

Dear Commissioner Breed,

As the Council of Chief State School Officers approaches the end of another successful fiscal year, we would like to take the opportunity to extend our deepest thanks for your continued support.

CCSSO works diligently on behalf of its member states and territories to address the many important opportunities and challenges facing chiefs, educators, and policymakers today. The organization understands that each state has real and discrete needs. It strives to successfully address all of them appropriately and competently, not only through its many member services, events, and strategic initiative programs, but also through its advocacy and communications staff who work tirelessly to ensure that our members' voices are represented on Capitol Hill and within the United States Department of Education.

Over the next fiscal year, the Council looks forward to reshaping our strategic plan to reflect the ever-changing priorities of chiefs and their state agencies. We are preparing ourselves to better serve the needs of chiefs in the era of common standards for college and career readiness, next generation accountability systems and state and federal legislative reforms that will shape the landscape of American education for future generations.

All of these coordinated efforts are made possible through CCSSO's membership dues. Your contributions to CCSSO are greatly appreciated and absolutely critical to the success of the organization as we continue to work hard to fulfill your needs. Your dues also help the Council expand the opportunities we are able to offer to you and your staff in the areas of professional development; meetings and conferences; and resource materials and publications. Our goal, as always, is to ensure that you will see an even greater return on your investment in 2011-2012.

Thank you for your dedication to quality education for the children of our country. On behalf of all CCSSO staff, we wish you a successful and positive end of the school year.

Sincerely,



Gene Wilhoit
Executive Director, CCSSO



Christopher Koch
President, CCSSO Board of Directors
Superintendent of Education,
Illinois State Board of Education

CC: Bruce Buterbaugh, CCSSO

Enclosures (2)



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ABOUT CCSSO



The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) is a nationwide, nonpartisan, and nonprofit membership organization. The Council’s membership is made up of the chiefs, deputies, federal liaisons, and public information officers from every state and territory. For over 80 years, we are the only organization that brings together the top education leaders from every state in the nation, across party lines.

At CCSSO we harness the collective power of the state education leaders, especially in effecting national policy. We are committed to prepare every child for lifelong learning, work, and citizenship. CCSSO is uniquely positioned to take on this ambitious, state-led reform—and now more than ever, we are taking a unified, strategic, and systemic approach to transforming and improving the public education experience for every child.

Our Strategic Approach to Transforming Education

CCSSO utilizes the power of collective state action to transform public education through three key elements of the public education system. Your needs drive and structure this work. Chiefs guide this work through our state-driven strategic initiatives:

Standards, Assessment, and Accountability. CCSSO combines the collective wisdom of states with the latest in research and innovative thinking to leverage these three powerful drivers of student success.

Information Systems. CCSSO assists states in building robust information systems and using high-quality policy research to improve student outcomes.

Education Workforce. CCSSO collaborates with states to develop systems for recruitment, induction, retention, accountability, and support of highly effective educators and educational leaders.

HOW WE SUPPORT YOU



At the state level, CCSSO:

- Strengthens the knowledge, skills, and capacity of chief state school officers and their staff as **education systems leaders**
- Supports groups of states in transforming their educational systems and policies, and leverages their experiences to **scale up innovation**
- Offers a **trusted forum** for members to collaborate, share, and demonstrate best practices
- Provides **continuity and support** to key state education agency staff

At the national level, CCSSO:

- Forges state consensus on **pressing educational issues**
- Advocates for **policies and practices** that represent states' interests
- Brings together state policy leaders, educational experts, and others to **create solutions shared issues**

Our Membership Meetings

The Summer Institute provides professional development for chief state school officers and their deputies. This meeting provides opportunities for members to engage in intensive problem solving and learning sessions, as well as informal networking with colleagues and education experts from around the country.

July 16-19, 2011 — Stowe Mountain Lodge, Stowe, VT

The Annual Policy Forum and Business Meeting brings members together to identify policy priorities for the upcoming year. Engaging and challenging nationally recognized speakers often highlight this fall meeting. The election of CCSSO's board of directors also takes place at the APF.

November 17-19, 2011 — Wyndham Phoenix Hotel, Phoenix, AZ

The Legislative Conference focuses on federal advocacy. Throughout the meeting, members are provided opportunities to develop unified messages and to engage with their state congressional delegation, the administration, and US Department of Education officials to share and discuss issues and concerns.

March 25-27, 2012 — Washington Marriott at Metro Center, Washington, DC

OUR IMPACT



The list below highlights the national projects CCSSO led and facilitated with our members over the past year:

- Provided advocacy and communications support on the **Common Core State Standards** with the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices. The common core has been formally adopted by over 40 states.
- Secured opportunities for chiefs to testify before **House and Senate committees** with jurisdiction over education policy and spending.
- Led the **Partnership for Next Generation Learning**, a network of seven states participating in innovation labs focused on producing concrete examples of the systemic changes necessary to meet the education needs of all students.
- Launched the **State Consortium on Educator Effectiveness** to bring together to identify ways to develop highly effective teachers and leaders and evaluate teaching and leading.
- Persuaded Congress and the Administration to **support state education funding** in the Federal Budget and Appropriations process.
- Developed the **InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards**, defining a new vision for highly effective teaching.
- Formulated an updated, comprehensive **Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)** policy statement. The statement's primary focus is promoting innovation which is informing the Congress's and the Administration's approach to ESEA reauthorization.
- Began work with a state consortium to systemically **implement the Common Core State Standards**.



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