

Education Commission
S t a t e s

February 13, 2015

The Honorable Nikki Haley
Governor, State of South Carolina
1205 Pendleton Street
Columbia, SC 29201

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Dear Governor Haley:

With a new year, new staff and new legislative session, we encourage you to lean on your oldest and most trusted partner in education, the Education Commission of the States. With 50 years of proven experience in providing relevant and unbiased education research, guiding education leaders through enacting impactful K-12 and postsecondary policies and delivering in-person technical assistance when states need it the most, ECS is ready to support you with your education goals.

As governors ourselves, we know the challenges you face with education policy on a daily basis. As you begin tackling your education priorities in 2015 and beyond, rely on the expert staff at ECS to help you make progress quickly. Think of ECS as an extension of your existing staff.

As a governor, you and your team can reach out anytime and take advantage of the unparalleled services and resources that come with your current ECS membership:

- 24-hour response on your state-specific education policy questions ranging from preschool to post-secondary and workforce issues.
- Research assistance when reviewing legislation for veto or signature consideration.
- Custom assistance such as reviewing and consulting on proposed legislation, providing unbiased advice on policy plans and testifying at legislative hearings as third-party experts.
- State education policy tracking and 50-state databases providing one-of-a-kind information and best practices from other states.

2015 marks the 50th year of ECS bringing state education leaders together to share, learn about and advance education policies. As we all work towards the same goal – continually improving success for all students – individual states will take their unique approaches. However, when we collaborate, we can make informed decisions and ensure progress for students in all states.

Action is required on your part appoint ECS Commissioners. One of the unique aspects of ECS is that by state statute each state has the ability to appoint seven commissioners from various education sectors. This key constituency group in each state helps to shape ECS' work and research, making it meaningful for all states. In most states, the governor or his/her designee is an ECS Commissioner by default.

We recommend that appointments be filled with commissioners of education or state superintendents, commissioners of higher education, legislative chairs of education and appropriations committees and other key education leaders in your state. Some states have even inserted this recommendation in statute. These individuals will not only help shape ECS' research, but also allow for a clear line of communication with your state. It is this idea of working across silos that allows ECS to have deeper and more meaningful collaboration on critical education issues.

EQUIPPING EDUCATION LEADERS, ADVANCING IDEAS

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We ask that you work to fill these appointments as soon as possible. Additionally, please notify us of the individual in your office working on education policy so key communications can be directed appropriately. Doing so will ensure you continue to receive value-added benefits from ECS. More information about your state's vacancies is included on the enclosed document.

We encourage you to reach out to the ECS staff for any education issue you are facing:

- **Research inquiries:** Emily Workman, Manager of Information Clearinghouse, eworkman@ecs.org or 303.299.3655
- **Custom technical assistance or committee/taskforce support:** Tonette Salazar, Director of State Relations, tsalazar@ecs.org or 303.299.3638
- **Learn how ECS can support you and your staff:** Jeremy Anderson, ECS President, janderson@ecs.org or 303.299.3624

In both Nevada and Montana, ECS has been instrumental in helping us attain our state education policy goals and provide key information on issues across the P-20 spectrum in a timely manner.

Sincere regards,

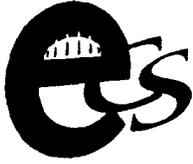


Brian Sandoval
Governor, State of Nevada
ECS Chair



Steve Bullock
Governor, State of Montana
ECS Chair-elect

Enclosure



Education Commission
States



To: State Education Policy Leaders
From: Paul Baumann, Director, National Center for Learning and Civic Engagement
Jeremy Anderson, President, Education Commission of the States
Date: February 2015
Re: State Civic Education Policy Framework

With guidance from civic education leaders from across the country, the National Center for Learning and Civic Engagement at the Education Commission of the States developed this State Civic Education Policy Framework.

We are aware that civic education is likely to be addressed in your legislature during this year's session. With this in mind, we are hopeful that this framework will be of use to you in building an understanding of best practices recommended by the civic education field.

In addition, we would like to remind you that ECS is available to assist in your civic education efforts. We would be happy to provide customized reviews of research, policy analysis and/or legislative testimony upon your request. We would also be happy to help you connect with other leading organizations in the field of civic education, including the Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools and the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE).

Should you desire additional copies of this framework or support with policy related to civic education or any additional issue along the entire education spectrum, we would be pleased to provide assistance. Our contact information is as follows:

Paul Baumann
pbaumann@ecs.org
303.299.3608

Jeremy Anderson
janderson@ecs.org
303.299.3624

Best wishes for a successful and prosperous 2015!