



»» **College- and Career-Readiness**

With the changing face of technology and the critical need for a postsecondary degree or credential, students must possess both content knowledge and the ability to apply those skills in order to succeed and become employable. Businesses and the workforce demand analytical thinkers, problem solvers, effective communicators and team players. State policymakers will be looking at creating rigorous guidelines for schools and districts as they work to radically change the way instruction is provided so that personalized learning is a staple in today's educational environment.

»» **Assessment and Accountability Systems**

Policymakers are looking to offer flexibility for districts to develop multiple measures of student learning as evidence for course credit, promotion and graduation. Accountability systems can be amended to utilize multiple measures to assess the success of individual schools and districts with a focus on college- and career-readiness measures, including mastery in core subjects, annual student growth, closing achievement gaps among all student groups, attendance and improved graduation rates.

»» **Preparation for Teachers and School Leaders**

In order to adequately prepare students, teachers and school leaders also must be appropriately trained, licensed and evaluated. State policymakers should articulate a comprehensive set of professional standards to ensure teachers and school leaders are equipped to help students graduate college- and career-ready. Teacher training, licensure, evaluation and professional development should align to rigorous state standards. More rigorous teacher pre-service programs can connect with high academic standards so teachers enter the classroom prepared to guide all students to success. They also should have access to ongoing, high-quality, relevant and effective professional development, including research on the ways students learn, personalized learning, new technologies for teaching and learning, innovative teaching methods, inclusive practices and the latest specialized knowledge in the subject area taught.

»» **College Completion**

College access rates are climbing nationally, but completion rates remain stagnant. Because of this, the Obama administration set a goal for the United States to again become the leader in postsecondary degree attainment by 2020. Although this task will not be easy, states are working to increase the number of people who hold a postsecondary degree, certificate or credential. Knowing that college completion is a vital tool for economic success and growth, state policymakers are developing and monitoring completion agendas to ensure students persist to degree attainment. Policy levers include a focus on improving retention rates, easing transfer and articulation among institutions, and targeting data-based strategies to ensure persistence and success. State leaders also must focus on collaboration between legislators, educators and officials at public colleges and universities as they work together to increase production of postsecondary degrees and certificates.

»» **Funding Options for Postsecondary Education**

Linking postsecondary education funding to productivity will be on many state agendas this year. New approaches tie appropriations and individual campus performance in an effort to increase college completion, since funding will connect to degrees instead of simply counting heads. Policymakers should consider formulas that reward student success and completion leading to high-quality graduates that meet demands of the workforce. Policy targets must include a clear identification of the funding source and use of existing allocations with a balance between money awarded for completion and those funds received from tuition. States should consider rewarding institutions that succeed with underserved populations, and focusing on institutions that improve degree and certificate attainment, while giving attention to those that achieve momentum points that demonstrate students are progressing toward graduation.

For more information on these topics and for additional resources on education policy, see » www.csg.org/top5in2013.

YOUR CSG EDUCATION RESOURCE » PAM GOINS



THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS

Pam Goins has been with CSG since 2005. In her current role, she oversees the education policy division, supervises the Policy Academy for Newly Elected Legislators series on topics impacting state policymakers and serves as staff liaison to CSG's Education Policy Task Force. She has led implementation of the Common Core State Standards Policy Initiative educating state and local policymakers on the national effort for states to adopt common English/language arts and mathematics academic standards. She also led a six-state effort to reduce childhood obesity through policymaking as part of a project with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Prior to joining CSG, Goins served as a program consultant for the Kentucky Department of Education for 11 years, serving in a regulatory and policy compliance capacity. She also was associate director for KYCID, a statewide center working with 176 local school districts in Kentucky on positive behavior supports for students. Goins holds a bachelor's degree in psychology from Eastern Kentucky University and a master's degree in education from the University of Kentucky.

GET INVOLVED »

CSG provides state leaders a variety of regional and national opportunities to actively engage on issues of importance to their jurisdictions and constituents. CSG's regional and national committees and task forces are designed to encourage multi-state problem solving, the sharing of best practices, and networking among state officials and between the public and private sectors.

In past years, CSG's Education Public Policy Committee has focused on several key issues, including creating a college-going culture, using public-private partnerships to enhance educational outcomes, the nexus of education and workforce development, and seeding the knowledge economy.

CSG's Education Committee will hold its next meeting as part of the **NATIONAL CONFERENCE** in Kansas City, Missouri, September 19-22, 2013.

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