT DID IF YOU HADN'T BEEN THERE. I APPRECIATED YOUR WILLINGNESS TO WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ME AND BE IN THE WORK WITH THE BOARD. I THINK YESTERDAY'S OUTCOMES POSITION [OUR STATE] REALLY WELL."

— State chief of education

"DIDN'T GET A CHANCE TO CATCH YOU LAST WEEK, BUT WANTED YOU TO KNOW HOW MUCH I APPRECIATED YOUR TIME AND EXPERTISE. I THOROUGHLY ENJOYED MY VISIT TO THE ECS CONFERENCE IN DENVER, AND AM LOOKING FORWARD TO THE NEXT ONE IN DECEMBER. I HAVE LEARNED SO MUCH FROM THE EMAIL YOU FOLKS SEND OUT MOST EVERY DAY, AND AM JUST SO GRATEFUL I WAS ASKED TO BE A COMMISSIONER.

APPRECIATE YOUR DEDICATION, YOUR KNOWLEDGE, AND YOUR WILLINGNESS TO BE A RESOURCE FOR US!"

— State board of education member



CONVENE

We bring education leaders together within their states and across states.

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We bring education leaders together within their states and across states to learn from one another. Through our two annual national gatherings, regional meetings and issue-specific or role-specific meetings, we create opportunities for policymakers and their staff to interact and collaborate.

Education Commission of the States celebrated its 50th anniversary at the 2015 National Forum on Education Policy with 595 pivotal education leaders – governors, legislators, state commissioners, higher education leaders, teachers, business leaders – all focused on transforming policy and advancing student success. The three-day event also brought some of the nation's top education speakers and included sessions on topics ranging from preschool through postsecondary education and workforce readiness.

NATIONAL FORUM ON EDUCATION POLICY



The 2015 National Forum on Education Policy convened **595 registrants**, including **19 Steering Committee Members** and **70 Commissioners**.



A FEW HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE POST-CONFERENCE SURVEY

Average attendee rating of 5.32/6.0 for the question: "How do you rate your experience overall?"

74.6% of survey responders responded "yes" to "I learned new ways to engage with Education Commission of the States moving forward."

"I WAS NOT AWARE OF ECS AND AM VERY GRATEFUL THAT YOU BROUGHT ME TO YOUR CONFERENCE. I WAS DISAPPOINTED TO DISCOVER THAT [STATE NAME] IS NOT A MEMBER AND WILL WORK ON CHANGING THIS AS YOU HAVE MUCH TO OFFER IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION."

"I'VE GONE TO ECS FOR THE PAST 10+ YEARS ... THE REVAMP OF ECS WAS HUGELY NEEDED AND VERY APPRECIATED ... THE CONTENT WAS TIME SENSITIVE FOR NOW, WHILE STILL LOOKING FORWARD ... I HAD DEBATED ABOUT COMING AS THE CONTENT WAS STALE, BUT THE REWORKING OF THIS BRINGS ECS BACK TO THE ED POLICY HUB. GREAT JOB!"

"THANKS AGAIN TO YOU AND YOUR TEAM FOR AN EXCELLENT NATIONAL FORUM IN DENVER. THE SPEAKERS AND CONTENT WERE EXCELLENT, AS ALWAYS, AS WAS THE ORGANIZATION AND FLOW OF THE EVENT."

WINTER COMMISSIONERS MEETING

The **Winter Commissioners Meeting** is held at the beginning of December each year. This annual convening presents an opportunity for Education Commission of the States staff and Commissioners to build relationships, engage in rich discussions and prepare for the year ahead.



The 2015 Winter Commissioners Meeting in Austin, Texas had **141 registrants**, including **25 Steering Committee Members** and **31 Commissioners**.



In December 2015, Education Commission of the States brought together **24 education leaders from six states**, including Kentucky, Mississippi, Montana, Nevada, Pennsylvania and Texas for a Dual Enrollment Policy Academy. The goal of this convening was to inform attendees on best practice and lessons learned from dual enrollment policy adoption and implementation, and assist them in developing short-, medium- and long-term goals for enhancing dual enrollment opportunities in their state. After the meeting, Education Commission of the States staff engaged with most of the states on this issue, and Mississippi has launched a dual enrollment and AP task force to develop recommendations to inform legislation.



"JEREMY: IT WAS AN INCREDIBLY PRODUCTIVE, INSIGHTFUL, AND THOUGHT PROVOKING TIME IN AUSTIN. OUR MONTANA TEAM ENDED OUR TIME TODAY ENERGIZED AND COMMITTED TO MOVING THE NEEDLE MEASURABLY. THANKS TO YOU AND YOUR STAFF."

— Deputy Superintendent of Education

2015 Commissioners' Toolkit



An online toolkit was created for Education Commission of the States Commissioners in 2015 to support them in their roles as ambassadors for our organization. The toolkit contains documents explaining their role, ideas on how to fully engage as a Commissioner and templates for forwarding reports and encouraging their networks to subscribe to Education Commission of the States communications.



The formation of **YOUR EDUCATION POLICY TEAM**

THE CHALLENGE GOING INTO 2015

Entering our 50th year in 2015, Education Commission of the States was known as the “go-to” for education policy resources. But increased competition in the field, combined with a decline in our reputation in the past, led to decreased awareness and utilization of Education Commission of the States’ services. Many key leaders in education policy could not concisely and accurately describe our organization’s services and value. They often saw Education Commission of the States as just a data disseminator and didn’t fully understand the depth and breadth of the services offered. Stakeholders expressed confusion regarding if, when and how to best use Education Commission of the States. Other key leaders did not even know Education Commission of the States existed at all.

This was not totally surprising as our own staff lacked a unified vision of why Education Commission of the States exists. Because of this, our staff struggled with concise, efficacious messages for communicating our vision to others. Similarly, our organization’s visual materials and website were inconsistent and sometimes confusing for users. The Education Commission of the States logo design did little to shed light on our organization’s purpose and value as well.

Even with these challenges, when surveyed, education policy leaders expressed that an organization like Education Commission of the States is important and needed. Education Commission of the States had an opportunity to regain our position as an essential education policy partner. The key was transitioning from an organization built solely on information, research and data to an organization focused on strong relationships with those it serves.



Education Commission of the States dedicated 2015 to redefining its brand in order to increase recognition and use of its services.



“AS WE CELEBRATED OUR 50TH ANNIVERSARY IN 2015, IT WAS THE PERFECT TIME TO REVIEW WHO WE ARE AS AN ORGANIZATION AND DETERMINE IF OUR MESSAGING AND BRANDING ACCURATELY REFLECTED OUR VALUES. DURING THE PROCESS, WE FOUND THAT EDUCATION COMMISSION OF THE STATES IS WELL-KNOWN FOR OUR UNBIASED EDUCATION POLICY REPORTS AND DATABASES, BUT WE AREN’T ALWAYS UTILIZED FOR OUR ABILITY TO OFFER TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND COUNSEL TO POLICYMAKERS. WE WANT POLICYMAKERS TO KNOW THAT WE ARE FAR MORE THAN JUST DATA. AS MANY STATE POLICYMAKERS CAN ATTEST, WE RESEARCH, REPORT, COUNSEL AND CONVENE.”

— **Jeremy Anderson**

President, Education Commission of the States

OUR APPROACH

IDENTIFYING AND LISTENING TO STAKEHOLDERS

We began a year-long process, involving Education Commission of the States' staff and stakeholder input, by identifying our key stakeholders, the critical people we must engage in order to accomplish our goals. We discussed the key stakeholders at length and wrote in-depth sample descriptions including their typical backgrounds and demographics. As a staff, we spent time getting to know them and discussing what they each needed from our organization.

WE LEARNED HOW TO BEST BE THEIR
EDUCATION POLICY TEAM.

Next, we engaged many of our staff members in several intensive meetings to discuss the essence of our brand.

Our branding update represents months of work involving Education Commission of the States' staff and extensive stakeholder outreach:

- Studied attendee surveys from 2014 National Forum on Education Policy.
- Conducted national survey of key Education Commission of the States' stakeholders in the fall of 2014.
- Reflected on Commissioner input from a roundtable discussion on the future of Education Commission of the States at the 2014 Winter Commissioners Meeting.
- Completed a national telephone survey with key stakeholders during the winter of 2015.
- Surveyed Education Commission of the States staff and conducted internal focus groups.



DISCOVERING OUR BRAND ELEMENTS

Our Brand Values

These represent the core of our organization. They were imperative to define because they represent the code by which our brand lives and the principles upon which we make our decisions. They are the heart and soul of our organization.

Non-Partisan

We believe that meaningful dialogue and informed education policy are priorities no matter what a stakeholder's political affiliation may be. We believe this so strongly that we built our organization's governance structure to be strictly non-partisan and unbiased. By law, even our chair alternates between Democratic and Republican governors every two years. We never take sides, and we do not advocate for specific policies. Our goal is effective policy, not political alliances.

Collaboration

Good education policy comes from collaboration among the full spectrum of state education leaders. No one individual or sector of leaders can effectively address education issues alone. It takes everyone, from governors to teachers, to develop strong education policies. This is why a broad range of state education leaders make up our Commissioners. And, it's why we create opportunities for leaders both within a state and across states to work together and learn from each other.

Knowledge

With knowledge comes power—the power to make effective education policy decisions. We arm education leaders with detailed research, the nation's most extensive clearinghouse on

state education policy, conferences and other resources to learn about policy trends, as well as what has worked, what has not and why. With this information, we know leaders are better equipped to achieve their education policy goals.

Service

We are in the business of service. From our information hotline to our commitment to respond to requests within 24 hours to our willingness to travel to states to testify, we are dedicated to providing the best service to state education leaders. We attend to their education questions and needs, no matter how big or small. We pride ourselves on making everyone we interact with feel important, informed, confident and respected.

The Power of Government

We believe that government works and has the power to create change. We trust in the democratic process and see it as our duty to work together to address our country's issues. We know that if we put high-quality information and resources into the hands of the people who lead, they will move our states and country forward in the right direction.

OUR BRAND PERSONALITY

Our brand personality captures the set of distinguishing qualities and characteristics of Education Commission of the States. These qualities are reflected in the experience we offer, and inform our external messages. They are the traits for which we strive to be known.

Invested

COMMITTED | ALLY/PARTNER | COLLABORATIVE | IN IT TOGETHER | A MOTIVATOR

Relatable

EMPATHETIC | APPROACHABLE | PERSONABLE | ENGAGING

Knowledgeable

INTELLIGENT | WELL-INFORMED | EXPERIENCED | CURRENT | DESIRE TO SHARE EXPERTISE

Responsive

ATTENTIVE | A CAREFUL LISTENER | EAGER TO HELP | IN SERVICE

Trustworthy

CREDIBLE | HONEST | FAIR | TRANSPARENT | GENUINE

Reliable

DEPENDABLE | CONSISTENT | STEADY

BRAND VALUE PROPOSITION

Our brand value proposition is the unique value our constituents derive from engaging with us. It is an internal guide for what should be conveyed about Education Commission of the States in a way that will attract policymakers and organizations to partner with us.

Through Education Commission of the States' partnership, I have the information, support and clarity to confidently lead education policy decisions for my state.

BRAND POSITIONING

Our brand positioning captures what is unique about us relative to others in our field of work. This statement represents the core ideas for which Education Commission of the States seeks to be known.

The essential, indispensable member of any team addressing education policy.

BRAND PROMISE

Our brand promise is the heart of what is most important and unique about Education Commission of the States. It serves as an internal rallying cry for our staff, can be used as a shorthand way to talk about our brand internally and is used as a yardstick for measuring how well various organizational activities and communications are aligned with our brand. When our staff lives our brand promise, we build our brand.

Serve the people behind the policy.

UNCOVERING OUR UNIQUE MESSAGES

The next phase in our 2015 branding work was to use our newly defined brand elements to draft key messages describing who we are, what we believe and why we are needed. A sample is our one minute message:

At Education Commission of the States, we believe in the power of learning from experience. Every day, we provide education leaders with unbiased information and opportunities for collaboration. We do this because we know that informed policy makers create better education policy.

Every staff member learned this one-minute message, and our entire team participated in a 'message-off' where we practiced delivering the message, an experience that made our staff enthusiastically and collectively commit to who we are and what we do.

**OUR STAFF BECAME UNIFIED IN
WHO WE ARE AS AN ORGANIZATION.**

BRINGING THE BRAND TO LIFE

With key stakeholders identified, brand elements defined and messaging constructed, we needed a clear visual identity that would bring our brand attributes to life, allow people to know us instantly and associate our look with the great work we do.

People:

The mark in our logo shows multiple people coming together, conveying the idea of relationships and collaboration.



**EDUCATION
COMMISSION
OF THE STATES**

Your education policy team.

Funnel:

The funnel shape shows a two way flow of information, supporting both people and education, from Education Commission of the States to policy makers and from policy makers to Education Commission of the States.

Typography:

The use of all capitalized letters for “Education Commission of the States” lends a strength and sense of professionalism to our name.

Tagline:

The lowercase lettering of our tagline adds warmth by balancing with the uppercase treatment of our name.

The new branding was introduced at the 2015 National Forum on Education Policy where we also celebrated our 50th anniversary. The branding provided a renewed energy and excitement for the National Forum and also for our future as an organization.



"YOUR NEW LOGO IS WONDERFUL. I LOVE IT! FRESH AND GETS THE POINT ACROSS ALL IN THE LOGO. SO MUCH BETTER THAN YOUR LAST LOGO."



"THE NEW LOGO LOOKS APPROACHABLE AND TELLS ME RIGHT AWAY WHAT YOU DO. IT'S MODERN AND FRESH. :) AND MORE GEARED TO WHAT I'D LIKE EDUCATION TO LOOK LIKE. AS IN NOT HAVING IT LOOK INSTITUTIONALIZED. GREAT JOB!"



"LOVE THE NEW BRANDING! A MUCH BETTER REFLECTION OF ECS."



"I LIKE IT [NEW LOGO]. CHEERY, UPBEAT, RELEVANT! CONGRATULATIONS ON 50 YEARS!!"



"OUR NEW BRANDING REFLECTS WHO WE ARE – WE ARE YOUR EDUCATION POLICY TEAM. WE SERVE AS A PARTNER TO STATE POLICYMAKERS BY PROVIDING PERSONALIZED SUPPORT AND OPPORTUNITIES – SUCH AS THE NATIONAL FORUM ON EDUCATION POLICY – TO COME TOGETHER AND LEARN FROM ONE ANOTHER."

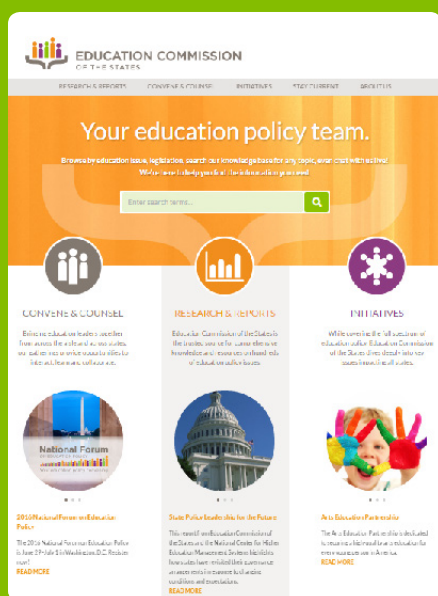
— **Jeremy Anderson**

President, Education Commission of the States

A SUPPORT-FOCUSED WEBSITE

The final push in 2015 was to build a new website for Education Commission of the States that reflected our new branding and our organization's commitment to serving the people behind the policy. We started by gathering user feedback to guide functionality of the new site. Our main findings during this discovery stage were that our users wanted a search-based website with simpler navigation and more ways to request personal assistance.

The new website launched in early December 2015 at the Winter Commissioners Meeting. It includes new features such as:



■ **Search-focused homepage.**

■ **Ability to filter search findings by resource type.**

■ **Ability to live chat with policy experts.**

■ **Increased opportunities to request personal assistance.**

■ **Simplified navigation.**



"HAD TO DROP A QUICK NOTE TELLING YOU HOW MUCH I LIKE THE NEW WEBSITE. KUDOS TO YOU AND THE ENTIRE ECS TEAM! IT'S EASY TO NAVIGATE, AESTHETICALLY PLEASING AND, THANKFULLY, STILL CHOCK FULL OF USEFUL REPORTS AND DATABASES. LOVE IT, LOVE IT, LOVE IT!"

— State Department of Higher Education Employee

RELATED INTERNAL WORK IN 2015

DEFINING OUR DELIVERABLES

As we focused on our branding in 2015, we also worked to clearly define our major types of reports and their respective purposes:



Education Trends

An **Education Trends** publication focuses on policy actions that are top-of-mind with stakeholders. They answer the question, “How have state laws changed or developed?”



Education Policy Analysis

An **Education Policy Analysis** publication provides a deeper analysis on a single policy issue. This could include a review of several states, review of academic research and/or an outline of steps policy leaders can take to move forward.



50-State Review

The **50-State Review** publication presents a one-time look at how all states are approaching a particular policy issue. This report is shorter in narrative and includes most of the information in a table/chart format. The review may be tied to an online 50-State Comparison.



Promising Practices in Education

A **Promising Practices in Education** publication takes a key education issue and examines state policies where measurable results have been collected. Outcomes data must be included to support highlighting the law or policy. Supporting research studies may be included.



Special Report

An **ECS Special Report**, such as the State Financial Aid Redesign report, provides a comprehensive look at one or several education policies and may include an online searchable database.

CLASSIFYING POLICY PROBLEMS

Hand-in-hand with defining our reports and defining our brand was moving from an organization that approached our work in a ‘what we want to write about’ approach to one focused on how do we better “serve the people behind the policy” by addressing *their* key education policy problems.

To do this, we defined and bucketed education policy problems into four key issue areas. We remain committed to addressing these issue areas across the entire spectrum from preschool through postsecondary education.

Financing

We understand that identifying and appropriating funding for programs from pre-kindergarten to postsecondary is critical to high-quality education. That is why we address a broad range of funding issues including preschool funding, funding for special student populations and financial aid.

Teaching and Leading

Every student’s success depends on having access to quality teachers and leaders. To support policymakers in these areas, we dive into areas such as educator preparation and licensure, quality instruction and leadership, and educator evaluation.

Learning and Transitioning

A student’s educational journey requires mastering rigorous content and purposeful coordination through each step, pre-k through postsecondary. For this reason, we cover policy areas including 3rd-grade reading proficiency, high school graduation requirements and postsecondary degree/certificate completion.

Measuring and Improving

Education systems can be continuously improved when they are reviewed consistently and held accountable for preparing students for success. To support policy improvements, we address topics like assessments, state turnaround strategies and pre-k through postsecondary data systems.

INTERNAL ORGANIZATION

A final step in 2015 was to ensure that the Education Commission of the States' policy staff were aligned to best serve policymakers. Our policy experts are now structured in the following Institutes and Centers:

INSTITUTES

Early Learning

K-12

High School

Postsecondary and Workforce

CENTERS

STEM

**National Center for Learning
and Civic Engagement**

Arts Education Partnership

Knowledge and Research

Our institutes' staff support policymakers on the full spectrum of education policy issues (financing, teaching and leading, learning and transitioning, and measuring and improving) within their institute-specific education level. Our center staff dive deeper and support policymakers on issue-related education areas. Working together, the Education Commission of the States' staff provide both in-depth and broad support for policymakers across the country.

APPENDIX

A. List of Reports

B. Education Commission of the States' Policy Team

C. Executive, Steering and Standing Committees

D. Commissioners

E. Partners/Funders

F. Budget and Financials

APPENDIX A

2015 RESEARCH AND REPORTS

Believing that informed policymakers create better education policy, Education Commission of the States provides state leaders with unbiased policy research and reporting, targeted technical support and the opportunity to learn from peers in other states.

We regularly release insightful reports covering education policy trends, comparing policy approaches across the states and highlighting promising practices. We also maintain databases that allow policymakers to quickly research policies in other states and compare their state laws against other states.

Here you will find a summary of our 2015 research and reports sorted by four key education policy issue areas: financing, teaching and leading, learning and transitioning, and measuring and improving.

Financing

We understand that identifying and appropriating funding for programs from pre-kindergarten to postsecondary is critical to high-quality education. That's why we address a broad range of funding issues, including preschool funding, K-12 funding, financial aid and performance-based funding.

State Pre-K Funding: 2014-15 fiscal year

This 50-state review provides analysis of 2014-15 appropriations for state-funded pre-K programs.

State funding mechanisms for English language learners

This policy trends report provides a clear and detailed description of the ways states finance English language learners and allows policymakers to evaluate their own funding models against those from other states.

2015 RESEARCH AND REPORTS

In-state tuition policies under the Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act

This policy analysis provides state and postsecondary leaders with a review of the Choice Act requirements, key information on deadlines, considerations for evaluating state policy for compliance and examples of policy actions.

The Progress of Education Reform: A look at funding for students with disabilities

This issue of The Progress of Education Reform outlines some facts — and myths — surrounding the federal Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and how its passage has made state policymakers think differently about how they fund their public schools.

Redesigning State Financial Aid: Principles to guide state aid policymaking

This project is designed to help educate stakeholders about the guiding principles in reimagining their state financial aid programs and offer policymakers resources to help examine and implement necessary policy changes.

State approaches to funding dual enrollment

This policy analysis explores state approaches to minimize or completely eliminate tuition and other costs for dually enrolled students.

State funding for students with disabilities

This 50-state review, along with a **50-state Comparison**, focuses on states' primary funding mechanisms for students with disabilities.

Teaching and Leading

Every student's success depends on having access to quality educators, which is why we work on the topics of governance, educator preparation and licensure, quality instruction and leadership, and educator evaluation.

Trends in teacher certification: Equipping teachers to prepare proficient readers

This education trends report examines states' moves toward requiring early education teacher candidates to pass a reading instruction test before being licensed.

Questions to consider when creating or modifying charter school laws

This policy analysis explores questions to consider on topics from charter school accountability to student enrollment and everything in between.

Learning Time in America: Trends to reform the American school calendar

A joint report from the National Center on Time & Learning (NCTL) and Education Commission of the States shows that at least 35 districts across more than 10 states are fueling the growth of schools that have implemented a longer school day and/or year.

Vergara and the complexities of teacher employment policies

This policy analysis uses the Vergara v. California case as a means to examine the complexities of teacher employment policies and how they may impact student and teacher rights.

State Homeschool Policies: A patchwork of provisions

This 50-state review explores the wide variety of ways states regulate homeschooling and explores what others around the country are doing or have done to address the topic.

2015 RESEARCH AND REPORTS

The Progress of Education Reform: Health barriers to learning and the education opportunity gap

This issue of The Progress of Education Reform offers an overview of the important yet sometimes overlooked issue of student health and its relationship to achievement in the classroom.

Aligning K-12 and postsecondary career pathways with workforce needs

This education trends report provides a first look at state policymaking activity in 13 states. Policy activity summarized here establishes a process for educators and employers to convene and use workforce data to set priorities.

Learning and Transitioning

For students to advance from one educational level to the next, they must master rigorous content under the guidance and purposeful coordination of educators. For this reason, we cover issues including 3rd-grade reading proficiency, academic standards, high school graduation requirements and degree and certification completion.

Closing the Achievement Gap: Four states' efforts

This education trends report highlights the efforts of four states — Connecticut, Massachusetts, Washington and Wisconsin — to reduce their achievement gaps through state-level task forces or commissions and other legislative action.

Dual enrollment course content and instructor quality

This policy analysis explores some of the reasons for the increase in delivery of dual enrollment courses at high schools, and the importance of ensuring course and instructor quality.

Addressing postsecondary access for undocumented students

This education trends report focuses on the 18 states that have passed legislation to update residency eligibility for in-state tuition and state financial aid to include additional individuals residing in the state, including undocumented individuals.

2015 RESEARCH AND REPORTS

ECS and National Experts Examine: State-level English language learner policies

This special report reviews English language learner policy recommendations made by a group of national experts convened by Education Commission of the States.

Community colleges expand role into awarding bachelor's degrees

This policy analysis examines state policies that allow community colleges to offer four-year degrees, summarizes arguments for and against these policies and offers key policy considerations related to community college bachelor's degree programs.

Targeted programs and career pathways within workforce development policies

This policy analysis offers a review of enacted legislation related to workforce development and career and technical education from 2012-14 and provides several state examples.

Computer science in high school graduation requirements

This education trends report examines states that are allowing or requiring districts to apply computer science coursework toward completion of high school graduation requirements in math, science or foreign language.

Reverse Transfer: The path less traveled

This education trends report reviews reverse transfer and explores how states and organizations might utilize the policy as one approach to support increasing educational attainment.

Free and compulsory school age requirements

This 50-state review examines increasing the age range that a student is required to attend school; with goals of boosting high school graduation rates and producing a better prepared workforce.

2015 RESEARCH AND REPORTS

Instructional time trends

This education trends report reviews the impact of instructional time on achievement, variation in school start dates and trends in school day and year length.

Reverse Transfer: Paving the pathway

This education policy analysis examines reverse transfer policies and the implementation strategies states have used thus far. A handful of state examples are included.

Reverse Transfer: What is the best route to take?

This promising practices in education report presents early outcomes data for the 10 states that have implemented statewide policies and offers recommendations informed by prior state actions.

Deeper Learning: A primer for state legislators

This education trends report is created for state policymakers seeking to modify instruction and assessment policies to better engage today's students.

Youth Voting: State and city approaches to early civic engagement

This education trends report reviews new efforts by state and city leaders to encourage youth voting within their boundaries.

Measuring and Improving

Education systems can be continuously improved when they are reviewed consistently and held accountable for preparing students for success. To aid this process, we address topics such as assessments, educator evaluations, student privacy and pre-kindergarten through postsecondary data systems.

Multiple measures for college readiness

This education trends report reviews the multiple measures to assess a student's college readiness, provides a deeper look at competency-based assessments and offers policy considerations for state and system leaders.

2015 RESEARCH AND REPORTS

Assessment Opt-Out Policies: State responses to parent pushback

This education trends report highlights the myriad ways states are addressing the hot-button issue of students who choose to opt-out of assessments.

Emerging state turnaround strategies

This education trends report provides information and available outcomes data for three school turnaround strategies that are gaining attention and momentum: innovation zones, recovery districts and receiverships.

Governors' Top Education Issues: 2015 State of the State addresses

This education trends report highlights the top six education priorities for governors in 2015: early learning, school finance, school choice, teaching quality, workforce development/career and technical education, and postsecondary funding, affordability and access.

Using assessments to inform 12th-grade interventions and accelerations

This policy analysis digs into statewide high school college and career readiness assessments and how states are using them to overcome the “wasted senior year” and high postsecondary remediation rates.

The Progress of Education Reform: The shaping of federal education policy over time

This issue of The Progress of Education Reform provides an overview of major events in education policy history, such as the most significant K-12 education policy event in history, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

The Civics Education Initiative of 2015

This education trends report examines approaches, strategies and graduation/diploma requirements to ensure all students are taught basic civics and are ready for active, engaged citizenship.

2015 RESEARCH AND REPORTS

GED, HiSET and TASC: A comparison of high school equivalency assessments

This education trends report provides a comparison of these three assessments' features and aspects of testing programs states have weighed when deciding which high school equivalency exam to offer.

Testing Trends: Considerations for choosing and using assessments

This education trends report examines how states have addressed the considerations for choosing and using assessments.

State Summative Assessments: 2015-16 school year

This 50-state review includes a comparison chart that provides an overview of the state summative assessments being administered in grades 3-12, how states are meeting minimum assessment requirements, the name of assessment vendors and state-specific assessments.

50-State Comparisons and Databases (created or updated in 2015)

12th grade transitions

An overview of how states use college-readiness assessments to make the most of the 12th-grade year in all 50 states, including analysis of determinations, intervention, acceleration and state college-readiness definitions and postsecondary admissions.

Dual/concurrent enrollment

An exhaustive overview of dual or concurrent enrollment policies, including access, finance, program quality, transferability and much more.

English language learners

An exhaustive resource with extensive information about policies on English language learners, including finance, teaching quality and basics such as percentages and numbers of students in each state, program approaches and unique policy levers to promote parent engagement.

2015 RESEARCH AND REPORTS

Open enrollment

A comprehensive resource of open-enrollment policies in all 50 states, with 50-state comparisons showing how all states approach specific open-enrollment policies.

State funding for students with disabilities

A 50-state comparison that indicates each state's funding mechanism, allocation and student count method for K-12 students with disabilities.

State financial aid

This 50-state policy database provides a comprehensive look at the 100 largest state-funded financial aid programs across the country and is intended to inform discussions surrounding current program design, highlight innovative models already in practice in the states and assist states in identifying peer programs.

State legislation

Updated on an ongoing basis, this database offers summaries of enacted legislation on more than 300 topics in categories such as accountability, assessments, standards and curriculum, teaching quality and much more.

State of the State addresses

Updated within days of an address, this resource offers summaries of education-related proposals from State of the State addresses, categorized by state, year and issue.

APPENDIX B

EDUCATION COMMISSION OF THE STATES' POLICY TEAM

President



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K-12



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Arts Education Partnership



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Knowledge and Research



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Postsecondary and Workforce



BRIAN SPONSLE, ED.D.

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APPENDIX C

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee provides strategic direction and oversight for the management, operations and financial policies of the organization. The president is hired by and serves at the pleasure of the Executive Committee. Specific powers and responsibilities of the Executive Committee include reviewing the Education Commission of the States' annual audit, annual report and the president's proposed budget before forwarding each on to the Steering Committee for final approval.

The Executive Committee is composed of the chair, the immediate past chair, the chair-elect, the vice chair, the treasurer and not more than five additional members of the Steering Committee who are broadly representative of the Commission and who are appointed by the chair.

2015 Executive Committee Members



Chair

THE HONORABLE STEVE BULLOCK
Governor, State of Montana



THE HONORABLE BEN CANNON

Executive Director, Oregon Higher Education
Coordinating Commission



Immediate Past Chair

THE HONORABLE BRIAN SANDOVAL
Governor, State of Nevada



THE HONORABLE JOE GARCIA

Lieutenant Governor, State of Colorado



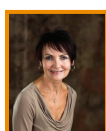
Vice Chair

THE HONORABLE DOLORES GRESHAM
Chair, Education Committee, Tennessee Senate



THE HONORABLE LUTHER OLSEN

Chair, Education Committee, Wisconsin Senate



Treasurer

MELODY SCHOPP
Secretary of Education, South Dakota
Department of Education



THE HONORABLE ROY TAKUMI

Chair, Education Committee, Hawaii House of
Representatives



THE HONORABLE PHIL BRYANT

Governor, State of Mississippi

STEERING COMMITTEE

The Steering Committee is the primary policy-setting body of Education Commission of the States. Specifically, the Steering Committee has the right to: adopt and approve statements and communications to implement, effectuate and advocate policy positions of the Commission; consider policy recommendations from any person, committee or other body; engage in discussion and debate of education issues in order to provide major program direction for the Commission; recommend bylaws changes to the Commission; and approve the Education Commission of the States' strategic plan, annual budget and Annual Report.

Between meetings of the Steering Committee, its policymaking authority is delegated to the Executive Committee. The Steering Committee voting members consist of one representative from each member state, as well as the chair, vice chair, treasurer and immediate past chair during their terms of office. The chair and vice chair of the Commission shall serve as the chair and vice chair of this Committee as well.

2015 Steering Committee Members

Alabama

STEPHANIE BELL

Member, Alabama State Board of Education

Alaska

MIKE HANLEY

Commissioner, Alaska Department of Education and Early Development

American Samoa

MORELI NIUATO

President, Kanana Fou Theological Seminary

Arkansas

TERRI HARDY

President, TNH Educational Consulting, Inc.

California

MARTY BLOCK

Chair, Budget Subcommittee on Education, California Senate

Colorado

JOE GARCIA

Lieutenant Governor, State of Colorado

Connecticut

BETH BYE

Deputy Majority Leader, Connecticut Senate

Delaware

DAVID SOKOLA

Chair, Senate Education Committee, Delaware Senate

Florida

KELLI STARGEL

Chair, Senate Higher Education Committee, Florida Senate

Hawaii

ROY TAKUMI

Chair, House Education Committee, Hawaii House of Representatives

Illinois

JAMES L. APPLGATE

Executive Director, Illinois Board of Higher Education

Indiana

DENNIS KRUSE

Chair, Senate Education and Career Development Committee, Indiana Senate

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS, CONT.

Iowa

LINDA FANDEL

Special Assistant for Education, State of Iowa

Kansas

SALLY CAUBLE

Member, Kansas State Board of Education

Kentucky

DERRICK GRAHAM

Chair, House Education Committee, Kentucky House of Representatives

Maryland

ADRIENNE JONES

Speaker Pro Tem, Maryland House of Delegates

Massachusetts

MITCHELL CHESTER

Commissioner of Education, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Michigan

PHIL PAVLOV

Chair, Senate Education Committee, Michigan Senate

Minnesota

CHARLES WIGER

Chair, Senate Education and Senate Finance K-12 Budget Division Committee, Minnesota Senate

Mississippi

PHIL BRYANT

Governor, State of Mississippi

Missouri

DAVID PEARCE

Chair, Senate Education Committee, Missouri Senate

Montana

STEVE BULLOCK

Governor, State of Montana

Nebraska

JOHN BONAIUTO

Government Relations, Nebraska Association of School Boards

Nevada

BRIAN SANDOVAL

Governor, State of Nevada

New Hampshire

NANCY STILES

Vice Chair, Senate Education Committee, New Hampshire Senate

New Jersey

SHIRLEY TURNER

Senator, New Jersey Senate

New Mexico

DENNIS ROCH

Deputy Chair, House Education Committee, New Mexico House of Representatives

North Carolina

CRAIG HORN

Chair, House Appropriations Committee on Education, North Carolina House of Representatives

North Dakota

DONALD SCHAIBLE

Member, Senate Education Committee, North Dakota Senate

Oklahoma

MARY FALLIN

Governor, State of Oklahoma

Oregon

BEN CANNON

Executive Director, Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission

Pennsylvania

DAVID VOLKMAN

Executive Deputy Secretary to the Secretary of Education, Pennsylvania Department of Education

South Carolina

GARRISON WALTERS

Executive Director, South Carolina Higher Education Foundation

South Dakota

MELODY SCHOPP

Secretary of Education, South Dakota Department of Education

Tennessee

DOLORES GRESHAM

Chair, Senate Education Committee, Tennessee Senate

Texas

MICHAEL WILLIAMS

Commissioner of Education, Texas Education Agency

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS, CONT.

Utah

HOWARD STEPHENSON

Senate Chair, Public Education Appropriations
Subcommittee, Utah Senate

Texas

MICHAEL WILLIAMS

Commissioner of Education, Texas Education Agency

Virgin Islands

DONNA FRETT-GREGORY

CFO, Virgin Islands Port Authority

Virginia

PATRICIA WRIGHT

Former Virginia Superintendent of Public Instruction

West Virginia

ROBERT PLYMALE

Senator, West Virginia Senate

Wisconsin

LUTHER OLSEN

Chair, Senate Education Committee, Wisconsin Senate

Wyoming

JILLIAN BALOW

State Superintendent, Wyoming Department of Education

FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance Committee provides advice to the Executive Committee on the selection of the Commission's certified public accounting firm, reviews the results of the public accounting firm's annual audit, reviews and makes recommendations regarding the president's proposed annual Education Commission of the States' budget, proposes to the Executive Committee changes in Education Commission of the States' accounting practices and recommends strategic financial policies to the Executive Committee.

The Committee also makes recommendations to the Executive Committee regarding the following issues: portfolio; mission and objectives; appropriate asset allocation strategy; Education Commission of the States investment policy consistent with objectives; and investment managers to implement investment policies. In addition, the Committee monitors investment results and alerts the Executive Committee to any problems.

2015 Finance Committee Members

Chair

MELODY SCHOPP

Secretary of Education, South Dakota Department of Education

KELLI STARGEL

Chair, Higher Education Committee, Florida Senate

DENNIS KRUSE

Chair, Education and Career Development Committee, Indiana Senate

MARTY BLOCK

Chair, Budget Subcommittee on Education, California Senate

SHIRLEY TURNER

Senator, New Jersey Senate

PHIL PAVLOV

Chair, Education Committee, Michigan Senate

JOHN BONAIUTO

Government Relations Consultant,
Nebraska Association of School Boards

NATIONAL FORUM PLANNING COMMITTEE

The National Forum Planning Committee works in concert with Education Commission of the States staff to review and approve the overall design and desired outcomes for the Education Commission of the States' annual meeting, establish an evaluation plan to assess Commissioner satisfaction and meeting effectiveness and provide direction to the president and staff for future meetings.

2015 National Forum Planning Committee Members

Chair

DOLORES GRESHAM

Chair, Education Committee, Tennessee Senate

JOE GARCIA

Lieutenant Governor, State of Colorado

MARY FALLIN

Governor, State of Oklahoma

THE HONORABLE DENNIS ROCH

Deputy Chair, Education Committee, New Mexico House of Representatives

JAMES APPLGATE

Executive Director, Illinois Board of Higher Education

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee makes nominations for Education Commission of the States' officers, Steering Committee positions, awards or recognitions, or other nominations that the chair or Steering Committee may request.

2015 Nominating Committee Members

Chair

ROY TAKUMI

Chair, Education Committee, Hawaii House of Representatives

LUTHER OLSEN

Chair, Education Committee, Wisconsin Senate

ADRIENNE JONES

Speaker Pro Tem, Maryland House of Delegates

Vice Chair

STEPHANIE BELL

Member, Alabama State School Board of Education

MIKE HANLEY

Commissioner of Education and Early Development, State of Alaska

DAVID PEARCE

Chair, Education Committee, Missouri Senate

APPENDIX D

2015 COMMISSIONERS (STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN BOLD)

Alabama

- **Stephanie Bell**, Member, Alabama State Board of Education
- Robert Bentley, Governor, State of Alabama
- Dick Brewbaker, Chair, Senate Education Committee, Alabama Senate
- Sally Howell, Executive Director, Alabama Association of School Boards
- Neal Morrison, Commissioner, Alabama Department of Senior Services
- Caroline Novak, President, A+ Education Partnership
- Bill Poole, Chair, Ways and Means Education Fund Committee, Alabama House of Representatives

Alaska

- James Fields, Chair, Alaska Board of Education and Early Development
- Lynn Gattis, Chair, House Education & Early Development Finance Subcommittee, Alaska House of Representatives
- **Mike Hanley**, Commissioner, Alaska Department of Education and Early Development
- Nancy Norman, Education Consultant, Norman Consultant Services
- Deena Paramo, Superintendent of Schools, Matanuska Susitna Borough School District
- Gary Stevens, Member, Senate Education Committee, Alaska Senate
- Bill Walker, Governor, State of Alaska

2015 COMMISSIONERS, CONT.

American Samoa

- Seth Galea'i, President, American Samoa Community College
- Salu Hunkin-Finau, Director of Education, American Samoa Department of Education
- Lolo Matalasi Moliga, Governor, Territory of American Samoa
- Vaetasi Tu'umolimoli Moliga, Chair, House Education Committee, American Samoa House of Representatives
- **Moreli Niuatoa**, President, Kanana Fou Theological Seminary
- Etuale Viane, Director, Office of Catholic Education

Arizona

- Franklin Pratt, Representative, Arizona House of Representatives
- Kelli Ward, Chair, Senate Education Committee, Arizona Senate
- Kimberly Yee, Vice Chair, Senate Education Committee, Arizona Senate

Arkansas

- **Terri Hardy**, President, TNH Educational Consulting, Inc.
- Kaneaster Hodges, Jr., Former Chair, Higher Education Coordinating Board, Arkansas Department of Higher Education
- Asa Hutchinson, Governor, State of Arkansas
- Calvin Johnson, former Dean of Education

California

- **Marty Block**, Chair, Budget Subcommittee on Education, California Senate
- Jerry Brown, Jr., Governor, State of California
- Jack O'Connell, Former State Superintendent of Education and Partner, Capitol Advisors Group

2015 COMMISSIONERS, CONT.

- Shirley Weber, Member, Assembly Education Committee, California Assembly
- Kent Wong, Director, Labor Center, University of California-Los Angeles

Colorado

- Kerrie Dallman, President, Colorado Education Association
- **Joe Garcia**, Lieutenant Governor, State of Colorado
- Alec Garnett, Member, House Education Committee, Colorado House of Representatives
- John Hickenlooper, Governor, State of Colorado
- Nancy Todd, Member, Senate Education and Transportation Committees, Colorado Senate
- Evy Valencia, Education Policy Advisor, State of Colorado

Connecticut

- **Beth Bye**, Deputy Majority Leader, Connecticut Senate
- Cheryl Dickinson, Professor, Southern Connecticut State University
- Andrew Fleischmann, Co-Chair, Joint Education Committee, Connecticut House of Representatives
- Dannel Malloy, Governor, State of Connecticut
- Mark McQuillan, Former Connecticut Commissioner of Education, Southern New Hampshire University
- Hayley Zinn Rowthorn, Director of Literacy, Assessment & Instructional Improvement, South Windsor Public Schools
- Betty Sternberg, Former Commissioner of Education and Professor, Central Connecticut State University

2015 COMMISSIONERS, CONT.

Delaware

- Madeleine Bayard, Vice President, Policy and Practice, Rodel Foundation of Delaware
- Steven Godowsky, Acting Secretary of Education, Delaware Department of Education
- Jack Markell, Governor, State of Delaware
- Mark Murphy, Former Secretary of Education
- Lindsay O'Mara, Education Policy Advisor, State of Delaware
- **David Sokola**, Chair, Senate Education Committee, Delaware Senate

District of Columbia

- Muriel Bowser, Mayor, District of Columbia
- Elaine Crider, Chair, Board of Trustees, University of the District of Columbia
- David Grosso, Chair, Education Committee, Council of the District of Columbia
- Jack Jacobson, President, Board of Education of District of Columbia
- Hanseul Kang, State Superintendent of Education, Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE)
- Ronald Mason, Jr., President, University of the District of Columbia
- Phil Mendelson, Chair, Council of the District of Columbia,

Florida

- Janet Adkins, Chair, K-12 Subcommittee, Florida House of Representatives
- Michael Bileca, Representative, Florida House of Representatives
- John Legg, Chair, Senate Education Pre-K-12 Committee, Florida Senate
- Rick Scott, Governor, State of Florida
- Eric Smith, Member, AVID Center of Florida & Georgia
- **Kelli Stargel**, Chair, Senate Higher Education Committee, Florida Senate

2015 COMMISSIONERS, CONT.

Georgia

- Valerie Clark, Member, House Education Committee, Georgia House of Representatives
- Nathan Deal, Governor, State of Georgia
- Erin Hames, President, ReformEd Georgia
- Hank M. Huckaby, Chancellor, University System of Georgia
- William S. Schofield, Superintendent, Hall County School District
- Freddie Powell Sims, Secretary, Education and Youth Committee, Georgia Senate
- Richard Woods, State Superintendent of Schools, Georgia Department of Education

Hawaii

- Joan Husted, Education Institute of Hawaii
- David Ige, Governor, State of Hawaii
- Michelle Kidani, Chair, Senate Education Committee, Hawaii Senate
- Kathryn Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education, Hawaii Department of Education
- J.N. Musto, Executive Director Emeritus, University of Hawaii Professional Assembly
- Alan Oshima, President and CEO, Hawaii Electric Company
- **Roy Takumi**, Chair, House Education Committee, Hawaii House of Representatives

Idaho

- C.L. Otter, Governor, State of Idaho

Illinois

- **James L. Applegate**, Executive Director, Illinois Board of Higher Education
- Kimberly Lightford, Vice-Chairperson, Senate Education Committee, Illinois Senate
- Craig Lindvahl, Member, Illinois Board of Education
- Bruce Rauner, Governor, State of Illinois

2015 COMMISSIONERS, CONT.

Indiana

- Robert Behning, Chair, House Education Committee, Indiana House of Representatives
- Tim Harman, Representative, Indiana House of Representatives
- **Dennis Kruse**, Chair, Senate Education and Career Development Committee, Indiana Senate
- Teresa Lubbers, Commissioner, Indiana Commission for Higher Education
- Mike Pence, Governor, State of Indiana
- Earline Rogers, Senator, Indiana Senate
- Chad Timmerman, Director of Education Policy, State of Indiana

Iowa

- Tod R. Bowman, Senator, Iowa Senate
- Terry Branstad, Governor, State of Iowa
- **Linda Fandel**, Special Assistant for Education, State of Iowa
- Ron Jorgensen, Chair, House Education Committee, Iowa House of Representatives
- Amy Sinclair, Ranking Member, Senate Education Committee, Iowa Senate
- Cindy Winckler, Representative, Iowa House of Representatives

Kansas

- Steve Abrams, Chair, Senate Education Committee, Kansas Senate
- Sam Brownback, Governor, State of Kansas
- **Sally Cauble**, Member, Kansas State Board of Education
- Diane DeBacker, Former Kansas Commissioner of Education
- Frank Henderson, Jr., Past President, Kansas Association of School Boards
- Ron Highland, Chair, House Education Committee, Kansas House of Representatives
- Zoe Newton, Vice Chair, Kansas Board of Regents

2015 COMMISSIONERS, CONT.

Kentucky

- Steven Beshear, Governor, Commonwealth of Kentucky
- Gary Cox, President, Association of Independent Kentucky Colleges and Universities
- Constantine William Curris, President Emeritus of AASCU, American Association of State Colleges and Universities
- **Derrick Graham**, Chair, House Education Committee, Kentucky House of Representatives
- Blake Haselton, University of Louisville
- Verna Lowe, Dean, Eastern Kentucky University
- Mike Wilson, Chair, Senate Education Committee, Kentucky Senate

Louisiana

- Conrad Appel, Chair, Senate Education Committee, Louisiana Senate
- Steve Carter, Chair, House Education Committee, Louisiana House of Representatives
- Andre Coudrain, Member, University of Louisiana Board of Supervisors, Cashe Lewis Coudrain & Sandage Law Firm
- Patrick Dobard, Superintendent, Louisiana Recovery School District
- Bobby Jindal, Governor, State of Louisiana
- Phyllis Taylor, Chairman and President, Patrick F. Taylor Foundation
- John White, State Superintendent of Education, Louisiana Department of Education

Maine

- Duke Albanese, Former Maine Commissioner of Education and Senior Policy Advisor, Great Schools Partnership
- Brian Langley, Chair, Joint Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, Maine Senate
- Paul LePage, Governor, State of Maine

2015 COMMISSIONERS, CONT.

Maryland

- Kathleen Hetherington, President, Howard Community College
- Larry Hogan, Governor, State of Maryland
- **Adrienne Jones**, Speaker Pro Tem, Maryland House of Delegates
- Nancy J. King, Chair, Education, Business & Administration Subcommittee of the Senate
Budget & Taxation Committee, Maryland Senate

Massachusetts

- **Mitchell Chester**, Commissioner of Education, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
- Richard Freeland, Former Commissioner of Higher Education, Northeastern University
- Matthew Malone, Former Secretary of Education
- James Peyser, Secretary of Education, State of Massachusetts
- Paul Toner, President, New Voice Strategies
- Thomas Weber, Commissioner, Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care

Michigan

- Nancy Danhof, Executive Director, Todd Martin Development Fund
- Kellie Dean, President/CEO, Dean Transportation Headquarters
- Karen McPhee, Senior Education Policy Advisor, Michigan Governor's Office
- **Phil Pavlov**, Chair, Senate Education Committee, Michigan Senate
- Amanda Price, Chair, House Education Committee, Michigan House of Representatives
- Rick Snyder, Governor, State of Michigan
- Brian Whiston, State Superintendent, Michigan Department of Education

2015 COMMISSIONERS, CONT.

Minnesota

- Brenda Cassellius, Commissioner of Education, Minnesota Department of Education
- Mark Dayton, Governor, State of Minnesota
- Sondra Erickson, Chair, House Education Innovation Policy Committee, Minnesota House of Representatives
- Lawrence Pogemiller, Commissioner of Higher Education, Minnesota Office of Higher Education
- **Charles Wiger**, Chair, Senate Education and Senate Finance K-12 Budget Division Committee, Minnesota Senate

Mississippi

- Glenn Boyce, Commissioner of Higher Education, Mississippi State Institutions of Higher Learning
- **Phil Bryant**, Governor, State of Mississippi
- Nolan Mettetal, Chair, House Universities and Colleges Committee, Mississippi House of Representatives
- John L. Moore, Chair, House Education Committee, Mississippi House of Representatives
- John A. Polk, Chair, Senate Universities and Colleges Committee, Mississippi Senate
- Gray Tollison, Chair, Senate Education Committee, Mississippi Senate
- Carey Wright, State Superintendent of Education, Mississippi Department of Education

Missouri

- Steve Cookson, Chair, House Elementary and Secondary Education Committee, Missouri House of Representatives
- Patrick Gadell, Attorney at Law
- Joel Jennings, Assistant Professor, Saint Louis University

2015 COMMISSIONERS, CONT.

- Thomas Kerber, LUTCF - Principal, Insurance & Benefits Group, LLC
- Jay Nixon, Governor, State of Missouri
- **David Pearce**, Chair, Senate Education Committee, Missouri Senate

Montana

- Elsie Arntzen, Member, Senate Education Committee, Montana Senate
- **Steve Bullock**, Governor, State of Montana
- Elly Driggers, Kindergarten Teacher, Central Elementary School
- Denise Juneau, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Montana Office of Public Instruction
- Debra Lamm, Vice Chair, House Education Committee, Montana House of Representatives
- Carmen Cornelius Taylor, Dean of Academic Affairs, Aaniiih Nakoda College
- Mike Thiel, Math Teacher, Flathead High School

Nebraska

- Roy Baker, Senator, Nebraska Legislature
- Michael Baumgartner, Executive Director, Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education
- Matthew Blomstedt, Commissioner of Education, Nebraska Department of Education
- **John Bonaiuto**, Government Relations, Nebraska Association of School Boards
- Pete Ricketts, Governor, State of Nebraska
- Jim Scheer, Senator, Nebraska Legislature
- Kate Sullivan, Chair, Education Committee, Nebraska Legislature

2015 COMMISSIONERS, CONT.

Nevada

- Carolyn Edwards, Member, Board of School Trustees, Clark County School District
- Aaron D. Ford, Senate Minority Leader, Nevada Senate
- Becky Harris, Chair, Senate Education Committee, Nevada Senate
- Pat Hickey, Member, Assembly Education Committee, Nevada Assembly
- Erv Nelson, Member, Nevada Assembly
- **Brian Sandoval**, Governor, State of Nevada
- Michael B. Wixom, Vice Chair, Board of Regents, Nevada System of Higher Education

New Hampshire

- Virginia Barry, Commissioner of Education, New Hampshire Department of Education
- Kathryn Dodge, Principal, Dodge Advisory Group, LLC
- Maggie Hassan, Governor, State of New Hampshire
- Tom Horgan, President & CEO, New Hampshire College and University Council
- Daphne Kenyon, Principal, D.A. Kenyon & Associates
- Mel Myler, Member, House Education Committee, New Hampshire House of Representatives
- **Nancy Stiles**, Vice Chair, Senate Education Committee, New Hampshire Senate

New Jersey

- Chris Christie, Governor, State of New Jersey
- Susan Cole, President, Montclair State University
- Patrick Diegnan, Jr., Deputy Speaker and Chair, Assembly Education Committee, New Jersey Assembly
- Kristin Hennessy, Teacher, Brielle Elementary School
- Peter Renwick, Principal, Westfield High School
- **Shirley Turner**, Senator, New Jersey Senate

2015 COMMISSIONERS, CONT.

New Mexico

- Gayle Dean, Executive Director, San Juan College Foundation
- Viola Florez, Professor and Endowed Chair, College of Education, University of New Mexico
- Susana Martinez, Governor, State of New Mexico
- Sharon Morgan, Past President, National Education Association of New Mexico
- **Dennis Roch**, Deputy Chair, House Education Committee, New Mexico House of Representatives
- John Sapien, Chair, Senate Education Committee, New Mexico Senate

New York

- Maura Banta, Former Chair, Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education
- Barbara Clark, Assemblywoman & Deputy Majority Whip, New York State Assembly
- Andrew Cuomo, Governor, State of New York
- Johanna Duncan-Poitier, Senior Vice Chancellor of Community Colleges & the Education Pipeline, State University of New York
- John Flanagan, Chair, Senate Education Committee, New York Senate
- Bethaida Gonzalez, Dean, University College, Syracuse University

North Carolina

- Mark Edwards, Superintendent, Mooresville Graded School District
- **Craig Horn**, Chair, House Appropriations Committee on Education, North Carolina House of Representatives
- Robert Landry, President, Choice Growth
- Donald L. Martin, Jr., Professor of Education, High Point University
- Pat McCrory, Governor, State of North Carolina

2015 COMMISSIONERS, CONT.

- Lucy Roberts, Executive Director, Race to the Top, North Carolina Governor's Office
- Dan Soucek, Co-Chair, Senate Education & Higher Education Committee; Co-Chair, Senate Appropriations--Education & Higher Education Committee, North Carolina Senate

North Dakota

- Mike Bitz, Superintendent, Mandan Public School District
- Aimee Copas, Executive Director, North Dakota Council of Educational Leaders
- Jack Dalrymple, Governor, State of North Dakota
- Jack Maus, Superintendent, Grafton Public Schools
- Mike Nathe, Chair, House Education Committee, North Dakota House of Representatives
- Nicole Poolman, Senator, North Dakota Senate
- **Donald Schaible**, Member, Senate Education Committee, North Dakota Senate

Ohio

- John Kasich, Governor, State of Ohio

Oklahoma

- Ann Coody, Member, House Common Education Committee, Oklahoma House of Representatives
- **Mary Fallin**, Governor, State of Oklahoma
- Joy Hofmeister, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Oklahoma Department of Education
- Glen Johnson, Chancellor, Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education
- Marcelle Mack, Director, Oklahoma State Board of Career and Technical Education
- Michael Rogers, State Representative, Oklahoma House of Representatives
- Jason Smalley, Vice Chair, Appropriations Subcommittee on Education, Oklahoma Senate

2015 COMMISSIONERS, CONT.

Oregon

- Lee Beyer, Member, Education and Workforce Development Committee, Oregon Senate
- **Ben Cannon**, Executive Director, Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission
- Joe Gallegos, Oregon House of Representatives
- Mark Johnson, Member, Higher Education and Workforce Development Committee, Oregon House of Representatives
- Jeff Kruse, Member, Education and Workforce Development Committee, Oregon Senate

Pennsylvania

- Andrew Dinniman, Minority Chair, Senate Education Committee, Pennsylvania Senate
- Nichole Duffy, Senior Education Advisor, Pennsylvania House of Representatives
- James Roebuck, Jr., Democratic Chair, House Education Committee, Pennsylvania House of Representatives
- Stan Saylor, Chair, House Education Committee, Pennsylvania House of Representatives
- Lloyd Smucker, Chair, Senate Education Committee, Pennsylvania State Senate
- **David Volkman**, Executive Deputy Secretary to the Secretary of Education, Pennsylvania Department of Education
- Tom Wolf, Governor, State of Pennsylvania

Puerto Rico

- Alejandro Garcia Padilla, Governor, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico
- Jenniffer Gonzalez-Colon, Representative, Puerto Rico House of Representatives
- Rafael Roman Melendez, Secretary of Education, Puerto Rico Department of Education
- Angel Rosa Rodriguez, Chair, Government Affairs, Government Efficiency and Economic Innovation Committee, Puerto Rico Senate

2015 COMMISSIONERS, CONT.

South Carolina

- Nikki Haley, Governor, State of South Carolina
- Robert Hayes, Jr., Member, Education Committee, South Carolina Senate
- Larry Kobrovsky, Former Member, State Board of Education, South Carolina Department of Education
- Willis Walling, Private Citizen
- **Garrison Walters**, Executive Director, South Carolina Higher Education Foundation

South Dakota

- Dennis Daugaard, Governor, State of South Dakota
- Rick Melmer, Director, Leadership South Dakota
- **Melody Schopp**, Secretary of Education, South Dakota Department of Education
- Jacqueline Sly, Chair, House Education Committee, South Dakota House of Representatives
- Deb Soholt, Chair, Senate Education Committee, South Dakota Senate
- Tony Venhuizen, Chief of Staff, Office of the Governor, State of South Dakota

Tennessee

- Harry Brooks, Chair, House Education Committee, Tennessee House of Representatives
- **Dolores Gresham**, Chair, Senate Education Committee, Tennessee Senate
- Tammy Grissom, Executive Director, Tennessee School Boards Association
- Bill Haslam, Governor, State of Tennessee
- Claude Pressnell, Jr., President, Tennessee Independent Colleges and Universities Association
- Lana Seivers, Dean, College of Education, Middle Tennessee State University

2015 COMMISSIONERS, CONT.

Texas

- Greg Abbott, Governor, State of Texas
- Dan Branch, Attorney, Winstead PC
- Rob Eissler, President, Eissler and Associates
- Raymund Paredes, Commissioner of Higher Education, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
- Florence Shapiro, Former State Senator
- Royce West, Member, Education Committee, Texas Senate
- **Michael Williams**, Commissioner of Education, Texas Education Agency

Utah

- Francis Gibson, Member, House Education Committee, Utah House of Representatives
- Gary Herbert, Governor, State of Utah
- Aaron Osmond, Member, Senate Education Committee, Utah Senate
- Tami Pyfer, Education Advisor, Office of the Governor, State of Utah
- **Howard Stephenson**, Senate Chair, Public Education Appropriations Subcommittee, Utah Senate

Vermont

- Peter Shumlin, Governor, State of Vermont
- Robert Starr, Jr., Senator, Vermont Senate

Virgin Islands

- Angeli Ferdschneider, Education Policy Advisor, U.S. Virgin Islands
- **Donna Frett-Gregory**, CFO, Virgin Islands Port Authority

2015 COMMISSIONERS, CONT.

- David Hall, President, University of the Virgin Islands
- Kenneth Mapp, Jr., Governor, U.S. Virgin Islands
- Nereida Rivera O'Reilly, Member, Committee on Education and Workforce Development, Virgin Islands Senate

Virginia

- Artur Davis, former U.S. Representative
- Antione Green, Chairman, Southside Community and Housing Development
- Patricia A. Harvey, Retired University Administrator
- Steven Landes, Chair, House Education Committee, Virginia House of Delegates
- Stephen Martin, Chair, Senate Education and Health Committee, Virginia Senate
- Terry McAuliffe, Governor, Commonwealth of Virginia
- **Patricia Wright**, Former Virginia Superintendent of Public Instruction

West Virginia

- Amelia Courts, President/CEO, The Education Alliance
- Paul Hill, Chancellor, West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission
- Michael Martirano, State Superintendent of Schools, West Virginia Department of Education
- David Perry, Delegate, West Virginia House of Delegates
- **Robert Plymale**, Senator, West Virginia Senate
- Earl Ray Tomblin, Governor, State of West Virginia
- Jan Vineyard, President, West Virginia Oil Marketers & Grocers Association

2015 COMMISSIONERS, CONT.

Wisconsin

- Tony Evers, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
- Tracie Happel, Assistant Center Director, School District of La Crosse
- Demond Means, Superintendent, Mequon-Thiensville School District
- **Luther Olsen**, Chair, Senate Education Committee, Wisconsin Senate
- John Reinemann, Executive Secretary, Wisconsin Higher Educational Aids Board
- Scott Walker, Governor, State of Wisconsin

Wyoming

- **Jillian Balow**, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Wyoming Department of Education
- Matt Mead, Governor, State of Wyoming
- David Northrup, Chair, House Education Committee, Wyoming House of Representatives
- James Rose, Executive Director, Wyoming Community College Commission
- Rachel Rubino, Case Manager, Albany County School District
- Kathy Vetter, President, Wyoming Education Association
- Jeff Wasserburger, Senator, Wyoming Senate

APPENDIX E

PARTNERS AND GRANTS

2015 Partners

PLATINUM

General Electric ■ USA Funds

GOLD

Amplify ■ AT&T ■ Farmers Insurance ■ National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) ■ Pearson ■ Renaissance Learning ■ State Farm Foundation ■ ACT ■ Alliance for Early Success ■ College Board ■ Scholastic

SILVER

BloomBoard ■ ETS ■ HP ■ MetaMetrics ■ Measured Progress ■ SAS ■ Education Networks of America (ENA) ■ Milken Family Foundation ■ Burns & McDonnell

New Grants	Activity/Project
State Farm Companies	Every Student a Citizen
GE Foundation	Progress of Education Reform/Research studies
The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation	College Readiness 3.0

Continuing Grants	Activity/Project
USA Funds	State Financial Aid Redesign
Lumina Foundation	State Higher Education Policy
The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation	College Readiness 2.5

APPENDIX F

2015 BUDGET AND FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Statement of financial position for year ending December 31, 2015.

Income Statement

Revenues

GRANTS/CONTRACTS	\$1,356,022
SPONSORSHIP FUNDING/REGISTRATION	\$713,697
STATE FEES	\$2,307,623
GAINS/LOSS - INVESTMENTS	(\$45,979)
OTHER	\$6,655
TOTAL REVENUE	\$4,338,018

Expenses

SALARIES AND BENEFITS	\$2,828,674
OTHER OPERATING EXPENSES	\$1,878,132
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$4,706,806

Balance Sheet

Assets

CURRENT ASSETS	\$3,869,341
PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT	\$338,475
ENDOWMENT	\$2,125,405
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$6,333,221

Liabilities

CURRENT LIABILITIES	\$137,836
ACCRUALS	\$212,265
DEFERRED REVENUE	\$20,402
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$370,503

Net Assets

INVESTED IN CAPITAL ASSETS	\$338,475
OPERATING RESERVE	\$1,030,337
TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED	\$637,543
ENDOWMENT	\$2,125,405
UNRESTRICTED	\$1,830,958
TOTAL NET ASSETS	\$5,962,718