WORKING AT THE INTERSECTION OF EDUCATION POLICY AND POLITICS
“Education can’t be just another thing we do. It’s the most important thing we do. We need a more focused and comprehensive strategy. We need to be very specific about where we are trying to go. We need to realize it’s not enough to do just a ‘little more.’ We need a plan to get there, a road map to guide us.”

Governor James B. Hunt, Jr.
Foundation Board Chair
Governor of North Carolina
To spur lasting change, we need to reach a “saturation point” in both the policy knowledge and political will within states. This work is best accomplished through intentional, continuous relationship and network building.

It is imperative that we draw upon our relationships and credibility with a growing network of state policymakers and leaders. We will continue to be faithful to our organization’s vision and mission as we grow and enhance our programming and work.

DURING THE NEXT THREE YEARS, WE HAVE COMMITTED OURSELVES TO:

- Building our national network by strengthening existing partnerships and forming new connections with other education policy organizations;
- Rebuilding and reimagining our work with North Carolina policymakers through strategic, collaborative relationships with legislative leaders and key players in education;
- Expanding our State Legislative Retreat model in a targeted number of states each year;
- Assessing our current brand and actively working to expand the reach of our publications, web, and social media presence, as well as staff visibility;
- Diversifying our funding sources to incorporate new individual, foundation, governmental, and corporate relationships; and
- Bolstering Board engagement in ways that further develop our organization’s very best champions.

POLICY FOCUS AREAS

The Hunt Institute has built a strong brand and reputation for providing clear and concise information around a core set of policy issues, including high standards, assessments, accountability, effective teachers, and school leaders. Our primary audience of policymakers has shared with us they want to consider the full spectrum of education policy, and we have been responsive by providing them with a nuanced understanding of the importance of state systems designed to help students move seamlessly from early childhood through K-12 and on to career-training or postsecondary education.

“Public education—and all that it entails—is a complex system that is increasingly embroiled in politics. There can be little doubt that strong leadership at the state level is vital to ensure equitable opportunities for all students in our nation. Yet all too often, these leaders find themselves at crucial decision points without the background they need to act decisively. The Hunt Institute is committed to helping our leaders navigate today’s challenging landscape and advance education for all students.”

Javaid Siddiqi, Ph.D.
Executive Director & CEO
Through our leadership programs, convenings, and publications, we inspire, educate, and equip elected officials and senior policymakers to make better, more informed decisions that will enhance student learning, provide equal access to high-quality schools and teachers, and increase educational opportunities for all children.

THE HUNT-KEAN LEADERSHIP FELLOWS™

By investing in America’s political leaders, The Hunt Institute aims to build a cadre of informed and motivated educational leaders with the necessary influence to cultivate smart and effective education agendas, reform state education systems, and improve student outcomes. The Hunt-Keen Leadership Fellows™ program partners with senior-level political leaders who have the knowledge, skill, and will to be effective, reform-minded education policymakers at the state level. Named for renowned education governors Jim Hunt (D-NC | 1977-1985; 1993-2001) and Tom Kean (R-NJ | 1982-1990), the national, nonpartisan Fellowship was launched in the fall of 2014.

The Fellowship was designed to engage leaders with top minds in education, policy, and politics. Learning experiences include conversations with noteworthy policymakers, policy and group discussions, strategy breakouts, and site visits and classroom perspectives. The curriculum is tailored to help our Fellows understand the complex issues involved in developing successful schools and advancing sound strategies to improve teaching, learning, and student achievement.

Fellows also benefit from a bipartisan Advisory Board comprised of former governors who have established reputations for working across the aisle and improving public education. These board members serve as experts during in-person sessions and provide counsel to participants throughout their Fellowship experience.

The Hunt-Keen Leadership Fellows™ program now boasts a network of over 60 Fellows representing 40 states. We are proud of the outstanding accomplishments of our Fellows, and their pathways to date:

- Kate Brown has become the Governor of Oregon;
- Kim Reynolds has become the first female Governor of Iowa;
- Catherine Cortez-Masto has become Nevada’s first Latina U.S. Senator;
- Rhode Island Secretary of State, Nellie Gorbea, was named Vice Chair of the 2016 Democratic National Convention Platform Committee;
- Tate Reeves was elected to another term as Mississippi’s Lieutenant Governor;
- Eugene DePasquale won re-election as Pennsylvania’s state auditor;
- Indiana Speaker of the House Brian Bosma was elected to another term in November 2016;
- Florida State Senator, Anitere Flores, was re-elected in 2016 and appointed as President Pro Tempore;
- Nine Fellows have announced runs for Governor in 2018, including: California State Treasurer, John Chiang; Ohio Secretary of State, Jon Husted; Former Colorado State Senator, Mike Johnston; Former Colorado State Treasurer, Cary Kennedy; Oklahoma Lt. Governor, Todd Lamb; Idaho Lt. Governor, Brad Little; Florida Commissioner of Agriculture, Adam Putnam; Ohio Lt. Governor, Mary Taylor; and Former Michigan State Senator, Gretchen Whitmer.
GOVERNORS EDUCATION SYMPOSIUM™
The brainchild of Governor Jim Hunt, the Institute’s Governors Education Symposium™ was launched in December 2002 to bring together the nation’s governors to engage in candid dialogue about critical challenges facing education, and examine a variety of core education issues—incorporating the latest research from state and national experts and best practices from across the nation.

The cross-party symposia are held in settings where governors receive in-depth information from leading resource experts, examine the best approaches to critical challenges facing public education, and interact with their peers about the successes and difficulties they have encountered within their own states.

HOLSHOUSER LEGISLATORS RETREAT™
Guided by the bipartisanship Governor Hunt encouraged throughout his gubernatorial career, the North Carolina Legislators Retreat™ was established in 2003. Thereafter, The Hunt Institute has convened a yearly retreat for state legislators in North Carolina. The Retreat is a two-day event derived from the belief that effective education reform must be understood, if not driven, by those making decisions in legislative committees and on the legislative floor.

This invitation-only event was initially co-convened by Governor Hunt and former Republican North Carolina Governor Jim Holshouser; in 2012, it was renamed for Holshouser in honor of his commitment to public education and bipartisanship. The Holshouser Legislators Retreat™ (HLR) provides legislators from both parties a unique opportunity to learn about education issues, seek advice from state and national experts, and find common ground.

We make a special effort to not only collaborate with legislative leadership and key staff to develop an agenda that matters to them, but also recruit the participation of legislative leaders and committee chairs—especially those charged with education oversight and appropriations. Most important, we strive to ensure that the event is of a strong bipartisan nature.

STATE LEGISLATIVE RETREATS
The HLR model has been so successful that we have replicated it in other states. We work collaboratively with state-based organizations and legislative leaders to formulate agendas that meet state-specific needs and to ensure success by sharing our programming approach and expertise.
RESEARCH, PUBLICATIONS, AND COALITION BUILDING

The dissemination of unbiased, research-based information to policymakers is a fundamental part of the Institute’s mission. Our experts get to the core of the issues through conducting extensive analysis and research—identifying emerging strategies worth replicating, and recognizing the voices from around the country that offer new approaches to impact change. National and state-level publications written by Institute staff—including white papers, issue briefs, and fact sheets—have been well-received by policymakers and are targeted to governors and their education advisors, legislators, superintendents, local education agencies, and higher education leaders.

It is our work on the college- and career-ready standards that has led to an extensive, nationwide partner network that collaborates on emerging issues, leverages organizational resources, and transforms ideas into implementation strategies. This far-reaching alliance serves as a catalyst for knowledge building and information sharing, cohesive engagement around specific issues, and the identification of resources with sweeping impact. The following is a growing list of some of our partners:

- Alliance for Excellent Education
- National Governors Association
- National Conference of State Legislatures
- National Council of La Raza
- National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
- North Carolina Science, Mathematics, and Technical Education Center
- North Carolina Chamber
- Southern Regional Education Board
- Business Roundtable
- Council of Chief State School Officers
- Council of the Great City Schools
- Data Quality Campaign
- Duke University Sanford School of Public Policy
- Education Commission of the States
- Data Quality Campaign
- CAPE
- USDOE
- NCSSA
- NC SMT Center
- National Association of State Boards of Education
- The Education Trust
- Education Commission of the States
- Duke University Sanford School of Public Policy
- North Carolina Science, Mathematics, and Technical Education Center
- National Conference of State Legislatures
- National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
- North Carolina Chamber
- Southern Regional Education Board

O ur Foundation Board of Directors represent the very best in education, gubernatorial leadership, business, civil rights, and nonprofits—all united in championing quality education. These are our best ambassadors, advocates, and strategists, and the ones who steer our organization towards a sustainable future.

With an abundance of collective experience and varied backgrounds, our professional staff, led by Executive Director and CEO, and former Virginia Secretary of Education, Dr. Javaid Siddiqi, is exceptionally equipped to carry out The Institute’s mission: to secure America’s future through quality public education. From the boardroom to the classroom, we put knowledge, initiative, and connections to work for the future of public education.

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OUR FUTURE & YOUR SUPPORT

The Hunt Institute’s continued growth and success has been made possible by the generous financial support of our partners. Funders include the: Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation, Burroughs Wellcome Fund, Carnegie Corporation of New York, Dominion, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and State Farm Companies Foundation.

If you also believe in transforming education, equipping tomorrow’s leaders to make sound education policy choices, and providing quality public education for all, we encourage you to consider adding your support.

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