



2015 ANNUAL REPORT



Turning Reform into Reality

Foundation for Excellence in Education Board of Directors



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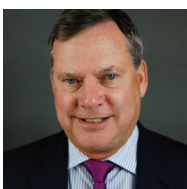
**F. PHILIP HANDY,
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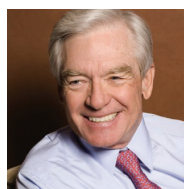
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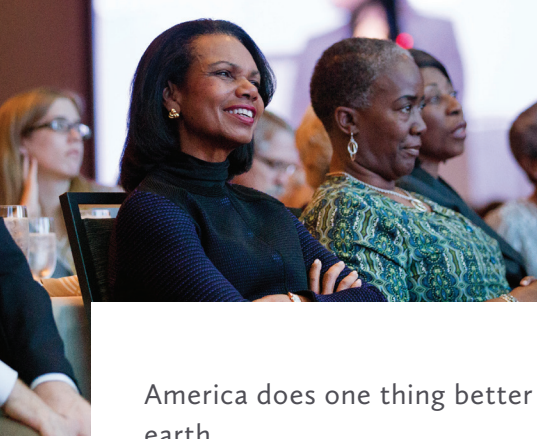
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CHARLES SCHWAB

Founder and Chairman of The
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“I refuse to believe that so many children are incapable of learning. This is why education is my core cause, and why as a nation we must take up this mantle for our children.”

America does one thing better than any country on earth.

We tap into the power of individuals. This is the nation for new ideas, better approaches and creative minds.

Young entrepreneurs tinkering in their garage can create technology that will change the world. An immigrant who comes with nothing can build a multi-national corporation from scratch. And the success they create ripples through the economy, creates opportunity for countless others and changes the lives of their posterity.

This should bode well for our nation going forward in the 21st century, when nations will prosper or fail based on their ability to channel human potential.

But the troubling reality is that we are narrowing the pipeline. More and more, we see children born into rags not being given the opportunity to aspire for riches. We are not giving them the capacity to do so.

We are being deprived of their new ideas, their better approaches and their creative minds.

That makes America weaker in a world anxious to exploit our weaknesses.

The root cause lies in vast swaths of elementary grade students who are functionally illiterate, who don't understand the basics of numbers or who have never been taught to think critically. From one grade to the next, many drop out while others graduate with meaningless degrees because they are bequeathed rather than earned.

Most often they come from disadvantaged circumstances. But rather than rise to overcome that, too often our education system uses those circumstances to excuse its failures.

I refuse to believe that so many children are incapable of learning.

I refuse to believe that we cannot do much better.

This is why education is my core cause, and why as a nation we must take up this mantle for our children.

Please take some time to go through this report and find out what we are doing to address our children, our future. And if you are so inspired, please join us.



Sincerely,
Condoleezza Rice

Dr. Condoleezza Rice
Chair, Board of Directors
Foundation for Excellence in Education



“Student-centered policies are gaining momentum and coming to fruition in state after state, which means better access to a quality education for all children.”

This past year has been one of the most rewarding since our founding in 2008. Student-centered policies are gaining momentum and coming to fruition in state after state, which means better access to a quality education for all children.

Two of our major initiatives in 2015 targeted higher expectations for students and increased school choice for parents. I'll briefly highlight both.

Our education system underestimates the ability of children to learn, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds. We believe in challenging all students with more rigorous academic standards, and measuring their progress with tests that reflect in-depth knowledge and critical thinking skills. This is what colleges and employers demand.

For this effort to work, passing scores on state tests must accurately reflect proficient knowledge of the new standards. To encourage this, we analyzed the adequacy of each state's passing scores in our “Why Proficiency Matters” initiative.

And we are seeing many states rise to the challenge by more closely aligning their proficiency expectations with those established by the highly regarded National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

School choice may be the most widely embraced element of school reform. Our policy experts and advocacy directors are developing and promoting

innovative approaches to empower more parents with education options. One very successful result is the Education Savings Account (ESA) program.

ESAs allow parents to take the public funds that would have been spent on their children in traditional public schools and redirect them to alternatives. These can include private schools, tutors, online courses, therapies for students with disabilities and other approved services.

This past year, Nevada became the first state to make ESAs available to all parents. We were involved in helping develop and implement the program. Now that a universal ESA program is established in one state, we believe that like other choice options, it will begin spreading to other states.

As we make progress, however, those opposed to education reform push back ever-harder in the political and legal realm. For example, the ACLU has challenged the Nevada ESA program, which we are helping to defend.

Not only are we tasked with spreading reforms, but defending them as well, all of which increases the challenges we face moving forward.

For more details about these issues, and other student-centered initiatives, I encourage you to browse through this annual report. And as always, we are deeply appreciative of your support.



Sincerely,

Patricia Levesque

Patricia Levesque
CEO, Foundation for Excellence in Education



“Every child is born with the gift of curiosity. Our mission is creating an education system that taps into this innate desire to learn and maximizes the potential of every boy and girl who steps foot in a classroom. This requires a system that is both challenging and flexible, that has options for parents and high standards for students, that recognizes each child is an individual with strengths and weaknesses.”

F. Philip Handy | President of ExcelinEd Board of Directors and former Chairman of the Florida State Board of Education

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About the Foundation for Excellence in Education

Launched by former Florida Governor Jeb Bush in 2008, the Foundation for Excellence in Education (ExcelinEd) is a national leader in the education reform movement. ExcelinEd is a hands-on, how-to organization that designs, develops and promotes sound education policy and provides model policy, rulemaking expertise, technical assistance, implementation strategies and public outreach.

Policy Development

Advocacy

Implementation & Technical Assistance

Outreach

Mission

To build an American education system that equips every child to achieve his or her God-given potential.

Vision

An education system that maximizes every student's potential for learning and prepares all students for success in the 21st century.

Guiding Principles

- All children can learn.
- All children can achieve when education is organized around the singular goal of student learning.
- All children can thrive when they are given the opportunity to choose the learning options best suited to their individual needs.

Approach

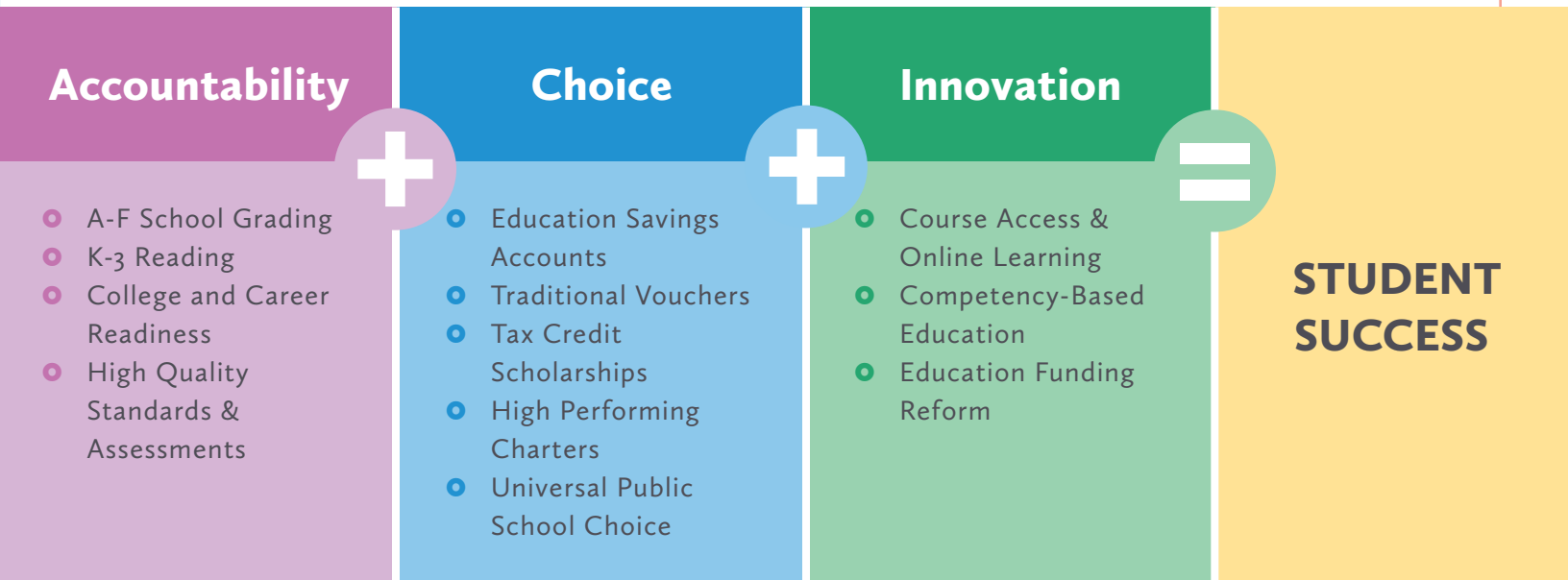
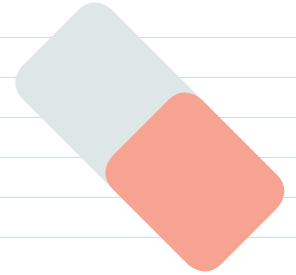
ExcelinEd wants all students to leave school with the knowledge and skills to achieve their full potential. To achieve this, ExcelinEd emphasizes policies that, if aggressively pursued, result in a measurable, objective rise in student learning across all student groups.

This is not a single-step process, and we support states as they undertake bold education reform to benefit their students. By providing customized, strategic support to policymakers, community and business leaders, reform advocates, teachers and parents, ExcelinEd aims to inform and advance education policies that improve the quality of education in every state.

Signature Policies

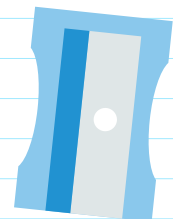
To achieve a high-quality, student-centered education system, ExcelinEd emphasizes a comprehensive reform agenda. Our formula for student achievement focuses on accountability, choice and innovation: measure what matters, use rewards and incentives to drive behavior and empower parents and students with choice.

Since no silver bullet will change the course of American schools, ExcelinEd emphasizes a set of signature policies that have reformed the education system in Florida and other states. This broad range of policies holds the power to improve learning for millions more students across the nation.



ExcelinEd in Action is the 501(c)(4) sister organization to the Foundation for Excellence in Education. Launched by former Florida Governor Jeb Bush in 2013, ExcelinEd in Action works with state lawmakers and partner organizations to pass legislation that empowers families with educational choice, prepares students for college and career, prioritizes early literacy, expands innovation and increases accountability.

ExcelinEd in Action's Board of Directors is an accomplished group of business, education and policy leaders, chaired by F. Philip Handy with members Eric Cantor, Betsy DeVos, William Oberndorf and Dr. Zachariah P. Zachariah.



Year in Review Quarter One

January

National School Choice Week

Joined 2,200 Alabama students, parents, teachers, community leaders and elected officials at the National School Choice Week March and Rally in Montgomery.

Georgia Summit

Attended the Georgia Charter Schools Association's Leadership Conference to present the A-F School Grading principles, which became part of Georgia's Opportunity School District legislative package and was signed into law by Governor Nathan Deal in April.

Florida Summit

Hosted the Florida education summit, *Keeping the Promise*, with partner organization Foundation for Florida's Future. The event convened top Florida policymakers and education stakeholders for a conversation about accountability and choice.

February

Original Research

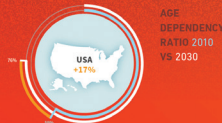
Published *Turn and Face the Strain: Age Demographic Change and the Near Future of American Education* by Dr. Matthew Ladner, Senior Policy Advisor, in collaboration with The Friedman Foundation. This original research was featured in 26 news articles, including *NBC News* and *Politico Online*.

JANUARY 2015

TURN AND FACE THE STRAIN:

AGE DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE AND THE NEAR FUTURE OF AMERICAN EDUCATION

BY DR. MATTHEW LADNER



www.ExcelinEd.org/FaceTheStrain

Shaping ESEA Reauthorization

Engaged in the effort to update the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). ExcelinEd developed five principles for the 2015 ESEA Reauthorization, engaged with Congressional staff and worked with state and national partners.

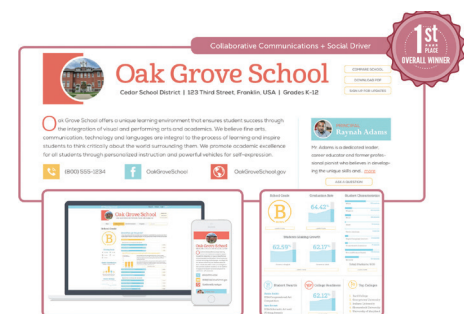
March

MOOCs for EdReformers

Launched *EdPolicy Leaders Online*, featuring four free, self-paced online courses for policymakers and education reform leaders. Courses feature 66 presenters, from high school students to state education chiefs, with registrants from all 50 states, D.C. and 77 countries.

Reimagining School Report Cards

Released the findings brief for the My School Information Design Challenge, ExcelinEd's contest that sought the help of designers to reimagine school report cards in a user-friendly and effective report for parents, policymakers and the public.



Year in Review Quarter Two

April

Game Changer

Education Savings Accounts (ESAs) were adopted in Mississippi, Tennessee and Nevada and expanded in Arizona and Florida, giving one million students eligibility in 2016.

Digital Learning Report Card

Released the *Digital Learning Report Card*—a comprehensive evaluation of digital learning policies in all 50 states with 13 in-depth state profiles. Twenty media outlets covered the report.



Economic Security Report

Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson signed SB 211, creating an Economic Security Report to provide students and their parents with detailed information about career pathways and college programs.

May

Model Policy

ExcelinEd's model student data privacy policy was unanimously adopted by Georgia and signed into law by Governor Nathan Deal.

50 State Scan

Released *Building a Trusted Environment: a Snapshot of State Laws on Data Use, Privacy and Security*, a report providing an overview of all 50 states' student data privacy laws and regulations.

Education Funding Reform

Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper signed the Pay for Success Contracts bill, adopting a tool that uses taxpayer dollars wisely to fund innovative, evidence-based education programs.



June

Universal School Choice

Assisted Nevada with implementing the most expansive private school choice program in the country.

Fewer Tests. Better Tests.

Launched *Fewer Tests. Better Tests.* to build awareness of the importance of higher standards and assessments.

Early Literacy

Nevada Governor Brian Sandoval signed the Read by Three Act, comprehensive K-3 Reading policy.

Expanding School Choice

Alabama expanded the Alabama Accountability Act to allow more students to participate in the state's tax credit scholarship program.

Proficiency Matters

Launched *WhyProficiencyMatters.com*, a research-based interactive website to help parents understand proficiency expectations on state assessments and engage in the conversation in their state.

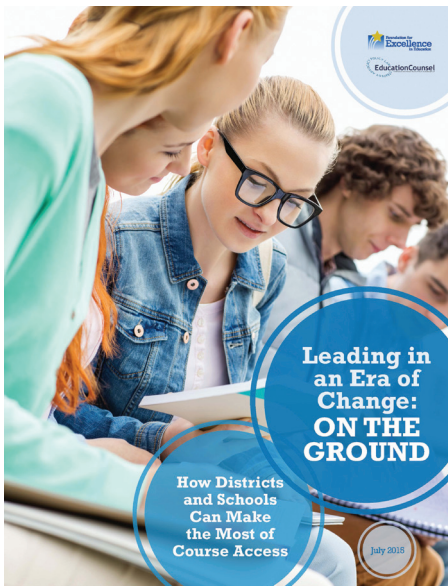


Year in Review Quarter Three

July

Profiling Course Access

Released *Leading in an Era of Change: On the Ground*, a white paper profiling 10 districts and charter schools in seven states using Course Access to improve learning.



Convening Leaders

Gathered state education leaders from six states and seven advocacy organizations to discuss Course Access.

August

Thought Leadership

Hosted the Excellence in Education Leadership Series, through ExcelinEd in Action, to bring policymakers, lawmakers and advocacy leaders together with state education reform champions. The series featured Georgia Governor Nathan Deal, Mississippi Lt. Governor Tate Reeves, Nevada Governor Brian Sandoval and Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson in 2015.

National Dialogue

Published three articles in *The American Spectator*. Topics included school choice, why proficiency matters and education funding reform.

September

Public Engagement

Held four focus groups in Orlando about the perception of standardized tests and the importance of assessments.

Drop the Suit

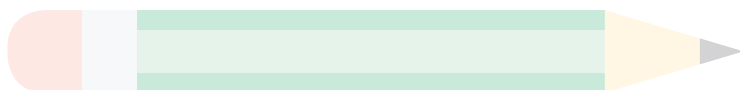
Developed and launched *DropTheSuitNV.org* to generate awareness and support for Nevada's landmark universal Education Savings Account program. #DroptheSuitNV achieved more than 380,000 impressions on Twitter within the first week.

Raising the Bar

Arizona and Georgia raised proficiency expectations on state assessments. By the end of 2015, 36 states did the same.

Challenging the Status Quo

Co-signed an amicus brief in *Vergara v. California*, supporting the constitutional right of California students to learn from effective teachers.



Year in Review Quarter Four

October

Convening State and National Leaders

Convened a record-setting number of attendees at the 2015 National Summit on Education Reform.

Promoting Course Access

Produced a series of videos profiling Course Access programs in Louisiana and Texas, including interviews with educators and students.



Board Update

Welcomed former Governor of West Virginia Gaston Caperton to ExcelinEd's Board of Directors.

National Survey

Conducted a national survey of Charter Management Organizations to provide relevant insights into the state policy preferences of high performing charter schools.

November

State Campaign

Launched a campaign in Georgia calling for the state to update its 30-year-old funding formula to address the realities of modern classrooms. An ExcelinEd-produced video from the campaign received more than 200,000 views.

Peer-to-Peer Learning

Launched a K-3 Reading cohort in conjunction with EdPolicy Leaders Online, providing targeted states with interactive support, instruction and networking opportunities.

Defending School Choice

Filed two amicus briefs in support of Nevada's Education Savings Account law (*Duncan v. Nevada* and *Lopez v. Schwartz*).

December

State Campaign

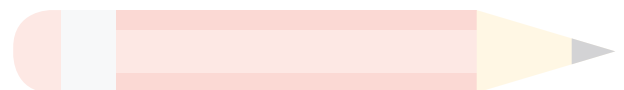
Launched *RaisingTheBarGA.com* as part of ExcelinEd's public awareness campaign to inform Georgia parents and the public about Georgia's new A-F School Grading System.

Federal Action

The United States Congress passed the Every Student Succeeds Act to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The law shifts important education decisions about standards, assessments and accountability to states and creates new flexible funding streams that states can use for public school choice, literacy and other reforms.

Legal Action

Co-signed an amicus brief filed by the Goldwater Institute asking the United States Supreme Court to hear the case on Colorado's Douglas County School Voucher Program.





School Grading Drives Student Success

A-F School Grading

A transparent, objective, easy-to-understand school accountability model.

Elements of a Rigorous School Grading System

A school accountability system spurs school improvement and increases student performance by providing transparent, objective information to parents, educators and the public about school effectiveness. Essential elements include:



Clear descriptors



Timely reporting



Outcome-based measures



Communicating with parents



Proficiency and growth



Recognition



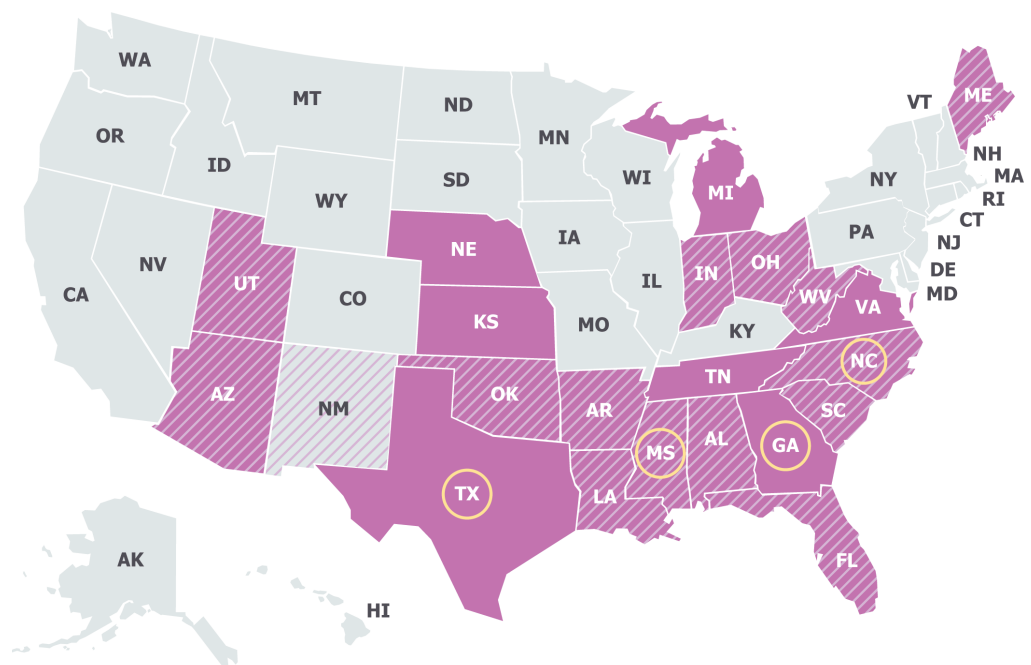
Attention on low performing students



Support and intervention

Most states use vague labels, such as “satisfactory” or “Level 1” to rate schools instead of offering parents, policymakers and the public transparent, objective information about school effectiveness. In 1999, Florida made the revolutionary decision to grade schools on an A-F scale just like students—no further explanation needed. Since that time 16 states adopted a similar system.

Behind the A-F simplicity is a data-driven system of accountability. ExcelinEd promotes an A-F School Grading policy that measures what matters: overall student performance and progress, with extra focus on struggling students, and graduation rates and college and career readiness in high school. School grading works by holding all schools to the same high expectations and clearly communicating the results to parents.



2015 ExcelinEd Engagement

Existing Policy Prior to 2014

Policy Strengthened or Passed in 2015



“An effective accountability system needs to be clear and fair in terms of measuring not only growth in student achievement, but proficiency as well.”

Senator Gray Tollison | Mississippi

State Actions

In 2015, ExcelinEd worked in 21 states on A-F School Grading.

- **Passed Policy:** Georgia, Texas
- **Strengthened Policy:** Mississippi, North Carolina
- **Guided Implementation:** Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Texas, Utah, West Virginia
- **Supported States:** Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Michigan, Nebraska, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia

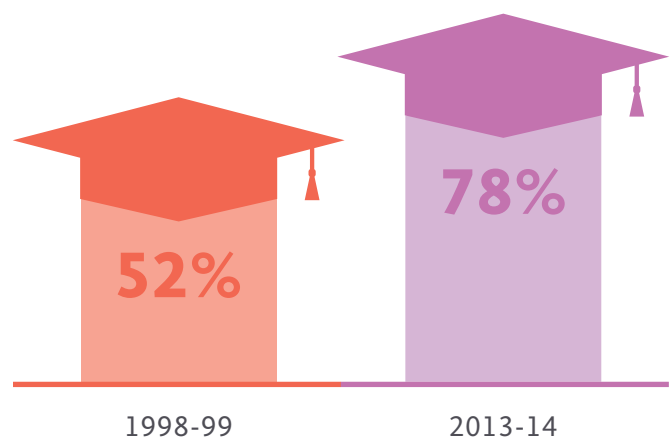
“Ensuring that parents have a clear, honest picture of how their child’s school is performing is a top priority for Governor Deal. Georgia’s new A-F School Grading Policy will help parents, teachers, administrators and communities recognize schools that are achieving success and provide support to those that are not meeting expectations.”

Martha Ann Todd | Executive Director,
Georgia Governor’s Office of Student
Achievement

Florida School Grading Leads to Student Success

Since implementation, the A-F School Grading Policy in Florida has consistently raised the bar – challenging teachers and schools to reach beyond excellence and prepare students for success. The result is a 26 percent increase in the high school graduation rate since the policy began in 1998-99.

GRADUATION RATE





Reading is the Gateway to Learning

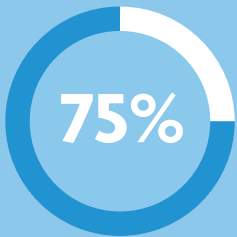
K-3 Reading

A comprehensive reading intervention policy that begins in kindergarten and ensures that students are prepared for success before moving on to fourth grade.

Almost
9 OUT OF 10

high school dropouts were struggling readers in the third grade

And high school dropouts make up:



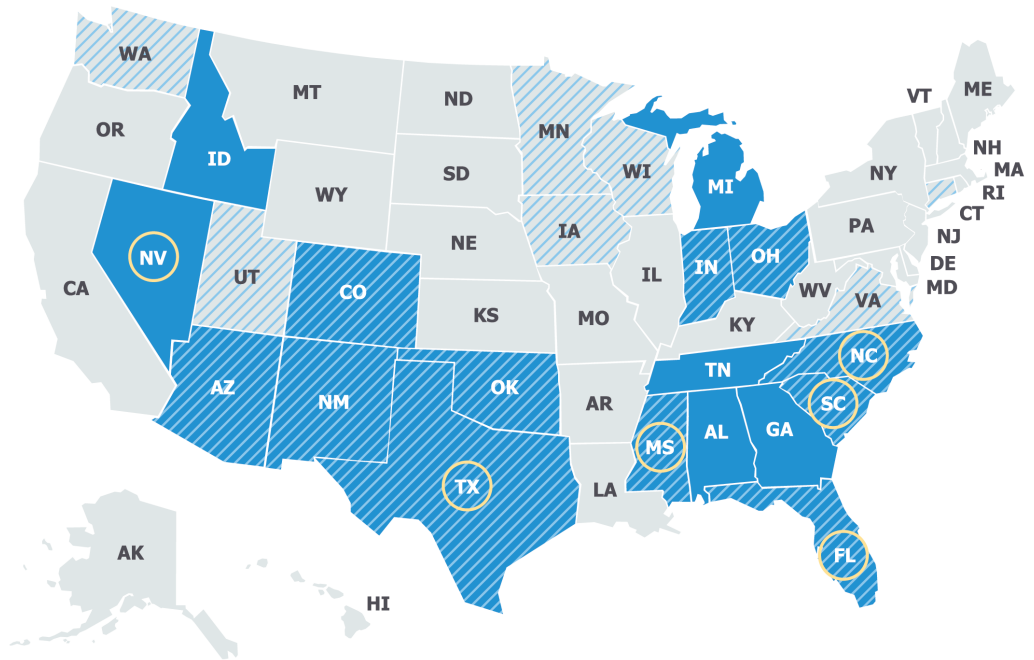
OF CITIZENS RECEIVING FOOD STAMPS



OF AMERICANS ON WELFARE

From kindergarten through third grade, children are learning to read. Then in fourth grade, they transition to use reading to learn. The ability to read opens doors and opportunities that each child deserves. Without this ability, students suffer. Children who are not reading proficiently in third grade are four times more likely to drop out or fail to graduate from high school, according to a report by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. For poor black and Hispanic students, that likelihood doubles.

ExcelinEd's comprehensive K-3 Reading policy was developed to ensure all students enter fourth grade with the foundational reading skills they will need to learn, graduate and succeed.



2015 ExcelinEd Engagement

Existing Policy Prior to 2014

Policy Strengthened or Passed in 2015



“Mississippi’s Literacy-Based Promotion Act put a laser-like focus on literacy starting in kindergarten to ensure that students were competent readers by the end of 3rd grade. Our schools now devote more instructional time to reading, and our teachers have become more effective teachers of reading. Students have benefited enormously from this policy, especially those who need extra support to master the foundations of reading.”

Dr. Carey M. Wright | Mississippi State Superintendent of Education

State Actions

In 2015, ExcelinEd worked in 17 states on K-3 Reading.







- **Passed Policy:** Nevada
- **Strengthened Policy:** Florida, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas
- **Guided Implementation:** Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Indiana, Mississippi, Nevada, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina
- **Supported States:** Alabama, Georgia, Idaho, Michigan, New Mexico, Tennessee

“It’s a great policy. It’s a policy that I think everyone can get behind. It’s critical to the future of not just our kids, but the entire state and nation.”

Dale Erquiaga | Chief Strategy Officer and Former State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Nevada

K-3 READING POLICIES BRINGING REAL RESULTS

States with most improvement in NAEP 4th Grade Reading scores since implementation of a comprehensive reading policy.

| State | Year Adopted | Grade Level Improvement | Scale Score Improvement | |
|----------------|--------------|-------------------------|---|------------|
| Florida | 2002 | Nearly 1 ½ |  | +13 |
| Oklahoma | 2011 | More than ½ |  | +7 |
| Indiana | 2011 | ½ |  | +6 |
| Mississippi | 2013 | ½ |  | +5 |
| North Carolina | 2012 | ½ |  | +5 |
| Arizona | 2010 | ½ |  | +5 |



Revolutionizing Educational Choice

Education Savings Accounts

The next generation of choice that empowers families with the financial freedom to choose the right school or learning environment for their child.

Customized Educational Choice

Under a robust system of accountability (monitoring and auditing), parents can direct funds in an ESA to any combination of educational uses, including:



Tutoring



Exam fees



Online programs and courses



Savings for future college costs



Contract public school courses



Private school tuition

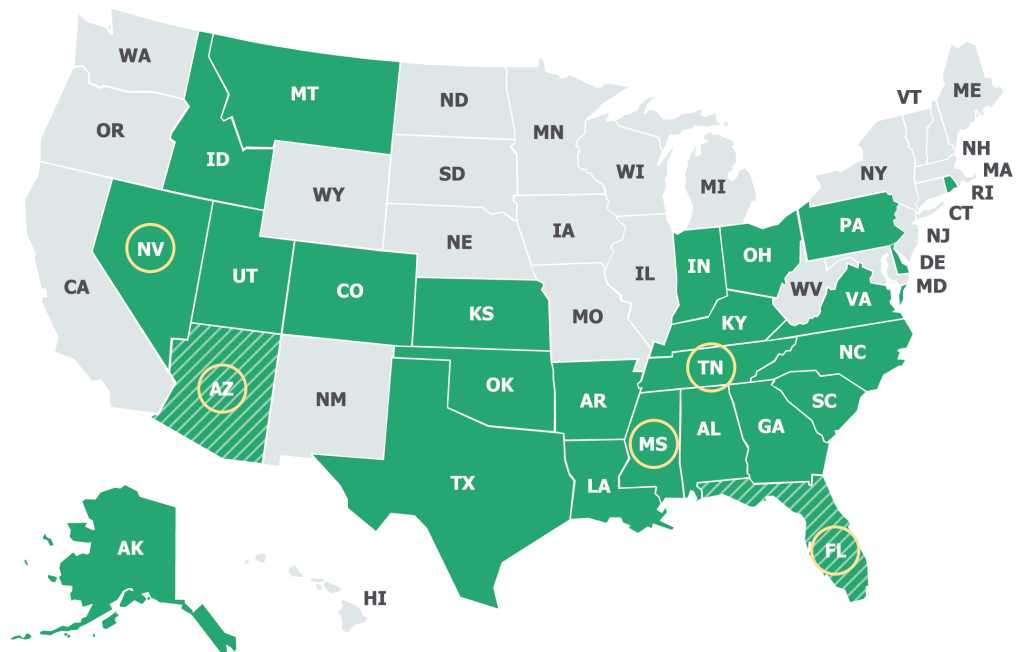


Therapy for special needs students



Instructional materials and curriculum

Since the first Education Savings Account (ESA) program was introduced in 2011, this policy has been changing education as we know it. ESAs place state dollars designated for a child's education into an account that parents can manage to cover the cost of customized learning. Account funds can cover multiple education options, including private school tuition, online education, tutoring and dual enrollment, and unused funds can be saved for future K-12 or higher education costs. ExcelinEd promotes the expansion of ESAs in states as a way for parents to care for their children's unique educational needs. ESAs create an entirely flexible approach to education, where the ultimate goal is maximizing each child's natural learning abilities.



2015 ExcelinEd Engagement

Existing Policy Prior to 2014

Policy Strengthened or Passed in 2015



"I am passionate about improving the state of education in Tennessee, and I am incredibly proud of the work we have accomplished. No parent should be denied the opportunity to select the best school for their child. Our state's new Individualized Education Account program brings us one step closer to ensuring that every family—regardless of their zip code or salary—has quality educational options for their child."

Representative Debra Moody | Tennessee

State Actions

In 2015, ExcelinEd worked in 26 states on ESAs.

- **Passed Policy:** Mississippi, Nevada, Tennessee
- **Strengthened Policy:** Arizona, Florida
- **Guided Implementation:** Arizona, Florida, Mississippi, Nevada, Tennessee
- **Supported States:** Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Colorado, Delaware, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Montana, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, Virginia

"The PLSA program has helped my family in ways I could have never imagined. I am so excited about the progress Gregory has made and it has all been possible this year because of the program. PLSAs are changing lives. It is changing our lives."

Katie Swingle | Florida mother of a special needs student using a Personal Learning Scholarship Account (Florida's ESA program)

Defending Nevada's Landmark ESA Program

Once operational, Nevada's ESA program could give more than 450,000 eligible students the chance to attend the school of their choice and to customize education services and therapies.

However, lawsuits filed by American Civil Liberties Union and Educate Nevada Now! threaten Nevada's ability to offer parents the freedom to decide how their children will be educated. And, these challenges are causing irreparable harm and uncertainty for the 4,100 children who were counting on these accounts this year.

Unwilling to sit on the sidelines, ExcelinEd filed two amicus briefs in support of Nevada's landmark legislation (*Duncan v. Nevada* and *Lopez v. Schwartz*).



93%

of all Nevada students –

453,024

children – are eligible

for an ESA



Preparing Students for Today's Global Economy

College & Career Readiness

Policies that provide information, incentives and access to advanced courses and certifications to prepare students for higher education and the workforce.

Workforce Demand

Skilled trades are the hardest jobs to fill in the U.S.

65%

of job openings in the U.S by 2020 will require some post-secondary education

Georgetown University, Center on Education and the Workforce, Recovery 2020

33%

of U.S. employers report difficulty filling open positions, with skilled trades the hardest jobs to fill for the 6th consecutive year

ManpowerGroup, 2015 U.S. Talent Shortage Survey

Almost **3.5 million**

Manufacturing jobs are likely needed to be filled in the next decade

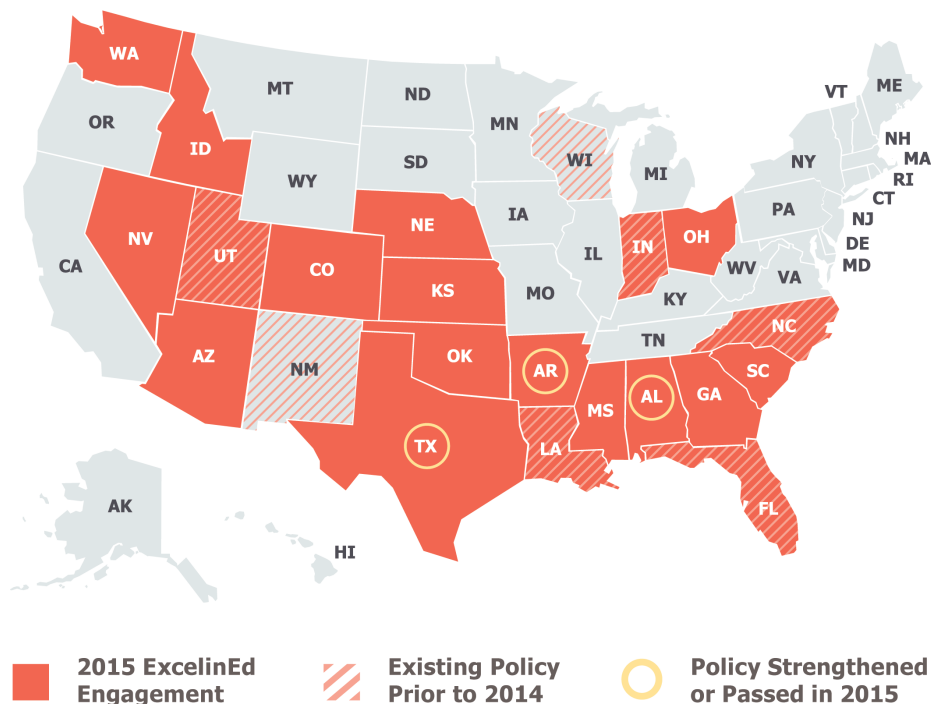
About **2 million**

Manufacturing jobs will go unfilled in the next decade

Deloitte/Manufacturing Institute, The Skills Gap in U.S. Manufacturing 2015 and Beyond, 2015

Our nation's failure to educate its students leaves many of them unprepared for the challenges they will face after high school, and this failure also threatens the country's ability to thrive in a global economy. ExcelinEd promotes comprehensive college and career readiness policies to best equip students for the rigors of the college classroom and the labor market. The model includes:

- Increasing students' access to Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate and dual enrollment courses and industry-verified job certifications during high school.
- Rewarding schools and teachers for student success in earning college credit and industry certifications.
- Informing teachers, parents and students about college and career options through Economic Security Reports.





“All I want is to get that first college credit for them and then they become believers...For children in poverty it is critical that we push them into more rigorous courses and then support them for success.”

Barbara Jenkins | Orange County Public Schools
Superintendent, Florida

State Actions

In 2015, ExcelinEd worked in 20 states on College and Career Readiness.

- **Passed Policy:** *Arkansas*
- **Strengthened Policy:** *Alabama, Texas*
- **Guided Implementation:** *Arkansas*
- **Supported States:** *Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Nebraska, Nevada, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Utah, Washington*

“Parents deserve the best information available to allow them to make informed decisions about the field of study and career that maximizes their child’s talents. By providing the right resources we can prepare our students for the rigors of the global workforce.”

Senator Alan Clark | Arkansas

GROWING SUCCESS IN INDUSTRY CERTIFICATION

Student Enrollment in Orange County Public School Courses that Lead to an Industry Certification or Licensure, Associate Degree or Baccalaureate Degree



5,802

28,009

2010

2015

Number of Students Earning Industry Certification in Florida



803

58,576

2007-2008

2014-2015

NUMBER OF STUDENTS



Expanding Access & Equity

Course Access

A technology-driven choice initiative that allows K-12 students to access quality courses regardless of location.

Nationwide,

ONLY 50%

of high schools offer calculus



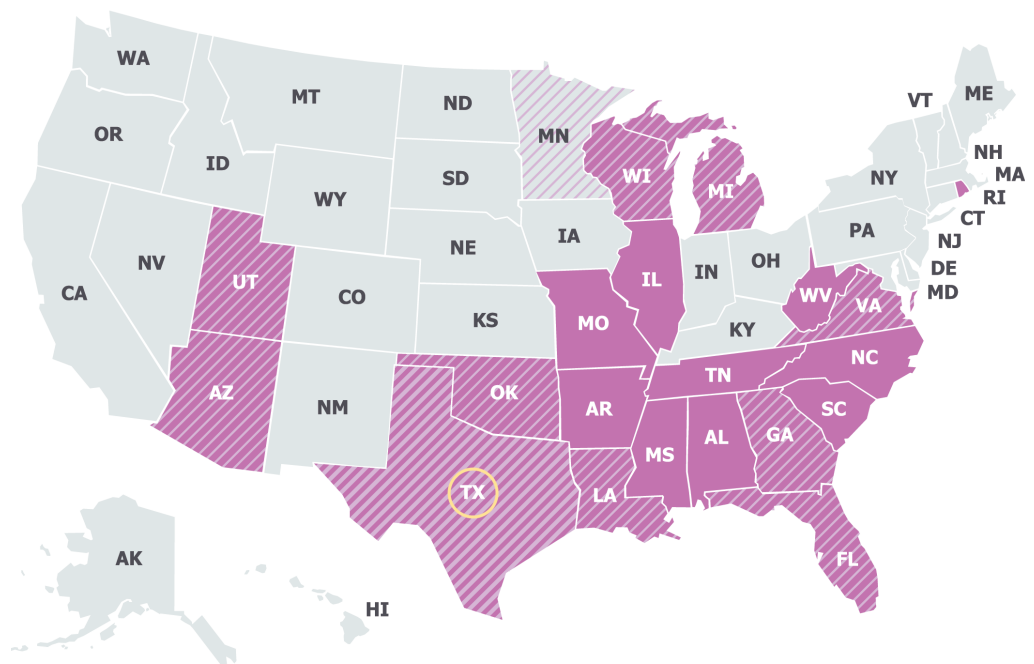
and

ONLY 63%

of high schools offer physics



Access to a high-quality education no longer needs to depend on location. ExcelinEd promotes Course Access to connect students—wherever they may live—with a wide variety of quality resources, instructors and courses. Course Access uses technology and innovative policy to offer a catalog of courses to students statewide. Families can select the best courses for their children from an online catalog of in-person, online and blended courses. From Advanced Placement to STEM and music courses, states can use Course Access to engage students like never before by offering their preferred courses in their preferred formats from effective, qualified teachers.



2015 ExcelinEd Engagement

Existing Policy Prior to 2014

Policy Strengthened or Passed in 2015



“When I told my dad that I wanted to be a welder and to come here for welding, he said it takes a lot of patience and you’re a girl and it’s a man’s job. So I told him, ‘Just watch me.’ Now I’m about to be certified, and he’s pretty proud.”

Stormi Hunnicutt | Louisiana student earning a welding certification through a Course Access program

State Actions

In 2015, ExcelinEd worked in 20 states on Course Access.

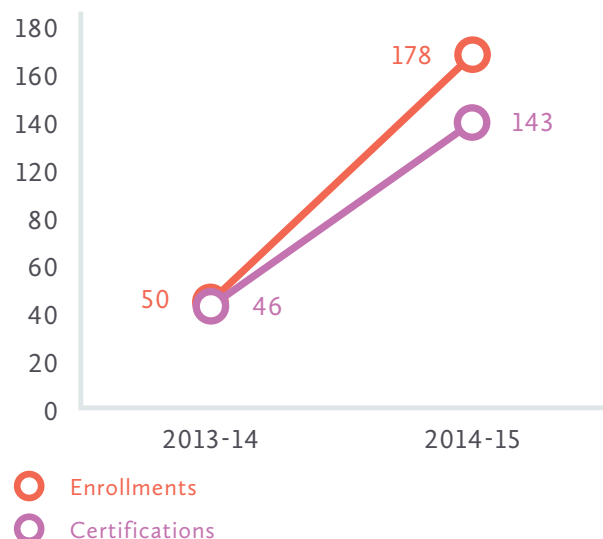
- **Strengthened Policy:** *Texas*
- **Guided Implementation:** *Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Michigan, Oklahoma, Texas, Utah*
- **Supported States:** *Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin*

“Our state continues to leverage innovative technology that improves access to learning opportunities so students—wherever they may be—can select high quality courses that match their individual needs and interests.”

Florence Shapiro | President and Chairwoman of Texans for Education Reform

Louisiana Industry Training Grows Exponentially with Course Choice

ABC-Pelican, a Louisiana training center for welding, electrical, pipefitting and other similar industry certifications, became a Louisiana Course Choice provider in 2013. The program allows high school students to earn demanding industry certifications at a Pelican Chapter Training Center during the day while also taking academic core classes at their home schools. **Since becoming a Course Choice provider, enrollments and certifications have more than tripled.**





Building the Foundation for a Personalized Education

Competency-Based Education

An innovative education model where students advance to higher levels of learning when they demonstrate mastery of concepts and skills—regardless of time, place or pace.

In a Competency-Based Education system, an individual student progresses as learning expectations are met, rather than a predetermined curriculum schedule, seat-time or even student age. A student can accelerate through concepts and skills they have mastered while receiving more time and support in other areas. This approach comprehensively rethinks the instructional model and includes fundamental changes in schedules, calendars, assessment and grading.

ExcelinEd promotes Competency-Based Education models to redesign education from a system where students advance based on age or grade to one that advances students when they are ready.

“We continue to transform education to a personalized system where every learner is met at their level. They are guaranteed success. They are challenged. They are pushed and they leave our system ready to choose college or their career.”

Thomas Rooney | Superintendent of California’s Lindsay Unified School District

State Actions

In 2015, ExcelinEd worked in 10 states on Competency-Based Education.

- **Passed Policy:** Idaho
- **Strengthened Policy:** Florida, Idaho, Utah
- **Supported States:** Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Mississippi, North Carolina, Ohio, South Carolina, Texas, Utah

WHAT’S THE DIFFERENCE?

Traditional Education



TEACH TO THE MIDDLE INSTRUCTION



AGE-BASED & SEAT-TIME PROGRESS

| | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| JAN | FEB | MAR | APR |
| MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG |
| SEP | OCT | NOV | DEC |

END OF YEAR ASSESSMENT

Competency-Based Education



STUDENT CENTERED INSTRUCTION

| |
|--------------------|
| – Work in Progress |
| ✓ Proficient |

PROGRESS UPON MASTERY

| | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| JAN | FEB | MAR | APR |
| MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG |
| SEP | OCT | NOV | DEC |

ASSESSMENT WHEN READY



Putting Dollars Where They Matter

Education Funding Reform

A reform that invests in proven strategies, incentivizes achievement and rewards student learning.

Per-student funding in American schools has quadrupled since the 1960s, yet academic achievement has remained stubbornly flat. Why? Because spending more on education only works when the money targets strategies and programs that produce results. ExcelinEd supports outcome-based funding policies that invest in proven strategies, incentivize achievement and recognize and reward student learning instead of just seat time. Outcome-based funding policies change funding formulas so per-pupil payments are aligned with desired student outcomes—such as course completion and graduation—instead of inputs.

“Pay for Success contracts could potentially revolutionize the way we invest in Colorado’s students and future workforce. It is great to see policymakers harnessing the power of private investment to improve kids’ lives. This innovative policy attracted a diverse group of supporters because it can be deployed to address a wide variety of problems.”

Luke Ragland | Vice President of Policy for Colorado Succeeds

State Actions

In 2015, ExcelinEd worked in 15 states on Education Funding Reform.

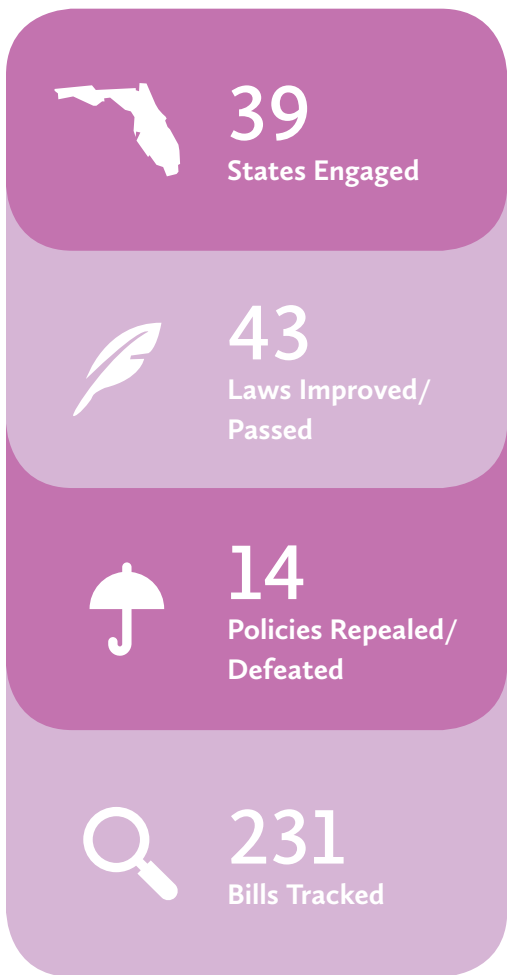
- **Passed Policy:** Colorado, Idaho, Nevada
- **Strengthened Policy:** Arkansas
- **Supported States:** Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Nevada, South Carolina, Tennessee

By significant margins, Georgians support efforts to modernize the state’s 30-year-old funding formula to a student-centered system that is flexible and transparent, according to a poll commissioned by ExcelinEd.



By the Numbers

We Turn Reform Into Reality



189 Education Reform Partners



95 State & National Speaking Engagements



20 Expert Testimonies in 10 States



776 Pages of Whitepapers & Policy Resources



50 *EdPolicy Leaders Online* Course Videos

104
Trips to Support States

265
Days on the Road

209,968
Miles Traveled





“Far too many students approach their high school graduation ceremony with the unsettling question of what comes next and are they ready for it. As we retool K-12 education from a model focused on diplomas to one focused on the future of students, more of them are walking off the stage prepared for the challenges of college or a meaningful career.”

Patricia Levesque | CEO, Foundation for Excellence in Education



140+

Press Releases and Statements



560+

News Stories and Media Hits



1.25M+

Reach through Eblasts



30%

Increase in Visits to The EdFly Blog



85K+

Pageviews on WhyProficiencyMatters.com



13,600

Twitter Followers



1.37M

Facebook Reach



132K+

ExcelinEd.org Visitors



39.6M

Digital Campaign Impressions

200

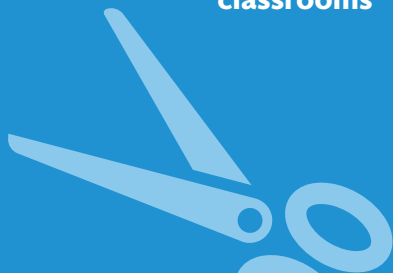
years of collective professional experience

7

staff with experience teaching in K-12 classrooms

55%

of staff have worked for a governor, a state legislature or a state department of education



Convening the Nation's Leaders

2015 National Summit on Education Reform

Highlights

936 Attendees
a record number
came from 45 states,
Washington D.C. and
England.

**359 State
Legislators**
and state and local
education leaders.

**#EIE15
Digital**

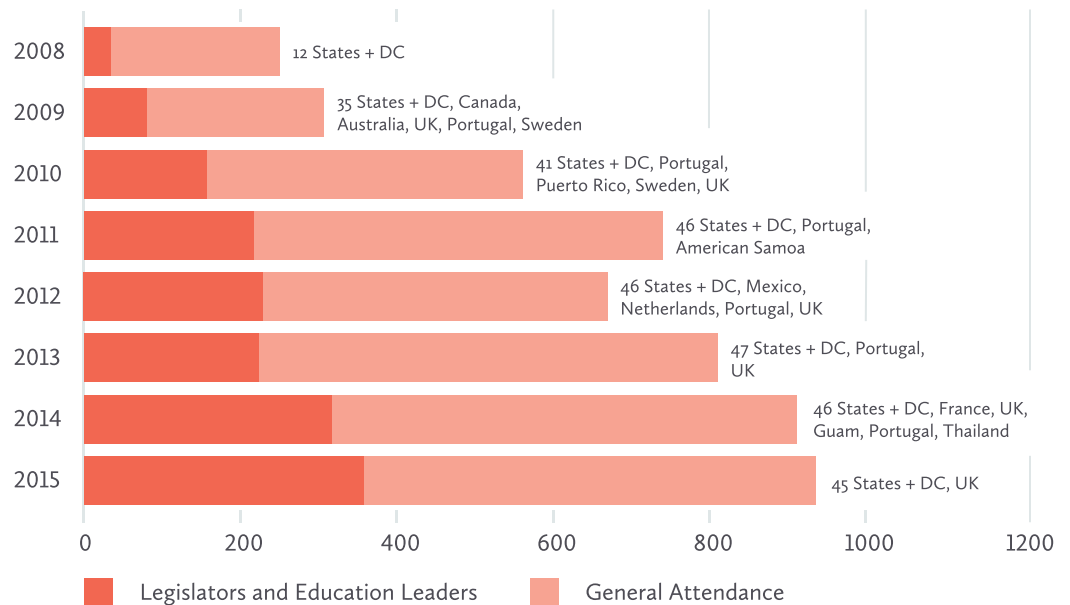
2.3 Million
#EIE15's reach
through Twitter

4,293 Tweets
using #EIE15

2,731 Retweets

ExcelinEd hosted the eighth annual National Summit on Education Reform October 22-23 in Denver. This flagship event gathered national leaders, state policymakers, reform organizations and education stakeholders to share what works, what doesn't and what's next in education reform. Featured keynotes and strategy sessions ranged from self-organized learning environments and enhancing economic mobility through education to why proficiency matters, the success of high-performing charter schools and ways to spark education innovation.

National Summit Attendance



“What we’re really committing to here is to not accept the world as it is, but to work for the world as it should be. The world as it is, is a world in which I can look at your zip code and I can tell whether you’re going to get a good education. The world as it should be is one in which every child’s life is worthy and fulfilled.”

Dr. Condoleezza Rice | 66th U.S. Secretary of State and 2015 Keynote Speaker



“Why did I take this particular invitation? ... If I have to ever affect policy, this is where it can be. And to be very honest, and I’m not flattering America, the kind of change I’m talking about, if it has to happen I believe it is in this country—in America that it can happen.”

Dr. Sugata Mitra | Professor of Educational Technology, Newcastle University, UK and 2015 Keynote Speaker

In Their Own Words

“Just when I think the National Summit on Education Reform cannot get any better, the Foundation finds a way to improve it...”

Pierce McNair | Staff, South Carolina House of Representatives



“The 2015 National Summit on Education Reform was, in one word, OUTSTANDING!...”

Nathan Lindsay | VP for Political Affairs, Business Council of Alabama



“The networking session on Friday was awesome! We had some great discussions and exchanging of ideas and solutions to universal problems affecting each of us in our respective state.”

Rep. Mike Glanton | Georgia House of Representatives

“Thank you for the fantastic lineup of speakers and breakout sessions...Sharing innovative ideas and starting important discussions about how things can be improved is a critical component of the work ahead of all of us.”

Kirsten Baesler | North Dakota State Superintendent of Public Instruction












“Each year I leave with not only new policy ideas to pursue, but encouraged and reinvigorated for the work ahead. We are anxious to continue our efforts and pursue bold reform in our state.”

Senator Ryan Aument | Pennsylvania State Senate



ALABAMA

Policy Engagement

| THE POLICY | OUR ROLE | ACTION |
|--|--|-----------|
| School Choice (Tax Credit Scholarships) |  | Improve |
| School Choice (Charter Schools) |  | Pass |
| A-F School Grading |  | Implement |
| School Choice (Education Savings Accounts) |  | Pass |
| College & Career Readiness (Industry Certifications, Economic Security Report) |  | Develop |
| Course Access |  | Develop |
| Standards & Assessments |  | Protect |
|  A Leading Partner Organization |  Supporting In-State Partners | SUCCESS |
| | | ONGOING |
| | | FAILED |

Existing Signature Policies

(as of January 2015)

- A-F School Grading

IN THE NEWS

Charter schools coming to Alabama; here's more about what that means

"I think you will have school systems across the state looking at it, seeing how they can take advantage of it," said Sen. Del Marsh, R-Anniston, the bill's sponsor. State School Superintendent Tommy Bice said Friday the new law gives local systems 'another tool to create innovative options to serve the needs of their students.'"

2015 Proficiency Gap

4TH GRADE READING



For 4th Grade Math, 8th Grade Reading and 8th Grade Math, visit WhyProficiencyMatters.com.

D-

DLN Report Card Grade


DigitalLearningNow.com

+19

Age Dependency Ratio

ExcelinEd.org/FaceTheStrain

Policy Engagement

| THE POLICY | OUR ROLE | ACTION |
|--|--|-----------------|
| School Choice (Education Savings Accounts) |  | Improve |
| A-F School Grading |  | Protect |
| K-3 Reading |  | Implement |
| Competency-Based Education |  | Pass** |
| Education Funding Reform (Pay For Performance) |  | Develop |
| College & Career Readiness (Industry Certifications) |  | Develop |
| Accountability (Proficiency Cut Scores) |  | Improve/Protect |
| Course Access |  | Improve*** |
|  A Leading Partner Organization |  Supporting In-State Partners | SUCCESS |
| | | ONGOING |
| | | FAILED |

** Competency-Based Education: Legislation received a favorable committee vote, but did not pass the full Senate.
 *** Course Access: Arizona's Digital Learning Now Report Card remained a C and did not improve.

Existing Signature Policies

(as of January 2015)

- Course Access
- Education Savings Accounts
- A-F School Grading
- K-3 Reading

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

"We've raised the bar on what proficiency means as compared to the old assessment. Now families and teachers can get meaningful feedback on how kids are actually doing so they can support them and help them be more successful."

Pearl Chang Esau | President and CEO of Expect More Arizona



2015 Proficiency Gap

4TH GRADE READING



For 4th Grade Math, 8th Grade Reading and 8th Grade Math, visit WhyProficiencyMatters.com.

DLN Report Card Grade

C+

DigitalLearningNow.com

Age Dependency Ratio

+22

ExcelinEd.org/FaceTheStrain

Policy Engagement

| THE POLICY | OUR ROLE | ACTION |
|---|----------|---------|
| School Choice (Special Needs Vouchers) | | Pass |
| College & Career Readiness (Industry Certifications) | | Develop |
| College & Career Readiness (Economic Security Report) | | Pass |
| A-F School Grading | | Protect |
| Digital Learning | | Improve |
| Education Funding Reform | | Improve |

| | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|---------|
| | | SUCCESS |
| A Leading Partner Organization | Supporting In-State Partners | ONGOING |
| | | FAILED |

Existing Signature Policies

(as of January 2015)

- A-F School Grading

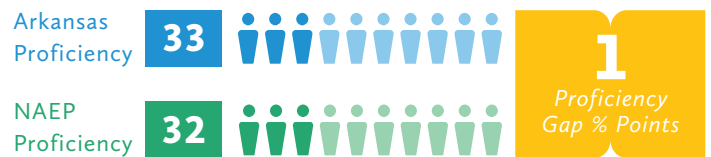
WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

"We were very pleased to pass the Succeed Scholarship bill with overwhelming bipartisan support in both the House and the Senate and with no dissenting votes. We were also pleased that this is the first time in Arkansas history that taxpayer funds can be used in a private institution. It is a parental choice program for severely disabled children who really have no options in the public school system. The program goes into effect in school year 2016 for a limited number (100). Based on public inquiries we expect that number to be exceeded and that the number of participants will increase in the years following."

Rep. Douglas House | Succeed Scholarship bill sponsor

2015 Proficiency Gap

4TH GRADE READING



For 4th Grade Math, 8th Grade Reading and 8th Grade Math, visit WhyProficiencyMatters.com.

DLN
Report Card
Grade

C

DigitalLearningNow.com

Age
Dependency
Ratio

+17

ExcelinEd.org/FaceTheStrain

ExcelinEd 31

Policy Engagement

THE POLICY OUR ROLE ACTION

Standards & Assessments



Protect

College & Career Readiness (Industry Certifications)



Pass*

School Choice (Tax Credit Scholarships)



Develop



A Leading Partner Organization



Supporting In-State Partners

SUCCESS

ONGOING

FAILED

* Industry Certifications: Legislation was not successful.

Existing Signature Policies

(as of January 2015)

- K-3 Reading

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

"I believe excellent schools don't just happen. They are carefully built by educators, community leaders, students, parents and policy makers who understand that the most important asset for our future is our children's education today. Colorado has done a lot of work to ensure all kids get the education they need to thrive and succeed in our communities—but there is more work to be done. I get up and do my best to ensure that all kids in Colorado have the very best opportunity to find their path in life and be prepared for success."

Shelby Edwards | Education Initiatives Manager, Colorado Children's Campaign (EdPolicy Leaders Online)

2015 Proficiency Gap

4TH GRADE READING

Colorado Proficiency

42



NAEP Proficiency

39



3

Proficiency Gap % Points

For 4th Grade Math, 8th Grade Reading and 8th Grade Math, visit WhyProficiencyMatters.com.

DLN Report Card Grade

D+

DigitalLearningNow.com











Age Dependency Ratio

+17

ExcelinEd.org/FaceTheStrain



Policy Engagement

| THE POLICY | OUR ROLE | ACTION |
|--|--|--------------------|
| School Choice (Education Savings Accounts) |  | Implement/ Improve |
| School Choice (Charter Schools) |  | Improve |
| School Choice (Public School Choice) |  | Pass |
| Standards & Assessments |  | Protect |
| A-F School Grading |  | Implement |
| Digital Learning |  | Improve |
| Course Access |  | Improve |
| Education Funding Reform |  | Develop |
|  A Leading Partner Organization |  Supporting In-State Partners | SUCCESS |
| | | ONGOING |
| | | FAILED |

Existing Signature Policies

(as of January 2015)

- Course Access
- Education Savings Accounts
- A-F School Grading
- K-3 Reading
- College & Career Readiness

IN THE NEWS

Bill would give more choice to students about where they can enroll

“Lawmakers in the House and Senate are considering proposals that would let children enroll in any school in the state that has available seats. The bills would also make it easier for some parents to transfer their children into different teacher’s classrooms.”

2013* Proficiency Gap

4TH GRADE READING



For 4th Grade Math, 8th Grade Reading and 8th Grade Math, visit WhyProficiencyMatters.com.

*Florida test scores for the 2014-15 school year were not released at time of print. They are anticipated Summer 2016.

A-

DLN Report Card Grade









DigitalLearningNow.com

+26

Age Dependency Ratio

ExcelinEd.org/FaceTheStrain

Policy Engagement

| THE POLICY | OUR ROLE | ACTION |
|--|---|----------|
| A-F School Grading |  | Pass |
| Student Data Privacy |  | Pass |
| School Choice (Education Savings Accounts) |  | Pass* |
| School Choice (Charter Schools) |  | Improve |
| Standards & Assessments |  | Protect |
| Education Funding Reform |  | Develop |
| Course Access |  | Improve* |
| College & Career Readiness (AP, Economic Security Report, Industry Certifications) |  | Develop |

| | |
|---|---|
|  |  |
| A Leading Partner Organization | Supporting In-State Partners |

| |
|---------|
| SUCCESS |
| ONGOING |
| FAILED |

Existing Signature Policies

(as of January 2015)

- Course Access

IN THE NEWS

Georgia Unanimously Passes Student Data Privacy, Accessibility and Transparency Act

A new law in Georgia should strengthen data privacy for students and create new controls around the management of student data... The state is required by the act to develop a data security plan that will keep student data as safe as possible. Technology vendors working with schools will be required to develop security procedures and prohibited from selling personal information about students to advertisers or anyone else...

2015 Proficiency Gap

4TH GRADE READING



For 4th Grade Math, 8th Grade Reading and 8th Grade Math, visit WhyProficiencyMatters.com.

B

DLN Report Card Grade

DigitalLearningNow.com

+16

Age Dependency Ratio

ExcelinEd.org/FaceTheStrain

* Not successful in 2015. Carried over into 2016, the second year of the state's biennial session.

Policy Engagement

| THE POLICY | OUR ROLE | ACTION |
|----------------------------|----------|-----------|
| K-3 Reading | | Develop |
| Education Funding Reform | | Pass |
| Competency-Based Education | | Implement |

| | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|---------|
| | | SUCCESS |
| A Leading Partner Organization | Supporting In-State Partners | ONGOING |
| | | FAILED |

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

"Next year we'll have 20 school/district incubators that will form a professional learning community around Mastery Education, the Idaho Mastery Education Network. We will gather data and learn from our challenges as we move along. We will capture our successes and show others across the state the potential of Mastery Education with real stories of real kids in real classrooms...As an educator, it couldn't be a more exciting time."

Kelly Brady | Director of Mastery Education for the Idaho State Department of Education



2015 Proficiency Gap

4TH GRADE READING



For 4th Grade Math, 8th Grade Reading and 8th Grade Math, visit WhyProficiencyMatters.com.

C

DLN Report Card Grade

DigitalLearningNow.com

+9

Age Dependency Ratio

ExcelinEd.org/FaceTheStrain

Policy Engagement

THE POLICY OUR ROLE ACTION

School Choice (Tax-Credit Scholarships and Vouchers)



Improve

K-3 Reading



Implement

A-F School Grading



Protect



A Leading Partner Organization



Supporting In-State Partners

SUCCESS

ONGOING

FAILED

Existing Signature Policies

(as of January 2015)

- A-F School Grading
- College & Career Readiness
- K-3 Reading

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

"After facing distractions at my old school, my parents wanted to put me in a better position to succeed. That's where private school and Indiana's Choice Scholarship program came in. Without the scholarship and change in schools, I wouldn't be where I am now. I have dreams and I know I can do anything thanks to my education. I wish I could give the same opportunity I have had to every student so they could also realize their potential."

Nicholas Ford | Indiana Choice Scholarship Recipient

2015 Proficiency Gap

4TH GRADE READING



For 4th Grade Math, 8th Grade Reading and 8th Grade Math, visit WhyProficiencyMatters.com.

B-

DLN Report Card Grade

DigitalLearningNow.com

+15










Age Dependency Ratio

ExcelinEd.org/FaceTheStrain



LOUISIANA

Policy Engagement

| THE POLICY | OUR ROLE | ACTION |
|--|--|----------|
| School Choice (Education Savings Accounts) |  | Develop |
| School Choice (Vouchers, Tax-Rebate Scholarships, Charter Schools) |  | Protect |
| A-F School Grading |  | Improve* |
| Standards & Assessments |  | Protect |
| Course Access |  | Protect |
| College & Career Readiness (Economic Security Report) |  | Develop |
| Education Funding Reform |  | Develop |
|  A Leading Partner Organization |  Supporting In-State Partners | SUCCESS |
| | | ONGOING |
| | | FAILED |

* A-F School Grading: No agreement among state partners on improving the existing growth calculation.

Existing Signature Policies

(as of January 2015)

- Course Access
- College & Career Readiness
- A-F School Grading

IN THE NEWS

Louisiana's Course Choice Revolution

As of the beginning of this year, there were more than 19,000 courses delivered through the Course Choice program in Louisiana, an eight-fold increase from the previous year—the program's first. Louisiana's education system may not be known for cutting-edge technology, but the Course Choice Program is a departure from the norm in that it is both innovative and successful.

2015 Proficiency Gap

4TH GRADE READING



For 4th Grade Math, 8th Grade Reading and 8th Grade Math, visit WhyProficiencyMatters.com.

B-

DLN Report Card Grade




DigitalLearningNow.com

+18

Age Dependency Ratio

ExcelinEd.org/FaceTheStrain

Policy Engagement

| THE POLICY | OUR ROLE | ACTION |
|--------------------|---|-----------|
| A-F School Grading |  | Pass* |
| K-3 Reading |  | Pass* |
| Course Access |  | Implement |

| | |
|--|--|
|  |  |
| A Leading Partner Organization | Supporting In-State Partners |

SUCCESS

ONGOING

FAILED

* Not successful in 2015. Carried over into 2016, the second year of the state's biennial session.

Existing Signature Policies

(as of January 2015)

- Course Access

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

"We've been working since 2013 to address Michigan's early literacy crisis by adopting a K-3 Reading Program based on the Florida experience. The Foundation for Excellence in Education has been with us, providing literacy experts and technical support every step of the way, which has helped us navigate the legislative and policy process. We couldn't have advanced this issue as successfully without the Foundation's help."

Gary Naeyaert | Executive Director, Great Lakes Education Project, Lansing, Michigan

2015 Proficiency Gap

4TH GRADE READING



For 4th Grade Math, 8th Grade Reading and 8th Grade Math, visit WhyProficiencyMatters.com.

C

DLN Report Card Grade

DigitalLearningNow.com

+13

Age Dependency Ratio

ExcelinEd.org/FaceTheStrain



MISSISSIPPI

Policy Engagement

| THE POLICY | OUR ROLE | ACTION |
|--|----------|-------------------|
| School Choice (Education Savings Accounts) | | Pass/Implement |
| School Choice (Charter Schools) | | Improve |
| A-F School Grading | | Protect |
| K-3 Reading | | Implement/Protect |
| Education Funding Reform | | Protect |
| Student Data Privacy | | Protect |
| Effective Teachers and Leaders | | Develop |
| College and Career Readiness | | Develop |

A Leading Partner Organization

Supporting In-State Partners

SUCCESS

ONGOING

FAILED

Existing Signature Policies

(as of January 2015)

- K-3 Reading
- A-F School Grading

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

"In 1997, only 17 percent of young Mississippians with disabilities were graduating from high school. Today, that number is 23 percent. That is not progress. That is a tragedy. I know for a fact that Mississippi's students with special needs can learn, can graduate and can succeed in life. If these students can do better, then Mississippi can and must do better."

Debra Dye | Parent from DeSoto County, Mississippi

2015 Proficiency Gap

4TH GRADE READING



For 4th Grade Math, 8th Grade Reading and 8th Grade Math, visit WhyProficiencyMatters.com.

D-

DLN Report Card Grade

DigitalLearningNow.com

+15

Age Dependency Ratio

ExcelinEd.org/FaceTheStrain

Policy Engagement

| THE POLICY | OUR ROLE | ACTION |
|--|----------|---------|
| K-3 Reading | | Pass |
| School Choice (Education Savings Accounts) | | Pass |
| School Choice (Tax-Credit Scholarships) | | Pass |
| College and Career Readiness (AP, IB, Industry Certifications) | | Pass |
| Digital Learning | | Improve |
| Education Funding Reform | | Pass |

| | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|---------|
| | | SUCCESS |
| A Leading Partner Organization | Supporting In-State Partners | ONGOING |
| | | FAILED |

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

"To build a stronger Nevada, I knew we had to start with our education system. A bright future for our state means we must take bold action now to ensure students have the resources and opportunities to create a path for success. Over the past year, our state has banded together to pass sweeping education reforms like Opportunity Scholarships, Read by Three and Universal Education Savings Accounts, among others that I know will propel Nevada forward. We could not have accomplished this work without the support of organizations like the Foundation for Excellence in Education."

Governor Brian Sandoval

2015 Proficiency Gap

4TH GRADE READING



For 4th Grade Math, 8th Grade Reading and 8th Grade Math, visit WhyProficiencyMatters.com.

B+

DLN Report Card Grade

DigitalLearningNow.com

+20










Age Dependency Ratio

ExcelinEd.org/FaceTheStrain



NORTH CAROLINA

Policy Engagement

| THE POLICY | OUR ROLE | ACTION |
|--|--|--|
| K-3 Reading |  | Improve |
| A-F School Grading |  | Improve* |
| School Choice (Vouchers) |  | Improve |
| School Choice (Education Savings Accounts) |  | Pass* |
| School Choice (Charter Schools) |  | Improve* |
| College & Career Readiness (AP, IB, Industry Certifications) |  | Improve/Pass* |
| Digital Learning |  | Improve |
|  A Leading Partner Organization |  Supporting In-State Partners | <div style="background-color: #4CAF50; color: white; padding: 2px;">SUCCESS</div> <div style="background-color: #FFC107; color: white; padding: 2px;">ONGOING</div> <div style="background-color: #F44336; color: white; padding: 2px;">FAILED</div> |

* Not successful in 2015. Carried over into 2016, the second year of the state's biennial session.

Existing Signature Policies

(as of January 2015)

- K-3 Reading
- College & Career Readiness
- A-F School Grading

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

"It's a terrible reality to send your kids to a school that fails to meet their needs day after day. For nearly two thousand North Carolina students, Opportunity Scholarships are a lifeline to a better education – to a better life. The families enrolled in this program are using it because they desperately need a choice."

Lisa Smothers | Opportunity Scholarships

2015 Proficiency Gap

4TH GRADE READING



For 4th Grade Math, 8th Grade Reading and 8th Grade Math, visit WhyProficiencyMatters.com.

C

DLN Report Card Grade

DigitalLearningNow.com

+17

Age Dependency Ratio

ExcelinEd.org/FaceTheStrain

Policy Engagement

| THE POLICY | OUR ROLE | ACTION |
|---------------------------------|--|-----------|
| School Choice (Charter Schools) |  | Improve |
| School Choice (Vouchers) |  | Improve |
| A-F School Grading |  | Implement |
| K-3 Reading |  | Implement |

| | | |
|---|---|---------|
|  |  | SUCCESS |
| A Leading Partner Organization | Supporting In-State Partners | ONGOING |
| | | FAILED |

Existing Signature Policies

(as of January 2015)

- K-3 Reading
- A-F School Grading

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

"Ohio's Third Grade Reading Guarantee focuses on early intervention, and that includes involving students' families. This approach helps us circle every struggling reader with adults who are focused on giving that child the skills and support she needs to be successful in school."

Dr. Richard Ross | Ohio Superintendent of Public Instruction

2015 Proficiency Gap

4TH GRADE READING



For 4th Grade Math, 8th Grade Reading and 8th Grade Math, visit WhyProficiencyMatters.com.

D

DLN Report Card Grade

DigitalLearningNow.com

+15

Age Dependency Ratio

ExcelinEd.org/FaceTheStrain



Policy Engagement

| THE POLICY | OUR ROLE | ACTION |
|--|----------------------------------|-----------|
| A-F School Grading | | Protect* |
| K-3 Reading | | Protect** |
| School Choice (Education Savings Accounts) | | Develop |
| | | SUCCESS |
| A Leading Partner Organization | Supporting In- State Partners | ONGOING |
| | | FAILED |

* A-F School Grading: Harmful legislation passed affecting grading calculation.

** K-3 Reading: Harmful legislation passed delaying full implementation of the law.



Existing Signature Policies

(as of January 2015)

- A-F School Grading
- Course Access
- K-3 Reading

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

"There is no question that Oklahoma significantly improved on the NAEP's 4th grade reading score because of the efforts we put behind ending social promotion and promoting Third Grade Reading in our Reading Sufficiency Act. We saw the greatest gain of any state in scores and this result bears further proof that Oklahoma made the right decision in adopting this vital policy to help students succeed."

Senator Clark Jolley | District 41

2015 Proficiency Gap

4TH GRADE READING



For 4th Grade Math, 8th Grade Reading and 8th Grade Math, visit WhyProficiencyMatters.com.

C+

**DLN
Report Card
Grade**

DigitalLearningNow.com








+18

**Age
Dependency
Ratio**

ExcelinEd.org/FaceTheStrain

SOUTH CAROLINA

Policy Engagement

| THE POLICY | OUR ROLE | ACTION |
|--|---|-----------|
| A-F School Grading |  | Improve* |
| School Choice (Education Savings Accounts) |  | Pass |
| School Choice (Tax-Credit Scholarships) |  | Improve |
| K-3 Reading |  | Implement |
| Course Access |  | Develop |
| Education Funding Reform |  | Develop |
| Competency-Based Education |  | Develop |

|  |  | SUCCESS |
|---|---|---------|
| A Leading Partner Organization | Supporting In-State Partners | ONGOING |
| | | FAILED |

* A-F School Grading: The policy was only enacted in the state's ESEA waiver. The state opted to not renew the policy in the revised waiver it submitted in 2015.

Existing Signature Policies

(as of January 2015)

-  K-3 Reading
-  A-F School Grading

IN THE NEWS

Students Learn To Love Reading After “Read To Succeed” Summer Reading Camp

“Under law, each district identified third grade students struggling to read on grade level, and gave them the opportunity to attend. Student Tyree McCray said for the first time, he enjoyed reading because of Read to Succeed.”

2015 Proficiency Gap

4TH GRADE READING



For 4th Grade Math, 8th Grade Reading and 8th Grade Math, visit WhyProficiencyMatters.com.

B-

DLN Report Card Grade

DigitalLearningNow.com

+20

Age Dependency Ratio

ExcelinEd.org/FaceTheStrain

Policy Engagement

| THE POLICY | OUR ROLE | ACTION |
|--|--|----------|
| School Choice (Education Savings Accounts) |  | Pass |
| School Choice (Vouchers) |  | Pass* |
| A-F School Grading |  | Protect* |
| Standards & Assessments |  | Protect |
| K-3 Reading |  | Pass* |
| Education Funding Reform |  | Develop |
|  A Leading Partner Organization |  Supporting In-State Partners | SUCCESS |
| | | ONGOING |
| | | FAILED |

* Not successful in 2015. Carried over into 2016, the second year of the state's biennial session.

Existing Signature Policies

(as of January 2015)

- Education Funding Reform

IN THE NEWS

Legislators hear opinions on vouchers for disabled students

"The accounts enable families to use local and state funds for education expenses, including private school tuition, for students with severe disabilities. Tennessee approved its own version of an educational savings account, the Individualized Education Act Program, earlier this year. That program goes into effect next school year."

2015 Proficiency Gap

4TH GRADE READING



For 4th Grade Math, 8th Grade Reading and 8th Grade Math, visit WhyProficiencyMatters.com.

F

DLN Report Card Grade

DigitalLearningNow.com

+18

Age Dependency Ratio

ExcelinEd.org/FaceTheStrain

Policy Engagement

THE POLICY OUR ROLE ACTION

A-F School Grading



Pass

Course Access



Improve

School Choice
(Education
Scholarship Accounts)



Develop

School Choice (Tax-
Credit Scholarships,
Vouchers)



Pass*

Standards &
Assessments



Protect**

Competency-Based
Education



Develop

K-3 Reading



Improve

College and Career
Readiness (AP
Incentives, Industry
Certifications)



Develop



A Leading Partner
Organization



Supporting In-
State Partners

SUCCESS

ONGOING

FAILED

* School Choice: Tax-Credit Scholarships legislation passed the Texas Senate but was not considered by the House. Voucher legislation passed in committee but not the full Senate.
** Standards & Assessments: Harmful legislation passed.

Existing Signature Policies

(as of January 2015)

● K-3 Reading

● Course Access

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

"We should do everything in our power to expand - not limit - a child's opportunities to earn a valuable education. Expanding school choice in Texas will empower families to make the best decision for their child, turn poor performing schools into good schools, and make our good schools even better. School Choice puts the focus of education back where it belongs - on the child."

Donna Campbell, M.D. | Texas State Senator

2015 Proficiency Gap

4TH GRADE READING

Texas

Proficiency

74



43

Proficiency
Gap % Points

NAEP

Proficiency

31



For 4th Grade Math, 8th Grade Reading and 8th Grade Math, visit WhyProficiencyMatters.com.

DLN
Report Card
Grade

DigitalLearningNow.com

B-

Age
Dependency
Ratio

ExcelinEd.org/FaceTheStrain

+14

Policy Engagement

THE POLICY OUR ROLE ACTION

School Choice
(Education Savings
Accounts)



Develop

A-F School Grading



Protect

College & Career
Readiness (Industry
Certifications)



Pass

Competency-Based
Education



Pass



A Leading Partner
Organization



Supporting In-
State Partners

SUCCESS

ONGOING

FAILED

Existing Signature Policies

(as of January 2015)

- A-F School Grading
- College & Career Readiness
- K-3 Reading
- Course Access

IN THE NEWS

Report: Utah is 'one of the best examples' of quality digital learning

Judi Clark, executive director of Parents for Choice in Education, said the Student Achievement Backpack will help teachers customize their instruction for each student and help parents be more involved in their child's education. "Imagine having information about students on day one rather than having to get to know them for the first couple of months," Clark said. "How much more effective can our teachers be? How much more of a partner does it make our parents in their child's education when they have all of the records on their students?"

2015 Proficiency Gap

4TH GRADE READING



For 4th Grade Math, 8th Grade Reading and 8th Grade Math, visit WhyProficiencyMatters.com.

A-
DLN
Report Card
Grade

DigitalLearningNow.com

+9
Age
Dependency
Ratio

ExcelinEd.org/FaceTheStrain



WEST VIRGINIA

Policy Engagement

THE POLICY

OUR ROLE

ACTION

A-F School Grading



Implement/
Protect



A Leading Partner
Organization



Supporting In-
State Partners

SUCCESS

ONGOING

FAILED

Existing Signature Policies

(as of January 2015)

- A-F School Grading

IN THE NEWS

Preliminary Statewide Assessment Results Show Positive Achievement in Literacy

“While I believe we should celebrate the successes of our students, I also want to use these results as a guide for the areas where we need to improve. It’s clear we must remain steadfast in our commitment to increase student achievement in the areas of math and science. We are committed to providing high levels of rigor to ensure our students graduate high school, college and career ready.”

Michael Martirano | West Virginia State Superintendent of Schools

2015 Proficiency Gap

4TH GRADE READING



For 4th Grade Math, 8th Grade Reading and 8th Grade Math, visit WhyProficiencyMatters.com.

B-

DLN
Report Card
Grade

DigitalLearningNow.com

+19

Age
Dependency
Ratio

ExcelinEd.org/FaceTheStrain

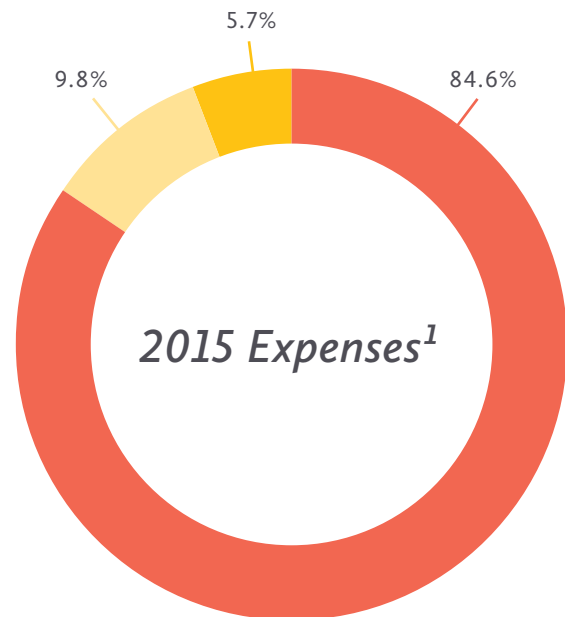
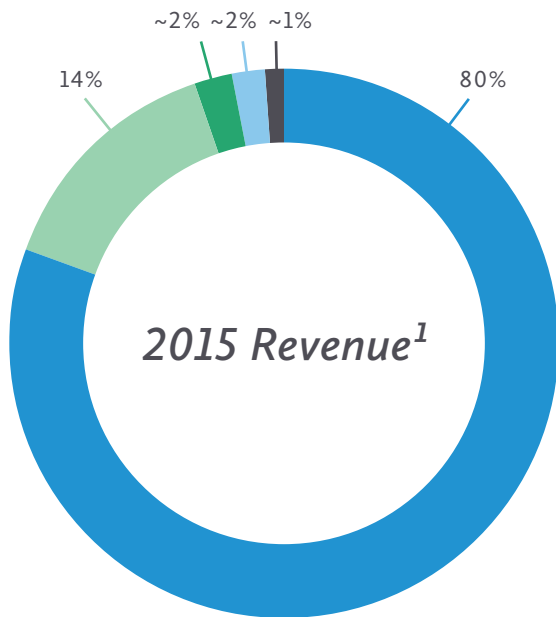




Fiscal Accountability

As with our formula for student achievement, the Foundation for Excellence in Education believes in accountability and transparency in our operations. We are committed to sound fiscal management, low overhead and bringing a strong return on investment to those who support our education reform work in the states.

In 2015, ExcelinEd invested more than \$11 million in total operating expenditures to successfully advance a bold reform agenda across the country. This was made possible by the generous pledges from our donors in 2015 and in prior years. Approximately 85 percent of ExcelinEd's expenses were invested directly into our policy, advocacy and communications work in the states, as well as our signature outreach event, the National Summit on Education Reform.



| | |
|------------------------------|-----|
| Foundations | 80% |
| Corporate | 14% |
| Other Income | ~2% |
| National Summit Registration | ~2% |
| Individuals | ~1% |

| | |
|-------------------------------|-------|
| Program Services ² | 84.6% |
| General & Administrative | 9.8% |
| Fundraising | 5.7% |

¹2015 Unaudited Results

²Program services include policy, advocacy, communications, outreach and education, the National Summit on Education Reform and the Arts For Life program.

Copies of our 990 filings, as well as a listing of our donors, are available on our website at: www.ExcelinEd.org.



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The Foundation for Excellence in Education is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, nonpartisan organization.

National Summit on Education Reform ●

Arts for Life ●

GREATER THAN \$1,000,000

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
Walton Family Foundation

\$500,001 - \$1,000,000

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2016



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