



Public Education in Your State: Setting the Agenda and Staying the Course  
A SYMPOSIUM BY GOVERNORS FOR GOVERNORS

December 1-2, 2002  
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

## SUMMARY REPORT

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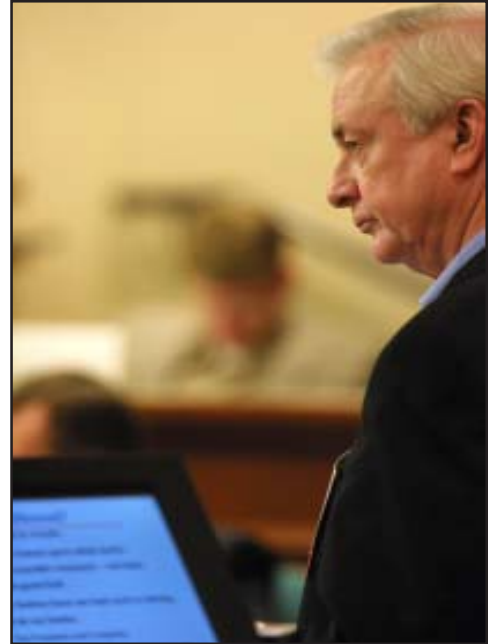
Tom Vander Ark, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

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*“The importance of governors being the education leaders in their states was the clearest message of the Symposium. With the economic challenges that all states face, the need for a more knowledgeable and skilled workforce to compete globally, and the challenge of No Child Left Behind, governors’ role in education leadership is more important than ever before. The Symposium for Governors illuminated that today’s governors must actively help design an educational approach that works much better than what we have now, and must constantly lead efforts to implement it.”*

*GOVERNOR JAMES B. HUNT, JR.*



## SUMMARY

On December 1-2, 2002 in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, the James B. Hunt, Jr. Institute for Educational Leadership and Policy launched its inaugural event with the first annual *Symposium for Governors by Governors*. More than twenty governors from around the nation participated in the Symposium – *Public Education in Your State: Setting the Agenda and Staying the Course*. Focusing on substantive education reform issues ranging from early childhood education to teacher quality to achievement, accountability and assessment, the Symposium was unique in its combination of rich, dynamic discussion between governors and presenters and confidential governors-only sessions.

Throughout the program, governors benefited from presentations by and discussions with national education leaders including Rod Paige, U.S. Secretary of Education; Margaret Spellings, Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy; Roy Romer, former three-term Colorado Governor and current Los Angeles Unified School District superintendent; Ed Rust, State Farm Insurance Companies CEO; Tom Vander Ark, Executive Director of Education for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation; Molly Corbett Broad, President of the University of North Carolina; Ted Sanders, President of the Education Commission of the States; Judith A. Rizzo, Executive Director of the Hunt Institute and Governor Jim Hunt, Hunt Institute Chairman.

Key themes that emerged from the high level Symposium discussions:

1. Governors must be *the* education leaders in their states and must lead the political process to advance education reform.
2. Governors must incorporate the direct link between education and the economy as part of implementing their education agendas.



# GOVERNORS – THE STATE EDUCATION LEADERS

“*T*he creation of the Hunt Institute for Educational Leadership and Policy is a very positive step in providing a means to export knowledge and information relative to reforming education all across America.”

SECRETARY OF EDUCATION ROD PAIGE

## SPEAKING FROM EXPERIENCE

Four veteran governors opened the Symposium's first session – *Governors Asserting Their Leadership: The Key to Excellence in Education*. While emphasizing different aspects of the role of a state's chief executive, each drove home the critical issue of the discussion – that governors must assert their leadership to achieve excellence in education for the students in their states.

Governor Roy Barnes, Democrat of Georgia, in his capacity as Chairman of the Education Commission of the States, shared two lessons from his experience, both of which emerged as themes of the Symposium: Governors are held accountable for education in their state and education is the key to economic prosperity.

Governor Jim Geringer, Republican of Wyoming, related, “the Governor must manage educational services” to ensure that what education affects and what affects education is complementary and integrated. There must be an education team that consists at a minimum of the governor and the state's chief state school officer. Governor Geringer continued that, even if the two do not function as a team, the governor must engage the chief state school officer if any meaningful reform is to occur.

Governor Paul Patton, Democrat of Kentucky, echoed the themes of gubernatorial accountability for a state's education success and the education-economy link. Having initially campaigned as the “economic development governor,” he says now that “education is the most important issue a governor will face” as it

is the key to improving state economic development.

Likewise, Governor Bob Taft, Republican of Ohio, challenged governors to “fight the forces of inertia.” Because it is so directly related to success in other areas, Governor Taft asserted that he spends more time on education than on any other single issue.

## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE - NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND: A FEDERAL IMPERATIVE FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Secretary Rod Paige headlined a plenary discussion with an overview of the principles and key provisions of the federal No Child Left Behind legislation. The Secretary focused on the importance of governors' leadership in shaping the ultimate outcomes of No Child Left Behind and in doing so, pointed out that he has designated Laurie Rich, Assistant Secretary at the Department of Education, as a direct contact person for governors. Margaret Spellings shared detailed information about the background and current status of the legislation and offered direct support to governors as states move forward with implementation. Also providing key guidance and information about No Child Left Behind were Secretary Paige's Chief of Staff John Danielson and Counselor to the Secretary Susan Sclafani. Critical to the discussion was the opportunity for governors to hear firsthand from the Secretary about his personal commitment to working with them directly to support their implementation efforts.

Numerous governors reiterated Paige's remarks, expressing the conviction that ensuring education improvements in their state is their most important job. Secretary Paige's recounting of specific experiences from his time as school superintendent in Houston gave real meaning to some of the challenges and opportunities faced by education reform leaders.

During a lively discussion that followed Secretary Paige’s remarks, governors expressed their hopes for No Child Left Behind and articulated the challenges posed by the legislation.

**KNOWING THE ISSUES**

As was the case throughout the Symposium, governors and education leaders offered lessons from their firsthand experiences on issues including early childhood education, teacher quality, achievement, accountability and assessment. Governor Frank O’Bannon, Democrat of Indiana, outlined his administration’s approach to establishing accountability standards and other benchmarks for student achievement, a hallmark of No Child Left Behind. Speaking about the role of teachers and teacher quality, State Farm CEO Ed Rust urged governors to rely on teachers as a resource – National



GOV. GRANHOLM (D-MI)

Board Certified Teachers in particular – the way businesses use their top employees. To lead successful education reform, governors must be personally knowledgeable about current and emerging education issues.

**PARTICIPATING GOVERNORS**

A bipartisan group of 22 incumbent, newly-elected and former governors from 18 states participated in the Hunt Institute Symposium.

- |                          |                        |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Roy Barnes (D-GA)        | Frank O’Bannon (D-IN)  |
| Mike Easley (D-NC)       | Paul Patton (D-KY)     |
| John Engler (R-MI)       | Sonny Perdue (R-GA)    |
| Jim Geringer (R-WY)      | Ed Rendell (D-PA)      |
| Jennifer Granholm (D-MI) | Bill Richardson (D-NM) |
| Brad Henry (D-OK)        | Bob Riley (R-AL)       |
| Mike Huckabee (R-AR)     | Roy Romer (D-CO)       |
| Jim Hunt (D-NC)          | Don Siegelman (D-AL)   |
| Mike Leavitt (R-UT)      | Bob Taft (R-OH)        |
| Jim McGreevey (D-NJ)     | Tom Vilsack (D-IA)     |
| Ronnie Musgrove (D-MS)   | Mark Warner (D-VA)     |



# THE EDUCATION-ECONOMY LINK

“Governor Hunt and the Hunt Institute did what few could accomplish — gathered policy experts and many of the nation’s governors for an honest and open discussion of critical education issues...”

GOV. MCGREEVEY (D-NJ)

## THE EDUCATION-ECONOMY LINK

Governors’ determination to carry out their education agendas, the demands of No Child Left Behind and an unpredictable economy require that partners from all sectors combine their talents and resources to do as much as possible for students and schools. Recognizing this, the Symposium focused on specific examples of how teams of state stakeholders can make a difference in implementing sound education policy.

“Insert yourself into the process. Take the lead. Drive accountability.” These were among Ed Rust’s commanding words.



GOV. HUCKABEE (R-AR)

Rust stressed the importance of business involvement in education and ways in which business can provide substantive contributions to help governors accomplish their education goals. Referring to the National Education Goals Panel’s recognition of Texas and North Carolina as having made the most improvement in raising student achievement in the 1990s, Rust highlighted, “...researchers from Rand found that one of the most important factors in the success experienced by North Carolina and Texas was the active participation of the business community. It was the business community’s sustained support” he said, “that provided continuity for the states’ reform agenda as political and education leaders changed. This does not imply that the business community believes we are education experts,” Rust remarked. “But we recognize the need for change to meet the demands of a global economy.”

One example of business involvement that Rust cited is State Farm’s substitute teacher initiative through which 300 State Farm staff have been trained as substitute teachers, allowing permanent teachers time to pursue National Board Certification.

The promise of innovation and cost efficiencies were key to the remarks of Governor Mike Leavitt, Republican of Utah, and Tom Vander Ark, Executive Director of Education for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Leavitt and Vander Ark praised a pioneering Utah high school reform initiative, which will include linking high school diplomas to community college associates degrees. The effort will provide college-level education to students who otherwise might not have pursued higher education and simultaneously will save thousands of dollars yearly per student by eliminating the need for Utah to subsidize students’ first two years of college.

## GETTING IT DONE POLITICALLY

The first governors-only session began with candid remarks from former Governor Roy Romer. His presentation, *What I Wish I'd Known When I Was Governor*, stressed how critical it is for all governors to make education a high, if not their highest, priority. Without a strong education system, Romer noted, economic development efforts and other state priorities can suffer serious setbacks, even failures. Governors from both sides of the aisle asked tough questions of each other and gave frank responses.

Along with the opportunity to engage in substantive inquiry and discussions with national education leaders, the most repeated feedback about the Symposium concerned the many benefits of holding such "governors-only" sessions, a rare opportunity for states' chief executives and particularly important for successful bipartisan discussions about political strategy.

*How to Get It Done Politically* was a meeting open only to governors and moderated by Governor Hunt. It was in this session that governors shared effective strategies along with some of the challenges to success and welcomed questions from newly-elected governors preparing to take office.

Governors' education advisors also heard directly from some of their veteran counterparts in a session entitled *An Inside Look at Getting an Education Reform Agenda Passed*. Dr. Ed Ford, Secretary of the Executive Cabinet and Education Advisor to Governor Patton, Hazel



GOV. RILEY (R-AL) & GOV. RICHARDSON (D-NM)

Loucks, Deputy Governor for Education and the Workforce in the administration of Governor George Ryan, Republican of Illinois, and J.B. Buxton, Education Advisor to Governor Mike Easley, Democrat of North Carolina, shared their expertise and identified for advisors of newly-elected governors the critical elements and action items necessary to moving governors' education agendas forward.



GOV. TAFT (R-OH)



# PUTTING OUR KNOWLEDGE TO WORK

## IN REVIEW

*Public Education in Your State* was unique in both structure and content. The combination of high level guest speakers such as Secretary Paige, Tom Vander Ark and Ed Rust, combined with opportunities for governors to talk candidly in private resulted in a meaningful, substantive program.

The materials disseminated - many commissioned by the Hunt Institute specifically for the Symposium - included significant contributions from the Education Commission of the States.

Attending the Symposium were Hunt Institute partners such as the National Governors' Association, represented by Ray Scheppach and Dane Linn, the Business Roundtable, represented by Susan Traiman and the University of North Carolina Board of Governors, represented by Chairman Brad Wilson.

Governors were accompanied by top officials and aides such as Kathy Cox, Superintendent of Education who accompanied Governor Perdue, Republican of Georgia and First Man Dan Mulhern who joined Governor Jennifer Granholm, Democrat of Michigan.

## NEXT STEPS

Following the Symposium, the Hunt Institute provided governors who were unable to attend with the materials and information given to participating governors. Governor Hunt and Dr. Rizzo have since engaged with governors from both major political parties, from a range of geographic areas and who are facing diverse challenges concerning how to improve education in their states.

As diverse as the governors and their states are, a

common theme exists among them – the expressed desire to improve public education and the motivation to ensure that all children receive a sound, basic education and succeed in school.

In response to governors' and other state education leaders' needs, the Hunt Institute has initiated State Engagement, a program of strategic involvement with governors. An example of the Institute's state engagement work occurred in February 2003 with Governor Kathleen Sebelius, Democrat of Kansas. Governor Hunt and Dr. Rizzo were two members of the small, specialized team convened by the Hunt Institute to travel to Kansas. The team met with Governor Sebelius and Kansas' other top education leaders to address education issues currently facing the state.

This level of interaction is a natural follow-up to the Symposium and a primary focus of the Hunt Institute's continuing work. Looking forward to additional state engagement meetings, the Institute will continue to provide information and input to Governor Sebelius as she addresses the education issues confronting Kansas.

As Executive Director Judith Rizzo stated, "In the face of extraordinary fiscal challenges, coupled with the demands of No Child Left Behind, the Hunt Institute stands ready to assist governors across the country as they strive toward quality education for all students through implementation of their education agendas."

*Public Education in Your State* was an engaging, action-based gathering that provided governors with resources they need to improve education for students nationwide. This work will never be complete, but major advances can be made with expert guidance, the right focus and committed leaders.

“The Hunt Institute has the unmatched ability to bring together the nation’s foremost educational thinkers and policy leaders to discuss some of the most critical issues facing our nation today.”

TOM VANDER ARK,  
BILL AND MELINDA GATES FOUNDATION



GOV. EASLEY (D-NC)

## SYMPOSIUM PUBLICATIONS

### *Asia Society*

Asia & International Studies in the Schools

### *Business Roundtable*

You'll Be Quizzed

Education & Workforce Action Plan

### *Education Commission of the States*

No Child Left Behind Materials

Issue and Policy Briefs

### *Education Trust*

No Child Left Behind - State-specific Profiles

### *Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation*

Making Education the Priority

States' High School Graduation Rates

Making the Case for Small Schools

### *James B. Hunt, Jr. Institute for Educational Leadership and Policy*

Class Size & Student Achievement

### *National Board for Professional Teaching Standards*

National Board Certified Teachers by State

### *National Commission on Teaching & America's Future*

Investing in Teaching

### *Southeast Center for Teaching Quality*

Top Ten on Teacher & Teaching Quality

Five Implementation Strategies on Teacher &

Teaching Quality

### *Trust for Early Education*

Universal Preschool - State-specific Pre-K Fact Sheets



GOV. RENDELL (D-PA)

“Governor Hunt was a mentor for many of us in the area of education reform. It’s wonderful the Institute exists to carry on his ideas and legacy.”

GOV. HUCKABEE (R-AR)





GOV. LEAVITT (R-UT)

“Governor Hunt has created a forum for governors to learn from their peers and nationally-acclaimed experts ... I left energized and engaged.”

GOV. LEAVITT (R-UT)



SECRETARY OF EDUCATION ROD PAIGE



GOV. MCGREEVEY (D-NJ)



GOV. ENGLER (R-MI)



GOV. HUNT (D-NC) & GOV. HENRY (D-OK)



GOV. HUNT (D-NC) & GOV. WARNER (D-VA)



GOV. PATTON (D-KY)



GOV. MUSGROVE (D-MS)



GOV. PERDUE (R-GA)



GOV. O'BANNON (D-IN)





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