

CHANGE IS COMING: 2010 POLITICAL TRANSITIONS AND THE ADP NETWORK

There is little question that political turnover can make it very difficult for a state to sustain its education reforms. When leading reform advocates – whether governors, state education leaders, legislators or other high-level officials – leave office, their policy legacies may face scrutiny and be subject to reversal. Gubernatorial transitions, particularly, can have a direct impact on other leadership roles within the education arena. In most states, any combination of Chief State School Officers (CSSO’s), State Board of Education members and State Higher Education Executives (SHEEO’s) are appointed and may have term limits set in place by the governor. This creates deeply connected lines of political leadership, which may have consequences during and after an election.

To understand the implications of the 2010 elections for states in the American Diploma Project (ADP) Network, Achieve conducted an analysis of the upcoming gubernatorial elections, collecting information on the election cycles, term limits and appointment process for governors, K-12 chiefs, higher education chiefs and state board of education members, with a focus on the relationship in each state between the governor and other key state leaders. It is critical that states with 2010 elections begin to consider *transition planning*, which is central to ensuring the college- and career-ready agenda is sustained, particularly in states where the governor has been a key champion of the agenda and/or where other leaders are appointed by the governor and are subject to turnover when the governor leaves office. Below are some major takeaways from this analysis:

SIGNIFICANT GUBERNATORIAL TURNOVER IS INEVITABLE

In 2010, there will be 37 gubernatorial elections, 23 of which will be open seat elections. Among the 35 states in the American Diploma Project Network, there will be 26 elections, 17 of which are sure to result in a new governor either because the current governor is facing a term limit or has decided not to run again.

	<i>Open Seat</i>	<i>Incumbent Running</i>
ADP States	17 STATES	9 STATES
	AL, CA, CO, CT, FL, GA, HI, ME, MI, MN, NM, OK, OR, PA, RI, TN, WI	AR, AZ, ID, IL, MD, MA, NE, OH, TX
Non-ADP States	6 STATES	5 STATES (and DC)
	KS, NY, SC, SD, VT, WY	AK, DC, IA, NV, NH, UT

Given trends seen in mid-term and primary elections over the past few months, the expectation is for the 2010 elections to result in political turnover on an unprecedented scale. Based on recent analyses conducted by Dutko Worldwide and The Cook Political Report, for example, at least fourteen of the 37 gubernatorial elections are considered “toss-ups,” with no clear winner or loser – both at the candidate and party level – emerging at this time. Moreover, only five elections with incumbents are considered “safe,” while the remaining 32 elections range from “likely safe” to “unsafe” to “open.” In the 26 ADP states with elections, ten of the elections are considered toss-ups, and only three elections are considered safe.

GUBERNATORIAL TURNOVER WILL LIKELY PRODUCE TURNOVER OF OTHER STATE LEADERS

There are many other educational leadership positions that could be affected across the 35 ADP Network states as well, including Chief State School Officers (CSSO’s), State Board of Education (SBOE) members and chairs, and State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO’s). While these positions may be linked to the governor in some states – through appointment, for example – they are not necessarily bound to the same term as the governor. There is much variability from state to state, both in the appointment process and in the working (and public) relationships between governors and other state education leaders, both of which have an impact on whether education leaders will stay in their positions after a gubernatorial change.

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	<i>K-12 Chief State School Officer Appointed by Governor</i>	<i>Governor Appoints 3 or More State Board of Education Members and/or Board Chair</i>	<i>Postsecondary Chief Appointed by Governor</i>
ADP States	7 STATES	19 STATES	6 STATES
	FL, ME, MN, NM, PA, TN, TX	AL, AR, AZ, CA, CT, FL, GA, ID, IL, ME, MD, MA, OH, OK, OR, PA, RI, TN, TX	CO, MD, MI, MN, NM, OH
Non-ADP States	3 STATES	6 STATES	0 STATES
	IA, NH, SD	AK, IA, NH, SD, VT, WY	

Among ADP States:

- In seven states, including six states that will definitely face a gubernatorial change in 2010, the K-12 CSSO is appointed by the governor.
- In another six states, four of which will have a new governor in 2010, chief state school officers are selected through election and face reelection this year, and nearly all have chosen not to run again or are term limited.
- 17 states have state boards of education with at least three members appointed by the governor; ten of which are states that will definitely have gubernatorial turnover by 2010. Otherwise, the most common method of selection of SBOE members is a statewide election. However, most SBOE member terms are four-plus years and members are appointed on a rolling basis to purposefully ensure there isn't too much upheaval or turnover in any given year.
- In eight states, the governor appoints the chair of the SBOE, including one state, Alabama, where the governor *is* the chair of the SBOE.
- Finally, six states have a SHEEO appointed by the governor, including four states that have a SHEEO appointed by a governor leaving office in the next year. However, of all positions, SHEEO's appear to be the least tied to governors and often serve at the pleasure of the state's higher education board or commission.

A NUMBER OF STATES COULD SEE AS MANY AS THREE TRANSITIONS IN 2010

While many states will certainly experience some change in their political and education leadership in coming years, nine states in particular are at risk for substantial political transition. Based on the regulatory relationship between their governors, CSSO's and state boards of education and the fact that their governors will definitely be leaving office after the 2010 election, Florida, Georgia, Maine, Minnesota, New Mexico, Pennsylvania and Tennessee could all experience significant changes in leadership, which could potentially impact their college- and career-ready reform efforts to date.

STATES NEED TO MONITOR TURNOVER AMONG OTHER LEADERS OF THE AGENDA

It is important to remember that transitions among legislative and key business and community leaders can also impact education policy. The loss of a key legislative or community champion can present a real challenge to the sustainability of the college- and career-ready agenda and should be taken into consideration as states consider what needs to occur to sustain the agenda in years to come.

LEADING STATES ON THE COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READY AGENDA WILL FACE INEVITABLE CHANGE

Of the 37 states facing re-election or turnover in 2010, 15 currently have college- and career-ready graduation requirements in place. These policies will face intense scrutiny from new leaders, particularly as rigorous requirements begin to impact graduating classes in coming years.

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STATE	GOVERNOR		CSSO		STATE BOARD		SHEEO
	Current Term Expires in 2010	Term Limit	Appointed by Governor	Elected by Ballot (and up for reelection)	At Least 3 Members Appointed by Governor	Chair Appointed by Governor	Appointed by Governor
Alabama**	X	X				X	
Arizona**	X			X	X*		
Arkansas**	X				X		
California	X	X		X	X		
Colorado	X	*					X
Connecticut	X	*			X*	X	
Florida**	X	*	X		X	X	
Georgia**	X	X		X	X		
Hawaii	X	X					
Idaho	X			X	X		
Illinois	X				X	X	
Maine	X	X	X		X		
Maryland	X				X		X
Massachusetts	X				X	X	
Michigan**	X	X					X
Minnesota**	X	*	X				X
Nebraska**	X						
New Mexico**	X	X	X				X
Ohio**	X			X	X		X
Oklahoma**	X	X		X	X		
Oregon	X	X			X		
Pennsylvania	X	X	X		X*	X	
Rhode Island	X	X			X	X	
Tennessee**	X	X	X		X*		
Texas**	X		X			X	
Wisconsin	X	*					
TOTAL	26	17	7	6	17	8	6
Delaware**	(2012)		X*		X*	X	
Indiana**	(2012)	(X)		X	X		
Kentucky**	(2011)				X		
Louisiana	(2011)				X		
Mississippi**	(2011)	(X)			X		
New Jersey	(2013)		X				
North Carolina**	(2012)				X		
Virginia	(2013)	(X)	X				
Washington**	(2012)			X	X		

* Will not seek another term

**States with college- and career-ready graduation requirements

X* Confirmed by legislature