

**SB**

**221**

Minor - other organizations support travel; fund their own travel. No objections to date.

# ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



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**Senator Gary Stevens**  
*President of the Senate*

## **SECTIONAL ANALYSIS** **CS for Senate Bill 221(EDU)**

### **SECTION 1:**

Establishes an advisory task force on higher education and career readiness for the purpose of compiling data and advising the legislature on matters pertaining to college or career readiness of students who graduate from public secondary schools in Alaska.

It's composed of 18 members representing the Governor, the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education, the University of Alaska, the Alaska School Board Association, the superintendents, career and technical training centers, the Alaska Federation of Natives, the National Education Association, Alaskan private colleges or universities, other public (non-UA) postsecondary institutions in Alaska, relevant faculty from around the UA system, both secondary and post-secondary students, and the chairpersons of the respective House and Senate Education Committees.

The respective entity that each task force member represents is expected to pay for their share of the expenses of participating in the task force.

The staff of the legislative members of the task force shall serve as staff for the task force.

The members of the task force shall elect a chair from among its members.

The task force shall compile research and summarize data regarding remediation, retention, and graduation rates in the state. There shall be developed a definition of remediation. The task force shall identify contributing causes for lack of college readiness, and best practices to reduce the need for remediation, and prepare a report to the legislature outlining strategies and recommendations to reduce remediation, improve college readiness, and increase college graduation rates. The report is to be submitted by March 1, 2011.

### **SECTION 2:**

Repeals the act and dissolves the task force on July 1, 2011.

### **SECTION 3:**

Makes the act take effect the day after the governor signs it.

*Accepted*

AMENDMENT #1 *adopted*

OFFERED IN THE HOUSE  
TO: CSSB 221(EDC)

BY REPRESENTATIVE PEGGY WILSON

1 Page 4, following line 1:

2 Insert a new paragraph to read:

3 "(7) determine the availability of broadband and Internet capabilities and the  
4 effect of the use of electronic, Internet, and virtual instruction on student learning and success  
5 in schools located in ~~regional educational attendance areas;~~"

*AM to  
AM -  
Withdrawn  
6*

*rural*

7 Renumber the following paragraphs accordingly.

*AM #2 to Am#4 - line five delete word "schools"*  
passes

~~*AM #3 (keller) to withdrawn*~~

AMENDMENT #2 *Adopted*

OFFERED IN THE HOUSE  
TO: CSSB 221(EDC)

BY REPRESENTATIVE SEATON

- 1 Page 4, line 11:
- 2 Delete "March 1, 2011"
- 3 Insert "April 1, 2011"

AMENDMENT #3 *Adopt as needed*

OFFERED IN THE HOUSE  
TO: CSSB 221(EDC)

BY REPRESENTATIVE SEATON

1 Page 3, lines 6 - 10:

2 Delete "The chair of the house committee having jurisdiction over education shall call  
3 the first meeting of the task force not later than 30 days after the effective date of this Act and  
4 shall serve as chair of the first meeting. The members of the task force shall elect a chair from  
5 among the members of the task force and other officers as needed to conduct the business of  
6 the task force."

7 Insert "The chair of the house committee having jurisdiction over education and the  
8 chair of the senate committee having jurisdiction over education shall serve as co-chairs of the  
9 task force. The co-chairs shall call the first meeting of the task force not later than 30 days  
10 after the effective date of this Act. The members of the task force shall elect other officers as  
11 needed to conduct the business of the task force."

*Conceptual AM #1 to AM 3 - Adopted*

*"If chair of either committee is <sup>of jurisdiction</sup> unable to serve, the President of the Legislature shall serve as co-chair"*

*Crawford*  
AMENDMENT #4 *Adopt*

OFFERED IN THE HOUSE  
TO: CSSB 221(EDC)

BY REPRESENTATIVE SEATON

- 1 Page 1, line 11:  
2 Delete "18"  
3 Insert "20"  
4  
5 Page 2, following line 19:  
6 Insert new paragraphs to read:  
7 "(13) one member of the house of representatives, appointed by the speaker of  
8 the house;  
9 (14) one member of the senate, appointed by the president of the senate;"  
10  
11 Renumber the following paragraphs accordingly.

AMENDMENT #5 Adopted

OFFERED IN THE HOUSE

TO: CSSB 221(EDU)

Conceptual amendment to specify that the chair of the Education committees at the time of the effective date of the bill may retain their seats on the Task Force through the term of the Task Force

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Amendment 6 - Conceptual (Keller) Adopted

P 4, line 7 add new sub

(9) Review completion rates for career skill  
certification programs ~~disaggregated~~ by program +  
postsecondary campus.

---

Amendment # 7 - Adopted

P. 1, line 10 after "It is" insert "and non-traditional students"

---

HB 221

13091C

PAGE 4, Line 7

- (9) review completion rates for  
career skill certification programs  
~~desegregated~~ by program & postsecondary  
campus

Disaggregated

AMENDMENT

OFFERED IN THE HOUSE  
TO: CSSB 221(EDC)

BY REPRESENTATIVE SEATON

- 1 Page 2, line 18, following "chair":
- 2       Insert ", on the effective date of this Act,"
- 3
- 4 Page 2, line 19, following "chair":
- 5       Insert ", on the effective date of this Act,"

## Louie Flora

---

**From:** Elizabeth Downing [eadowning@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, March 26, 2010 7:52 AM  
**To:** Rep. Paul Seaton; Sen. Gary Stevens  
**Cc:** Louie Flora  
**Subject:** SB 221/CSSB221 Legislative Task Force on Higher Education - missing membership

Senator Stevens and Representative Seaton,

I wanted to whole-heartedly share my support for SB 221 Legislative Task Force on Higher Education which brings together key education experts to look at secondary and postsecondary education and career readiness. I am wondering, however, why the composition of the task force does not include higher education professionals who have their boots on the ground addressing these concerns. I am speaking of college student services professionals who recruit, assess, advise, and provide an array of academic and student success strategies for retention from Adult Basic Education through graduation. Student Services professionals focus on the barriers to access (financial aid, remediation, study skills) and provide career planning and job placement services. While on a large campus, these roles are specialized, many of our community campuses have expert generalists who could provide real-time information and recommendations. Similarly, there are no high school guidance counselors on the task force.

If the size of the task force cannot be increased, perhaps the section listing three faculty who work in remediation can be changed to one expert in ABE, remediation, and developmental studies, one college student services professional, and one secondary guidance professional.

Thank you,  
Liz Downing  
Homer, AK

--

"Work, Solve Problems, Get Things Done"

Nebraska Summit on Career Readiness, Sponsored by the NE Dept. Education, and Dept. of Labor, November 2009

Nebraska group developed this definition for Career Readiness:

A Career Ready person is one who capitalizes on their personal strengths, talents, education, & experiences to bring value to the workplace and the community through their performance, diligence, ethics, and responsible behavior.

They also developed the following list of eleven areas of knowledge, skills, and behaviors, and then went on to define the attributes of these in considerable detail.

Inter- and Intra-Personal Skills

Creativity and Innovation

Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

Work Ethic and Personal Responsibility

Core Knowledge and Core Standards

Communication Skills

Technology

Adaptability and Life Long Learning

Exposure to the Work Environment

Collaboration and Teamwork

Global and Social Awareness

Alternate Definition 1:

Possess core academic, technical, and communication skills sufficient for transition to post-secondary education, gainful employment, or business creation without the need for remedial education.

Alternate Definition 2:

To be capable of completing a credit-bearing course of study at a qualifying post-secondary institution that will apply toward the award of a degree, without the need for remedial coursework.

HB 221

13091C

PAGE 4, Line 7

- (9) review completion rates for  
career skill certification programs  
desegregated by program & postsecondary  
campus

## **Educators debate aligning standards**

UNIQUE POPULATION: Alaska's schools compared with lower 48.

By MEGAN HOLLAND  
mholland@adn.com

Published: March 25th, 2010 11:22 PM  
Last Modified: March 25th, 2010 11:22 PM

Should Alaska's kindergartners be expected to learn to count to 20 or 100?

Should fourth graders be expected to identify plot, settings and character? Or should they read at a level above, as well as know about words and phrases from Greek mythology?

Should teens be expected to read John Keats by the 11th grade?

As 48 other states are participating in a national re-writing of their state education standards, Alaska is taking a look at its own and wondering if it should get on board and raise the bar for the state's students. But while some educators say Alaska kids deserve to be held to the same standard as the rest of the country, others are saying we are different and the current, laxer standards are just fine.

Earlier this month, the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers released the draft of sweeping new school standards that could lead to students across the country using the same math and English textbooks.

The idea is to replace the patchwork of state and local systems in an attempt to educate all American kids better. The federal government is watching the process.

In February, educators from across Alaska examined differences between the national draft and the state's required curriculum. Overall, they believe Alaska's standards should stay where they are. The State Board of Education will get its first presentation on the differences today at its Juneau meeting.

"Alaska has unique variances that other states do not have," wrote one group that reviewed elementary school reading standards.

"The (national proposed standard) is rigorous but not necessarily reasonable for Alaska's population," another group wrote. "Our 'at-risk' population would not benefit by increased rigor."

Opponents say Alaska's kids and schools, especially those in the Bush, are different. The state's dropout rate is double the national average, and the state rates last in the number of ninth graders who will likely have a bachelor's degree in 10 years, according to the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education.

### **READY FOR STEINBECK?**

Among the things that the national standards would call for: middle-schoolers will be ready to read "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer" and letters from John Adams; 10th graders will be up to mastering John Steinbeck's "The Grapes of Wrath."

The state standards don't mention specific reading material. Instead they say that middle schoolers should be able to identify foreshadowing in literature, and that by the 10th grade a student should be able to do things like identify syntax and fill out a Permanent Fund dividend application.

Unlike the national standards, Alaska has no state standards for how proficient 11th and 12th graders should be in reading and math, although to get a diploma they must pass an exit exam that they start taking in 10th grade.

Some think adopting the national standards is the right thing to do.

"If we do make the switch, we think parents would have a better grasp of student expectations, so conversations between schools and home may be more clear," wrote one of the few groups that reviewed the national standards and supported adopting them.

## **TOUGHER IN ANCHORAGE**

The Anchorage School Board supports drafting national standards. It says students and parents deserve to know how Anchorage schools compare to those around the United States.

"We are feeling very strongly that 50 different state standards is really not getting where we need to get as a country," said Anchorage Superintendent Carol Comeau.

Even though Anchorage's standards are higher than the state's when it comes to reading and math, it wants to know how its students measure up to those in other states. Students take just two national tests, in the fifth and seventh grades. In high school, tests like the SAT or ACT are not required and tend to be taken by only the college-bound. In the end, it's impossible to see how Anchorage's 50,000 public-school students are doing compared with students in, say, Seattle or New York.

What are they learning? At what pace? Educators don't know.

The State Board of Education will make the decision on whether to take on the more rigorous standards.

What the seven members will grapple with: Are the standards supposed to be minimum to allow the most kids to pass? Or are they meant to be rigorous and prepare kids for careers and four-year colleges? Is the state misleading kids by setting the bar too low? Or is it discouraging too many kids by setting the bar too high?

## **WATCH AND WAIT**

Les Morse, deputy education commissioner, said the state is watching to see what the rest of the country does. Not all 48 states that signed up to help draft the standards are necessarily going to adopt them, he said. Some educators in Massachusetts want to keep their own standards because they consider them higher, according to media reports.

Morse said the State Board of Ed wants to take a look at what states like Massachusetts require to see if there is anything Alaska can adopt, in part or in whole.

The state is also waiting to see if the Obama administration takes action on implementing national standards, Morse said.

"It's Alaskans who should decide what their standards should be," said Eric Fry, spokesman for the state Education Department.

- **nanuq** wrote on 03/26/2010 08:27:49 AM:

A more rigorous standard, with increased funding, is not the answer. Please read this study: <http://tinyurl.com/yakllzx> paying special attention to the section "What Federal and State Policymakers Should Do" and the paragraph before it.

**skunkcabbage** wrote on 03/26/2010 08:25:56 AM:

By all means, lets continue to educate parents and support those children with developmental and emotional disabilities stemming from their dysfunctional backgrounds (which occurs both in the city and in the bush, among all races), but lets not stymie the growth of those kids who are able to succeed. Alaska needs to be able to compete not only with the rest of the nation, but the rest of the world. The US is sadly very far behind the rest of the developed world in educational standards. If we want to compete on the global market, our kids needs a strong base to build from.

I say this from experience, my child is far above his "peers" at his school. This is a small rural school which allows each child to proceed at their own pace. No real grades, no real grade levels. I worry that my child won't have the impetus outside of what we encourage to motivate him to strive harder. Therefore we intend to supplement what he receives at his bush school with home schooling and outside activities and trips to give him that base. But not many parents are able to do that.

**M\_Gagnon\_57** wrote on 03/26/2010 08:19:17 AM:

Why would anyone in Alaska want to put the children of this state at a disadvantage right from the start? We live in a global economy and the federal government is trying to insure that American graduates can compete with those from all other countries. Alaskan parents should not accept a "laxer standard" for their children. Schools in this state should gradually, but steadily, move to the more rigorous curriculum.

**dirtydetoxdotcom4** wrote on 03/26/2010 08:08:35 AM:

Some commentators seem to be ignoring the most important aspects of modern educational values systems.

As an Alaskan, I think our value systems requires us to promote politicians who really DO have a chance of "turning things around". (in a good way).



*The Forum for America's Ideas*

# National Conference of State Legislatures

Presentation to the Alaska State Legislature  
Improving Higher Education  
January 27, 2010

How does Alaska compare to other states and the nation?

# **RETENTION AND GRADUATION RATES**

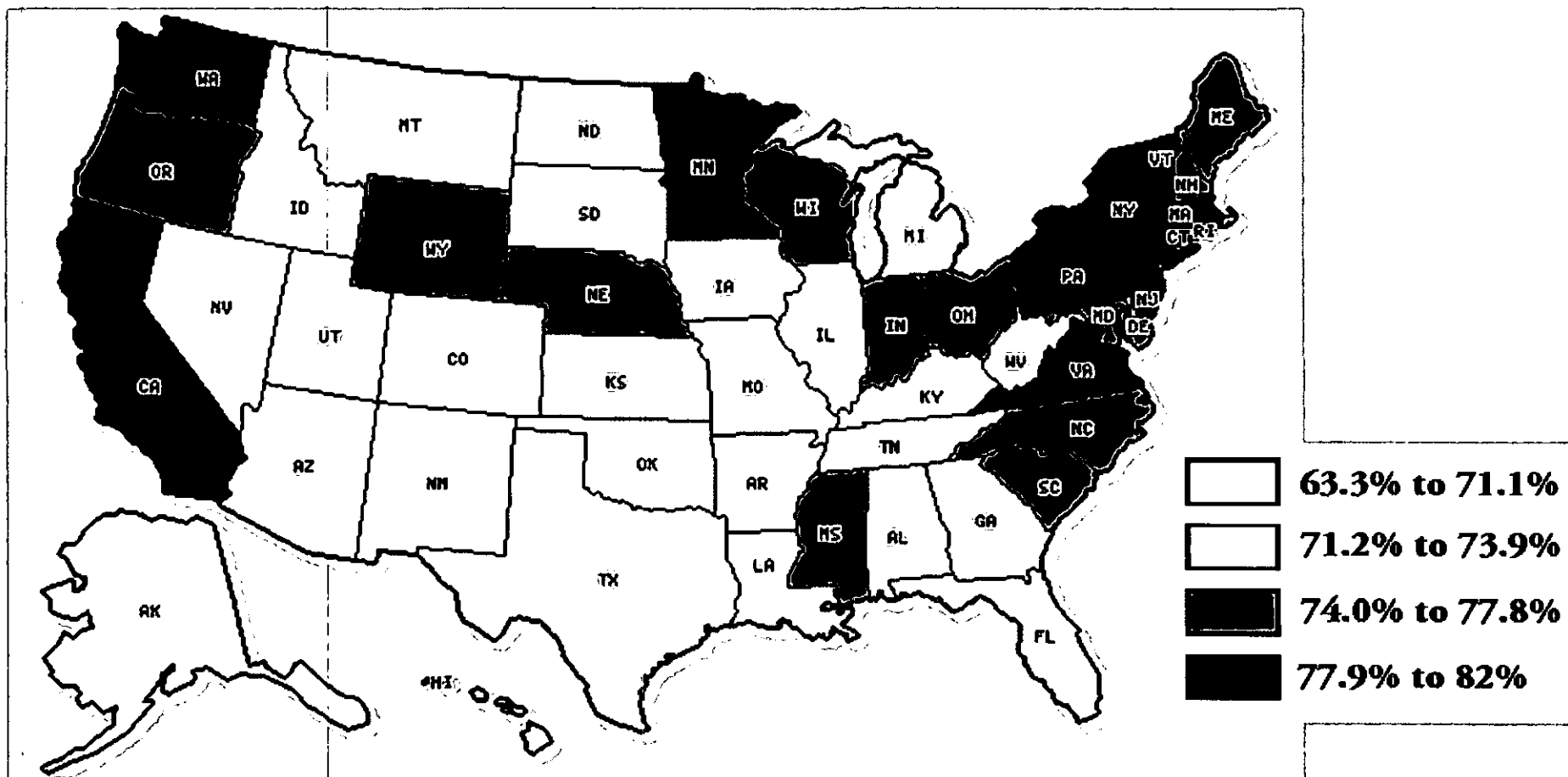
# Non-Traditional Student Population

## University of Alaska, Anchorage

- **55%** of students are **full-time**, **45%** are **part-time**
- 10% are American Indian or Alaska Native
- 44% are age 25 or older
- Open access university - serves students that do not have sufficient academic preparation and need remedial coursework

# Retention Rates: First-Time College Freshmen Returning Their Second Year

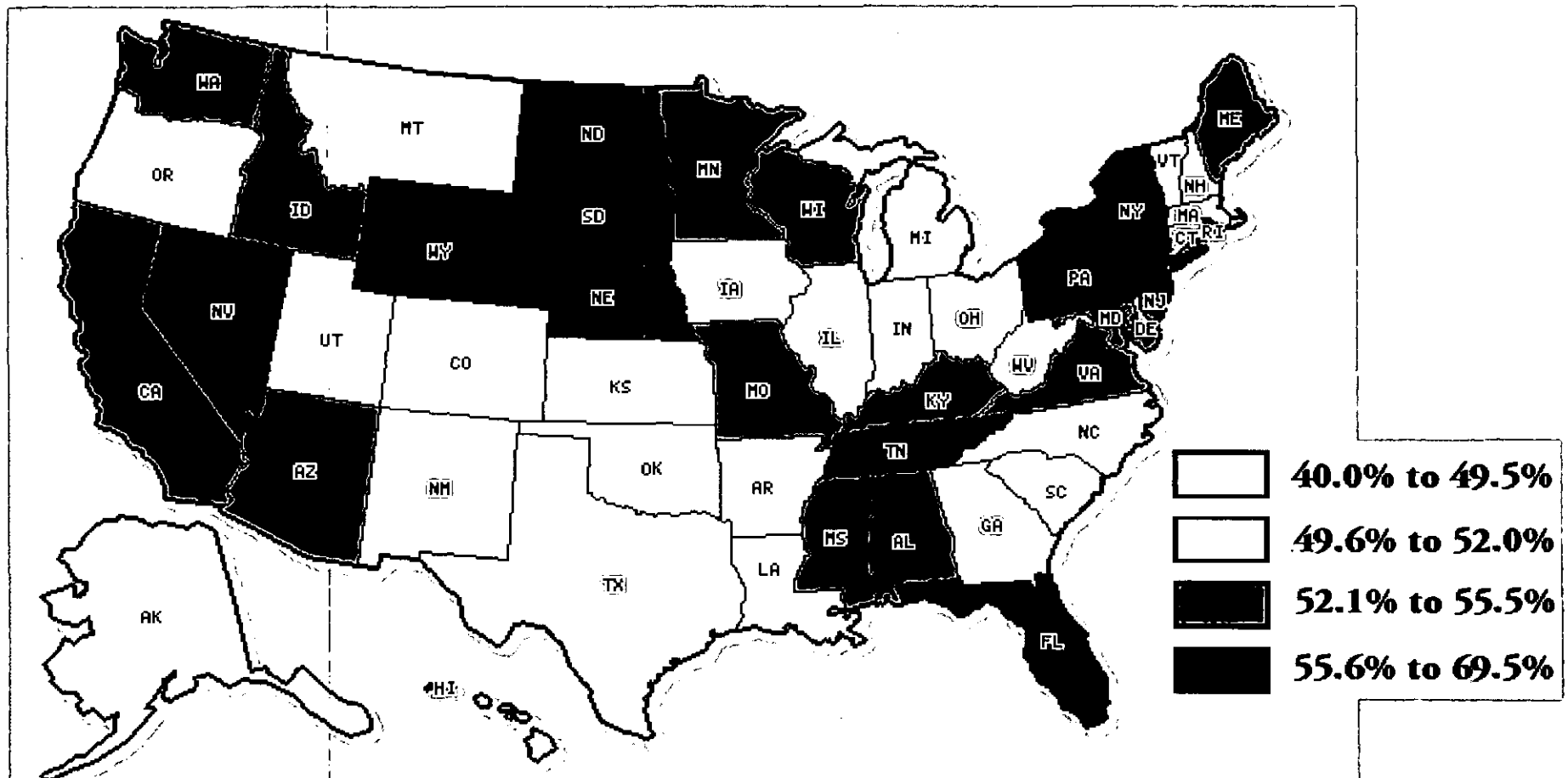
Rates for full- and part-time students attending four-year institutions, 2007  
 US Average = 75.5%      Alaska Average = 66.6% (5<sup>th</sup> from bottom)



Source: The National Center for Higher Education Management Systems; National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS Enrollment Survey

# Retention Rates: First-Time College Freshmen Returning Their Second Year

Rates for full- and part-time students attending two-year institutions, 2007  
 US Average = 53%      Alaska Average = 47.6% (6<sup>th</sup> from bottom)



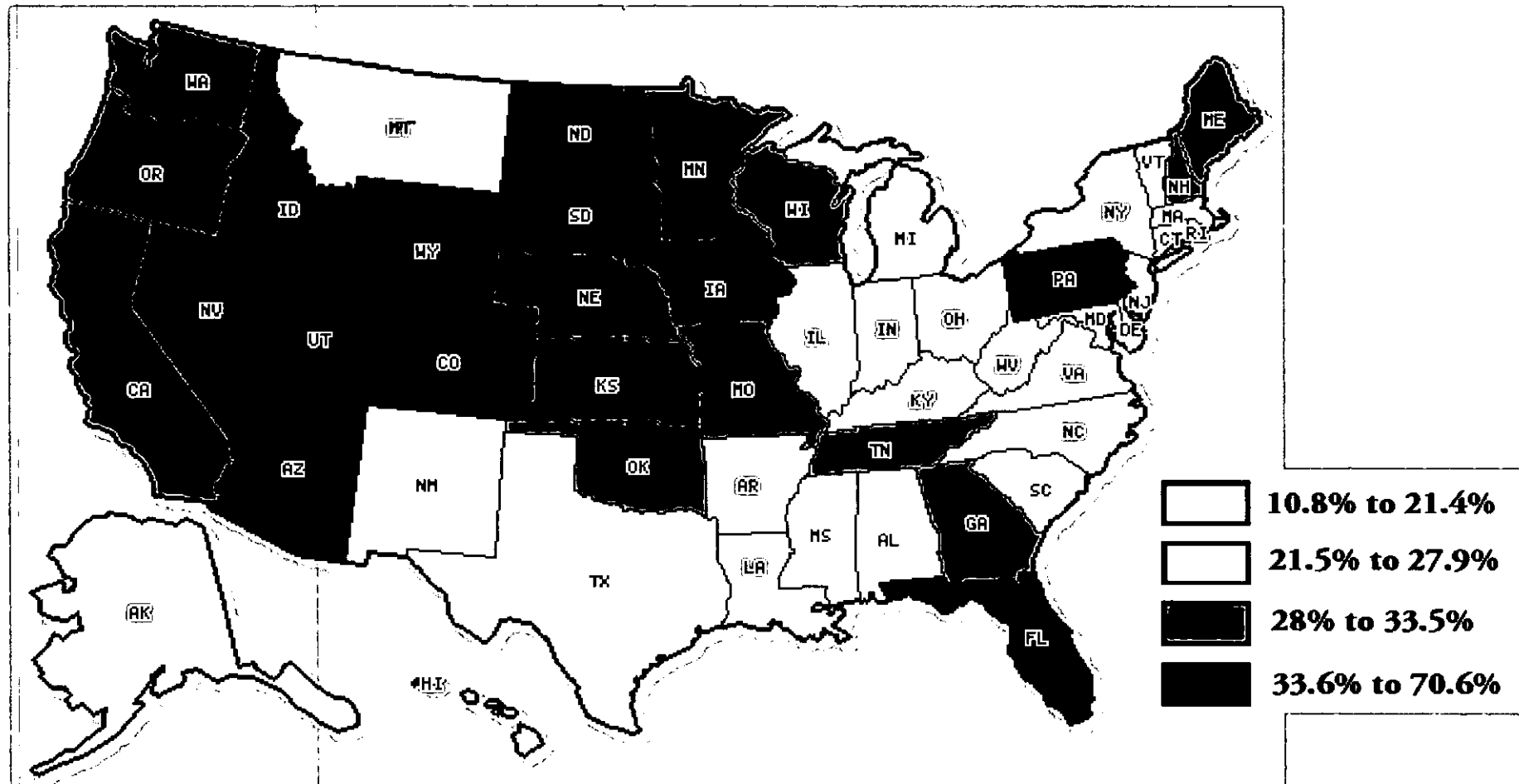
Source: The National Center for Higher Education Management Systems; National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS Enrollment Survey

# Graduation Rates: Three-Year Graduation Rates for Associate Students

Rates for first-time, full-time associate degree-seeking students, 2007

US Average = 27.8%

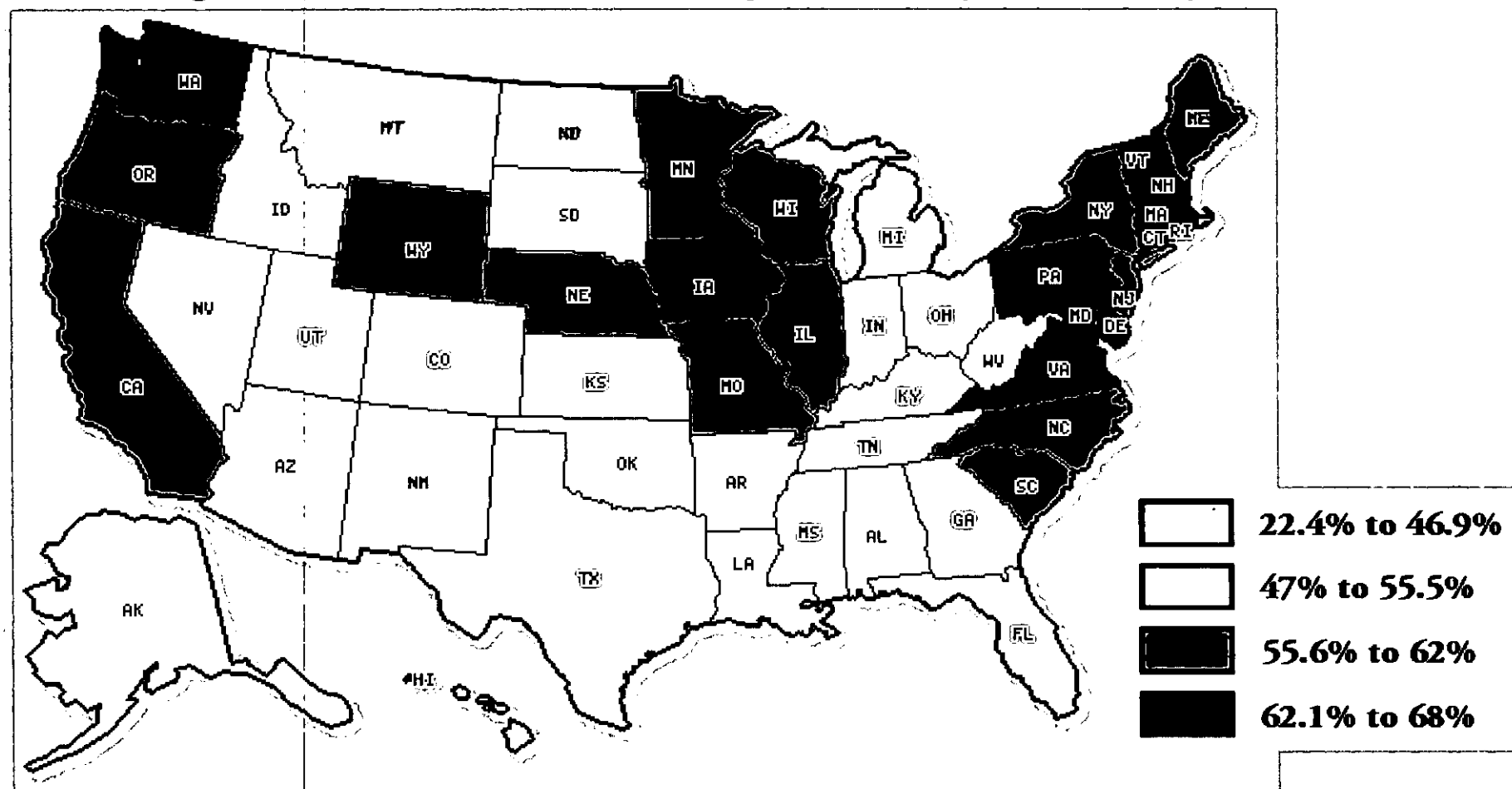
Alaska Average = 24.1%



Source: The National Center for Higher Education Management Systems; National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS Enrollment Survey

# Graduation Rates: Six-Year Graduation Rates for Bachelor's Students, 2007

Rates for first-time, full-time bachelor's degree-seeking students, 2007  
 US Average = 56.1%      Alaska Average = 22.4% (The bottom)



Source: The National Center for Higher Education Management Systems; National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS Enrollment Survey

# HIGHER EDUCATION TASK FORCES

# Examples of Recent Legislative Higher Education Task Forces

- **Arizona:** 2009 Task Force on Assessments to Measure College and Career Readiness
- **Arkansas:** 2007 Legislative Task Force on Higher Education Remediation, Retention and Graduation Rates
- **Illinois:** 2007 Public Agenda Task Force
- **Massachusetts:** 2005 Senate Task Force on Public Higher Education
- **Minnesota:** 2005 Task Force on Public Postsecondary Funding
- **South Carolina:** 2007 Higher Education Study Committee
- **NCSL:** 2006 Blue Ribbon Commission on Higher Education

# Arkansas

Arkansas State Board of Higher Education

## Legislative Task Force on Higher Education Remediation, Retention and Graduation Rates

- ***Final report released August 2008***
- Task Force Chair, Representative Johnnie Roebuck, keeps track of actions that have resulted from task force recommendations
  - 22 Acts have been signed
  - Several policies and programs not requiring legislation have been implemented

## Excerpt from Arkansas Spreadsheet: Efforts Addressing Task Force Recommendations

<b>Recommendation from Task Force Report</b>	<b>Bill Number</b>	<b>Bill Title</b>	<b>Sponsor</b>	<b>Bill Status</b>
3.2. Mandate that colleges and universities set clear, measurable exit standards for remedial courses, to be reviewed by ADHE, that correlate with the ACT 19 threshold and send results of how students do in meeting these standards to ADHE in a biennial report that should also include student success rates in subsequent courses.	HB1808	An act to require clear exit standards for all remedial courses taken at state-supported institutions of higher education; to improve the teaching techniques of remedial courses	Roebuck	Signed as Act 971
	HB1764	An act to expand reporting of postsecondary remediation	Hutchinson	Signed as Act 970

## Contact Information

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# The Path to a Degree

A LEGISLATOR'S GUIDE TO COLLEGE ACCESS AND SUCCESS

## Overview: The Path to a Degree

By Brenda Bausch

November 2009

America is no longer the world leader in education. U.S. performance at the K-12 and postsecondary levels is falling behind other countries. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), America and Germany are the only two OECD countries where the younger generation is actually less educated than the older generation. In February 2009, President Obama declared the lack of educational attainment in the United States a "prescription for economic decline, because we know the countries that out-teach us today will out-compete us tomorrow," and he set a goal for the United States to reclaim its position as the leader in college graduates by 2020. To accomplish that, states need to set their own college completion goals; study and diagnose where and why students are dropping out of the education system; and target state policy to those problem areas. Effective state policy can help more students obtain college degrees, be successful in life and contribute to the economy.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 54 percent of all new jobs and 75 percent of the fastest-growing jobs require some form of postsecondary education. In addition, people with bachelor's degrees earn 60 percent more over their lifetime than those with only a high school diploma, which translates into higher tax revenues for states and the federal government. College graduates also live healthier and longer lives and rely less on social programs such as welfare or Medicaid, saving states a significant amount of money. College graduates participate more in civic activities, such as voting, and in charitable activities, such as donating blood. States that improve college access and success increase these individual, economic and societal benefits.

College enrollment and completion rates will not alter significantly unless policymakers focus on nontraditional students, particularly low-income, minority and first-generation students, who are underrepresented and underserved in the education system. These students are

the fastest growing populations and the least likely to finish high school, enroll in college or earn a degree. The result is a significant and serious achievement gap that threatens states and the nation.

To meet President Obama's college completion goal and to preserve America's status as a world leader in education, state policy will need to focus on closing the achievement gap. State legislators have the power to design and implement policies that help prepare all students academically and financially for college and effectively support them to ensure they complete a degree.

*The Path to a Degree: A Legislator's Guide to College Access and Success* contains five briefs that provide an overview of key issues, discuss research findings, and offer examples of specific state action that can improve college access and success for underrepresented students.

**Raising Awareness: College Planning Strategies** focuses on early awareness and preparation as an essential component of college access. The brief discusses two strategies to increase early college planning among low-income, minority and first-generation students: information dissemination and student support services, both beginning no later than middle school.

**Increasing College and Workforce Readiness** discusses policies that can improve college and workforce readiness, such as aligning high school standards, adjusting graduation requirements, and using college-ready assessments. College readiness is a key component of both college access and success; students who take college preparatory courses in high school, for example, are more likely to enroll in and graduate from college.

**Improving College Affordability for Underrepresented Students: Financial Aid Strategies** discusses the three components of the higher education finance system: tuition, financial aid and state appropriations. The brief fo-

cuses on financial aid as a policy option to increase college affordability for low-income, minority and first-generation students and provides examples of effective financial aid programs.

**Engaging Students Academically and Socially: College Success Strategies** highlights evidence-based college success programs that help more students remain in college and graduate. Programs that increase student academic and social engagement have the greatest effect on completion rates. The brief provides examples of legislative action that encourages and supports college success programs.

**What You Need to Know About Minority-Serving Institutions** provides an overview of historically black colleges and universities, Hispanic-serving institutions, and tribal colleges and universities—known collectively as minority-serving institutions. The brief highlights why an increasing number of students choose to attend these institutions; their effect on the educational attainment of underrepresented students; and the challenges such institutions face.

Higher education can improve individual lives, bolster state economies, fill workforce needs, and sustain America's economic competitiveness. Now is the time for states to act to improve the path to a degree for all students.

#### Acknowledgments

This publication was made possible by generous funding from the Ford Foundation. NCSL is grateful to the foundation for the support of this project and for its strong commitment to improving higher education outcomes for all students.

This publication was written by Brenda Bautsch as a Policy Specialist in the NCSL Education Program. Brenda works on issues regarding college access and success.

The author wishes to thank the following people for taking the time to review briefs and provide valuable feedback: Rep. Maggie Jeffus, Rep. Betty Komp, Rep. Denise Merrill, Rep. Corey Mock, Deborah Santiago, Rita Barr, Paula Dominguez, Sara Fidler, David Harrell, Vincent Badolato, Lamar Bailey, Heather Chikoore, and Yilan Shen. Special thanks to Julie Davis Bell for her immeasurable guidance on the publication, and to Leann Stelzer for her work on editing and design.



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# The Path to a Degree

A LEGISLATOR'S GUIDE TO COLLEGE ACCESS AND SUCCESS

## Engaging Students Academically and Socially: College Success Strategies

By Brenda Bausch

November 2009

America is losing its lead as the country with the highest percentage of college-educated citizens. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), America and Germany are the only two OECD countries with a younger generation that is less educated than the older generation. While college access for underrepresented students is still a concern, overall, America ranks high in the world for the proportion of high school graduates that enroll in college. The problem is that too few of America's college students complete their degrees.

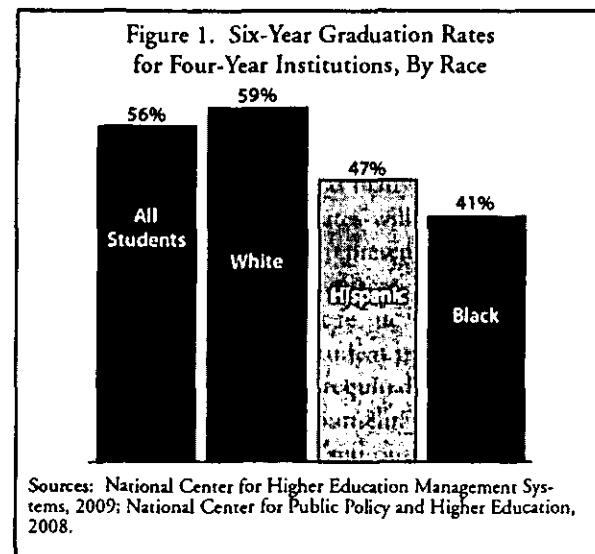
Just over half—56 percent—of students that enroll in a four-year institution earn a bachelor's degree within six years. Only 28 percent of associate degree-seeking students earn their degree within three years.<sup>1</sup> The statistics for students of color are even worse—just 41 percent of black and 47 percent of Hispanic college students attain their bachelor's degree in six years, compared to 59 percent of white students (Figure 1).<sup>2</sup> Just over one third of students who are both low-income and first-generation earn a bachelor's degree within six years at public four-year institutions, compared to 66 percent of their more advantaged peers.<sup>3</sup> These low graduation rates translate into missed economic opportunities for states and for the nation.

People with bachelor's degrees earn 61 percent more during their lifetime than those with only a high school diploma, and 42 percent more than those with some college but no degree.<sup>4</sup> Students who leave college without completing a degree lose money spent on tuition and fees and may incur loan debt. The gaps in completion across groups of students have implications that go beyond the individual. Federal and state governments incur losses when money spent on higher education appropriations and financial aid supports a student who does not complete college. Moreover, college graduates bolster state economies. Not only do college graduates pay more in taxes, they also save states money because they rely less on social programs such as welfare or Medicaid. College

graduates participate in more civic activities, such as voting, and in charitable activities, such as donating blood. In addition, children of college graduates are more likely to achieve higher levels of education, so society continues to reap benefits generation after generation.<sup>5</sup>

College success programs are designed to help at-risk students graduate from postsecondary education. Given their vested interest in having as many college-going students as possible graduate, states will want to consider which programs and policies represent the soundest investment for their limited resources. Various programs that focus on improving college success differ with respect to structure, identified student population, and the amount of financial support required. College success programs include academic counseling and student support services administered in and out of the classroom. These programs are usually targeted to students who are most at-risk of dropping out of college—low-income, minority and first-generation students, and those students who score low on placement exams.

Consensus has emerged that students who are academically and socially engaged during college are more likely



to graduate. A student is academically engaged when he or she interacts with faculty and finds learning meaningful. Social engagement refers to participation in campus activities and multiple connections with other students. Programs that increase academic and social engagement improve the degree attainment of underrepresented students.

Many postsecondary institutions design and implement college success programs, but state legislators can play an important role by providing incentives, funding and reporting requirements. Several states—such as Arkansas, Illinois and South Carolina—have created task forces to develop a state agenda on college success, set state goals, and provide recommendations for increasing degree attainment. Legislatures can require institutions of higher education to report student data on enrollment, retention and graduation so the legislature can track and monitor progress. In Massachusetts, for example, public two-year and four-year colleges are required by law to report annually to the governor and the legislature on a variety of higher education performance measures, including student success.

This brief describes barriers to graduation for underrepresented students, highlights college success programs that researchers have found to have the most effect on increasing retention and graduation rates, and provides examples of legislative action that encourages and supports such programs.

## Barriers to College Graduation

Several factors increase the likelihood that a student will drop out of college. For example, full-time employment, dependent children, weak academic preparation, off-campus residency and college affordability can negatively affect student retention and graduation. Low-income, minority and first-generation students likely face one or more of these factors. Low-income students are more likely to work full-time during college. This places them at a disadvantage, since research shows that working more than 20 hours per week hurts student academic performance.<sup>6</sup> Some estimates suggest that as few as 25 percent of low-income youth are academically well-prepared for college, compared to 60 percent of high-income youth.<sup>7</sup>

It is important to note that the issue of academic preparation can lead to discussion of inadequate high school preparation

and remedial education. Those discussions are covered in the brief *Increasing College and Workforce Readiness*.

In particular, many community college students face barriers to graduation. The Community College Survey of Student Engagement found that 75 percent of students at public two-year colleges face at least one risk factor, compared to 14 percent of students at four-year universities. The survey also found that 25 percent of community college students had children living with them, 25 percent were not native English speakers, and 50 percent worked more than 20 hours per week.<sup>8</sup>

### *Successful state policies and programs recognize and address the factors that cause students to drop out of college.*

Successful state policies and programs recognize and address the multiple factors that cause students to drop out of college. Factors such as full-time employment, off-campus residency and family responsibilities keep students from having time to engage in campus activities or receive needed academic help. By not integrating with the larger campus community, students do not make the personal connections with peers or with faculty that often motivate them to stay in school. College success programs that work with a student's over-loaded schedule by using class time to promote academic engagement or that have flexible hours for support services can be helpful. Such programs can be most effective if they reach out to at-risk students during their first year of college.

## First-Year Retention Strategies

Research indicates that students who return for their second year of college have a higher chance of graduating. Twenty-five percent of students who enroll at four-year colleges and one-half of those at two-year colleges do not continue to their second year on campus.<sup>9</sup> Six in 10 low-income and first-generation students who do not complete their college education drop out after their first year.<sup>10</sup> Because of this, many colleges focus success programs on retaining first-year students through bridge and orientation programs, first-year seminars and learning communities. These programs help underrepresented students engage academically and socially, increasing the chance that they will persist to graduation.<sup>11</sup>

*Summer Bridge* To help high school graduates prepare for and *Orientation Programs* their first year of college, summer bridge and orientation programs take place before classes convene. They vary in length; orientations usually last a day or two, and bridge programs unfold over a one- to

eight-week period. The goal is to better equip students for their first year in college by helping them build the necessary academic and personal skills. Bridge and orientation programs administer remedial coursework, teach study skills, and provide opportunities to adjust to campus life and meet other students.

Many programs specifically target low-income, first-generation and minority students. Colorado State University's Bridge Scholars program, for example, hosts underrepresented students on campus for eight weeks. Students take classes, learn study skills, and become familiar with the campus and its support services. The Bridge Scholars program recognizes the special needs of underrepresented students and provides them with the opportunity to catch up or even get a head start for college.

Some research indicates that summer bridge and orientation programs can increase retention rates and student participation in campus activities. According to the Pell Institute, bridge programs at Georgia State University, the University of California-San Diego, the University of Maryland-College Park, and California State University contributed to retention gains from freshman to sophomore year. Other studies indicate that bridge and orientation programs increase the likelihood that community college students will become academically engaged. The Community College Survey of Student Engagement found that 40 percent of students have participated in an orientation program.<sup>12</sup>

**First-Year Seminars** Another retention strategy is first-year seminars, which are small classes, typically of 10 to 25 students, that usually are taught by a faculty member. Since most freshmen enroll in large introductory courses with a lecture format and little interaction with faculty members, the seminars give students an opportunity to connect with faculty and receive personal attention and frequent feedback. The small class setting encourages participation in group discussion and fosters development of critical thinking and collaborative learning skills. The relationships with faculty and other students increase the level of academic and social integration for students who participate.<sup>13</sup>

According to the National Resource Center's 2006 survey on first-year seminars, 43 percent of the responding institutions credited the first-year seminar with increasing student persistence to sophomore year. About one third of the institutions indicated that the seminars increased the students' satisfaction with the school and faculty, and reported higher levels of student participation in campus activities. Seminars

also have been linked to better chances of graduation; some research suggests that students who complete freshman seminar courses are 5 percent to 15 percent more likely to earn their bachelor's degrees in four years.<sup>14</sup>

Other research, such as that conducted by the Policy Center on the First Year of College, makes the case that seminars are most effective if they are linked to one or more other courses, a practice commonly referred to as a learning community.

**Learning Communities** Like first-year seminars, the learning community concept is based on the notion that small class size promotes academic and social engagement.



Students take two or more classes together as a group, often with an overarching theme that connects the classes. By keeping the same group of students together for multiple classes, learning communities create more opportunities for social integration.

Creating opportunities for social and academic engagement during class time when students are already on campus is an effective retention strategy for low-income and minority students.

There are various examples of the positive effects of learning communities. At the University of Southern Maine, a commuter school, the learning communities have had positive results for at-risk students. The students who participate in learning communities have higher persistence rates than students who participate in other retention programs. Similarly, students who participate in the Seattle Central Community College learning community exhibit higher rates of retention than do nonparticipants. The students in the Seattle Central learning communities also tend to express higher levels of social and academic satisfaction. The research organization MDRC conducted an experimental program at Kingsborough Community College in which some freshmen participated in a learning community that included remedial English. Students who participated in the learning community were more likely than nonparticipants to take and pass the English skills assessment tests necessary to enroll in college-level English.<sup>15</sup>

In both first-year seminars and learning communities, a major focus is on giving the student personal attention, which translates into small class sizes. However, many required introductory courses are taught in lecture format to large numbers of students, a format in which students can easily feel lost. To ensure that students receive the attention and support they need to be successful in larger courses, many colleges and universities have redesigned their introductory classes.

## Redesigning Courses for Success

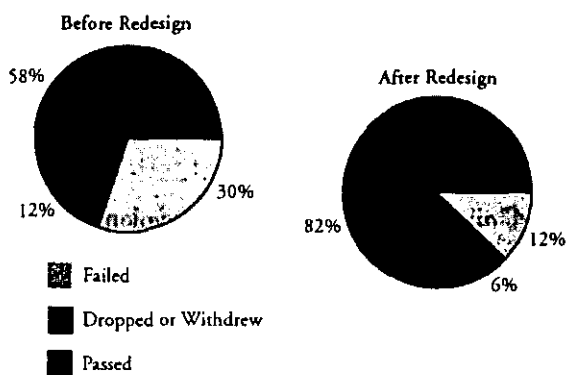
Not surprisingly, large and often impersonal introductory courses have high failure and dropout rates. About 25 introductory courses serve half the student population at community colleges and one third of the students at four-year colleges. These 25 courses have high drop, failure and withdrawal rates, and the rates can vary dramatically across institutions. At four-year institutions the drop, failure and withdrawal rates average from 22 percent to 45 percent, while at community colleges the rates average 40 to 50 percent, but can be much higher. Since these few courses affect such a large proportion of college students, restructuring them to improve student success can significantly affect retention and graduation rates.<sup>16</sup>

The National Center for Academic Transformation (NCAT) conducted research to redesign one introductory course at 30 postsecondary institutions. After evaluating the newly designed courses, the center found that 25 of the 30 colleges showed significant improvement in student performance in class, and all 30 cut costs by an average of 37 percent. According to the project report, "Collectively, the 30 redesigned courses affect more than 50,000 students nationwide and produce a savings of \$3.1 million in operating expenses each year."<sup>17</sup> Half of the institutions were studied closely to evaluate the effect on low-income and minority students; of those, 90 percent demonstrated positive effects on student learning.

*University of New Mexico* At the University of New Mexico, 47 percent of students are minorities, most of whom commute to school and work more than 30 hours per week. The introductory psychology course, one of the largest classes, had one of the highest failure rates. This course is taken by more than 2,000 students each year; of those students, 30 percent failed and another 12 percent dropped out or withdrew. To increase student success, the University of New Mexico worked with the National Center for Academic Transformation to redesign the course.

The new psychology course employed the main NCAT strategies: reduced lecture time and increased time for activities and group work, frequent quizzes, and computer-based learning techniques. The results from the newly designed course were positive—the failure rate dropped 18 percentage points and the drop/withdrawal shrunk by half (Figure 2). At the same time, due to the weekly quizzes and in-class study time, students covered the material more thoroughly than before. Student grades rose, and the learning quality improved. Yet another positive result was the cost savings. The redesigned course cost almost 50 percent less, from \$72 per student to \$37 per student.

Figure 2. Redesigning the University of New Mexico's General Psychology Course: Student Success Rates



Source: The National Center for Academic Transformation, 2005.

The cost savings realized by the University of New Mexico—and the 29 other institutions that participated in the redesign project—demonstrate that improving student success need not cost more money, but can be accomplished by changing how courses are taught to be more relevant and more effective for today's generation of students. Further, by using technology, some tasks become more efficient. Quizzes and assignments can be administered and graded through automated computer programs, thus increasing feedback to students and freeing time for faculty and teaching assistants.<sup>18</sup>

*Technology* Computer-based practices can be used to redesign a wide range of courses—from psychology and literature to statistics and math. *MyMathLab* is an example of a computer program used in math courses. The software allows students to do as many math problems as they need and receive instant feedback on their answers. The program also sends faculty detailed information on student progress. The University of Alabama uses *MyMathLab* in its redesigned intermediate algebra course. Students are required to spend time working on problems

in the math computer center using the software. Faculty or graduate students staff the center to help students when needed.

Within four years, the University of Alabama saw a significant increase—from 44 percent to 80 percent—in the number of students who receive a C- or better in the class. In the redesigned algebra course, African Americans, who comprise 14 percent of the undergraduate population, scored significantly higher than their peers in the traditional course. As in the University of New Mexico example, the gains did not come at a higher cost; rather the cost-per-student dropped 33 percent, saving the university about \$60,000 per year.<sup>19</sup>

First-year retention strategies such as redesigned courses, summer bridge and orientation programs, first-year seminars and learning communities are key to helping underrepresented students continue to their second year of college. Legislators can provide important support and incentives for institutions to implement such practices. Although the focus on first-year retention programs is crucial, it is not sufficient. An effective state strategy also requires that programs and activities be in place to move students from the second year of college to graduation.

### **From Second Year to Graduation: Practices to Increase Degree Attainment**

For college students to persist to graduation, they need to remain engaged academically and socially beyond their first year. Students who participate in activities such as internships, faculty-guided research, and service learning are more likely to remain engaged. If students receive the information and support they need when they need it, they have a greater chance of attaining a degree. Support services can provide students with needed help through academic advising, career counseling, mentoring, tutoring, and financial aid guidance. One program that includes all these services is the federally funded TRIO Student Support Services program.

**Federal TRIO** The federal TRIO Student Support Services program helps low-income, first-generation and disabled students attain a college degree. Of the students participating in TRIO, two-thirds must be both low-income and first generation. Institutions of higher education can apply to the Student Support Services program for competitive grants to fund student support projects on campus.

*Effective support services help students stay enrolled in college by targeting those in need before they drop out.*

Recognizing that students who are both first-generation and low-income are more at-risk of dropping out of college, Student Support Services program staff meet often with participating students to monitor their academic progress and track their use of available services. For many students, the Student Support Services office is a “home base” for them on campus—a place they can go at any time and receive needed help or guidance, whether for academic or personal reasons. For those in need of academic help, the program provides supplementary instruction through tutoring, workshops, group study sessions and computer-based exercises.

Research indicates that Student Support Services programs have had positive results on student retention and persistence. Overall, the 950 programs nationwide serve more than 200,000 students. According to the U.S. Department of Education’s analysis of the program, those students are more likely to persist through college and attain a degree than other low-income and first-generation students. The more involved the students are—by spending more time in the program or using more services—the more likely they are to complete college.<sup>20</sup>

**State Educational Opportunity Programs** Legislators can encourage colleges to apply for federal Student Support Services grants or can provide state funding for institutions to provide similar services. California and New York, for example, have state-funded Educational Opportunity Programs to help low-income, academically disadvantaged youth succeed in college through financial aid and comprehensive student support. Implementation varies by college; while some require participants to enroll in summer bridge programs or orientations, others require a specific course load. Institutions provide Educational Opportunity Program students with individual attention and extensive academic and personal counseling. Nyack College in New York testifies that it has seen noticeable positive effects from the program. Many of its program students have become leaders on campus, have made the dean’s list and have graduated with honors.<sup>21</sup>

**Early Warning Systems** Effective support services help students stay enrolled in college by proactively targeting those in need before they drop out. Many postsecondary institutions have early warning systems to identify students who are struggling academically and provide them with immediate help. At Hudson Valley Community College, for

example, faculty use the early warning system to alert academic counselors of students who are struggling in class, are misbehaving or are frequently absent. Faculty members notify counselors early in the semester to give students ample time to improve. The early warning system provides training and support to help faculty identify at-risk students.

**High-Impact Practices** In addition to providing support services for students, colleges and universities can promote other practices that increase degree attainment. Student research, service-learning courses, and internships have proven to help students remain in college and graduate.

The Association of American Colleges and Universities considers research with faculty, service learning and internships “high-impact practices” because of their positive results. Students that participate in these activities not only have higher rates of persistence and graduation, but also gain more personally, intellectually and culturally from their education. These positive results apply to all students, but appear to be even more evident in minorities and low-income students. Compared to non-Hispanic students, Hispanic students that participated in “high-impact” activities had better grade point averages, and African American students had higher chances of persisting in college than whites.<sup>22</sup>

**Research Experience** Undergraduate research opportunities give students the chance to work closely with faculty. Research experience can motivate students to continue their education toward advanced degrees. According to the *High-Impact Educational Practices* report, “Students who do research with faculty also are more likely to persist, gain more intellectually and personally, and choose a research-related field as a career.”<sup>23</sup> The report also indicates that students have positive and supportive relationships with the faculty.



**Service Learning** Service learning courses require that students apply what they are learning in class to a community service experience. For example, a public policy course on women as leaders could have its students mentor at-risk girls at local middle schools. The students then would reflect on their mentoring experiences in class. By connecting the classroom with the community, learning becomes more meaningful and engaging—the students integrate what

they learn in school into their lives and careers. They also learn the importance of civic responsibility and giving back to their communities. Further, by having a service project that classmates work and reflect on together, service learning courses can increase the social connection among students.

**Internships** Internships embed students in a job in a career field of interest and enable them to see how their degree can help them. These experiences can lead to greater persistence because students see a tangible result of their educational efforts. Internships also allow students to encounter a work environment with which they may not be familiar, increasing student confidence that they can do the job. If the internship leads them to see that job is not something they want to do after college, students still have time to change their major.

Encouraging underrepresented students to participate in activities such as research with faculty, service learning and internships can be an effective strategy for increasing graduation rates and overall student success. Although most institutions develop and implement their own programs, legislators can offer funding or other incentives to promote high-impact activities. A state plan or agenda on higher education is a good place for legislators to encourage institutions to provide and promote high-impact practices.

## Creating State Agendas that Promote College Success

State legislators can take leadership to improve college completion by letting institutions know that student retention and success are state priorities and that the institutions will be held accountable for results. A state agenda on college success can send that signal. These agendas identify priorities, set goals, and recommend policies and practices to improve college completion. Several legislatures have created task forces that bring together policymakers and higher education stakeholders to articulate state agendas.

**Arkansas** In 2007, the Arkansas General Assembly passed Act 570, creating the Legislative Task Force on Higher Education Remediation, Retention and Graduation Rates. The task force consisted of the governor, legislative leaders, college administrators, faculty and state education board members. The task force was charged with researching and analyzing Arkansas trends and data on student success, and creating a plan to decrease remedial education and increase student retention and graduation. The task force held 16 meetings, during which outside stakeholders presented members with comprehensive testimony and information.

In 2008, the task force released a report of its findings with a set of recommendations, incorporating many of the practices highlighted in this brief.

For example, the task force suggests requiring colleges and universities to use an early warning system to identify students struggling academically. The report also encourages colleges to increase student support services and recommends appropriating \$500,000 for the expanded services. Specifically, the task force mentions such strategies as learning communities, academic help measures and personal support services. Another recommendation is for colleges to take into special consideration the needs of underrepresented students and the fact that they are most likely to drop out during their first year. The task force suggests that colleges offer first-year experiences and evaluate how introductory courses could be redesigned to improve student success. Finally, the task force proposes an annual statewide conference where two- and four-year institutions could share strategies on retention and graduation. The conference could be valuable in continuing reform efforts and providing an opportunity for collaboration.<sup>24</sup>

**Illinois** In 2007, the Illinois General Assembly adopted House Joint Resolution 69, which created the Public Agenda Task Force and directed it to study higher education challenges and opportunities. As in Arkansas, the task force consisted of policymakers, state education leaders, and administrators and faculty from postsecondary institutions. The task force held six formal meetings and conducted regional forums and special briefings. The task force developed a state plan for higher education, taking into consideration input from a wide range of stakeholders. The final report, the *Public Agenda for College and Career Success*, lays out the state plan and serves as a guide for policymakers and higher education institutions as they consider policies, priorities and funding. It defines four main goals for Illinois: to increase access to postsecondary education; to make affordability a priority; to increase the number of degree holders in the state; and to use education, research and innovation to meet economic needs.

Legislators played an integral part in developing the public agenda, and also have a key role in implementing it and monitoring institutional progress. To facilitate institutional accountability to the legislature, the public agenda report advocates more robust state data systems that can accurately track retention and graduation rates.<sup>25</sup>

**South Carolina** In South Carolina, the Higher Education Study Committee was formed by the General Assembly to create a state agenda to improve the higher education system. To accomplish that task, the study committee developed a project plan involving participants from the education, business and government sectors. Subcommittees and additional task forces were formed to study specific issues in depth. The result, a comprehensive report titled *Leveraging Higher Education for a Stronger South Carolina*, includes detailed analysis and recommendations. The report provides information regarding cost, priority, timeline and responsibility for each recommendation.<sup>26</sup>

The report highlights the need for redesigning introductory courses that currently have high failure rates. Another recommendation urges institutions to develop early warning systems to provide students with immediate academic help, particularly during their first year. The report also advises continuing and expanding support for retention programs such as "academic support services, new student orientation, service learning, academic advisement, counseling, tutoring, cultural enrichment, 'freshman year' and 'sophomore year' programs."<sup>27</sup> Summer transition and bridge programs also are mentioned as useful to help students adapt to college.

## Conclusion

To maximize a state's investment in higher education and reach state goals for higher college completion rates, state legislators will want to understand the array of college success programs and know which are effective. Students who are supported in their classes and involved on campus are more likely to graduate. Therefore, student success programs should aim to increase the academic and social engagement of the students beginning in the first year of college and continuing until graduation.

As policymakers work to improve college success for underrepresented students, some points to consider include the following.

- Recognize the common risk factors that underrepresented students face and consider them in developing success programs.
- Use funding or other incentives to encourage institutions to target programs to first-year students.
- Encourage institutions to promote first-year programs such as learning communities, bridge and orientation programs, and first-year seminars to help students remain in school.

- Press institutions to measure the comparative effectiveness of the success programs.
- Support the redesign of introductory courses that have high failure rates to help students be more successful, and use technology to lower costs and improve efficiency.
- Consider funding or incentives to help institutions expand student support services that help students progress from first year to graduation.
- Fully leverage federal funding such as the TRIO programs, which award grants to institutions for student support.
- Recommend that institutions expand programs that keep students engaged academically and socially, such as research with faculty, service learning and internships.
- Create legislative task forces to bring together various stakeholders to develop a state agenda on student success. Institutions need clear signals from state legislatures that retention and success are priorities and that they will be held accountable for results.

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# ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



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**Senator Gary Stevens**  
*President of the Senate*

## **SECTIONAL ANALYSIS** **CS for Senate Bill 221(EDU)**

### **SECTION 1:**

Establishes an advisory task force on higher education and career readiness for the purpose of compiling data and advising the legislature on matters pertaining to college or career readiness of students who graduate from public secondary schools in Alaska.

It's composed of 18 members representing the Governor, the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education, the University of Alaska, the Alaska School Board Association, the superintendents, career and technical training centers, the Alaska Federation of Natives, the National Education Association, Alaskan private colleges or universities, other public (non-UA) postsecondary institutions in Alaska, relevant faculty from around the UA system, both secondary and post-secondary students, and the chairpersons of the respective House and Senate Education Committees.

The respective entity that each task force member represents is expected to pay for their share of the expenses of participating in the task force.

The staff of the legislative members of the task force shall serve as staff for the task force.

The members of the task force shall elect a chair from among its members.

The task force shall compile research and summarize data regarding remediation, retention, and graduation rates in the state. There shall be developed a definition of remediation. The task force shall identify contributing causes for lack of college readiness, and best practices to reduce the need for remediation, and prepare a report to the legislature outlining strategies and recommendations to reduce remediation, improve college readiness, and increase college graduation rates. The report is to be submitted by March 1, 2011.

### **SECTION 2:**

Repeals the act and dissolves the task force on July 1, 2011.

### **SECTION 3:**

Makes the act take effect the day after the governor signs it.

# FISCAL NOTE

**STATE OF ALASKA**  
**2010 LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

Fiscal Note Number: 1  
 Bill Version: CSSB 221(EDC)  
 (S) Publish Date: 2/1/10

Identifier (file name): SB221-EED-ACPE-01-25-10 Dept. Affected: Education  
 Title An Act establishing an advisory task force on higher RDU ACPE  
education in the legislative branch of government;... Component Program Administration and  
 Sponsor Senator Stevens Operations  
 Requester (S)EDC Component Number 2738

**Expenditures/Revenues** (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

	Appropriation Required	Information						
		FY 2011	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016
<b>OPERATING EXPENDITURES</b>								
Personal Services								
Travel								
Contractual								
Supplies								
Equipment								
Land & Structures								
Grants & Claims								
Miscellaneous								
<b>TOTAL OPERATING</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

<b>CAPITAL EXPENDITURES</b>								
-----------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

<b>CHANGE IN REVENUES ( )</b>								
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**FUND SOURCE** (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts								
1003 GF Match								
1004 GF								
1005 GF/Program Receipts								
1037 GF/Mental Health								
Other Interagency Receipts								
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

Estimate of any current year (FY2010) cost: \_\_\_\_\_

**POSITIONS**

Full-time								
Part-time								
Temporary								

**ANALYSIS:** (Attach a separate page if necessary)

Participation in higher education related working groups, advisory bodies, etc. are within the regular duties of ACPE's executive. As currently drafted, ACPE costs related to quarterly meetings would be diminimus and absorbed within existing budget authority.

Prepared by: Diane Barrans, Executive Director  
 Division: Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education  
 Approved by: Diane Barrans, Executive Director  
Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education

Phone 907-465-6740  
 Date/Time 1/25/10 9:00 AM  
 Date 1/25/2010

# FISCAL NOTE

**STATE OF ALASKA**  
**2010 LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

Fiscal Note Number: 2  
 Bill Version: CSSB 221(EDC)  
 (S) Publish Date: 2/1/10

Identifier (file name): SB221-LEG-LOB-01-25-10 Dept. Affected: Legislature  
 Title: "An Act establishing an advisory task force on higher education in RDU  
education in the legislative branch of government;..." Legislative Operating Budget  
 Component: Legislative Operating Budget  
 Sponsor: Senators Stevens, McGuire  
 Requester: Senate Education Committee Component Number: 796

**Expenditures/Revenues** (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

	Appropriation Required	Information					
		FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016
<b>OPERATING EXPENDITURES</b>							
Personal Services							
Travel	14.0						
Contractual							
Supplies							
Equipment							
Land & Structures							
Grants & Claims							
Miscellaneous							
<b>TOTAL OPERATING</b>	<b>14.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

<b>CAPITAL EXPENDITURES</b>							
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<b>CHANGE IN REVENUES ( )</b>							
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**FUND SOURCE** (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts							
1003 GF Match							
1004 GF	14.0						
1005 GF/Program Receipts							
1037 GF/Mental Health							
Other Interagency Receipts							
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>14.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

Estimate of any current year (FY2010) cost: \_\_\_\_\_

**POSITIONS**

Full-time							
Part-time							
Temporary							

**ANALYSIS:** (Attach a separate page if necessary)

SB 221 establishes an Advisory Task Force on Higher Education in the Legislative Branch of government. The Task Force consists of 13 members from various education and government entities. Members serve without compensation but are entitled to per diem and travel expenses. The legislation provides that per diem and travel expenses shall be paid from the budget of the agency or institution the member represents on the Task Force. The agency or institution can opt out of participating to avoid payment of per diem and travel expenses. The Legislature has two members on the Task Force, the Chairs of the Senate and House Education Committees.

It is anticipated that the Task Force will hold six meetings. Travel costs for the Legislators and staff are included in this fiscal note for two meetings in Anchorage and two meetings in Fairbanks. The other two meetings will be teleconferenced. The costs for employees of the Education Committee Chairs to staff the Task Force, costs for teleconferencing meetings, and printing the final the report which is due March 1, 2011 will be absorbed within existing budgets.

Prepared by: Karla Schofield, Deputy Director  
 Division: Legislative Affairs Agency  
 Approved by: Pamela Varni, Executive Director  
Legislative Affairs Agency

Phone 465-6626  
 Date/Time 1/25/10 1:43 PM  
 Date 1/25/2010

# FISCAL NOTE

**STATE OF ALASKA**  
**2010 LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

Fiscal Note Number: 3  
 Bill Version: CSSB 221(EDC)  
 (S) Publish Date: 2/1/10

Identifier (file name): SB221-EED-ESS-1-22-10 Dept. Affected: Education & Early Development  
 Title: "An Act establishing an advisory task force on higher education in the legislative branch of government..." RDU: Education Support Services  
 Sponsor: Senators Stevens & McGuire Component: Executive Administration  
 Requester: Education, Finance Component Number: 2736

**Expenditures/Revenues** (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

	Appropriation Required	Information						
		FY 2011	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016
<b>OPERATING EXPENDITURES</b>								
Personal Services								
Travel								
Contractual								
Supplies								
Equipment								
Land & Structures								
Grants & Claims								
Miscellaneous								
<b>TOTAL OPERATING</b>		<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

<b>CAPITAL EXPENDITURES</b>								
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<b>CHANGE IN REVENUES ( )</b>								
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**FUND SOURCE** (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts								
1003 GF Match								
1004 GF								
1005 GF/Program Receipts								
1037 GF/Mental Health								
Other Interagency Receipts								
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

Estimate of any current year (FY2010) cost: \_\_\_\_\_

**POSITIONS**

Full-time								
Part-time								
Temporary								

**ANALYSIS:** (Attach a separate page if necessary)

There is no fiscal impact on the Department of Education and Early Development

Prepared by: Eddy Jeans  
 Division: School Finance  
 Approved by: Larry LeDoux  
 Commissioner

Phone 465-8679  
 Date/Time 1/22/10 12:00 AM  
 Date 1/22/2010

# FISCAL NOTE

**STATE OF ALASKA**  
**2010 LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

Fiscal Note Number: 4  
 Bill Version: CSSB 221(EDC)  
 (S) Publish Date: 3/10/10

Identifier (file name): \_\_\_\_\_ Dept. Affected: Legislature  
 Title Legislative Task Force on Higher Education RDU Legislative Operating Budget  
 Component Legislative Operating Budget  
 Sponsor Stevens  
 Requester Senate Finance Committee Component Number 796

**Expenditures/Revenues** (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

	Appropriation Required	Information						
		FY 2011	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016
<b>OPERATING EXPENDITURES</b>								
Personal Services								
Travel								
Contractual								
Supplies								
Equipment								
Land & Structures								
Grants & Claims								
Miscellaneous								
<b>TOTAL OPERATING</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

<b>CAPITAL EXPENDITURES</b>								
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<b>CHANGE IN REVENUES ( )</b>								
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**FUND SOURCE** (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts								
1003 GF Match								
1004 GF								
1005 GF/Program Receipts								
1037 GF/Mental Health								
Other Interagency Receipts								
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

Estimate of any current year (FY2010) cost: \_\_\_\_\_

**POSITIONS**

Full-time								
Part-time								
Temporary								

**ANALYSIS:** (Attach a separate page if necessary)

SB 221 establishes an Advisory Task Force on Higher Education in the Legislative Branch. The Task Force consists of 13 members from various entities. Members serve without compensation but are entitled to per diem and travel expenses paid from the budget of the agency or institution the member represents. It is anticipated that the Task Force will hold six meetings; two in Anchorage, two in Fairbanks and two via teleconference. The Legislature has two members on the Task Force, the Chairs of the Senate and House Education Committees. Travel and support costs for the Legislators and staff will be absorbed within the Legislature's existing budget.

Prepared by: Senate Finance Committee  
Co-Chair Bert Stedman

Phone 465-3873  
 Date/Time 3/5/10 12:50 PM

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date 3/5/2010

# ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



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## Senator Gary Stevens *President of the Senate*

### SPONSOR STATEMENT Senate Bill 221

Excerpt from NCSL's "The Path to a Degree" by Brenda Bautsch, November 2009:

"America is no longer the world leader in education. U.S. performance at the K-12 and postsecondary levels is falling behind other countries. According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), America and Germany are the only two OECD countries where the younger generation is actually less educated than the older generation. In February 2009, President Obama declared the lack of educational attainment in the United States a 'prescription for economic decline, because we know the countries that out-teach us today will out-compete us tomorrow,' and he set a goal for the United States to reclaim its position as the leader in college graduates by 2020. To accomplish that, states need to set their own college completion goals; study and diagnose where and why students are dropping out of the education system; and target state policy to those problem areas. Effective state policy can help more students obtain college degrees, be successful in life and contribute to the economy. "

Alaska has seen this problem growing for many years. There is a disconnect in our education system. If enrollment in and completion of some form of higher education is the goal, then we must clearly identify why our students are failing to perform and devise a means to help them succeed. There are several challenges that must be faced. We have the resources to improve the situation, and Senate Bill 221 calls for the stakeholders to assemble and devise a plan to do so.

This task force will serve to identify ways to strengthen the education pipeline, improve student preparation for college, decrease the need for remediation in college, improve access to financial aid, increase retention and graduation rates in postsecondary education, provide enhanced funding and governance for our education system, address data and tracking needs, and ultimately to support economic development vis-à-vis a better trained, better educated citizenry.

Thank you for your consideration of this worthwhile legislation.