

Models of State K-12 Educational Governance: Where Does Indiana Stand?

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UPCOMING POLICY BRIEFS AND REPORT . .

- ✓ *The Role of Male Teachers in Public Education Today*
- ✓ *Latino Students and Disproportionality in Special Education*
- ✓ *Using Data to Address Equity Issues in Special Education*

According to the Indiana State Constitution, Article VIII Section 1, "...it shall be the duty of the General Assembly... to provide, by law, for a general and uniform system of Common Schools, wherein tuition shall be without charge, and equally open to all." The significance of the delivery of K-12 education as a state responsibility is additionally reflected in Indiana's state budget, where money allocated for education spending in Fiscal Years (FY) 2007-09 represented roughly 50 percent of the budget, more than any other expense of state government, when examining the state General Fund and the Property Tax Replacement Fund.¹

In fact, public schools in Indiana receive their most substantial portion of General Fund money from the state, compared to 17 percent from local funding and less than 10 percent from the federal government. During the 2007-09 biennium, Indiana's state budget will appropriate approximately \$15.1 billion to education. Because Indiana places a premium on providing quality public education to its students, as reflected by the state constitution and budget, assuring quality candidates are appointed or elected for state educational leadership positions must also be a priority.

This policy brief will examine educational leadership roles at the state level. First, the position of chief state school officer (CSSO) will be reviewed. While the official duties and titles for a CSSO may vary from state to state, these educational leaders are most often responsible for overseeing the general education policies of their state and for directing professional staff within the state.⁴ This brief will also touch upon the role of the

state board of education — typically a rule-making body that establishes standards and procedures for both students and educators within the state.⁵ The selection method for these educational leaders will also be considered. Are the candidates elected or appointed to their positions? Moreover, if these education officials are elected, is it done through a partisan or nonpartisan ballot? If appointed, who appoints these officials? Finally, this brief will discuss the qualification requirements of and compensation provided to chief state school officers.

MODELS OF EDUCATIONAL GOVERNANCE

The state educational governance model, the manner in which a state selects the CSSO and the board of education, varies across the United States. The Education Commission of the States (ECS) has identified four major models of educational governance and has detailed how state educational agencies interact and subsequently develop policy (see Figures 1-4 on page 2).⁶ A total of 40 of the 50 states fall into one of the four ECS models, and the remaining ten states operate under variations of the four basic models.

Model One: In the first model, used by 12 states, the electorate is responsible for the selection of a governor. In the linear format, the governor then appoints a state board of education and the state board of education in turn selects a CSSO.

Model Two: The voting public elects both the governor and the state board of education in the second model. The elected state board of education then subsequently appoints a CSSO. Eight states follow this model.

Model Three: The third model, currently followed by Indiana and 10 other states, has the public elect both the governor and the CSSO. The governor then appoints a state board of education.

Model Four: Lastly, the fourth model depicts an elected governor who in turn appoints both the state board of education and the CSSO. This model can be found in nine states.⁷

One argument to support Models One and Four, where the voting public is responsible solely for electing a governor, is that the electorate tends to be less informed about the roles and responsibilities of the state board of education and/or the CSSO. This argument assumes that in voting for a particular gubernatorial candidate one would also support his/her choices for the educational leadership positions. Arguments to support the elec-

tion process for educational officials, found in Models Two and Three, follow the logic that such elections provide for a broader array of opinions, where more voices are likely to be recognized in support of a top state policy priority.

Figure 1

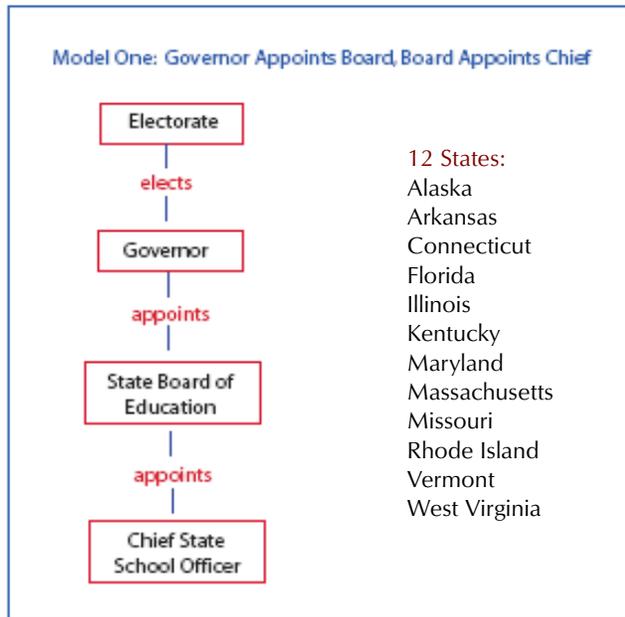


Figure 2

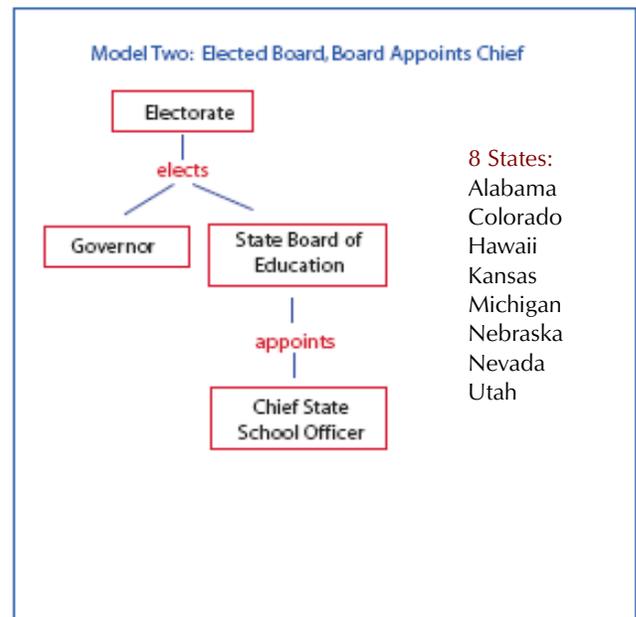


Figure 3

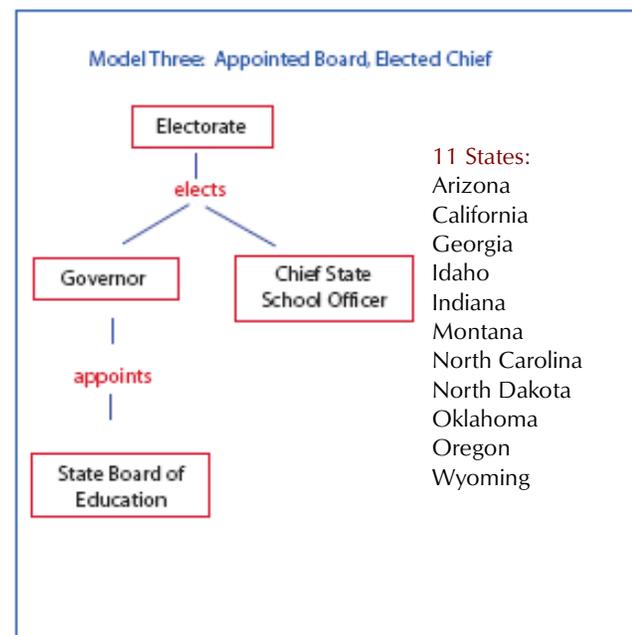
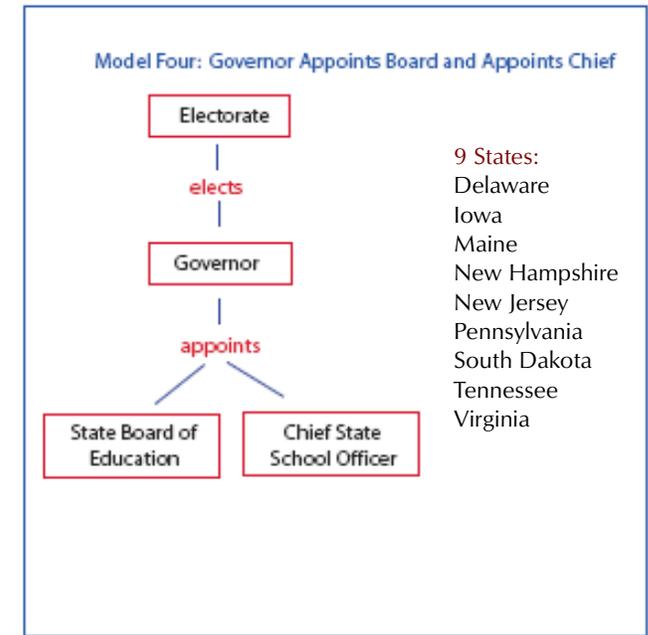


Figure 4



Source: Education Commission of the States.

STRUCTURE AND SELECTION IN INDIANA

As indicated above, Indiana follows Model Three of educational governance. Indiana selects the CSSO, titled as the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, through a partisan election, requiring the candidate to specify an affiliation with a political party. The remaining 10 board members of the Indiana State board of Education (ISBOE) are appointed to four-year terms by the governor on a staggered basis. At least four members must be actively employed by an Indiana school and hold valid teaching licenses. No more than six appointed members may be from the same political party. The CSSO of Indiana, currently Dr. Suellen Reed, serves in a dual role as the Chief Executive Officer for the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) and as chairperson of the ISBOE with full voting privileges.

Four other states allow their CSSO to be an ex-officio, voting member of the state board of education: Arizona, Idaho, Oklahoma, and North Dakota. Moreover, Arizona and Oklahoma also designate the CSSO to sit as the chairperson of the board.⁸ The Education Commission of the States (ECS) report, “Gubernatorial Leadership,” mentions that in states such as Indiana “where the chief state school officer is elected at large... but where the governor appoints state board members, two distinct sources of education leadership exist. Having an elected chief and the appointed board places a premium on cooperative working relationships.”⁹

Indiana is one of 13 states to elect the CSSO; 7 states, including Indiana, elect the CSSO through a partisan ballot and 6 states elect the CSSO on a non-partisan ballot. In the other 37 states the CSSO is appointed to the position by either the governor (13) or members of the state board of education (23); in the state of New York the CSSO is appointed by the Board of Regents. For additional information on the structure of K-12 educational governance and the selection of state education officials see Table 1.

Introduced by State Representatives Bill Friend (R, HD 23) and Robert Behning (R, HD 91) in 2006, HB 1355 intended to restructure educational governance in Indiana. The bill supported Governor Daniels’ 2005 legislative agenda, proposed to “take politics out of education” by changing the elected CSSO position to an appointed one.¹⁰ Specifically, the bill sought to:

- Provide for the superintendent of public instruction to be appointed by the governor;
- Repeal a statute relating to the residency of candidates for election for superintendent of public instruction; and
- Delete a provision describing the term of the superintendent of public instruction.¹¹

This bill proposed that both the members of the ISBOE and its chairperson, the CSSO, would be appointed by the governor. Thus, the governor would be the sole elected official accountable to voters for the selection of these educational officials and the performance of the K-12 education system. Additionally, all terms of employment related to the CSSO position would be at the governor’s discretion, including required credentials and compensation. The bill initially had not identified a financial impact unless the annual salary for the CSSO was raised from \$79,400 to a salary comparable to the national average of \$143,997.

Four amendments to HB 1355 were filed for consideration; the first three were presented by Representative Vernon Smith (D, HD 14) and the fourth by Representative Eric Turner (R, HD 32):

1. The annual salary of the state superintendent would be increased from \$79,400 to \$120,000;
2. The appointed state superintendent of public instruction will possess certain qualifications, namely a bachelor’s degree in education, a superintendent’s license, and teaching experience in a school setting;
3. The creation of a governor-appointed State Superintendent of Instruction Selection Commission composed of six individuals who will carry out the duties of the CSSO during a vacancy; and
4. The elimination of a requirement that stipulates local superintendents must hold a superintendent’s license.¹²

The Indiana State Teachers Association (ISTA) and the Indiana Federation of Teachers (IFT) were two lead organizations that opposed HB 1355, contending that the current system has consistently produced qualified candidates. After debate on the issue, all four amendments were defeated, largely down party lines, and the original bill died on its third reading, as it was not called by the deadline for a vote in the house of origin. It is possible a similar bill may resurface in future legislative sessions.

STATES IN TRANSITION

Several states around the nation have begun to examine their models of educational governance, and some have initiated change. More specifically, governors are beginning to look at models of state educational governance as a way to have a compelling impact on education policy. “In the past 20 years, various governors have taken a stronger role in education by initiating legal changes that, for example, give the sitting governor more control over state board or chief state school officer appointments,” notes the Education Commission of the States.¹³

In 2004, the state of Illinois passed Senate Bill 3000 to provide the governor more control over the state board of education and education policy as a whole. While Illinois continues with Model One of education governance (where the electorate chooses a governor who in turn chooses a state board of education which then selects the CSSO), the previous system in Illinois allowed for members of the state board of education to serve staggered terms; therefore, a governor may inherit many of the previous governor’s appointees. With the passage of the new law, each incoming governor will be able to nominate a majority of the members of the state board of education at the beginning of the governor’s term.

TABLE 1. Structure and Selection of Educational Governance Nationwide

State	State Superintendent			State Board of Education		
	Method of Selection	Salary	Salary Rank	Method of Selection	# of Members	Term (years)
Alabama	SBOE appointment	\$164,300	16	Partisan election (8)	9	4
Alaska	SBOE appointment*	\$85,000	45	Gov. appointment	7	5
Arizona	Partisan election	\$85,000	46	Gov. appointment*	11	4
Arkansas	SBOE appointment	\$119,768	32	Gov. appointment	10	6
California	Non-partisan election	\$175,525	10	Gov. appointment	11	4
Colorado	SBOE appointment	\$144,996	24	Partisan election	8	6
Connecticut	SBOE appointment	\$140,000	14	Gov. appointment*	9	4
Delaware	Gov. appointment*	\$154,700	19	Gov. appointment*	7	6
Florida	SBOE appointment	\$225,000	3	Gov. appointment	7	4
Georgia	Elected statewide	\$119,680	33	Gov. appointment	13	7
Hawaii	SBOE appointment	\$150,000	21	Non-partisan election	13	4
Idaho	Non-partisan election	\$82,500	47	Gov. appointment	8	5
Illinois	SBOE appointment	\$225,000	4	Gov. appointment	9	6
Indiana	Partisan election	\$79,400	48	Gov. appointment	11	4
Iowa	Gov. appointment	\$140,000	26	Gov. appointment	9	6
Kansas	SBOE appointment	\$137,281	27	Partisan election	10	4
Kentucky	SBOE appointment	\$220,000	5	Gov. appointment	11	4
Louisiana	SBOE appointment	\$180,000	9	Elect (8)/ Gov. appointment (3)	11	4
Maine	Gov. appointment	\$100,672	41	Gov. appointment	9	5
Maryland	SBOE appointment	\$185,000	8	Gov. appointment	12	4
Massachusetts	SBOE appointment	\$191,857	7	Gov. appointment	9	5
Michigan	SBOE appointment	\$175,099	11	Elected	8	8
Minnesota	Gov. appointment	\$107,432	37	None	None	None
Mississippi	SBOE appointment	\$292,000	2	Gov. (5)/ Legislature (4) appointment	9	9
Missouri	SBOE appointment	\$292,500	1	Gov. appointment*	8	8
Montana	Partisan election	\$89,472	44	Gov. appointment	7	7
Nebraska	SBOE appointment	\$155,000	18	Non-partisan election	8	4
Nevada	SBOE appointment	\$107,433	36	Non-partisan election	10	4
New Hampshire	Gov. appointment*	\$102,365	40	Gov. appointment	7	5
New Jersey	Gov. appointment	\$141,000	25	Gov. appointment	13	6
New Mexico	Gov. appointment	\$132,000	28	Elected	10	4
New York	Board of Regents appointment	\$170,165	13	Legislature appointment	16	5
North Carolina	Partisan election	\$120,477	31	Gov. appointment	13	8
North Dakota	Non-partisan election	\$77,434	49	Gov. appointment	7	6
Ohio	SBOE appointment	\$210,000	6	Non-partisan election (11)/ Gov. appointment (8)	19	4
Oklahoma	Partisan election	\$95,898	42	Gov. appointment	7	6

Note: Salary data based on self-reports provided to the Council of Chief State School Officers, 2004-2007

TABLE 1. Structure and Selection of Educational Governance Nationwide (continued)

State	State Superintendent			State Board of Education		
	Method of Selection	Salary	Salary Rank	Method of Selection	# of Members	Term (years)
Oregon	Non-partisan election	\$72,000	50	Gov. appointment	7	4
Pennsylvania	Gov. appointment	\$131,157	29	Gov. appointment*	21	6
Rhode Island	Gov. appointment	\$148,000	22	Gov. appointment	9	3
South Carolina	Partisan election	\$115,000	34	Legislature appointment	17	4
South Dakota	Gov. appointment	\$151,000	20	Gov. appointment	9	4
Tennessee	Gov. appointment	\$104,304	39	Gov. appointment*	10	9
Texas	Gov. appointment	\$164,748	15	Partisan election	15	4
Utah	SBOE appointment	\$160,000	17	Non-partisan election	15	4
Vermont	SBOE appointment*	\$120,800	30	Gov. appointment*	9	6
Virginia	Gov. appointment	\$146,535	23	Gov. appointment	9	4
Washington	Non-partisan election	\$105,861	38	Elected by local school board members	11	4
West Virginia	SBOE appointment	\$175,000	12	Gov. appointment	9	9
Wisconsin	Non-partisan election	\$109,488	35	None	None	None
Wyoming	Partisan election	\$92,000	43	Gov. appointment	11	4

Note: Salary data based on self-reports provided to the Council of Chief State School Officers, 2004-2007

* Requires approval or confirmation from another entity

New Mexico has a unique governance structure, as it does not follow any of the four common models. New Mexico’s current model was passed as House Bill 96 in 2004 and has an elected state board of education, called the Public Education Commission. The board, however, serves only in an advisory capacity without rule-making authority. In addition, the CSSO in New Mexico is appointed by the governor. This structure centralizes power over state education in the governor’s office.

In 2001, Florida passed the “Education Governance Reorganization Implementation Act.” The previously elected Florida State Board of Education (FSBOE) is now an appointed body that, led by the CSSO, controls K-20 education throughout the entire state.¹⁴ The seven board members are appointed by the governor and the FSBOE in turn selects a CSSO.¹⁵ Consequently, the Florida governor’s policies have a broader statewide impact. Idaho has also passed legislation that provides for a single body to control K-20 education throughout the state, although the CSSO of Idaho is an elected position via a non-partisan ballot.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL LEADERS

Qualifications for CSSOs vary from state to state, and three states (Connecticut, Kansas, and Massachusetts) do not have any legal requirements for those seeking to hold the position. Indiana’s singular requirement is that a candidate for the position must be an Indiana resident at least two years prior to the election. Twelve other states have residency restrictions as well. The Education Commission of the States (ECS) identified 16 states that require experience in education or administration as a prerequisite for the job and 4 states that specifically outline the need for certification in teaching or administration.¹⁶ Table 2 lists qualifications required by law in various states.

A total of 12 states delineate certain levels of education as necessary for candidacy.¹⁷ These education requirements range from Alabama’s requirement that the CSSO obtain “professional education equivalent to graduation from a standard university or college” to Nevada’s

requirement that a CSSO “hold a master’s degree in the field of education or school administration.” A general look at the education levels of CSSOs across the country reveals a large number of advanced degrees. Currently serving as the CSSO of a state are 17 individuals who hold a master’s degree or a juris doctorate (J.D.). Furthermore, there are 29 CSSOs who hold either a doctorate of education (Ed.D.) or a doctorate of philosophy (Ph.D.), including Indiana’s CSSO. There are only four CSSOs holding a bachelor’s degree, but no advanced degree. These numbers portray a field of well-qualified CSSOs across the country.

It would be expected, therefore, that CSSOs are compensated partly based upon the level of education held. Yet, when the level of education for the 50 CSSOs — identified by the highest degree held — was examined, a statistical analysis found that there was no difference in salary between the various levels of education.

TABLE 2. CSSO Qualifications by State

US Citizen	Minimum Age	Residency	Minimum Education	Education/ Administration Experience	Teaching/ Administration Certification
Arizona	Arizona	Arizona	Alabama	Alabama	Arkansas
California	California	California	Alaska	Alaska	Nebraska
Georgia	Georgia	Georgia	Arkansas	Arkansas	North Dakota
Idaho	Idaho	Idaho	Delaware	Delaware	Tennessee
Missouri	Montana	Indiana	Georgia	Iowa	(4)
North Dakota	Nevada	Missouri	Idaho	Maryland	
Oklahoma	North Carolina	Montana	Maryland	Minnesota	
Oregon	North Dakota	North Carolina	Mississippi	Mississippi	
Texas	Oklahoma	North Dakota	Montana	Nebraska	
Washington	Oregon	Oklahoma	Nebraska	New Hampshire	
Wisconsin	South Carolina	Oregon	Nevada	New Mexico	
Wyoming	Washington	Wisconsin	West Virginia	South Dakota	
(12)	Wisconsin	Wyoming	(12)	Tennessee	
	Wyoming	(13)		Vermont	
	(14)			Virginia	
				West Virginia	
				(16)	

Source: Education Commission of the States, 2007

COMPENSATION FOR EDUCATIONAL LEADERS

In an area of education where there are highly qualified individuals serving as CSSOs and a continuing need for such individuals, it is pertinent to look at compensation levels both in Indiana and nationwide. The CSSO of Indiana currently has an annual salary of \$79,400. This is the 48th lowest salary for a CSSO in the U.S.; only North Dakota and Oregon record a lower salary for the CSSO. The national average for a CSSO salary in 2007 was \$143,997, and Missouri paid the highest salary of \$292,500.¹⁸ Comparing the various models of educational governance, it can be observed that states whose structures elect the CSSO pay an average salary of \$101,410. Conversely, states whose structures appoint the CSSO pay an average salary of \$160,559. In fact, of the top 10 highest paid CSSOs, 9 were appointed to the position and of the 5 lowest paid CSSOs, 4 were elected to the position.¹⁹

For further perspective, the salary of \$79,400, provided to the CSSO in Indiana, makes this person one of the lowest paid educational leaders when compared to the salaries of local superintendents within the state. Only three of the 289 school districts pay their local superintendent less than the salary received by Indiana’s CSSO, and the superintendent of Indianapolis Public Schools receives the highest annual salary of \$239,800.²⁰

In April 2007 the Indiana General Assembly passed Senate Enrolled Act 401 which will positively affect the CSSO salary. Beginning on January 1, 2008, the CSSO and other state elected officials will receive an annual salary adjustment equivalent to the increase received by the state employees of the executive branch. The bill did not raise the base salary for the CSSO.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The CSSO of Indiana currently has an annual salary of \$79,400. This is the 48th lowest salary for a CSSO in the U.S., only North Dakota and Oregon record a lower salary for the CSSO. The national average for a CSSO salary in 2007 was \$143,997, and Missouri paid the highest salary of \$292,500. Moreover, 286 of the 289 local superintendents in Indiana earn more than the state superintendent.

Recommendation

Although the salary of Indiana’s CSSO will increase annually beginning in 2008, there should also be a raise in the base salary of the CSSO to a level at or above the national average (\$143,997 in 2007). A salary set at the national average would better reflect the earnings potential of a

person with an advanced education, extensive K-12 education experience, and the significant responsibility placed on the chief state school officer in guiding a public education system with more than 1 million students and 61,000 teachers in nearly 2,000 schools and 293 school corporations.

Conclusion

The current model of education governance in Indiana is one of four common models throughout the country. It is notable that some states are beginning to look at its structure of educational leadership and have moved to a linear governance model with greater authority over K-12 vested in the governor. Legislative proposals to move the CSSO to a position appointed by the governor, as considered by the Indiana General Assembly, have failed in part due to past proposals not ensuring for the optimal educational credentials of the CSSO.

Recommendation

If the office of CSSO is moved to an appointed position, employment criteria should be established to ensure that someone with an advanced degree in K-12 education, higher education, or a related field is selected. Indiana should not settle for credentials that are below the exemplary credentials held by Indiana's current CSSO.

Conclusion

Elementary and secondary public education is the largest expenditure of the state and its leadership should thus be considered a top priority. Indiana must seek to find and maintain the most qualified candidates for education leadership positions. Having well qualified local superintendents would be helpful not only to promote the efficiency and effectiveness of school districts, but also to enhance the pool of candidates for the CSSO position.

Recommendation

The Hallmarks of Excellence program, administered by the Indiana Association of Public School Superintendents (IAPSS) with assistance from CHORUS, an Indianapolis-based human capital management firm, is now in its fourth year of providing leadership development training and has provided assistance to over 330 superintendents and assistant superintendents. Indiana's educational leaders were the first in the nation to use Hallmarks. The leadership development program has leveraged best practices from education and business leadership and its demonstrated success justifies its continuance and expansion.

The State of Indiana would benefit from financially supporting the Hallmarks program and other statewide initiatives which encourage and sustain persons in educational leadership positions. Such an action would formalize the Hallmarks program much like the Indiana Principals Leadership Academy and the new School Business Officials Leadership Academy.

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