HOT TOPIC: Education

Class of 1
Individualized Learning Helps Students Succeed

5 Opportunities for States in Education

Jeb Bush: ‘A National Crisis’

Online ... But Out of Reach

“(With individualized instruction) we would also produce more efficient, effective and productive students who will be sufficiently prepared for the workforce.”
— Alabama Sen. Vivian Davis Figures

PLUS: Title IX 40th Anniversary
DON’T SETTLE FOR JUST A SNAPSHOOT

Get the big picture with CSG’s 2012 edition of *The Book of the States* online.

For comparative data on all 50 states and six U.S. territories, visit www.csg.org/BookoftheStates.

*Data reflect the number of bills introduced and enacted during 2011 regular legislative sessions. Source: *The Book of the States* 2012, Table 3.19 “Bill and Resolution Introductions and Enactments: 2011 Regular Session.”*
ON THE COVER
Alabama state Sen. Vivian Davis Figures, a member of her state’s Senate Education Committee, believes individualized instruction is a win-win for everyone involved. “As a state senator, I believe that if individualized instruction was implemented in K–16, the state would literally save millions of dollars,” Figures said. She’s pictured on the cover in front of Phillips Preparatory School located in her district in Mobile, Ala. Figures’ son, Shomari Figures, attended Phillips and he is now a lawyer. Phillips Prep was designated a Blue Ribbon School in 2011, the second time it has been designated as such. It was one of five Alabama schools—and the only middle school—to receive the designation in 2011. Read more about individualized learning on page 12.

Photo by Debbie Davis

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2012

12
HOT TOPIC—INDIVIDUALIZED LEARNING
Individualized, personalized and customized learning have become popular and often interchangeable buzzwords in education. This individualized approach is said to engage unmotivated learners by giving them ownership of their work.

26
10 QUESTIONS—JEB BUSH
Former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush calls the dilemma the nation faces with regard to education “a national crisis and it requires a bold response.”

38
HOT TOPIC—DISTANCE LEARNING
While distance learning may be an answer to increasing the number of Americans with higher education to meet the demands of tomorrow’s workforce, many states’ regulatory procedures limit where institutions can offer classes.

40
HOT TOPIC—TITLE IX
If the U.S. women had been a country, they would have placed third in overall Olympics medal count. The nation has moved forward in both athletics and academics in the 40 years since Title IX became law.
**hot topic**

12 INDIVIDUALIZED LEARNING
Individualized, personalized, and customized learning have become popular and often interchangeable buzzwords in education.

18 EDUCATION AND ECONOMY
James Applegate, vice president of program development for the Lumina Foundation, offers five opportunities for states to make dramatic gains, even in a time of very constrained resources.

20 BUDGET CUTS
As states faced the Great Recession, many cut education budgets, which has left school officials grasping for options. According to a survey by the American Association of School Administrators, more than 80 percent of administrators described their district as being inadequately funded.

28 DIGITAL LEARNING
Technology is transforming many models of education, from the way schools are structured to the way classrooms are designed.

30 TECHNOLOGY IN EDUCATION
Microsoft founder Bill Gates discussed the promise of technology in education during a March 1 speech at the National Association of Independent Schools Conference in Seattle. Capitol Ideas shares his comments.

32 TEACHER EVALUATIONS
Teacher evaluation and tenure laws sit at that rare intersection where both the federal and state governments agree changes are needed.

36 HIGHER EDUCATION FUNDING
Higher education performance funding became popular in the 1970s. While the concept has seen resurgence in recent years, many states are taking a different approach.

38 DISTANCE LEARNING
Distance learning is one answer to the needs of the American workforce as new jobs require even higher levels of educational attainment. Many states haven’t prepared for this growth in distance learning and that could block some potential students’ access to these courses.

40 TITLE IX
If the U.S. women had been a country, they would have placed third in overall Olympics medal count. The nation has moved forward in both athletics and academics in the 40 years since Title IX became law.

they said it

5 EDUCATION

6 EAST

7 SOUTH

8 MIDWEST

9 WEST

in the know

10 EDUCATION AND COURTS
Francisco M. Negrón Jr., general counsel and associate executive director, Legal Advocacy & Legal Services, National School Boards Association, says the Supreme Court regularly hears and decides cases that involve issues facing schools on a daily basis.

10 questions

26 JEB BUSH
Former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush calls the dilemma the nation faces with regard to education “a national crisis and it requires a bold response.”

by the book

34 HIGHER EDUCATION FUNDING
States across the country are cutting allocations to public universities, which, in turn, are raising tuition costs. The ways students and families finance higher education also have changed.

straight talk

42 EDUCATION AND LEGISLATORS
Five educators/legislators offer advice on how their colleagues can be better legislators on education issues.

stated briefly

44 AFFILIATE & ASSOCIATION NEWS
News from The Council of State Governments and its affiliates

how to

46 TEACH CIVICS

on the road

47 UPCOMING MEETINGS

shout out

48 TEXAS SEN. FLORENCE SHAPIRO
Texas Sen. Florence Shapiro believes teachers are key to fixing problems with the nation’s schools. State policymakers can help, she said, by professionalizing the teaching role once again.
With this issue of *Capitol Ideas* we go “back to school” with a focus on education. Education is perhaps the single most important function of state government. Getting education right is a high priority for the states. The challenges are great, but the cost of getting it wrong is one no state can afford to bear.

The U.S. public education system consists of about 14,000 local school districts and nearly 99,000 schools. In the 2007–08 school year, 48 percent of all revenues for public elementary and secondary education were provided by the states, while 44 percent came from local sources. More than three-fourths of this local portion was derived from local property taxes. The federal government contributed a relatively small share, just 8 percent.

State spending for education has grown over the past decade. Total expenditures for public elementary and secondary education rose from about $334 billion in 1997–98 to roughly $597 billion in 2007–08, an increase of 79 percent—or 36 percent when adjusted for inflation. Per pupil expenditures, when adjusted for inflation, increased by 26 percent during the same time period.

The budget crisis brought on by the economic downturn, however, has forced many states to cut education spending.

State leaders know that an educated citizenry is essential for a self-governing society, for a well-trained workforce and for “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness” to be enjoyed by all. Investments in education yield a solid return. A high school dropout will earn about $260,000 less than high school graduates and $800,000 less than college graduates in their lifetimes. High school dropouts have a life expectancy 9.2 years shorter than high school graduates. College graduates are three times more likely to vote than high school dropouts. Amazingly, research has shown, a one-year increase in average years of schooling for dropouts would reduce murder and assault rates by almost 30 percent, motor vehicle theft by 20 percent, arson by 13 percent, and burglary and larceny by almost 6 percent.

The majority of a school district’s budget is spent on teachers. In 2007–08, the average salary for a teacher in the U.S. was $49,600. Primary and middle school teachers earn 61 percent of the average salaries paid to other U.S. employees with the same experience and a college education. High school teachers earn 65 percent. These ratios place our teachers near the bottom of the list when compared to ratios in other countries.

Education reform is happening in the states. Forty-five states have agreed to adopt the Common Core State Standards and most of these states also have agreed to implement common assessments to measure students’ progress in learning the material in the standards. CSG is proud of the role we have played in convening state leaders to learn more about these reform efforts. You can read more about this effort in the pages that follow.

While the statistics are telling, for me, education has always been a very personal pursuit. I can still name each of my elementary school teachers (and I’m guessing many of you can as well). These educators in Salina, Kan., had a profound impact on my aspirations, my career and my enjoyment of life. They taught me to read, to write, to reason, and to work and play well with others. From my first day of kindergarten to my last days in law school, I was blessed with dedicated teachers whose passion for learning helped kindle my own pursuit of knowledge. As my own daughter, Nell, started sixth grade this fall, I saw in her the work of great educators. She is a self-confident, bright, articulate, courteous girl with a curiosity about the world around her. Her test scores tell me she is full of knowledge. Her outlook on life tells me she is full of wonder and wisdom. What a miraculous and transformative power education holds! Often the complexities of education policy fail to focus on the fundamental fact that a great teacher can have a profound impact on the life of a child.

CSG values the opportunity to educate state leaders about education—particularly what works in education today. We give state leaders lots of extra credit for the innovations they are pursuing in their states. We love sharing their success stories with you in this issue of *Capitol Ideas*. We hope you find this issue enlightening, and don’t worry, there won’t be a test.

“*The only thing more expensive than education is ignorance.*”

—Benjamin Franklin
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Corrections
An article in the May/June issue of Capitol Ideas incorrectly said the North Carolina
State Capitol is rarely used by the governor. The governor’s permanent office along
with immediate staff and press office is housed in the Capitol.

An article in the July/August Capitol Ideas incorrectly said Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker
won’t expand Medicaid following the U.S. Supreme Court ruling on the Affordable
Care Act. Walker has said he will wait until after the November election to decide
what steps to take on the Medicaid program in his state.

The Council of State Governments

email capitolideas@csg.org
internet capitolideas.csg.org
staff writers HEATHER PERKINS
CSG Membership Coordinator
hperkins@csg.org
KRISTA RINEHART
CSG National Leadership Center Coordinator
krinehart@csg.org

contributing writers JENNIFER BURNETT
CSG Program Manager, Research Services and Special Projects
jburnett@csg.org
CRADY DEGOLIAN
CSG National Center for Interstate Compacts Director
cdegolian@csg.org
TIM WELDON
CSG Education Policy Analyst
tweldon@csg.org

CAPITOL IDEAS | SEPT / OCT 2012

4
“To see so many **great, innovative, creative, courageous ideas** coming from states, I think, is literally leading the country to where we need to go.”

—U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan, in an interview with The Associated Press, as reported in *The Boston Globe* in August

“Is reform **controversial**?

**You bet it is.**

—Former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, during an education policy forum hosted by the Mississippi Center for Public Policy and Mississippi First in Jackson, Miss., Aug. 7, as quoted in the *Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal* in Tupelo, Miss.

“If you want to make **real, sustainable change**, you can’t do it without collaboration.”

—National Education Association President Dennis Van Roekel, as quoted on MLive Media Group website, a collaboration of several Michigan newspapers

“Any kind of school **reform** or school **rescue** has to be, first and foremost, about the students.”

—Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Corbett, as quoted in the *Gant Daily* in July

“Reading proficiency is the single most **powerful foundation** that we have for all future success.”


“(The United States) will not be able to keep pace—much less lead—globally unless it moves to **fix the problems** it has allowed to fester for too long.”

BIKEWAYS PROGRAM
Maryland’s Department of Transportation in July announced $3.1 million in grants to increase and improve bicycling opportunities across the state, The Associated Press reported. The latest round of Bikeways Program grants will be used around the state for on- and off-road bike route connections and signs, bike racks, safety improvements and preliminary design of a bridge along the Washington, Baltimore and Annapolis Trail in south Odenton.

MEDICAL MARIJUANA
The Maine Department of Health and Human Services in July released newly suggested rules for the state’s medical marijuana program, according to the Kennebec Journal. The proposed changes are the first updates to the program since its 2010 implementation. The modifications are in response to a 2011 law designed to liberalize the current program. Many of the updates will relax rules already in place. A public hearing on the proposed changes was scheduled in August.

PROPERTY TAXES
The New Jersey Division of Taxation in July mailed reimbursement checks worth $195 million to 163,000 senior and disabled homeowners, The Star Ledger of Newark reported. The Property Tax Reimbursement Program, informally known as the Senior Freeze, is designed to help homeowners living on fixed or limited incomes deal with the effect of rising property taxes. Homeowners ages 65 or older who have low to moderate incomes and disabled people receiving Social Security assistance are eligible for the program.

ARTS FUNDING
The Delaware Division of Arts in July announced $1.4 million in grants for arts programs around the state. Nearly 100 arts initiatives in 25 communities will benefit from grants to support programming, education, marketing and promotion, according to a press release from Gov. Jack Markell’s office. The division’s funding comes from the Delaware General Assembly and the National Endowment for the Arts.

JOB TRAINING
New Hampshire Gov. John Lynch in July announced nine companies had received Job Training Fund grants totaling almost $200,000. Nearly 200 workers will receive training through the latest round of grants, according to the governor’s office. Lynch reinstated the Job Training Fund in 2007; it has helped train nearly 14,000 workers with almost $5 million in grants.

To learn more about these and other developments in the Eastern Region, visit: capitolideas.csg.org and www.csgeast.org.

Children’s Water Safety Bill Signed Into Law

Massachusetts Gov. Deval Patrick in July signed a bill intended to improve children’s water safety measures in the state. Senate Bill 2075, also known as “Christian’s Bill,” aims to decrease the risk of drowning for children at camps and recreational programs, The Boston Globe reported.

The legislation was named in honor of Christian Frechette, a 4-year-old who drowned in 2007 at summer camp while swimming in a lake without a life jacket. Drowning is the leading cause of injury and death for children ages 1 to 4 in Massachusetts, according to Department of Health Commissioner John Auerbach.

Under the law, camps and recreational programs must meet a number of new water safety requirements, including testing children during an initial session to determine swimming levels and identifying nonswimmers and at-risk swimmers. Camps and programs then must restrict children to a swimming area that corresponds to their assessed level.

“This legislation ensures the safety of our children by matching individual swimming ability to the right swimming area,” Patrick said during the signing. “This will help reduce risks for young children so they can take full advantage of the many outdoor recreational areas available to them in the commonwealth.”

Camps and recreational programs must have a Coast Guard-approved personal flotation device on hand for each child designated as a nonswimmer or at-risk swimmer. Programs also will be able to require parents and guardians to provide personal flotation devices for their children.

Programs now also are prohibited from not allowing parents or guardians to provide a Coast Guard-approved personal flotation device for their children. This provision is “unique nationally in empowering parents to ensure personal protection for their children,” according to a press release from the governor’s office.

The water safety law reaches beyond camps and recreational programs. Vehicles such as popular tour boats are required to have personal flotation devices for every passenger under age 10.
Abstinence-only is the Choice for Many Mississippi Schools

Another step in Mississippi’s battle against teen pregnancy will begin in the 2012–13 school year.

A state law enacted in 2011 requiring school districts to teach some form of sex education will take effect in the upcoming school year.

Districts had until June 30 to choose between abstinence-only and abstinence-plus approaches. Abstinence-plus includes discussions of contraception, but no demonstrations of condoms, The Associated Press reported.

According to information released in July by the state Department of Education, more than 50 percent of school districts have opted for an abstinence-only curriculum. Eighty-one school districts have chosen an abstinence-only approach. Three districts chose to use a hybrid approach—abstinence-only with younger grades and abstinence-plus for older grades.

The state’s two largest school districts were split on their chosen methods. DeSoto County, the largest district, chose abstinence-only. The second-largest district, the city of Jackson, chose abstinence-plus.

The four specialty schools governed by the state Board of Education—the Mississippi School for the Deaf, the Mississippi School for the Blind, the Mississippi School of the Arts, and the Mississippi School for Math and Science—also will teach abstinence-plus.

Boys and girls will be educated separately and parents must give permission for their children to take the sex education classes.

Mississippi has long had teen pregnancy rates above the national average. State Health Department statistics show that in 2009, about 64 out of 1,000 girls ages 10 to 19 gave birth to a baby who lived. The U.S. national average was 39 live births among every 1,000 girls and women under 20, according to The Associated Press.

Prior to the 2011 law, school districts were allowed to teach abstinence, although it was not required; they could go further with local school board approval.

MORTGAGE SETTLEMENT

Kentucky Attorney General Jack Conway announced in July the state would receive $19.2 million from a national settlement with the nation’s five largest banks over dishonest mortgage practices. A majority of the state’s settlement money will be used for programs that create affordable housing, provide legal assistance for those in danger of foreclosure and revitalize foreclosed housing. Other beneficiaries of the settlement include the city of Louisville and the Kentucky All Schedule Prescription Electronic Reporting Program.

TEXTING WHILE DRIVING

Alabama became the 38th state to outlaw texting while driving when a new law took effect in July. The fine is $25 for first offenses, $50 for second and $75 for third, The Birmingham News reported. Motorists who are pulled over by law enforcement also will receive two penalty points on their driver’s licenses. Talking on a cell phone, entering a phone number and using a GPS navigation device are still legal under the new law.

DEATH PENALTY

Virginia’s Department of Corrections announced in July the use of a new drug to execute prisoners by lethal injection, according to The Washington Post. Due to a nationwide shortage of pancuronium bromide, the state will now be using rocuronium bromide as part of its three-drug cocktail. Other states have opted to switch to a one-drug regimen as a response to the shortage.

UNCLAIMED PROPERTY

Florida Chief Financial Officer Jeff Atwater announced in July that during the 2011–12 fiscal year, the state returned a record $211 million in unclaimed cash and property to residents. The number represented nearly a 12 percent increase over the previous fiscal year. Currently, the Bureau of Unclaimed Property holds accounts valued at more than $1 billion. Since Atwater took office in January 2011, more than $323.6 million has been returned to Floridians, according to his office.

GPS DEVICES

The Arkansas Highway Commission in July approved a plan to equip each of the state Highway and Transportation Department’s 2,400 vehicles with GPS devices, the Arkansas News Bureau reported. The department will be the first state agency to install GPS devices in all its vehicles. Installations are expected to cost about $700,000 and are expected to save the state money in the long run. Highway Director Scott Bennett said the devices would help with both preventive maintenance and employee accountability.
With his state facing an increase in drought conditions, South Dakota Gov. Dennis Daugaard activated the state Drought Task Force in July.

The task force is responsible for exchanging drought information among government agencies and agriculture, fire and water supply organizations, according to a press release issued by the governor’s office. The group also is monitoring any drought condition developments and the potential impact it might have on the state’s economy.

“We have been closely tracking weather patterns, and the Drought Task Force will give us a forum to exchange facts and data so our citizens can count on having the most up-to-date information as they respond to the drought,” Daugaard said.

Prior to the formation of the task force, the state Department of Agriculture, Office of Emergency Management and the South Dakota State University Cooperative Extension Service had been tracking the drought.

Members of the Drought Task Force include representatives from the governor’s office, the departments of Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources, Game, Fish and Parks, and Public Safety, the Bureau of Information and Telecommunications, the South Dakota Association of County Commissioners, the state climatologist, the federal Farm Service Agency, the South Dakota National Guard and the South Dakota Association of Rural Water Systems.

The task force held its first meeting July 23 and launched its website July 26. The website includes links to drought-related news releases, drought monitoring and weather conditions, and agricultural information, the Associated Press reported.
Hawaii Tourism Reaches Record Highs

Hawaii Tourism Authority numbers released in June indicate the state is headed for a record-setting year, the Honolulu Star Advertiser reported.

“Hawaii’s tourism economy is on pace to set a record-breaking year in 2012 with double digit increases in visitor arrivals and expenditures through June,” Tourism Authority President and CEO Mike McCartney said in a statement.

The state set records for both the number of visitors and total visitor spending in June. It welcomed 677,218 visitors, an 11.5 percent increase in visitor arrivals for the month. Visitor spending in June was a record $1.2 billion, a 20.4 percent increase over last year.

The record high numbers brought the total number of visitors for the first six months of 2012 to 3,932,266, up 10.2 percent from last year. Total visitor spending for the year grew to $7.1 billion, a 21.4 percent increase.

In addition to the overall expenditure and arrival increases, all major visitor markets experienced significant growth.

Visitors from the Western U.S., Hawaii’s number one market, rose for the eighth month in a row. Arrivals were up 4 percent from last year to 285,342 visitors.

The Eastern U.S. market grew by 8.1 percent and spending increased by 10.6 percent over last year. June marked the 10th straight month of increases for this market.

Hawaii’s largest international visitor market, Japan, saw a staggering 21.9 percent increase in visitor arrivals and a 31.4 percent increase in spending.

In June, the state also saw increases over last year in the number of visitors traveling for business, as well as an increase in the number of honeymooners, according to information released by the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

The West

CASINO AMENDMENT
A measure to allow commercial casinos in Oregon barely made it onto the November ballot, The Oregonian reported. The measure had 116,521 valid signatures, narrowly eclipsing the mandatory 116,284 needed for a constitutional measure. Supporters of the measure are backing a proposed casino in Wood Village, Ore. If it passes, commercially operated casinos would be required to give 25 percent of their gaming revenues to the state. Oregon currently has only tribe-operated casinos.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE
The Wyoming Department of Workforce Services announced the state’s jobless rate continued to be well below the national average in June. Wyoming’s June 2012 jobless rate was 6 percent, more than 2 percent lower than the national average of 8.2 percent, The Associated Press reported.

Wyoming’s seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for June came in at 5.4 percent, down 0.6 percent from June 2011.

LOTTERY FUNDS
The Idaho Lottery had a record-setting year in the 2012 fiscal year, according to The Associated Press. Total lottery sales topped out at $175.8 million, up 19.5 percent over 2011. The state’s Department of Education was a major beneficiary of the increased revenue. The lottery turned over $41.5 million to the department—the largest amount since the lottery began in 1989. The education funds were divided among the department’s public school building account, state building fund and a fund to help match school bond payments.

WATER SUPPLY
Gov. Jerry Brown and U.S. Interior Secretary Ken Salazar in July announced plans to reconfigure California’s water delivery system. The project, estimated to cost nearly $24 billion, involves the creation of two 35-mile tunnels, Reuters reported. The tunnels will divert water from the Sacramento River to an aqueduct system. It will reduce the number of fish killed by pumps and restore natural water flows, bypassing the delta rather than drawing water directly from it.

To learn more about these and other developments in the Western Region, visit: capitolideas.csg.org and www.csgwest.org.
Some of the greatest decisions from the U.S. Supreme Court have arisen in the context of public schools and education. Some of those decisions, like *Brown v. Board of Education*, have enduring impact not only for schools, but also for the very fabric of our democratic society.

Beyond the big landmark decisions, the Supreme Court regularly hears and decides cases that involve many of the myriad other issues facing schools on a daily basis. Those issues span a broad spectrum, ranging from high-level constitutional questions to more mundane matters affecting the operational realities of school districts.

Sometimes those issues come together in a single case.

For instance, in *Morse v. Frederick*, the Supreme Court dealt with a constitutional question involving student freedom of speech. The case, which was notorious for the slogan “Bong Hits 4 Jesus” sprawled across a 14-foot banner unfurled by a student at a school event, resulted in a decision that upheld a public school’s ability to regulate student speech that promotes drug use.

But one aspect of the decision that is often missed in the conversation of constitutional rights and free speech is the Court’s preservation of the qualified immunity of the school principal, Deborah Morse, who was personally sued in the case. The preservation of the qualified immunity is exceedingly important not only because school officials need to be able to exercise professional discretion and not have their educational judgment chilled by the fear of lawsuits.

Because many school districts legally defend their educators and employees from suit when they are carrying out school district policy in their work, and because many school districts are self-insured, the potential loss of individual damages in some cases could represent a severe financial setback for many school districts.

In other instances, the Court takes special notice of the perspective of public schools in cases that do not involve education, but nonetheless impact the operations of school districts. Because school districts are collectively the largest public employer in the country, Court opinions involving public employment disputes weigh proportionally more heavily on school districts.

In a recent case, *Borough of Duryea v. Guarnieri*, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of a Pennsylvania town in a dispute premised on the federal constitutional right to petition the government. The employee in that case claimed that the town had violated his right to petition the government when it retaliated against him for filing a grievance petition. The Court rejected the claim citing the amicus brief of the National School Boards Association for the proposition that employment grievance petitions are different from petitions to the government on issues of public importance.

This ruling favored school districts as public employers because most are subject to either collective bargaining agreements or state laws that require them to entertain grievance petitions in the employment dispute resolution process.

This national school law docket is most often remembered for landmark cases, and rightly so. But on a more regular basis, the Supreme Court produces tens of decisions in any given term that impact public school districts and state agencies. The interested observer or government administrator would do well to include those lesser-known cases as part of a regular review.
It’s individual. It’s digital. It’s a whole new way of schooling in the 21st century. New technologies allow teachers to engage students and offer a more individualized approach to learning. Teachers don’t just stand at the front of the classroom and lecture; they want students to get hands-on experience in projects. Digital learning also opens the door to many more resources that can help students get a better grasp on a particular topic and teachers understand what their students know. Even with budget challenges, educators are finding new ways to teach.

21st century education—it’s not your parents’ classroom anymore.
It began with a sticky problem … literally. Danville, Ky., High School physics teacher Danny Goodwin gave his students the following assignment: Create from scratch a substance so viscous it would hold in place a 500-gram weight on one end of a two-foot-long board when raised to create a ramp.

Students did not receive a how-to guide. Through trial and error they created their gluey concoctions and lathered them on their boards, then elevated the boards as high as possible before the weights slowly pulled loose and slid down the incline.

The point: Teach students the principles of gravity, viscosity and friction through authentic, hands-on learning. Each team of students found a slightly different approach to tackle the problem.

In a typical physics class, students might receive a complex scientific formula they would have to apply to a group of problems in a textbook or on a worksheet. But this assignment was different. It involved a concept known as project-based learning. In effect, students had to devise a method to halt gravity as if they were preventing the apple from falling on Sir Isaac Newton’s head.

“In project-based learning you actually get to use the material and information that we get and apply it, and it gives us a much more in-depth understanding of all the material,” explained Tyler Whitehouse, a junior.

“We have to teach students to think,” Danville Superintendent Carmen Coleman said. “The world has changed drastically, yet schools have not.”

**Individualized Instruction**

Although teachers frequently assign projects to reinforce instruction, project-based learning takes the
concept to a different level. The project itself takes center stage instead of being used to supplement traditional instruction. Students engaged in project-based assignments are assessed not by taking a pen-and-paper test, but by actually performing a task to demonstrate what they’ve learned. As long as their projects address state standards, the only limitation is typically the students’ own creativity.

Individualized, personalized and customized learning have become popular and often interchangeable buzzwords in education. One idea behind this individualized approach is that it frequently engages unmotivated learners by giving them ownership of their work. It also requires students of all ability levels to solve problems through hands-on activities.

“That’s what businesses are looking for these days,” Kentucky Education Commissioner Terry Holliday said. “And too many of our kids come out and try to go into college or careers and they’re just not self-directed. They’ve been handed things on a silver plate. Step One. Step Two. Step Three. They’re just not independent thinkers, and I think that’s bad for our country.”

Alabama Sen. Vivian Davis Figures, a member of the Senate Education Committee, wishes her schools offered an individualized approach to education when she was growing up. Figures, who serves on the board of trustees at Jacksonville State University, supports individualization both in K–12 and postsecondary education.

“As a state senator, I believe that if individualized instruction was implemented in K–16, the state would literally save millions of dollars,” she said. “We would also produce more efficient, effective and productive students who will be sufficiently prepared for the workforce. The millions of dollars the state would save could be invested in industry recruitment to hire these students who most definitely would be highly qualified.

“Individualized instruction is a win-win for all.”

Many schools—charter and noncharter alike—are starting to design innovative strategies to engage students and offer a more individualized approach. One example is the Avalon School, a small charter school for grades 7–12 in St. Paul, Minn.

Holly Marsh graduated in 2012 with 38 other seniors. Her experience at Avalon included three community internships mirroring her interests, including one with the National Park Service. Although some of her courses included traditional seminars, many of her classroom assignments involved independent project-based learning. During her senior year, an interest in education policy became the lynchpin for Marsh’s culminating senior project, resulting in a state statute expanding the kind of personalized learning Marsh received at Avalon.

Seniors at Avalon are required to complete a project involving at least 300 hours of documented work. They have to create a formal proposal, work with community members and make a 30-minute formal public presentation on the project and its outcomes.

Marsh wondered why the individualized instruction available to students at Avalon wasn’t available to students in all Minnesota schools. She believed the state should give schools greater autonomy to provide the same personalized learning she received.

During her senior year, Marsh helped draft language that ultimately was included in Minnesota House File 2949, also known as The Improved Achievement Through Individualized Learning Act, which encourages schools
to introduce and expand individualization. The Senate approved the legislation unanimously; the House adopted it by a 119-9 vote. Marsh testified three times at legislative committee meetings.

“We believe the individualization needs to occur in what students are learning, the pace at which they’re learning it and how the information gets into the students. So it’s about making it so teachers can get information to individual students tailored to their specific needs, interests and learning styles,” Marsh said. “I’m just a very passionate individual who has had an opportunity to go to an extraordinary school, and I would love to see this replicated, because I think it can be replicated.”

**Individualized Track to Graduation**

Idaho also has adopted an individualized approach that not only allows students to graduate from high school early, but also rewards those who do.

In 2010, Idaho’s legislature enacted House Bill 493, known as Mastery Advancement Pilot Program bill. It authorized pilot programs enabling students to graduate from high school up to three years early. By 2017, early graduates will be awarded scholarships amounting to 35 percent of the amount the state would have appropriated on their education during their senior year. Their school districts also will receive 35 percent, with the remaining 30 percent going back into Idaho’s general fund.

After its first year, 79 high school students met the requirements of the program and received money.

“This is an attempt to allow students to move ahead at their own pace, which we think will not only save the state money, but will also allow us to spend more time with those students who really need the help,” said Sen. Dean Mortimer, vice chair of the Idaho Senate Education Committee.

The 2012 legislature followed up by enacting House Bill 426, creating the so-called “8 in 6” program to encourage students to get on the fast track to a college degree. The legislation, sponsored by Rep. Steven Thayn, compresses eight years of education into six. Thayn hopes it will allow students to earn a bachelor’s degree after just two full years in college. Thayn said the measure could eventually save Idaho taxpayers more than $100 million a year.

The plan begins in seventh grade with students taking one online class. Students would then take two online classes each semester and earn seven college credits per semester during the school year. The last two years of
high school would be spent in college-level courses. Thayn describes traditional public education as a factory or conveyor system in which students are expected to learn at the same pace.

“We don’t have any definition of mastery. Students advance to the next grade at the end of 180 days,” he said. “So there’s no incentive for the student to learn anything quicker, because there’s no advantage in learning.”

Challenges to Individualization

Public education often has treated students as interchangeable parts, not as individuals, even though each student has a unique learning style. One concept gaining traction is a break from the traditional one-size-fits-all model that has been a defining feature of American education.

“If a child participates in individualized instruction and is able to move from one level to another at his or her own individual pace and ability, I believe that child has a higher probability of being more confident and having higher self-esteem,” Figures, the Alabama senator, said. “The child will also have a better chance of discovering what his or her passion is, thus leading to joy and fulfillment.”

While models and pockets of innovation exist, several challenges will have to be addressed to allow individualization to take root on a broad scale.

Teachers and school leaders will have to understand how to adjust their instruction for a tailor-made curriculum. Schools and teachers also must develop individualized assessments. The standard pen-and-paper test will not accurately measure individual mastery. Therefore, alternative multiple assessments will have to be created to allow students to demonstrate proficiency in various forms. These can include projects, portfolios and a variety of digital or online assessments.

Holliday, of Kentucky, said another key task will involve building partnerships with postsecondary education. He said colleges of education will have to change the way future teachers are prepared and must be willing to accept students from schools with a curriculum and assessment design that may seem completely foreign to postsecondary admissions officials today.

“If you’re going to (a system of) project-based learning and kids are doing a senior project, if higher education doesn’t take that and value that, … if higher education doesn’t buy into it, you’re not going to get anywhere,” Holliday said.

The Council of State Governments recently created the Center for Innovation and Transformation in Education, which has launched an analysis of policies and practices that will drive deeper learning outcomes, resulting in more students completing high school with mastery of content, application of knowledge and higher-order thinking skills such as inquiry and analysis.

A key component of that work surrounds implementing personalized instruction through transformational activities and innovative pedagogies. A focus group appointed to advise the center recommended states provide flexibility to local school districts to create innovative models of instruction and assessment or authorize innovation zones that will allow these practices, such as individualization, project-based learning and multiple forms of assessments, to take root. The center will release its policy and practice framework in late 2012.

Putting Students at the Core

The details may vary, but many school systems are creating a framework for real and lasting school improvements built around individualized instruction. One system doing this is the Expeditionary Learning Network, a charter school network with more than 150 schools—elementary through high school—in which student-centered instruction is as much a fixture as textbooks and test-taking are in most schools.

At Clairemont Elementary in Decatur, Ga., an Expeditionary Learning school, students learn about rock formations by visiting a working coal mine, not by reading about them in a book or passing around samples of rocks in the classroom. The unit might conclude with students researching and creating brochures about rock formations at a nearby park.

Expeditionary Learning engages students; they are required to use high-level critical thinking skills to solve problems through hands-on assignments.

Erin Wheeler, principal at Clairemont, points out individualized learning is important because students don’t enter her school at the same place.

“Every single child learns in their own way, which could be very similar in a whole class or could be very different,” she said.

Teachers at Clairemont begin each school year with individual student assessments, not just paper and pencil tests, but opportunities to interact with their students to understand each of their abilities and needs.

“If we understand where each child is, then we can design the differentiated lessons for the various groups, so we take them from where they are to the next step,” Wheeler said.
**KENTUCKY**

Greater Coordination Between K–12, Higher Education

A common complaint is education policy occurs in silos.

K–12 and postsecondary education policymakers often work in isolation. Legislation and regulation impacts one or the other without bridging the divide separating the two sides. Without collaboration between K–12 and higher education, measures to promote college-readiness are difficult to implement successfully.

Kentucky has created a strong framework linking K–12 and postsecondary education, as well as the Education Professional Standards Board, which is responsible for teacher preparation and licensure issues in the state. In 2009, legislators enacted Senate Bill 1, an omnibus bill that paved the way for college and career readiness by mandating new standards and cross-agency cooperation.

One provision called on the Kentucky Board of Education, the Kentucky Department of Education, the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education and the Education Professional Standards Board to devise a strategy to reduce college remediation rates. The goal of Senate Bill 1 is to cut remediation rates in half by 2014 and to increase college completion rates among students who enrolled in at least one remedial class in college.

“It’s going to require that all the agencies in the state work together, because it’s too big of a project,” Phillip Rogers, then-executive director of the Kentucky Education Professional Standards Board, noted during a CSG focus group meeting this year.

Since Senate Bill 1 was enacted, these agencies have created cross-agency work teams that included two- and four-year institutions, among others. These work teams developed goals and action plans, identified useful resources and determined expected outcome measures for each of the strategies, promoting readiness and degree completion. The teams also developed ways to measure progress on each goals established by the bill.

**MAINE**

Proficiency-based Diplomas

By 2017, students throughout Maine will be able to move from one grade to the next not based on spending a required number of hours or days in each subject, but by demonstrating that they understand certain concepts and skills.

Some students may be able to graduate high school in fewer than four years; for others, it may take longer.

More than 20 individual school districts and high schools had already adopted so-called proficiency-based models when the 2012 legislature enacted Legislative Document 1422. It will require all schools to provide proficiency-based diplomas to students who are now in the eighth grade. The legislation allows schools to apply for waivers to delay implementation until 2020.

In a proficiency-based system, some students would move through classes at a faster pace. Once they’ve passed a test, they could move to the next level regardless of how much time they have spent in class. Students will be allowed to repeat tests and assignments as often as required to demonstrate proficiency.

The Maine Department of Education describes the need for proficiency-based learning.

“The system of schools we have today is one in which time is the constant and learning is the variable. Teachers and students are given a fixed period of time in which to cover a fixed curriculum,” the department’s website says. “The result is a model that falls short of meeting the needs of all students. Some students disengage because the pace of the class does not challenge them, while others fail to achieve learning goals because the pace is too fast.

“In a learner-centered, proficiency-based system, students advance upon demonstration of mastery, rather than remain locked in an age-based cohort that progresses through a fixed curriculum at a fixed pace, regardless of learning achievement.”
**OHIO**

**Turning Around Cleveland Schools**

The Cleveland, Ohio, Metropolitan School District is shrinking.

Since 1996, it has lost nearly half of its student population. It ranks near the bottom of more than 600 school districts statewide in academic performance, and three-fourths of its 42,000 students are enrolled in schools on academic watch or academic emergency status.

Coupled with a $19 million budget shortfall, city and school leaders faced a crisis.

“We had to decide whether we wanted to live in a city or a cemetery,” Ohio Senate Minority Leader Nina Turner said.

In June, the Ohio legislature approved House Bill 525, known as the Cleveland Plan. It is designed to triple the number of students enrolled in high-performing district and charter schools and eliminate failing schools in the next six years.

“During the last decade we have lost 30,000 students,” said Turner, who supports the plan for the Cleveland district. “If we continue that, there won’t be any students to teach. Families are not going to bring their children into a system that will not prepare them to be successful.”

The Cleveland Plan updates employment policies to improve teacher quality and includes a salary schedule to reward high-performing teachers and teachers in high-demand fields. Teachers will no longer be assigned to buildings based on seniority; a team including the principal, parents and teachers at the school must approve their hiring.

The bill’s sponsor, Rep. Sandra Williams, believes the plan can improve Cleveland’s schools.

“I think the legislative process was the vehicle to remove many of the restrictions that were in place,” she said.

Whether the district is able to bounce back may be determined on the outcome of a property tax levy expected to be by the ballot in Cleveland in November. If the levy fails, the school district will not be able to comply with many of the bill’s provisions and will likely be forced to lay off more than 200 teachers in January, Williams said.

**WASHINGTON**

**Encouraging School Innovation**

After state education leadership in Washington notified legislators in fall 2010 that 60 percent of the state’s 2,000 public schools were rated fair under the state’s accountability standards, legislators enacted two bills during the 2011 session to encourage and reward innovative practices.

House Bill 1546 directs the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction to develop a review process for school districts to be designated as innovation schools. Schools that focus on science, technology, engineering and mathematics or arts and that partner with community, business, industry and higher education, or that use project-based or hands-on learning are given priority status under the legislation.

The legislation authorizes the superintendent and the Washington Board of Education to waive specified laws and rules for schools earning the innovation designation. Waivers can include basic education requirements, student-to-teacher ratios and length of school year.

Innovative schools also will be allowed to commingle state funds for special programs, such as learning assistance and bilingual instruction and granted flexibility over credit-based graduation requirements. Groups of schools in a central area can apply together to be named an innovation zone.

The bill’s sponsor, Rep. Mark Hargrove, a Boeing employee, understands the need for motivating the next generation of students to fill high-tech jobs.

“The teachers and the parents at the local level know what’s best for their students,” he said. “I just felt in my heart that the ideas that work the best are when the people at the ground level buy into it. They’ll work hard on it and make sure it comes to fruition.”

Also during the 2011 legislative session, lawmakers in Washington enacted House Bill 1521, which requires the state superintendent to develop basic criteria and a streamlined review process for identifying existing innovative schools in the state. It also requires the superintendent to create a website to highlight those innovative schools and to publicize the schools that have been designated as innovative.
Perhaps, as the saying goes, there are no silver bullets in life.

Today, however, the data clearly tell us that the closest thing a state has to a silver bullet for creating a successful 21st century economy and an improved quality of life—better health, lower crime, citizens who contribute—is a dramatic increase in the number of college-educated people in its workforce. The connection between states with a more educated population and increased per capita income, tax revenues, public health and citizen engagement, as well as lower crime, smoking and obesity rates, is clear.

This is a classic win-win for states: providing greater wealth while lowering demands on public resources from Medicaid, public assistance and prisons. Many governors, legislators, mayors, and education and business leaders know this.

State data, however, make clear that dramatic action is required to drive education levels from “what is” to “what must be” unless states want to be left behind in the race to succeed in this economy. That is why the Lumina Foundation, the largest foundation in the country solely focused on college access and success, is devoting its resources to mobilize states, cities and the nation around Goal 2025—to raise the percentage of our workforce with a quality college degree certificate or other credential from less than 40 percent, where we have been mired for decades, to 60 percent by 2025.

Labor market data tell us that even by 2018 almost two-thirds of the new and replacement jobs in this economy will require some form of college education. In high-growth industry sectors, that number is higher.

These low education levels will undercut any effort to create jobs because economic research makes clear that a more educated workforce is needed to increase productivity and create jobs, not just fill current workforce demands.

States have some clear opportunities to make the dramatic gains we need, even in this time of very constrained resources. Here are a few.

1. **Ensure successful implementation of the Common Core State Standards and assessments.** The country has a once in a generation chance to declare that the math and language skills a high school graduate needs to succeed in college and career are largely the same in Ohio as they are in Florida. The adoption of common core across the states was a historic accomplishment, but in many ways it was the easy part. Hundreds of millions of federal and foundation dollars are being spent to ensure the common core assessments of the standards will be high quality. The hope is that states that have been spending hundreds of millions of dollars collectively on homegrown assessments will benefit fiscally, as well as educationally, from use of these high-quality assessments. Still, much more state work is needed in support of implementation. For example, demanding full engagement of K–12 and higher education in this work will ensure alignment of learning, reduce the need for remedial education in higher education, reduce the time and cost of degrees, and put students on a more certain path to college success.

2. **Tie higher education funding to improvement in student completion.** States have always funded colleges for performance. The performance focus to date has been largely on increasing enrollment. The strategy has worked. We have seen consistent enrollment increases in higher education. Unfortunately, increased enrollments have not led to the increases in degree completion we need. The college dropout problem has resulted in 36.2 million adults in the current workforce—22 percent of the total—having some college but no degree. Millions of these former students earned 60 credits or more but have nothing to show for it, except, perhaps, debt. If you reward institutions for taking more students to success—and importantly, provide greater reward for graduating underserved students and reducing equity gaps—you are more likely to develop the workforce and citizenry you need.
Use financial aid dollars wisely. The federal debates over Pell Grants, loans and tax credits aside, there has been a disturbing trend in state and institutional aid programs providing increasing amounts of limited financial aid dollars to wealthier students who can afford, and will attend, college anyway; this while closing out growing numbers of lower-income qualified students due to resource constraints. The latter group is much greater in numbers and their education is crucial to workforce needs. Much of this drift has been justified by the use of merit-based scholarships based on test scores. But what constitutes merit? Is a low-income student who has overcome enormous barriers to become college-ready less meritorious than a wealthy student with higher scores who has had every advantage? Every state should identify where every dollar of state and institutional aid is going and ensure these resources are targeting students who cannot go to college without support. This is smart education policy that will best serve to create a productive workforce and it is the right thing to do.

Align your workforce development and higher education systems. Every dollar counts. Yet at the national and state levels we waste millions of dollars that could produce the workforce we need through disconnected programs across higher education and workforce development systems. State leaders and employers must take the lead with these sectors to create a coherent aligned pathway for credentialed learning—certificates and degrees—that lead to employment. Michigan’s No Worker Left Behind program is an example of this type of integration. In addition, in the same way high schools should be held accountable for graduates’ success (typically college readiness and enrollment), workforce and education data should be connected to assess the impact of college degrees on graduates’ success. Insist on the integration of workforce development and higher education programs and use integrated data to hold everyone accountable for preparing students to succeed in this economy.

Raise the education levels of your current workforce. It is not just about the kids. In the large majority of states, every baby born between now and 2025 could be mentored through high school to a college degree and their workforce would still be inadequate to support a strong economy. Unless we develop strategies to bring college to our current undereducated workforce, we cannot meet the changing demands of the economy. Remember the 36.2 million adults with some college degree and no degree? Now add the 40 percent of the current workforce with only a high school diploma or less and you realize that we cannot succeed if we ignore the more than 60 percent of our current workforce that are at risk. There are other practice and policy issues in which states, cities and colleges could and should engage to be economically competitive and support a quality of life that will keep and attract people and employers. The Lumina Foundation stands ready to partner with state leaders in whatever ways are helpful to jumpstart progress toward Goal 2025.

The challenge to dramatically raise education levels is urgent. Goal 2025 is an audacious goal. States and cities that embrace this goal for themselves and collaborate across sectors can achieve it and look forward to strong economic recovery and a high quality of life. The consequence of continued stagnant education levels is the painful year-to-year, hand-to-mouth existence we see playing out in too many states today. The rest of the world is not waiting for us to wake up. It is past time to ready ourselves for the challenge, take aim at the goal of increased education attainment and fire the near silver bullet that will secure the future.

James Applegate is vice president of program development for The Lumina Foundation for Education.
In early July, one unusual item came up for bid on the online auction giant eBay. The listing read, “One Slightly Used But Extremely Successful Pennsylvania Public High School.”

The high school in question was The Learning Center, an alternative school in the Neshaminy School District. The district, faced with a $14 million deficit, considered closing the school, according to news reports. The eBay listing—which had bids starting at just under $600,000—offered one lucky buyer naming rights, a large pizza, a coffee mug and the chance to deliver the commencement address.

Although the listing was taken off eBay before the auction ended, it does highlight some of the extremes to which school districts are going to try to close massive budget gaps caused by state funding cuts and lagging local tax revenue. School districts across the country have let hundreds of thousands of teachers or staff members go, stopped buying computers and textbooks, limited or suspended busing for students, increased class sizes, and cancelled all-day kindergarten and summer classes.

The National Perspective

“We know that states have made very deep cuts to education funding since the start of the recession,” said Phil Oliff, policy analyst with the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, a Washington, D.C.-based nonpartisan research and policy institute working on federal and state fiscal policies. “As of last year, over half of the states had education funding levels … below pre-recession levels.”

Oliff said some of the deepest cuts to K–12 education came last year after money from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act ran out.

“The federal aid was enormously helpful in helping states avoid some of the potentially deepest cuts to education funding,” he said.

According to an analysis by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, at least 19 states cut education funding by more than 5 percent between 2010–11 and 2011–12. Four states—Illinois, Kansas, Texas and Wisconsin—cut spending by 10 percent or more.

The American Association of School Administrators conducts a yearly survey to gauge how districts are coping with the economic downturn. In its 2012 report, more than 80 percent of administrators described their district as being inadequately funded. Nearly 70 percent of respondents said they eliminated positions in both the 2010–11 and 2011–12 school years. And while 4 percent of administrators said they reduced the school week to four days in 2010–11 and 2011–12, more than 10 percent of administrators anticipated making that reduction in the 2012–13 year.

“These are all really directly impacting student achievement,” said Noelle Ellerson, assistant director of policy analysis and advocacy for the American Association of School Administrators. “They don’t mention anymore about modifying thermostats, reducing field trips, eliminating staff travel, reducing consumable supplies or outsourcing janitorial services. (Eliminating) that sort of stuff are conversations school districts have already had.”

California May Cut Calendar

California State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson said education funding in his state has been cut by 25 percent over the past four budget cycles. Torlakson said California school districts have laid off 35,000
teachers and up to a couple of dozen districts may go into receivership next fiscal year if the funding situation does not improve.

Gov. Jerry Brown proposed an initiative that will be on the ballot in November that would increase for seven years the personal income tax on people earning more than $250,000 a year and increase the sales tax by one-quarter cent for four years. Of the $6.8 billion to $9 billion expected from the taxes in the 2012–13 fiscal year, 89 percent is earmarked for education.

If the initiative fails, an additional $6 billion would be cut from education. During the most recent session, legislators gave school districts the green light to cut an additional 30 days from the school calendar over the next two years if the initiative fails. That means the California school calendar could drop to 160 days a year, down from 180 days three years ago. Five days already had been cut from the calendar in 2009.

Such a short school year, Torlakson said, means teachers will not be able to cover everything in the state standards.

“It’s an extremely difficult set of choices left to school districts and their administrative staff,” he said. “Basically, you can’t cover it all. They (students) are still going to be tested on what they know across the curriculum and across the standards they’re supposed to learn, but we will have this gap. You just can’t cover all of the material in the depth for optimal student understanding and learning.”

While funding may improve in the future, Torlakson said the shortage will already have done its damage to this generation of students.

“It’s harmful,” he said. “It’s extremely frustrating because these students only have third grade one time, only have fourth grade one time. … They will be hurt by the loss of in-
struction and the loss of the quality learning environment we know we can create with the right funding. … We’ve had some small progress in test scores, but we know it could be so much more.”

**Waivers Increased in Texas**

When Texas legislators passed a biennial budget last year, total education funding had been cut by $5.4 billion to help offset an anticipated $15 billion to $27 billion shortfall. The Texas Education Agency estimated that 25,000 school positions were eliminated between the 2010–11 and 2011–12 school years, the first year the budget took effect.

Dominic Giarratani, assistant director of government relations for the Texas Association of School Boards, said the number of classrooms seeking a waiver to exceed the state mandated 22-to-1 student-teacher ratio in kindergarten through fourth grade more than tripled—from 2,200 in the 2010–11 school year to 8,500 in the 2011–12 year. But with more than 1,000 school districts, each of which has a large amount of local control, Giarratani said the effects of the budget cuts are quite wide between districts in Texas.

“You have some schools that, kind of like the proverb, they were the ones putting the acorns away,” he said. “Then you have other districts that have been systematically underfunded; they don’t know if they can last two years with the current funding structure. Depending upon where you landed, you might say nothing has changed or you might see a district on the verge of shutting its doors.”

Texas Sen. Florence Shapiro, chair of the education committee, said legislators talked with Texas Education Agency Commissioner Robert Scott to ask him what kind of cuts school districts could manage.

“He believed a $4 billion cut was something he thought he could sustain and school districts could sustain,” Shapiro said. “The House side cut $10 billion and we had to negotiate.”

In addition to the $4 billion in general education funding, all $1.4 billion in discretionary programs also was cut.

Shapiro said stimulus money helped school districts avoid making painful cuts earlier, but legislators warned that it was one-time funding.

“That actually came back to bite us,” she said. “Many school districts in Texas used it as ongoing revenue, then came to us and said, ‘But we had it before.’ … That was a real issue for us.”

“We didn’t have any other place to cut,” Shapiro said. “When you’ve got a general revenue budget … and 65 percent of it’s in education. You have to have everyone share in the pain, particularly in a down economy.”

**Pennsylvania Schools in Distress**

Education funding in Pennsylvania was cut by about $900 million in the 2011–12 budget. Although the 2012–13 budget keeps the basic education funding program level, an additional $150 million was cut from an accountability block grant.

“You find an increasing number of schools in financial distress,” said Rep. James Roebuck Jr., minority chair of the House education committee. “Even now, more affluent districts are beginning to see they are three or four years away from a major financial debacle. … They relied on reserves to get over initial cuts, but now schools have laid off teachers, they’ve laid off staff, they’ve reduced programs. Some schools have cut arts and music, they’ve cut libraries, they’ve cut sports.”

A recent survey by the Pennsylvania Association of School Business Officials and the Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators shows many school districts are making significant cuts. For the 2012–13 school year, 61 percent of school districts will increase class size, 37 percent will reduce tutoring for struggling students and 11 percent will reduce full-day kindergarten.

“We have economic problems, but it’s a question of where we put our priorities,” Roebuck said.

Rep. Paul Clymer, chair of the House education committee, said the 2011–12 education funding cuts were due to the loss of federal stimulus money. He said he was pleased the state was able to keep basic funding for education stable. Although some schools may be struggling, he said, the legislature has allotted $49 million to aid distressed schools.

“Some of those reports you’ve seen on the Internet, some of those schools will receive this additional funding,” Clymer said. “In some of these cases where there are distressed schools, not all, but in some cases, it was total mismanagement of money. They got additional money from the state and they totally mismanaged it. … We do have a plan for distressed schools, to go in there and help them with their situation.”
School Seat Time

Tight budgets continue to be a problem for many state education systems. In California, Gov. Jerry Brown has said he’ll need to cut an additional $6 billion from education if a proposed initiative to increase the personal income tax on people earning more than $250,000 a year and raise the sales tax by one-quarter cent fails at the ballot box in November. If that happens, legislators gave schools the green light to cut an additional 30 days from the school calendar over the next few years, dropping the number of days students are in school to 160, down from 180 days three years ago. American students already are in school fewer days than students from around the world, and the amount of time in school varies by state.

Mandatory Number of Student Days in School Year, 2011


Minimum Number of School Hours in Public Institutions

Friday, Nov. 30
2–6 p.m.        Registration Open
3–6 p.m.        Education Legislative Briefing, Part I (sign-up required)
4–5:30 p.m.     Associates Advisory Committee
6–8 p.m.        Welcome to Austin Reception (all attendees invited)

Saturday, Dec. 1
7:30 a.m.–5 p.m. Registration/Information Desk Open
8–11 a.m.        Committee on Suggested State Legislation Part I (breakfast provided)
8 a.m.–Noon      Governance Committee (invitation only, breakfast provided)
8 a.m.–Noon      Meet the Exhibitors! (Breakfast served 8–10 a.m. in the Expo Hall & prize giveaways from 10 a.m.–Noon)
9 a.m.–Noon      Education Legislative Briefing, Part II (sign-up required)
Noon –2 p.m.     Opening General Session
Keynote Speaker: Mike Allen, chief political correspondent for Politico
2–2:30 p.m.     Dessert in the Expo Hall & Innovations Awards: East & South
2–4 p.m.        Exhibit Hall Open
2:30–4:30 p.m.  Policy Workshops & Task Force Meetings
                   » Health Policy Task Force
                   » Transportation Policy Task Force
                   » Education Legislative Briefing, Part III (sign-up required)
                   » Investment Subcommittee
                   » Midwestern Legislative Conference Reception (invitation only)
                   » 21st Century Foundation (invitation only)
                   » Reception
Noon–2 p.m.     ‘Houston, We’ve Had a Problem’
Keynote Speaker: James Lovell Jr., Apollo 13 Astronaut
2–2:30 p.m.     2012 Toll Fellow Class Graduation Ceremony
2–2:30 p.m.     Dessert Expo Hall & Innovations Awards: Midwest & West
2–4 p.m.        Expo Hall Open
2:30–4 p.m.     Transmission Line Siting Compact Session
2:30–4 p.m.     Policy Workshops & Task Force Working Breakfasts
                   » Education Policy Task Force
                   » Energy & Environment Policy Task Force
                   » Spouse & Guest Breakfast in Expo Hall
                   » Mid-Western Snack & Prize Giveaway—Expo Hall
                   » Committee Meetings
                   » Intergovernmental Affairs
                   » Finance
6–8 p.m.        Reception

Sunday, Dec. 2
7:30 a.m.–5 p.m. Registration/Information Desk Open
8–10 a.m.        Policy Workshops & Task Force Working Breakfasts
                   » Health Policy Task Force
                   » Transportation Policy Task Force
                   » Education Legislative Briefing, Part III (sign-up required)
                   » Investment Subcommittee
                   » Midwestern Legislative Conference Reception (invitation only)
                   » 21st Century Foundation (invitation only)
                   » Reception
10:30 a.m.–Noon  Committee Meetings
                   » International Committee
                   » National Conference Committee
                   » Workshop sponsored by the CSG Justice Center
Noon–2 p.m.     ’Houston, We’ve Had a Problem’
Keynote Speaker: James Lovell Jr., Apollo 13 Astronaut
2–2:30 p.m.     2012 Toll Fellow Class Graduation Ceremony
2–2:30 p.m.     Dessert Expo Hall & Innovations Awards: Midwest & West
2–4 p.m.        Expo Hall Open
2:30–4 p.m.     Transmission Line Siting Compact Session
2:30–4 p.m.     Policy Workshops & Task Force Working Breakfasts
                   » Health Policy Task Force
                   » Transportation Policy Task Force
                   » Education Legislative Briefing, Part III (sign-up required)
                   » Investment Subcommittee
                   » Midwestern Legislative Conference Reception (invitation only)
                   » 21st Century Foundation (invitation only)
                   » Reception
4:30–6 p.m.     Committee Meetings
                   » Intergovernmental Affairs
                   » Finance
4–5:30 p.m.     Midwestern Legislative Conference Executive Committee Meeting (invitation only)
6–8 p.m.        Reception

Monday, Dec. 3
7:30 a.m.–Noon  Registration/Information Desk Open
8–10 a.m.      Spouse & Guest Breakfast
                   Special Breakfasts
                   » Health Policy Academy: Diabetes
                   » Toll Fellow Alumni Session (invitation only)
8–11 a.m.      State Revenue Outlook: 2013 and Beyond
                   » Executive Committee
                   » Workshop sponsored by the CSG Justice Center
                   » Reception
10:30 a.m.–Noon Committee Meetings
                   » Intergovernmental Affairs
                   » Finance
10:30 a.m.–Noon Committee Meetings
                   » International Committee
                   » National Conference Committee
                   » Workshop sponsored by the CSG Justice Center
                   » Reception
Mike Allen is the chief political correspondent for Politico. Time magazine named Allen as one of the top 140 Twitter feeds shaping the day’s debate. The New York Times Sunday magazine cover story in April 2010 dubbed Allen “The Man the White House Wakes Up To.” Vanity Fair named Allen to its 2011 Top 50 New Establishment list. He is also the creator of the daily newsletter, Morning Money, which gives readers the political intelligence on the intersection of Washington and Wall Street—a must-read from cabinet secretaries to CEOs of the Fortune 500. Allen is co-author of a series of e-books focusing on the 2012 presidential campaign, including Politico Playbook 2012—The Right Fights Back, published in November 2011, and Inside the Circus—Romney, Santorum and the GOP Race, published in April, 2012.

Capt. James Lovell Jr. had extensive experience as a naval aviator and test pilot before being selected for the space program in 1962. He executed various commands in the Gemini Mission Program, including serving as pilot on the 1965 history-making Gemini 7 flight that saw the first rendezvous of two manned spacecraft. His fourth and final flight was on the perilous Apollo 13 mission in 1970. As spacecraft commander, he and his crew successfully modified their lunar module into an effective lifeboat when their cryogenic oxygen system failed. The emergency actions they took allowed them to survive in space and safely return to Earth. Tom Hanks portrayed Lovell in the 1995 film about the mission, “Apollo 13.”

Lovell applies the philosophy of the “time when we did bold things in space to achieve leadership” to the goals and ambitions of any organization, proving that even during challenging times, innovation and new heights of leadership can be attained.

Hotel & Early Registration Cutoff Date: Oct. 19, 2012

Registration
To register for the conference, visit www.csg.org/2012NationalConference.

Registration Rates

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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*one associate member per company is complimentary before Oct. 20. For complete registration rate details, visit the CSG website.

Transportation
Information on hotel parking, sedan service, airport shuttle service, taxi rates and car rental discounts can be found online at www.csg.org/2012NationalConference.

Accommodations
Hilton Austin
500 East 4th Street | Austin, TX 78701
ph (512) 482-8000 | guest fax (512) 469-0078
www.austin.hilton.com | Rate: $179 + 15 percent tax

Accommodations can be made by visiting the CSG website or by calling Central Reservations at 1 (800) 236-1592 and asking for the group code: CSG
Seeking a Bold Response »

Education is ‘A National Crisis’
by Mary Branham

What was the most frustrating thing you found in making real change in education?

“The most frustrating thing was to hear stories from high school graduates struggling with remedial courses because Florida’s K–12 system had failed them—we had failed them. It was frustrating because these were precious lives whose opportunity for success was hampered through no fault of their own. Their stories also reminded me why we were pushing for real change. It encouraged me to remain bold and focused on reform.”

Discuss the education changes and successes in Florida while you were governor and what other states can learn from that.

“While governor, I had the honor of helping develop and implement a plan to reverse a generation of decline in our state and brighten the futures of countless students. We adopted the A+ Plan during my first year as governor. In that year, Florida transitioned to a data-driven accountability model that grades schools A–F—just like students. Basing school grades on objective measures of student performance and progress better informs parents, school leaders and community leaders on the true state of learning. … A few years later, we ended the damaging practice of social promotion in the third grade and started focusing on ensuring every third-grade student enters fourth grade with critical reading skills.”

What is the basis for reforms suggested by the Foundation for Excellence in Education?

“We believe all students can learn given the right opportunities. A child’s ZIP code, race or parents’ salary should not define his or her capability to learn. Whether we’re pushing for rigorous academic standards, standardized measurement, data-based accountability, outcome-based funding or school choice, it all comes back to helping ensure all children have a high-quality learning environment and the opportunity to reach their God-given potential.”

With so much polarization in politics and government today, do you think a bipartisan solution is possible and why?

“I do. Our children’s education should not be a political issue. It is a national crisis and it requires a bold response—I don’t think many will disagree with that. We must act on behalf of America’s next generation, advancing reforms that result in systemic change in our schools, our districts and our states. In a changing world filled with careers that increasingly require higher levels of critical thinking and problem-solving skills, we have to put kids first.”

What is the biggest challenge for education reform today?

“America is falling far behind other countries in the race for knowledge. Our biggest challenge is transforming our education system with new, higher academic standards and preparing the nation for a new bar. Our nation’s students rank 21st in science and 24th in math among 30 industrialized nations. We are not producing enough engineers, doctors, nurses, teachers, information technology specialists, welders … and the list goes on, largely because too many students leave high school without the foundational skills to pursue these careers. Consider the innovations and inventions that will never be discovered. Consider the billions and billions of dollars of productivity our country will never experience because students were unprepared by their schools. Consider the incredible loss of human capital and the toll it will take on our society. By working to ensure every student has access to the learning experience that equips them with knowledge and skills for success, our youngest generation will be able to flood this nation with an unprecedented show of human potential.”

What do you think about the Obama administration’s approach to allow states to innovate? Has it helped states improve education?

“Thanks in part to reforms passed a decade ago in (the Elementary and Secondary Education Act reauthorization known as No Child Left Behind), student achievement across the nation has improved. (The act) should be reauthorized. Given Washington’s inaction, Secretary (Arne) Duncan has tried to establish a process to provide regulatory relief to states that have adopted high standards, school accountability, interventions for failing schools and other policies that are proven to improve student achievement. It is critical that the bar for receiving these waivers be kept high—rewarding states that are advancing real reform.”

What do you think of the Obama administration’s Race to the Top?

“Putting aside the issue of spending funds our country does not have, Race to the Top and its emphasis on data, teacher quality, improved teacher evaluations and turning around low-performing schools created an environment that encouraged states to adopt good policies.”

What has been the biggest disappointment in terms of opportunities missed following the release of the “Nation At Risk” report?

“Today, we advocate for many of the recommendations we saw back in the ’80s in that report—things like vouchers and tuition tax credits. Progress has been made, but an underwhelming amount, given the almost 30 years since. I think we can always do better in providing more options, and we’re still lacking as a nation in terms of offering a customized education.”

How can states make improvements in education while continuing to face budget shortfalls?

“While funding is important, how you spend it is more important than how much you spend. We should prioritize funding for reforms and reward achievement. Florida is a great example of using funding for proven programs and reforms: A–F school grading, rewards for results, promotion and graduation requirements, funding for student success and student choice. A recent report in Education Next, a scholarly journal published by the Hoover Institution and the Harvard Kennedy School, actually plotted test score gains against increments in spending between 1990 and 2009. Just about as many high-spending states showed relatively small gains as those which showed large gains, and many states showed gains while committing very little additional resources.”

“Our children’s education should not be a political issue.”

—Former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush
Georgia legislators passed a bill this year to encourage every student to take an online course during their middle or high school career.

Rep. Tom Dickson, a former school superintendent, said students need to be familiar with technology, since many jobs of the future will require a level of technological literacy. “We try to encourage lifelong learning,” said Dickson. “Technology is really going to be the future of that.”

But that’s just part of the story.

Technology has made it easier to offer high-level courses at smaller, rural schools. These virtual schools allow for a more equitable education between rural and urban school districts, Dickson said.

John Bailey, executive director of Digital Learning Now!, a national campaign of the Foundation for Excellence in Education to promote quality, customized public education through technological innovations, said technology helps on two levels in education. First, it is making things more efficient by reducing the amount of time teachers spend on everything from grading papers to developing lesson plans. Secondly, technology is transforming many models of education, everything from the way schools are structured to the way classrooms are designed.

“The transformational element is where there is a lot more excitement and promise,” he said. Teachers can “adapt to each learner’s strengths and weaknesses.”

Focus on Students

It’s that promise of personalization that can help shape a better learning environment for all students, said Allyson Knox, academic program manager, National Partnerships for Microsoft Corporation’s U.S. Partners in Learning program.

“I think (technology) is going to engage and empower a learner in a different way,” she said. “A student can become a contributor in a different way in an online world.”

Chip Slaven, senior advocacy associate for the Alliance for Excellent Education, a nonprofit education policy and advocacy group based in Washington, D.C., said technology also gives teachers almost instant information about what their students are learning and understand.

“It gives teachers an added way to guide their students through learning, but also to be an educational designer of what their students each need,” said Slaven.

When Dickson started teaching in the 1960s, teachers served basically as lecturers standing at the front of the room and talking for 50 minutes with all students doing the same thing. Now, he said, students work in small groups with two or three different things going on in a classroom.

“We’ve seen so many changes in education over the last 40 to 50 years,” Dickson said.

He believes technology will accelerate those changes, and states and school districts should be ready.

Assist the Teachers

But successful adoption of digital learning requires more than just sticking laptops or tablet computers in the hands of every student, Slaven said.

“You can have all the technology in the world,” he said, “but … it’s still a person who is driving the learning.”

That’s one reason teacher training will be key to whether digital learning can meet its potential outcomes.

“Training needs to be a huge part of what teachers are doing and it needs to happen all the time,” Slaven said. “If we do that, I think you’re going to see a sea change in student learning.”

Educators must be involved in any state discussion of expanding technology in schools, Dickson said, not only because of costs, but also because they have some good ideas.

“If educators are not prepared to use what we as legislators have put in front of them, then we’ve wasted a lot of money,” said Dickson.

Cover The Costs

While it can be expensive to equip schools with the hardware and software necessary to enhance digital learning, supporters believe states can find options to work around some costs.

In Georgia, for instance, the state is working on ways to enhance infrastructure to schools, such as installing broadband sufficient to allow students to access all the information available through the Internet.

Policymakers also are re-evaluating the state’s funding mechanism for K–12 education—from technology purchase and upkeep to training for teachers and staff.
Slaven said schools could lower some costs by allowing students with their own devices to use them in school. While some have concerns that allowing students to use their own devices might widen the digital divide, that may not be the case. Slaven said some schools have loaner programs for students who don’t have them.

In addition, the digital divide is much smaller in one area—mobile technology, according to Chris Dede, Wirth Professor in Learning Technologies at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and an editor of “Digital Teaching Platforms: Customizing Classroom Learning for Each Student.”

“The gap between rich and poor in mobile technology is much smaller than the gap between rich and poor in terms of things like having a home computer with broadband,” Dede said.

Mobile is cheaper and many families across the economic spectrum use mobile technologies for reasons beyond education.

“If we look at the fact that even poor kids have cell phones, then we can take advantage of repurposing those cell phones to narrow the digital divide,” he said.

Dede pointed out that, if used correctly, technology can help teachers be more effective and schools be more efficient. In short, he said, technology can bring down the costs of education.

Bailey believes those upfront costs for technology can be taken from current state budgets.

“As long as we keep the conversation that this is something else you have to do in addition to everything else in the budget, it’s going to undercut and undermine it,” he said. “It’s rethinking how existing funds and budgets can be spent on digital learning opportunities.”

But before that decision is even considered, Slaven believes states should spend time on a strategic plan for schools to move forward.

“Don’t rush out to buy the technology,” he said. “Instead, rush to think about how to do that.”

Schools, the Alliance for Excellent Education believes, should allow students to advance when they have mastered a skill. If students need to spend more time in a particular area, they get it. Schools should ensure teachers get the professional development they need to best deliver the information to students.

Slaven said policymakers should not take a Band-Aid approach, considering digital learning the latest big thing in education and adopting policies around that.

“It’s a process that requires very, very careful thought because there are a lot of issues associated with it,” he said.
Growing up, I was fortunate to have teachers who encouraged their students to explore areas of learning they were curious about. Having the freedom to try things out allowed me to develop a passion for computing—which eventually led me and a fellow student, Paul Allen, to start Microsoft.

Being lucky enough to have great teachers also nurtured a love of learning that has stayed with me ever since. As I told school leaders recently at the annual conference of the National Association of Independent Schools, my own experience in school is one of the reasons I’m so passionate about the work our foundation is doing in education.

I believe a lot of good teachers could become truly great teachers if we can get better at identifying and measuring effective teaching, investing in helping teachers improve, and rewarding excellence.

I also believe technology can help teachers be more effective and make learning more interesting.

When done right, the results are promising. One indicator is how many K–12 students are enrolled in at least one online class. The number increased from 45,000 students in 2000 to 3 million in 2009. Another is a recent U.S. Department of Education study showing that “blended learning”—a combination of online learning and classroom teaching—increases student outcomes by 14 percent. These are early numbers and more research is needed, but these are encouraging signs.

It’s exciting to see the growing number of entrepreneurs developing online learning systems in areas like mobile learning applications and e-books and the ways teachers are using a blended learning approach in their classrooms.

There are four key trends in online learning. The first is creating more engaging and interactive ways of learning than the traditional textbook. Another is using the Internet to post and find great teacher lectures and effective course materials. The use of social networks is also a growing influence, with the potential to increase collaboration among and between teachers and students and extend class discussions beyond the classroom. We’re also seeing new kinds of personalizing learning—using gameplay and other tools—that give students and teachers important real-time feedback.

But finding the right resources and figuring out how to use them is more difficult today than it should be. The foundation will be developing an online service that will help educators more easily discover and learn how to use these new tools.

There really is no limit to what teachers can do if they have the right resources. A decade from now, finding and using the best content and technology will be as natural as opening a book. Tablets and high-speed Internet access will be ubiquitous. Each student will have a learning map that helps chart their interests and learning path inside and outside the classroom. And the concept of the textbook will fade—replaced by easy online access to the best lectures and course materials available.
Want to become an expert in education policy? Pam Goins recommends the following as a good place to start:

- Council of Chief State School Officers: ccsso.org
- Education Commission of the States: www.ecs.org
- Alliance for Excellent Education: www.all4ed.org
- National Governors Association Center for Best Practices: nga.org/cms/center
- Achieve: achieve.org
- Data Quality Campaign: www.dataqualitycampaign.org
- EdLeader21: edleader21.com
- National Association of State Boards of Education: nasbe.org
- National Education Association: www.nea.org
- National PTA: pta.org
- College Board: about.collegeboard.org
- American Association of State Colleges and Universities: aascu.org/policy/state-policy/state-legislation
- American Association of Community Colleges: www.aacc.nche.edu
- Institute for Higher Education Policy: www.ihep.org

Essential Reading

- Education Week: www.edweek.org/ew/index.html
- Jobs for the Future Newswire: www.jff.org/media/newswire/2012/newswire-83/1451
- Stateline Headlines: www.pewstates.org/projects/stateline/headlines/issues=328444
- Policy Innovators in Education Blog: www.pie-network.org/blog
- EducationCounsel e-Updates: www.educationcounsel.com/resources/e-updates
- Lumina Foundation for Education eNewsletter: www.luminafoundation.org/newsroom/newsletter.html
- The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation: www.hewlett.org/
- National Institute for Early Education Research Online Newsletter: nieer.org/publications/online-newsletters
- Foundation for Excellence in Education Reform News: excelled.org/ReformNews

CSG’s State Leaders’ Guide to Education Issues
Teacher evaluation and tenure laws sit at that rare intersection where both the federal and state governments agree changes are needed. The quality of a teacher in the classroom is commonly regarded as one of the most important factors in a child’s education. One 1998 study by the National Bureau of Economic Research showed that a difference in teacher quality could account for at least 7.5 percent of the achievement differences between schools.

The federal government has strongly encouraged states to revamp teacher evaluation laws by making it mandatory to qualify for programs like Race to the Top, School Improvement Grants and No Child Left Behind waivers. States have embraced that idea of change in recent years.

**The National Perspective**
States have long relied on degrees and certifications to ensure teachers were qualified, said Angela Minnici, deputy director of the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality. Teacher evaluations usually were of a cursory, check-the-box type.

That didn’t work, Minnici said.

States are changing to a new kind of evaluation, she said, that “identifies the needs of teachers and leaders and makes sure that those who don’t belong in the profession, whether it’s teaching or leading, are ushered out. The major focus is on improving everybody’s skills in all phases of their career.”

The new laws generally extend the time it takes for teachers to earn tenure, changes ratings to a four-tiered system—ranging from highly effective to ineffective—and increases the amount of time observers spend in a teacher’s classroom. One common area of...
contention is how to measure student achievement. Using just standardized test scores presents a problem, Minnici said.

Most teachers—including those who teach performing arts, physical education, most high school subjects and early elementary—teach in an area without a standardized test, she said.

“So it’s usually somewhere between roughly 60 to 70 percent of our teachers that we don’t have a valid and reliable measure to include in a teacher’s evaluation,” she said.

“A test score is only a test score and it will only tell you so much, but it often doesn’t tell teachers or principals how to actually improve their practice. They may know what they’re doing isn’t working, but they don’t know how to change that. That is by far right now the biggest challenge across the country in trying to figure out how to include student achievement in teacher evaluation systems.”

Out in Front

Delaware and Tennessee, the first two Race to the Top winners, are the furthest along in redesigning their teacher evaluation systems.

In Delaware, equal weight is given to planning and preparation, classroom environment, instruction and professional responsibilities in a teacher’s evaluation. But teachers cannot be called effective or highly effective if they don’t receive a satisfactory rating on student growth.

Both Delaware and Tennessee use student growth testing models, which gauge how far students should progress in a year and are used to compare against actual test scores. In nontested areas, both states are working on setting up other measures to gauge student progress. Alison Kepner, public information officer for the Delaware Department of Education, said more than 500 teachers last year were involved in setting up growth measures in nontested areas.

“They’re insights and expertise have helped us develop pre- and post-tests, many of which were assessments they were already using in the classroom, our technical advisory committee then vetted to ensure they are statistically valid,” Kepner said. “These will be used next year.”

Sara Heyburn, assistant commissioner for teachers and leaders at the Tennessee Department of Education, said a big challenge has been ensuring student test data and observation scores match up. A state evaluation of the program showed “observers systematically failed to identify the lowest performing teachers.”

Heyburn said in districts that had strong leadership and training, the observations aligned well with test scores. This shows the need for continued training and coaching, she said.

“Quickly, we’re seeing implementation of these measures across a whole state is really hard work,” Heyburn said. “It takes commitment at every level. … It’s a cultural shift we’re making. Teachers, in the past, were not getting rich feedback to inform their practice. This is a new set of skills.”

Working Together

New Jersey accomplished a feat almost unheard of in this day and age. It passed a major overhaul to the nation’s oldest teacher tenure law with no dissenting votes in either chamber.

Sponsored by Sen. Teresa Ruiz, S1455 expands the amount of time teachers need to work in the state to earn tenure from three to four. The first year is spent in a mentorship program and the teacher has to have two positive reviews within the first three years to be offered tenure. Educators may be fired after two years of negative reviews. The bill also says standardized tests will be used to gauge student progress, but “shall not be the predominant factor in the overall evaluation of a teacher.”

The New Jersey Education Association supported Ruiz’s bill and had a seat at the table during its drafting. Ginger Gold Schnitzer, director of government relations for the group, said teachers were willing to move to binding arbitration instead of going to the court system to fight a dismissal, but they weren’t willing to surrender what’s known as last in, first out.

“I think we got something nobody was entirely happy with, but everybody can live with,” Schnitzer said. “I don’t think we should say, ‘OK, tenure reform is done,’ and we dust our hands off and say we’re done with this. I think education reform is a bigger topic than that and this conversation should continue. We have to be willing to provide resources and talk about things in a broader way than ‘let’s get rid of bad teachers.’”

Ruiz said conversations regarding teacher evaluations may start out with how to make it easier for districts to fire ineffective teachers, but the needs are much greater than that.

“This isn’t a silver bullet,” she said. “We’re not going to change this and all of the sudden, have tremendous outcomes. … We need to look at teacher preparation and how we’re developing the next generation of professionals. We need to look at teacher licensure for the profession. We need to have an in-depth discussion about a longer day, longer school year. There’s a lot more to be had here.”

TENURE CHANGES
GREENBRIAR, TENN.—Greenbriar Middle School teacher Larry Proffitt, shown last year in his classroom (above), will be affected by a new Tennessee tenure law that took effect in 2011. The law requires a teacher to be on the job five years instead of three to get tenure. Proffitt was in his second year in the district last year. Tennessee also changed its evaluation system for teachers after receiving Race to the Top funds. ©AP Photo/Mark Humphrey
FOOTING THE BILL FOR COLLEGE

It’s no secret that the cost of a college education has skyrocketed. Across the country, states are cutting allocations to public universities, which, in turn, are raising tuition costs. In fact, from the 2006 fiscal year to the 2011 fiscal year, just seven states increased constant dollars per student support for public institutions, according to “State Higher Education Finance FY 2011,” a recent report by State Higher Education Executive Officers. Twenty of the 43 states that decreased funding did so by more than 20 percent.

The way students and families finance higher education also has changed. Tough economic times have increased the number of families seeking aid. A large proportion of families, 81 percent, continued to seek federal financial aid by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, known as FAFSA, in 2012, according to Sallie Mae’s national study of college students and parents. That’s up from the 2008 level of 74 percent.

The nationally representative survey of 1,600 dependent undergraduate college students and parents revealed that the average amount families spent on college declined by 5 percent in 2012. American families reported taking more cost-saving measures and more families report making their college decisions based on the cost they can afford to pay.

HOW FAMILIES FUND COLLEGE

LOW-INCOME FAMILIES

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MIDDLE-INCOME FAMILIES

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HIGH-INCOME FAMILIES

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SOURCE: How America Pays for College 2012; Sallie Mae’s National Study of College Students and Parents; Conducted by Ipsos Public Affairs
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<td>Wisconsin</td>
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<td>Texas</td>
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<td>Maryland</td>
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<td>South Carolina</td>
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#### Average Amount of Federal Student Loans

The average amount of federal student loans borrowed rose from $5,327 per student in 2008–09 to $7,874 in 2011–12.

### Battling the Costs

Los Angeles—Protesters demonstrated outside a teleconference meeting where the California Board of Regents was deciding whether to ask the state to increase funding to the 10-campus system to aid the hiring of instructors, increase enrollment and avoid raising tuition.

© AP Photo/Reed Saxon

In Indiana, the number of students enrolling in institutions of higher education has grown steadily for decades. But less than one-third of four-year college students graduate on time, and only slightly more than half graduate after six years.

“In the past, our objective was just getting people to school,” said Sen. Luke Kenley, chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee. “We needed a much more rigorous model that focused more on outcomes like on-time graduation rates, and that’s what we developed.”

Indiana has been slowly moving toward a performance-based funding model. The plan allocates a certain portion of the money universities receive from the state based on a set of outcome-driven metrics like graduation rates.

According to Jason Bearce, associate commissioner for strategic communications and initiatives for the Indiana Commission for Higher Education, the state started small: It began its transition in 2003 with only one metric.

“We realized it would take time to move the ship,” he said.

Now, the state apportions some of its funding based on a refined set of metrics centered on three key areas: completion, progression and productivity. Metrics range from degree completion and on-time graduation rates to students at two-year institutions completing remedial courses.

“We’ve constructed a formula that provides incentives for our universities to more closely focus on outcomes,” said Kenley. “I really think it will help both students and the state get more value for their money.”

Indiana has allocated 5 percent, or $61 million, of overall state support for higher education to performance funding for the upcoming budget cycle.

Kenley believes basing even a small percentage of funds on a performance-based model can encourage universities to focus on outcomes.

“You don’t have to dedicate all of your funding to performance-based funding to get the results you want,” said Kenley. “Transitioning even a small portion of funding provides the kind of accountability from our universities we want to see as legislators.”

A Growing Trend

While Indiana is a relative newcomer to performance-based budgeting in higher education, the idea itself isn’t a new one.


“But as state budgets were squeezed over the next 20 years, most of those programs were cancelled or cut back significantly,” he said.

While the concept has seen a resurgence in recent years, many states are taking a different approach.

“When the idea first emerged, it was primarily related to bonuses given for meeting certain goals,” said Whitehurst.

Now, states are applying criteria to existing funding, rather than creating new dollars for universities or colleges hitting their marks. That means states don’t have to come up with additional funds in already strapped budgets to explore using performance funding.

“The fiscal crunch has forced policymakers to make tough choices, but that has also led them to begin exploring new and more effective ways to approach higher education, like performance-based funding,” said Pam Goins, CSG’s director of education policy.

According to Whitehurst’s research, 19 states are currently involved in performance-based budgeting in some way.

“But there is a lot of variation across states in their approach,” said Whitehurst. “While a few states—like Ohio, Tennessee and Indiana—are pushing to move toward a more outcome-focused approach in a significant way, others have linked only a minimal amount of funding to performance.”

West Virginia, for example, has begun to test the waters with this strategy. Legislators have convened the Select Committee on Outcome-Based Funding to explore how performance-based funding might be used to better allocate the $322 million the state budgets for its public colleges and universities each year.

“National data indicate that West Virginia needs to provide 20,000 additional degrees, above and beyond what is currently produced, by 2018 in order to maintain its current workforce,” said Rob Anderson, executive vice chancellor for administration for the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission.

“So we are now examining performance-based funding as a potential policy lever in order to achieve these needed outcomes.”

STUDY TIME

EVANSVILLE, IND.—Cassie Bedell enjoyed the sun while studying outside the David L. Rice Library at the University of Southern Indiana. Bedell has enough hours to be a senior but will not graduate until December 2013 because she is taking more classes required for medical school. Indiana is using outcomes, like graduation, in funding decisions for higher education institutions.

© AP Photo/The Evansville Courier & Press, Erin McCracken
“You don’t have to dedicate all of your funding to performance-based funding to get the results you want.”

—Indiana Sen. Luke Kenley, chair Senate Appropriations Committee

Less than a quarter of full-time students at four-year public universities in West Virginia graduated on time in 2010, and only 47.4 percent graduated within six years; that’s nearly 10 percent less than the national average.

When deciding whether to implement a performance-based approach, the state is doing its homework. Ashley Schumaker, senior director of board and public relations at the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission, said the committee will base its formal recommendations to the legislature on several factors.

“Models currently utilized in other states are being examined and will be taken into consideration by the Select Committee, in addition to feedback from budget and higher education officials, as well as prioritization of statewide goals and objectives,” she said.

For states considering moving to an outcome-focused funding model, Kenley stressed the importance of working closely with higher education institutions.

“You have to get buy-in from the universities,” he said. “That kind of joint exercise will definitely be more successful in the long run.”

Indiana’s Performance Criteria

Completion Metrics
- Overall Degree Completion: Includes one-year certificates, associate degrees, bachelor’s degrees, master’s degrees and doctoral degrees.
- At-Risk Student Degree Completion: Includes one-year certificates, associate degrees and bachelor’s degrees.
- High-Impact Degree Completion: Includes bachelor’s degrees, master’s degrees and doctoral degrees in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) related fields.

Progress Metrics
- Student Persistence Incentive: Provides an incentive for students successfully completing a set number of credit hours. Two-year institutions are rewarded for students earning 15, 30 and 45 credit hours; four-year, nonresearch campuses are rewarded for students earning 30 and 60 credit hours.
- Remediation Success Incentive: Provides an incentive to two-year institutions for students who successfully complete a remedial course and subsequently complete a gateway college-level course in math and English.

Productivity Metric
- On-Time Graduation Rate: Provides an incentive for increased on-time graduation rates at two- and four-year institutions. On-time graduation rate is considered four years for four-year institutions and two years for two-year institutions.
- Institutional Defined Productivity Metric: This metric is defined by each institution and submitted to the commission for approval. The metric must align with the strategic plan of the institution and focus on reducing the cost of attendance to the student. Although differing by institution, the goal is to reward institutions for improving productivity in some manner.

Taken from testimony offered by Teresa Lubbers, commissioner of the Indiana Commission for Higher Education, to the U.S. House Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training.
When Excelsior College decided to offer online courses in Florida, staff members took five months to complete the state application and then waited another six months before the college was granted approval to operate in the Sunshine State. “The entire process, from start to finish, took nearly one year,” said Paul Shiffman, assistant vice president for Strategic and Governmental Relations and executive director of The Presidents’ Forum at Excelsior College, a private nonprofit institution based in New York that focuses almost exclusively on distance learning.

The lengthy application process is just one hurdle higher education institutions must cross before being able to provide distance learning opportunities to students in some states. In Massachusetts or Wisconsin, for example, institutions must pay upward of $15,000 per individual program, according to a report from the Washington, D.C.-based law firm Dow Lohnes, which represents numerous higher education institutions. States such as Hawaii and South Dakota, however, require no fees for institutions seeking approvals to operate there. “The biggest hurdle institutions face is the lack of a uniform application process for approval to operate,” Shiffman said.

That hurdle and others delay access to higher education to a growing number of students who are looking online to further their learning and be able to compete in a changing workforce.

Distance Learning

Distance learning is one answer to the needs of the American workforce as new jobs require even higher levels of educational attainment. “The rapid advances in the Internet and technology have brought the issue of distance education to the forefront of policymakers’ and the higher education communities’ minds,” said Alan Contreras, a former administrator in the Office of Degree Authorization at the Oregon Student Assistance Commission. “Today more colleges and universities are operating across state lines, allowing for greater access to higher educational opportunities.”

Contreras is consulting with The Council of State Governments and The Presidents’ Forum on an effort to develop a state distance learning agreement that would make it easier for colleges and universities to offer online courses in multiple states.

Enrollment in online courses rose by nearly 1 million students between 2009 and 2010, according to the Sloan Consortium, an organization dedicated to

“Today more colleges and universities are operating across state lines, allowing for greater access to higher educational opportunities.”
—Alan Contreras, former administrator, Office of Degree Authorization, Oregon Student Assistance Commission
improving online education in higher education. That represents a growth rate of more than 20 percent, the fastest-growing segment of the higher education population.

In addition, nearly 5.6 million students were enrolled in at least one online course in the fall of 2009, the most recent year for which figures are available, according to data from the Sloan Consortium.

Access Limited

But many states haven’t prepared for this growth in distance learning and that could block some potential students’ access to these courses. State regulatory policies have lagged behind rapidly evolving technology, limiting institutions’ ability to offer courses on a national scale.

“Aside from the initial application and approval process, many states require continuing maintenance and additional fees in the form of renewals, reports and updates,” said Sharyl Thompson, vice president of Regulatory Affairs and Compliance for the American College of Education. “The net result for institutions is an approval process that is often times costly both in terms of dollars spent and resources required.

“In some states these requirements can ultimately limit student access to online programs,” she said.

In addition to the challenges the current regulatory environment presents for institutions, the growing number of institutions offering distance-learning classes causes a separate set of challenges for state authorizing agencies.

“At the state level, the problem becomes the volume of schools,” said George Roedler, manager of Institutional Registration and Licensing with the Minnesota Office of Higher Education. Minnesota has nearly doubled the number of schools registered just in the past year.

“Minnesota has heard from well over 500 schools, most of which the state will either have to register in order to allow them to continue to operate in Minnesota or have institutions withdraw from the state entirely,” he said.

Given staffing limitations and constricting state budgets, the sheer volume of institutions seeking approvals to operate has placed unprecedented burdens on state offices of higher education.

Distance Learning Compact

As more higher education institutions offer online education across state lines, a uniform process for allowing institutions to operate in a state is becoming more important.

Some state leaders and education officials are exploring a solution to these challenges through an interstate agreement known as the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement, which is being drafted with the assistance of CSG’s National Center for Interstate Compacts and The Presidents’ Forum, in consultation with a drafting team of subject matter experts and the existing regional higher education compacts.

The State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement offers a process that could make state authorization more efficient and more uniform. Such an agreement, Contreras said, “has the potential to dramatically reshape the regulatory review and approval process for colleges and universities operating outside their home state.”

The agreement establishes minimum standards for state and institutional participation and shifts the responsibility of authorization to the home state of the institution. While the establishment of uniform minimum standards and the shift in institutional approval represents a significant change in the traditional delivery model for distance learning programs, institutions, states and students could benefit substantially if consensus can be achieved.

“If a state could be certain that another state was doing a good job of maintaining and enforcing the key standards established in (the agreement), it should be willing to grant approvals to operate out of state institutions without going through a detailed and expensive evaluation process, which in turn should expand access to affordable higher education opportunities,” Contreras said.

The drafting team is expected to meet at least once more to finalize the draft and begin sharing it more broadly with the higher education community. The goal will be to receive broad-based feedback from both policymakers and various stakeholder groups.

CSG, the Presidents’ Forum and the drafting team are continuing discussions with the existing regional higher education compacts to create a unified State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement document. The agreement should be finalized by the end of 2012 and ready for legislative consideration and approval in the 2013 legislative session.

About the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement

The draft State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement is designed to improve student access to high quality distance learning opportunities. If states approve, the agreement would:

Preserve full state oversight of on-the-ground institutions and campuses;

Set forth reasonable triggers for institutional (physical) presence;

Set uniform minimal standards for state and institutional participation;

Allow states to assume the principal role in matters of consumer and student protection;

Shift principal oversight responsibilities from the state in which the “distance learning” is being offered to the “home state” of the institution offering the instruction; and

Lay out a model reciprocity agreement for state adoption, including an organizational structure and a financial plan to support operations.
“No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”

Those 37 words left an indelible mark on the U.S. education system and gave women more opportunities in academics and athletics. President Richard Nixon signed Title IX on June 23, 1972. It was one of several amendments included in the Education Amendments of 1972. Nixon spent most of his remarks about the amendments discussing desegregation busing and didn’t mention the expansion of education access for women.

Rep. Patsy T. Mink of Hawaii was a driving force behind Title IX, and the amendment was renamed the Patsy T. Mink Equal Opportunity in Education Act after her death in 2002. Indiana Sen. Birch Bayh is credited with authorship of the final bill.

“While the impact of this amendment would be far-reaching, it is not a panacea,” Byah said, according to the Congressional Record.

“It is, however, an important first step in the effort to provide for the women of America something that is rightfully theirs—an equal chance to attend the schools of their choice, to develop the skills they want, and to apply those skills with the knowledge that they will have a fair chance to secure the jobs of their choice with equal pay for equal work.”

Looking at the state of the educational system before and after the passage of Title IX, it appears the country has achieved some of those goals. Many believe much more progress can be made.

IN SPORTS

In 1972, fewer than 32,000 women participated in intercollegiate athletics.

In 2010–11, 193,232 women participated in intercollegiate athletics.

In 1972, women’s teams received only 2 percent of schools’ athletics budgets; and no athletic scholarships.

In 2010–11, for every $1 spent on women’s sports, about $2.50 are spent on men’s sports.

In 1972, 295,000 girls competed in high school sports, while 3.67 million boys did.

In 2010–11, 3.2 million girls participated in high school sports, while 4.5 million boys did.

NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Title IX brought new opportunities for female athletes, like Donnisha Williams of Maryland, top right, who participates in bowling, softball players at the University of Oklahoma and Jodi Gillette, top left, now White House senior policy adviser for Native American Affairs, who was recognized by the Women’s Sports Foundation commemorating the 40th anniversary of Title IX.
### IN COMPUTER SCIENCE DEGREES

In 1985, women received 37 percent of undergraduate computer science degrees.

In 2010, women received 18 percent of undergraduate computer science degrees.

Source: Women and Information Technology, By the Numbers, National Center for Women & Information Technology

**WOMEN IN TECH**

STANFORD, CALIF.—Stanford engineering graduate student Serena Yeung said “just walking into the classroom is one of the biggest hurdles for women thinking of entering the field.” The tech industry—and classes to prepare students for it—is still a male bastion. ©AP Photo/Paul Sakuma

### IN THE WORKFORCE

In 2011, women held:

- 57 percent of professional occupations in the U.S. workforce
- 25 percent of professional computing occupations
- 20 percent of chief information positions at Fortune 250 companies (2012)

Source: Women and Information Technology, By the Numbers, National Center for Women & Information Technology

### ON ADVANCED PLACEMENT TESTS

In 2011, females took:

- 56 percent of all AP tests
- 46 percent of calculus tests
- 19 percent of computer science tests

Source: Women and Information Technology, By the Numbers, National Center for Women & Information Technology

### BEFORE AND AFTER TITLE IX

**1971–72**

Women earned:

- 43 percent of associate degrees
- 46 percent of bachelor’s degrees
- 40.5 percent of master’s degrees
- 6 percent of first professional degrees
- 15.8 percent of doctoral degrees

Source: Association of American Colleges and Universities

**2008–09**

Women earned:

- 62 percent of associate degrees
- 57 percent of bachelor’s degrees
- 60 percent of master’s degrees
- 59 percent of first professional degrees
- 52 percent of doctoral degrees

Source: Association of American Colleges and Universities, Chronicle of Higher Education

**NOTE:** Doctor’s degrees include Ph.D., Ed.D., and comparable degrees at the doctoral level. Excludes first professional, such as M.D., D.D.S., and law degrees.

### IN SCHOOLS

**COLLEGES**

1970

Women were 23 percent of faculty

2010

Women were 42 percent of faculty

Source: Association of American Colleges and Universities

**COLLEGE PRESIDENTS**

1970

3 percent were women

1986

9.5 percent were women

2011

26.4 percent were women

Source: Association of American Colleges and Universities, Chronicle of Higher Education

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**MAKING HISTORY**

PRINCETON, N.J.—Shirley M. Tilghman, shown at this year’s commencement, became the first female president of Princeton University in 2001. © AP Photo/Mel Evans

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KEEP PARENTS INVOLVED

“As legislators, it is essential for us to remember that the foundation of education in this country is in the home. Parents are a child’s first teacher. Rather than removing parents from the equation of education, parents need to be viewed as the key factor in the development of their children. As we propose education legislation, we must strive to remember the value of empowering parents in the education of their children. Whether they choose public, private, virtual or home school, the parents are the ones who best know their child’s needs. Everything we do should be to empower the parent.”

DAVID CASAS
Representative, Georgia
High School Teacher of American Government and Economics

UNDERSTAND EFFECTIVENESS OF PRESCHOOL

“I am always taken by the strong, bipartisan support for the idea that early childhood education is a vital component of meaningful education reform. The return on investment is much higher on preschool than other educational stages. Yet, no state has broken out of the entrenched current system—nonsystem, really. It is almost unheard of for towns or states to make the investments necessary to have high quality, early childhood education available to all children. … Federal Title I dollars are available for preschool, yet the vast majority of districts continue to spend it on elementary remediation vs. preschool—despite the proven effectiveness of preschool.”

BETH BYE
Senator, Connecticut
Chair of the Senate Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee
Helped to Develop Five Model Preschool Facilities
2009 and 2011 Connecticut Early Childhood Alliance Legislator of the Year

IF YOU COULD TELL COLLEAGUES ONE THING ABOUT THE REALITIES OF EDUCATION THAT COULD MAKE THEM BETTER LEGISLATORS ON EDUCATION ISSUES, WHAT WOULD IT BE?
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PAUL PINSKY
Senator, Maryland
Chair of Senate Education Subcommittee
Former High School History Teacher
Former Staff at Local Teachers’ Association

Beware of quick fixes. I’ve seen too many in recent years. For the last five or six years, the popular refrain was, let’s get rid of bad teachers…. The Gates Foundation and its (Measures of Effective Teaching) project, is now saying the focus should be on improving the decent teachers. They sort of recalculated and said that teachers below standard are … not where you should be spending time and money. The other thing I would recommend to legislators dealing with education policy is to spend some time in a classroom. … Teachers who have committed to it and are doing a good job … talk to them and ask them what’s working and what’s not.”

TAKE TIME TO LISTEN

“I just think the best thing you can do is to listen to all sides, particularly educators and parents and superintendents. You have to listen and, at that point, weigh and come down to your own personal belief system … I think you have to investigate. Some of these educational issues are very complex. Being a teacher, I clearly see both sides to many issues when it comes to education. … Being a conservative Republican is a little unique in the teaching profession. I find myself on the middle on a lot of these issues and I have to look at that them carefully and listen to all sides involved.”

TIM LEWIS
Representative, New Mexico
High School Teacher in Albuquerque Public Schools

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KATE WEBB
Representative, Vermont
Speech Pathologist and Special Education Teacher
Clinical Professor of Communication Science, University of Vermont

AVOID THE TEST SCORE DEBATE

“I think the connection between good teaching and testing outcomes distracts legislators. Certainly, we need these measures, but I believe there are better and more accurate measures as to what constitutes excellent, long-term, quality teaching and student achievement. … We know that teachers who score high in these measures tend to produce the best outcomes for students. These measures also give teachers a map for improvement and help administrators identify areas of continuing need. When teachers and legislators remained locked in the test score debate, we increase defensiveness and are distracted away from the larger discussion of what teachers can do to improve outcomes for students by improving their professional practice.”

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Midwestern Lawmakers Discuss ‘Economic Reinvention’

Nearly 500 participants gathered this summer in Cleveland for the Midwestern Legislative Conference’s Annual Meeting, where they heard from top policy experts and shared ideas on how to address the policy challenges facing the region. The theme of this year’s conference was “Economic Reinvention,” which is the focus of Ohio Rep. Armond Budish’s agenda as chair of the MLC. Attendees approved 11 policy resolutions—available online at www.csgmidwest.org—on topics ranging from agricultural and energy policy to international trade.

Ohio Rep. Armond Budish (right) presided over the 2012 Annual Meeting of the Midwestern Legislative Conference, which was held in Cleveland in July. He was joined by legislative colleagues from around the region, including Nebraska Sen. Jean McCollum, left, who is second vice chair of the MLC.

What Works in Reentry Clearinghouse

The Council of State Governments Justice Center, the Urban Institute and the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance recently unveiled the What Works in Reentry Clearinghouse, an online tool offering easy access to research on the effectiveness of re-entry programs and practices. The Clearinghouse provides a user-friendly, one-stop shop for practitioners and service providers seeking guidance on evidence-based re-entry interventions. Learn more about the clearinghouse at http://nationalreentryresourcecenter.org/what_works.

School Discipline Consensus Project

Following up on its groundbreaking report—Breaking Schools’ Rules: A Statewide Study of How School Discipline Relates in Students’ Success and Juvenile Justice Involvement—The Council of State Governments Justice Center is launching a national consensus-building project.

The School Discipline Consensus Project will kick off this fall and will culminate in a comprehensive report proposing guidelines and strategies for minimizing the use of suspension and expulsion to manage student behaviors, improve students’ academic outcomes, reduce their involvement in the juvenile justice system and promote safe and productive learning environments.
Fahrenkamp Award

Wyoming House Speaker Edward Buchanan, right, presented Wyoming Sen. John Schiffer with the Bettye Fahrenkamp Award for Distinguished Legislative Leadership on Behalf of Western States during the 65th CS&G West annual meeting in July. The annual award is in honor of Fahrenkamp, who served with distinction in the Alaska State Senate until her untimely death in 1991.

Western State Business Incentives

CSG West released a new report, “Trends in Western State Business Incentives,” during its annual meeting in July. The product is a collaborative effort between the CSG West Fiscal Affairs Committee and The Council of State Governments’ national office. It documents business incentives that work in the Western regions 13 states.

Nevada Assemblywoman Debbie Smith, a 2010 Toll Fellow, chairs the CSG West Fiscal Affairs Committee.

To find out ways states can learn from each other in tough economic times, visit www.csg.org, click on the Knowledge Center icon and then the report.

Western Legislators at the Alberta Legislative Assembly

The Alberta Legislative Assembly gave lawmakers and guests a first-hand look at parliamentary democracy with a Mock Legislature during the 65th CS&G West annual meeting in July. The session was held at the request of the CS&G West Committee on the Future of Western Legislatures.

U.S. lawmakers filled the Alberta Legislature Chamber to consider a mock bill for the fictional state of Newalta. Opposition lawmakers badgered government ministers during the legendary Oral Question Period.

Futures Committee Chair Rep. Sam Hunt of Washington, a 2005 Toll Fellow, assumed the mantle of premier, while Rep. Gary MacLaren of Montana led the official opposition. Rep. Maxine Bell of Idaho, a 2008 Toll Fellow, donned purple robes to become Newalta’s lieutenant governor and a most regal representative of the monarchy.

Alberta Legislative Assembly Speaker Gene Zwozdesky presided over the event, and other government ministers coached lawmakers on parliamentary rules of the road.
Kevin Cline, chair of the social studies department at Frankton High School in Indiana, is one of this year’s winners of the American Civic Education Teacher Awards. Cline said it’s not always easy to get high school students interested in how government works, but it’s important to try. Here are his tips on how to get the next generation of voters interested in the democratic process.

BE PRESENT IN COMMUNITY THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

MAKE IT HANDS-ON.
“I would say you have to try to let students encounter government with as many senses as possible,” Cline said. “They need to experience as much as they possibly can.” For instance, Cline’s classes regularly run an imaginary political campaign, doing everything from trying to get (fake) donors to contribute and creating a platform to making campaign ads and looking at polling data. “By the end of the week, they were exhausted, frustrated and stressed,” he said. “I said, ‘Welcome to politics!”

BREAK THROUGH THE CYNICISM.
Adults aren’t the only ones who have become cynical about politics, Cline said. Students are hearing cynical things at home and are bringing that to the classroom. Cline said policymakers can help break through that shell. “If legislators are not making themselves visible in a non-campaigny way to these students, then we’re going to be hard pressed for the students to ever feel they have a voice representing them at the state or federal level,” he said. “You can’t just have legislators stroll through your school in October. You’ve got to have a presence in that community throughout the entire term.”

USE REAL-LIFE EXAMPLES.
Any major election year provides a great example of the democratic process at work. “You’ve got incredible right-here-in-the-present type examples you can draw from,” Cline said. “It makes things certainly more challenging. … One of the things you do every day is make sure you’re following the news, make sure you’re paying attention to the campaign ads out there … so you can bring those to the students’ attention.”

TEACH RESPECT AND CURIOUSITY.
Many students come into Cline’s government class with preconceived notions about politics or politicians, but they can’t back up their positions with facts. He likes to make students question why they believe what they believe by giving them positions to debate that they may not agree with. “I don’t care if you ever agree with a point of view that’s different than yours,” he said. “At the end of the day, I want you to be able to appreciate a person’s ability to hold that opinion and it’s OK if they view the world a different way than you do. I don’t care if you don’t agree with it; just respect it.”

LEGISLATORS NEED TO SAY YES.
Cline said it’s important for state legislators to say yes when classes ask to meet with them for a few minutes at the capitol or when asked to make an occasional classroom visit. Rep. Terri Austin, a former teacher, has been very willing to talk to Cline’s classes. “If (legislators) don’t want to do it because it’s the right thing to do, do it because that’s the next generation to be voting,” Cline said. “One of the things I’ve always appreciated about Rep. Austin is when she gives her time, she gives it in a very objective way. She doesn’t come in toting her campaign signs in the van behind her. She comes in, sneaks in and asks students what’s important to them.”
National and Regional Meetings

Registration and application deadlines may apply. Visit www.csg.org/events for complete details.

How will government deal with the consequences of a cyber-attack, particularly if public safety is a victim itself? What does the private sector need from government during disaster response and recovery? These and other pressing issues will be discussed at the NEMA 2012 Emergency Management Policy & Leadership Forum Oct. 5–9 in Seattle, Wash. The forum brings together emergency management professionals in the public and private sectors to share information and lessons learned from recent disasters, resolve common issues and build relationships that will enhance national preparedness. For more information, visit www.nemaweb.org.

The National Association of State Treasurers’ Annual Conference will be held Sept. 8–12 in Anchorage, Alaska. Through peer-to-peer discussions, the states’ fiduciary leaders will examine the latest trends in investment and public policy, as well as how emerging issues may affect the nation’s treasuries. This high level exchange of ideas will herald the future of the states’ public finance programs.
Do you know someone in state government who deserves a shout out? Email Mary Branham at mbranham@csg.org.

For more on Florence Shapiro, visit: capitolideas.csg.org.
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