



Strategy Labs Platform: 2017 Mid-year State Policy Tracking Update

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Overview of 2017 Postsecondary Education Policy Tracking

In support of the Strategy Labs platform, Education Commission of the States tracks legislative activity aligned with the postsecondary priorities embedded in Lumina Foundation's [state policy agenda](#). Education Commission of the States utilizes a web-based tool to track and review state legislation, which is displayed on the organization's website. From the Strategy Labs initiative [policy tracking](#) webpage, external users can access an interactive map and individual bill details and sort the information by state and issue.

In 2017, Education Commission of the States is monitoring legislation related to the following topics:

- Attainment Goals.
- Credential Paths.
- Low-income Students.
- State Data Systems.
- Student Outcomes.

The policy priorities also include several sub-issues or focus areas.

Attainment Goals captures states' efforts to establish or revise goals, as well as plans to support attainment and metrics to gauge progress toward the objectives.

Credential Paths covers multiple sub-issues, including competency-based education, credit-hour limits, guided pathways, near completers, on-time completion, prior learning and transfer.

Low-income Students addresses financial aid and tuition policies targeted toward improving completion rates among students with high financial need.

State Data Systems identifies general policies related to data systems as well as completion and workforce development metrics.

Student Outcomes focuses on policies to develop and modify outcomes-based funding models, including those with equity measures.



The following sections provide summaries of overall state legislative actions related to Lumina’s state policy agenda, enacted measures, pending bills and examples of state legislation.

Topline Legislative Tracking Results

As of June 30, Education Commission of the States is actively tracking and monitoring 240 individual legislative actions in 44 states aligned to five priority issues in Lumina’s state policy agenda. Legislation may be assigned to more than one priority area and states may have proposed more than one bill within a topic. The legislative action counts include pending, failed, enacted and vetoed measures.

State Policy Agenda Priority	Number of Legislative Actions	States
Attainment Goals	20	CA, CT, HI, ID, LA, ME, NC, OR, TX, WA
Credential Paths	83	CA, CO, CT, DE, FL, GA, HI, ID, IL, IN, KY, MA, MD, ME, MI, MN, MO, NC, NJ, NM, NY, OR, PA, RI, TN, TX, UT, VA, WI
Low-income Students	93	AR, AZ, CA, CO, CT, DE, HI, IL, IN, KY, LA, MA, MD, MI, MN, MO, MS, NC, NE, NH, NJ, NM, NY, OH, OK, OR, PA, RI, TX, UT, VA, VT, WA, WV, WY
State Data Systems	20	AL, CA, CT, ID, MA, MD, ME, MI, MS, NC, NJ, NV, SC, UT, VA, WA
Student Outcomes	50	AL, AR, AZ, CO, FL, IL, KY, LA, MA, MI, MO, MS, NC, NJ, NM, TX, UT, VA, WV

Note: Education Commission of the States did not identify relevant legislation in Alaska, Iowa, Kansas, Montana, North Dakota and South Dakota.

Enacted Legislative Actions

As of June 30, 22 states enacted at least 45 legislative actions tied to the Lumina state policy agenda. In several cases, states enacted more than one bill related to a priority issue and the legislation applied to more than one topic.

State Policy Agenda Priority	Number of Legislative Actions	States
Attainment Goals	3	LA, ME, OR
Credential Paths	17	CO, GA, IN, MD, NC, NJ, NM, OR, TN, TX, UT, VA
Low-income Students	12	AR, AZ, CA, CO, IN, MS, NC, OK, OR, UT



State Data Systems	6	MD, NV, SC, VA
Student Outcomes	7	AR, CO, KY, NM, TX, UT, VA

Pending Legislative Actions

Approximately 55 of the 240 individual legislative actions that Education Commission of the States is monitoring still are pending. The following nine states are in regular session or recess and further actions could be taken on these bills and additional legislation could be introduced: California, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

As with the previous summary sections, legislation may be assigned to more than one priority area and states may have proposed more than one measure within a topic.

State Policy Agenda Priority	Number of Legislative Actions	States
Attainment Goals	3	CA, NC
Credential Paths	19	CA, MA, MI, NC, NJ, NY, PA, WI
Low-income Students	22	CA, MA, MI, NC, NJ, OH, PA
State Data Systems	5	CA, MA, MI, NC, NJ
Student Outcomes	12	MA, MI, NC, NJ

Examples of Legislative Actions Corresponding to the State Policy Agenda

Education Commission of the States selected and summarized examples of enacted and pending policies to illustrate the alignment between the legislative measures that state leaders are proposing and Lumina Foundation’s state policy priorities. The following 10 states are featured: California, Indiana, Maine, Maryland, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Virginia and Washington.

Attainment Goals

Maine

[Legislative Document 1638](#) expands the responsibilities of the State Workforce Investment Board to support an attainment goal of increasing the percent of working-age adults holding a high-value certificate, college degree or credential to 60 percent by 2025, with a focus on meeting future workforce needs. The board must track and report the state's progress toward the attainment goal.

Status: Enacted



Oregon

[House Bill 2311](#) revises Oregon’s 40-40-20 educational attainment goals to include an additional adult population. The legislation requires the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, in coordination with the State Workforce Investment Board, to establish educational attainment goals for adults who are not enrolled in a K-12 school, a higher education institution or another postsecondary training program. The educational attainment goals must be associated with current and projected job opportunities for adults and designed to promote labor market success.

Status: Enacted

Credential Paths

Competency-based Education

Oregon

Under [House Bill 3289](#), the Higher Education Coordinating Commission must submit an annual report to legislative interim committees that describes progress made in providing competency-based education at public postsecondary institutions. The report must describe the effectiveness of expanding competency-based education, identify issues and barriers, analyze competency-based education models to determine which have been successful, and recommend specific policy changes and initiatives institutions can implement to expand competency-based education.

Status: Enacted

Guided Pathways

California

[Senate Bill 539](#) establishes the Community College Completion Grant Program that provides guided pathways focused on improving student success. Community colleges must develop comprehensive guided pathway plans that incorporate the following components: clearly structured coherent academic program maps; student advising and support services; systems to track students’ progress and interventions for those at risk of not advancing; and program-specific learning outcomes aligned with students’ goals.

Status: Pending

Guaranteed and Reverse Transfer

New Mexico

[Senate Bill 103](#) establishes a statewide articulation plan to facilitate credit transfer between institutions. The Department of Higher Education must: 1) establish a common course naming and numbering system for lower-division courses; 2) create a process to identify courses as substantially equivalent; 3) maintain a list of lower-division courses offered at state higher education institutions; and 4) develop a process for reviewing, updating and maintaining the common course numbering system.

Status: Enacted

Full-time Enrollment and On-time Completion

New Jersey

Under [Assembly Bill 4686](#), the secretary of higher education must establish a statewide “30 Credits Per Year to Finish” communication campaign to encourage students to enroll in 30 credits to graduate within two years for an associate degree or four years for a baccalaureate degree. In addition,



institutions must report to the secretary on their strategies and incentives to accomplish the on-time completion goals.

Status: Pending

Near-Completers

Maryland

[Senate Bill 7](#) requires the Higher Education Commission to create a statewide communication campaign to identify near completers and encourage them to re-enroll in a postsecondary institution and earn a degree. The commission also must implement a plan to provide incentives for near completers to re-enroll and complete a degree and for colleges to identify and graduate near completers.

Status: Enacted

Prior-Learning Assessments and Credits

Indiana

[House Bill 1281](#) defines prior learning assessments as an evaluation through which an eligible institution grants college credit for knowledge or skills learned without requiring a student to enroll in a course or pay full tuition and fees for an equivalent course. The legislation allows students to use state financial aid to defray expenses associated with prior learning assessments.

Status: Enacted

Low-income Students

Utah

[Senate Bill 256](#) delegates authority to the Board of Higher Education to set eligibility requirements for and distribute Regents' Scholarship funds to postsecondary institutions. The legislation specifies that need-based criteria must be incorporated into the board's requirements for the scholarship.

Status: Enacted

Washington

[House Bill 1452](#) expands the Washington State Opportunity Scholarship program to include students pursuing professional-technical certificates and degrees, and advanced degrees in high-demand health professional shortage areas. The legislation creates the Pathways Scholarship Account from which the scholarships will be awarded. Under existing eligibility requirements, students must have a family income at or below 125 percent of the state median family income.

Status: Pending [Note: Washington's Legislature is in special session]

State Data Systems

Nevada

[Senate Bill 458](#) establishes the P-20W Research Data System Advisory Committee, which is required to develop and oversee a statewide longitudinal data system that links data related to early childhood education programs, K-12 public education, postsecondary education and the workforce. The committee also must assist with coordinating and managing the data system.

Status: Enacted



Virginia

Under [House Bill 1664](#), the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) is required to administer the Virginia Longitudinal Data System as a multi-agency partnership to develop educational and employment outcomes data. The legislation requires SCHEV to annually publish information for students eligible for the Tuition Assistance Grant program, including employment rates, average salary and debt, remedial enrollment, credit accumulation, degree completion and other data deemed necessary to address success in postsecondary education.

Status: Enacted

Student Outcomes

Kentucky

[Senate Bill 153](#) creates an outcomes-based funding model that prescribes metrics and state funding allocations. Thirty-five percent of total higher education allocations will be set aside as performance incentives. The funding formula places an emphasis on bachelor's degree production, the number of students progressing beyond 30 credit hours, STEM and health degree production, and degrees earned by low-income and underrepresented minority students.

Status: Enacted

New Jersey

Under [Assembly Bill 3097](#), the secretary of higher education is required to develop performance-based funding plans for public higher education institutions. The plans should seek to increase the progression and graduation of all students. In addition, the plans should be sensitive to the differing missions of institutions, responsive to changes within the institutions, and hold campuses accountable for the quality of instruction and student learning. The bill establishes several performance measures, including degree and credit completion; however, the secretary is not limited to those measures.

Status: Pending

AUTHOR

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