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Subject: State Actions - Turning Reform Into Reality

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State Actions – Turning Reform into Reality

Legislative Sessions are in full swing and states across the country are considering policies to improve student achievement. Here is a quick snapshot of states that have voted to advance reforms.

Arizona:

Thanks to the leadership of Senator Crandall, Arizona is building on reforms passed in previous years. The Senate Education Committee passed legislation to expand educational choice to more parents and to improve their existing reading policy to ensure third grade students are mastering critical reading skills. The committee also advanced policies to transform education for the digital age by passing legislation to protect students' ability to enroll in online courses and move to a performance based funding system.

Iowa:

Governor Branstad has made reading and ending social promotion in the third grade the central component of his education platform. This week, both House and Senate committees held hearings and voted on HSB 517.

Florida:

The House Education Committee unanimously advanced legislation that expands online learning by removing the requirement that students in elementary schools must have been enrolled in a public school the year before and allows full-time Florida Virtual School Students to participate in local extra-curricular activities. The Florida House also passed legislation to implement the waiver Florida received from provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Florida's comprehensive reforms, including its leading accountability system, earned greater flexibility to continue improving the quality of education for Sunshine State students.

Maine:

Governor LePage has made a priority of transforming education in Maine for the digital age. The House and Senate have passed legislation directing the Department of Education to create a working group to expand online and blended learning opportunities for K-12 students statewide.

Michigan:

House Education Committee passed legislation to expand digital learning by allowing more cyber charter schools, removing prior public school attendance requirements and increasing the cap on student enrollment.

Minnesota:

Representative Myhra's bill to expand digital learning with an online course requirement passed the House Education Reform Committee and House Education Finance Committee.

New Mexico:

New Mexico became the 12th state to receive federal regulatory relief in exchange for advancing real reform. Congratulations to Hannah Skandera and Governor Martinez for their commitment to improve education amidst many challenges.

Virginia:

The first bill in Governor McDonnell's Opportunity to Learn platform achieved final passage this week. SB 789/HB1061 to require students to complete an individual online course was passed by the House and Senate. Many other reforms in the Opportunity to Learn passed committees this week, including HB 576 which establishes a teacher evaluation system that includes student learning and ends the damaging

practice of Last In, First Out.

The **Foundation for Excellence in Education** is igniting a movement of reform, state by state, to transform education for the 21st century economy.

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