

## ECS RESOURCES, SERVICES & ACTIVITIES

The *ECS Information Clearinghouse* gathers, analyzes and serves as a repository of information on a wide range of education topics from sources including state legislation, agency policy and regulations, executive orders, research studies, reports, surveys, journals and news articles. ECS provides access to this extensive collection of material through its Web site, print publications and customized, quick-turnaround searches by Clearinghouse staff. At [www.ecs.org](http://www.ecs.org), you'll find:

- ♦ The nation's only comprehensive database of state education policy enactments, searchable by state, by year and by policy issue
- ♦ In-depth, up-to-date information on more than 250 education policy topics, including summaries of and links to useful reports, studies and Web sites, and examples of innovative state policies and programs
- ♦ Multistate reports and databases that allow you to review and compare state policies on issues of top concern and interest to today's policymakers.

ECS' *policy and research work* is focused on helping state leaders assess the progress and impact of their reform efforts; identify emerging needs, priorities and opportunities; and make more efficient and strategic use of their resources. Services available to states include: customized research, analysis and technical assistance; policy scans and audits; surveys; and legislative testimony.

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The annual *National Forum on Education Policy*, cross-state conferences and seminars, and other ECS-sponsored events provide unique opportunities for state policy and education leaders to share information and ideas, reflect on what they have learned and accomplished, and discuss emerging trends, challenges and opportunities.



# EDUCATION COMMISSION OF THE STATES

March 2007

2007 National Forum on Education Policy – Partnership Campaign

## ECS – PREMIER RESOURCE FOR STATE LEADERS ON EDUCATION

*“The party states recognize that each of them has an interest in the quality and quantity of education furnished in each of the other states, as well as in the excellence of its own education systems and institutions... because the products and services contributing to the health, welfare and economic advancement of each state are supplied in significant part by persons educated in other states.”*

– The Compact for Education, 1965

The Education Commission of the States (ECS), a national nonprofit, nonpartisan organization headquartered in Denver, Colorado, is the operating arm of an interstate compact forged under the leadership of the nation's governors and ratified by the U.S. Congress in the mid-1960s.

Among ECS' key functions is its sponsorship of the *National Forum on Education Policy*, which brings together several hundred political, education and business leaders from across the country each summer to share information and ideas, reflect on what they've learned and accomplished, and enlarge their understanding of emerging issues, trends and opportunities. The 2007 National Forum will be held July 10-13 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Over the years, ECS has both symbolized and sustained states' historic commitment to working together to improve public education. It remains a unique and vital mechanism for helping them:

- ♦ Communicate and collaborate on education policy
- ♦ Create policy environments that promote improvement and innovation in education
- ♦ Think, plan and invest their resources more strategically.

## EDUCATION CHALLENGES FACING STATE LEADERS TODAY

*“We need to take our students from nation-leading to world-competing.”*

– Alice Seagren  
Minnesota Commissioner of Education

America's global influence is reliant on the quality of its education systems. The strength of our economy and workforce, our capacity to nurture research and innovation, the vitality of our communities and institutions – all depend on steadily expanding the number and range of Americans prepared for living, working and learning in a “flat” world.

In the face of this complex and pressing challenge, the need for *strong leadership, sound policymaking and strategic investment*

is particularly critical in three interrelated areas:

- ♦ Accelerating strategic reforms that serve to promote access, achievement and opportunity at all levels of public education
- ♦ Dramatically improving the skills, size and knowledge of the K-12 teaching workforce
- ♦ Resolving points of conflict between federal mandates, state education reform agendas and local priorities and prerogatives.

### ECS EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

**Hon. Kathleen Sebelius, Chair**  
Governor, Kansas

**Hon. Mike Huckabee**  
Former Governor, Arkansas  
Former ECS Chairman

**Hon. Luther Olsen, Vice Chair**  
Senate Education Committee  
Wisconsin State Senate

**Hon. Tim Kaine**  
Governor, Commonwealth of Virginia

**Richard Rhoda, Treasurer**  
Executive Director  
Tennessee Higher Education Commission

**Hon. Rae Ann Kelsch**  
Chairman, House Education Committee  
North Dakota House of Representatives

**Roderick G. W. Chu**  
**Interim President**  
Education Commission of the States

**Hon. Howard Lee**  
Chairman, North Carolina State  
Board of Education

**Hon. Sandy Garrett**  
State Superintendent of Public Instruction  
Oklahoma State Department of Education

**Hon. Norman Sakamoto**  
Majority Whip & Chairman  
Senate Education Committee  
Hawaii Senate

### CORPORATE SUPPORT FOR ECS

Over the past several years, ECS' corporate partners have influenced important improvements in education across the states. They include the following:

ACT Inc.  
Center for Educational Leadership and  
Technology (CELT)  
The College Board  
Discovery Education  
Educational Testing Service (ETS)  
Harcourt Assessment, Inc.  
IBM  
I Can Learn  
Kaplan K-12 Learning Services  
MGT of America Inc.  
National Evaluation Systems Inc. (NES)  
Pearson Education  
PLATO Learning Inc.  
State Farm Company Foundation  
Texas Instruments  
TIAA-CREF

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## 2007 NATIONAL FORUM ON EDUCATION POLICY

July 10-13, 2007

Philadelphia, PA

**Participants:** For more than four decades, The National Forum on Education Policy has provided a one-of-a-kind opportunity for policymakers, practitioners and stakeholders at all levels of public education across the nation to share information, ideas and lessons learned.

*“As a state legislator, the National Forum allows me to learn from and work with my colleagues from around the country on important education policy issues.”*

— Norman Sakamoto  
Chairman, Hawaii State Senate Education Committee

As in the past, this year’s gathering in Philadelphia will bring together the policymakers who make up ECS’ core constituents: governors and their education policy advisors; legislative leaders; state superintendents and state school board members; community college and university system heads.

Discussions will be further informed by education researchers and experts who are guiding national and state-level analyses and programs on education finance, workforce development, technology and data systems development, curriculum, human resources and more.

**Issues:** The plenary, concurrent and small-group session topics for this year’s National Forum offer opportunities for careful reflection on current practices and emerging promising strategies. For example:

- ◆ *Analysis of the Costs and Benefits of Comprehensive Reform*
  - ◆ Framing full-scale reform strategies
  - ◆ Implementing federally and state-mandated corrective action for low-performing schools
- ◆ *Strategies that Support a Culture for Teaching Excellence*
  - ◆ Addressing imbalances in teacher supply and demand
  - ◆ Improving teachers’ working conditions to retain quality educators especially in communities with the highest challenges
- ◆ *Advocacy for Educational Opportunity*
  - ◆ Beginning public education investments with early learners
  - ◆ Increasing the number and range of young people and adults prepared for careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics
- ◆ *Alignment of Education Systems*
  - ◆ Using data to evaluate the capacity of education systems to effectively serve students, and track and guide their performance and progress from early learning through college and workforce readiness.

**Structure:** This year, the National Forum program has been fine-tuned to maximize opportunities for participation and interaction, including: dialogue sessions following plenary events; roundtables and other small-discussion groups that provide deeper information on targeted strategies; and pre- and post-conference sessions targeted to specific policymaking groups of National Forum attendees.



### Plenary events at this year’s National Forum include:

Keynote address by Marc Tucker, author of the New Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce’s report *Tough Choices or Tough Times*.

Panel discussion in which ECS Chair Kathleen Sebelius and other governors reflect on the challenges of education reform.

Presentation of ECS’ annual awards for outstanding contributions to public education on the part of an individual (James B. Conant Award, state (Frank Newman Award) and corporation (ECS Corporate Award).

## FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN GOAL

ECS seeks \$350,000 in support from corporate partners to ensure that every state is represented by policymakers and education leaders serving each section of the P-16 pipeline. This support will allow ECS to:

- ◆ Tap the country’s noted education experts to serve as resources at plenary and concurrent sessions
- ◆ Help states build cross-cutting teams of state leaders and bring them to the National Forum

*“ECS will use this time of organizational transition to form a collaboration of purpose. We will strengthen our relationships with respected colleagues and build new partnerships with organizations that have launched innovative strategies to increase student achievement at all levels of education.”*

— Kathleen Sebelius  
Governor of Kansas, 2006-08 ECS Chair

## BENEFITS TO PARTNERS

ECS’ commitment to its corporate partners will extend for a full year – beginning with the 2007 National Forum in July. Among the benefits to Platinum (\$30,000), Gold (\$10,000) and Silver Partners (\$5,000) of the **2007 National Forum on Education Policy** are:

- ◆ Complimentary registration
- ◆ Special invitation to a private reception hosted by ECS’ 2006-08 Chair Kansas Governor Kathleen Sebelius, to honor National Forum corporate sponsors
- ◆ VIP seating at all plenary sessions
- ◆ VIP invitations to constituent dinners
- ◆ Visual and verbal recognition throughout the National Forum
- ◆ Recognition on the ECS Web site prior to and following the National Forum.

Following the National Forum, ECS and corporate partners will re-convene at the CEO Forum during the Fall ECS Steering Committee Meeting to:

- ◆ Frame a new corporate alliance for education in collaboration with state leaders
- ◆ Explore collaborative opportunities with ECS on new projects and initiatives
- ◆ Review a calendar of ECS meetings and events to which corporate partners will receive special invitations.

## CONFLUENCE OF COMMON GOALS

State policymakers and corporate executives know our nation cannot remain a first-rate economic power with a second-rate education system. Join in partnership with ECS, state policymakers and education leaders to create and promote strategies that will enlarge education opportunities for Americans of all ages, backgrounds and circumstances.

Under the leadership of its new chair, Governor of Kansas Kathleen Sebelius, and its Executive Committee composed

of legislators, chief state school officers, state postsecondary education officials, ECS is working to re-establish itself as a dynamic force for change and improvement at all levels of public education, within and across states. The commitment and support of corporate leaders is critical to strengthening ECS’ capacity to help states address the challenges of reform and restructuring as systematically, strategically and collaboratively as possible.

*“It is the purpose of this compact to...provide a forum for the discussion, development, crystallization and recommendation of public policy alternatives in the field of education.”*

– Compact for Education