



LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STAFF NETWORK

Connecting legislative education staff since 1986



Legislative Education Staff Network 2009-10 Network Accomplishments

2009-2010 LESN Steering Committee	
Paul Aguilar , <i>New Mexico</i> , NCSL Co-Chair	Robin Madison , <i>Iowa</i> , ECS Co-Chair
Paula Dominguez , <i>Rhode Island</i> , NCSL Appointee	Robin Blackmon , <i>Texas</i> , ECS Appointee
Bridget Godes , <i>Iowa</i> , NCSL Appointee	Paul Headlee , <i>Idaho</i> , ECS
Cheryl Reinhart , <i>Arkansas</i> , NCSL Appointee	Kristopher Nordstrom , <i>North Carolina</i> , ECS Immediate Past Co-Chair
Shirley Iorio , <i>North Carolina</i> , NCSL Immediate Past Co-Chair	

Melodye Bush, ECS LESN Staff Coordinator, 303-299-3631 or mbush@ecs.org

Sara Shelton, NCSL LESN Staff Coordinator, 303-856-1647 or sara.shelton@ncsl.org

LESN Webpage: <http://www.ncsl.org/Default.aspx?TabID=788&tabs=857,36,367#857>

LESN Strategic Plan & Working Groups – During 2008-09, the LESN Steering Committee worked diligently to develop a three-year strategic plan creating a blueprint to strengthen the network's current structure and promote future growth. Through this process, the network has identified three strategic issues in which to focus: building and maintain critical mass for leadership, focus and direction on key education policy issues; securing funding to support its activities; and keeping staff updated on key education policy and finance issues, including international benchmarking/comparisons. LESN solicited input and feedback from a broad range of stakeholders, including NCSL and ECS staff and network members at-large. As stipulated in the LESN by-laws, voice votes to formally adopt the strategic plan were called at the ECS National Forum on July 8-10, 2009 in Nashville, TN and at the NCSL Legislative Summit on July 20-24, 2009 in Philadelphia, PA. The plan was unanimously adopted.

This year's Steering Committee has been focused on implementation. They continue to organize themselves into three working groups that reflect the three strategic issues. The working group on securing funding to support LESN is exploring a number of potential collaborations with organizations (AERA, MDRC, AEI, Brookings, Urban Institute) and seeking potential funders (Wal-Mart, Wallace, USDOE, Intel) to support staff professional development opportunities. The working group on building and maintain critical mass is, among other things, working on updating the LESN staff contact list, targeting low participation LESN states, and creating an LESN mentoring program. The final working group to keep staff updated on key education policy issues created Ning, a social networking site, and a monthly compilation of education research called, Heads Up in Education (which has been widely popular).

Increased Network Participation – LESN added 29 members from 18 states to the listserv from September 2009 through August 2010. The LESN listserv serves approximately 257 legislative education staff from across the county.

LESN 2010 Fall Seminar – Supported by a generous grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Institute for Education Sciences, NCSL hosted the LESN Fall Seminar, *Linking Research and Policy to Improve Science, Technology, Engineering and Math Education*, on December 11-13, 2010, immediately following the NCSL Fall Seminar in San Diego, CA. Travel stipends supported 38 staff from 20 states and the District of Columbia.

<http://www.ncsl.org/default.aspx?tabid=19474>

NCSL and ECS Annual Meetings –

NCSL – Legislative Summit, Louisville, Kentucky, July 15-28, 2010. LESN teamed up for the second year with the NCSL Legislative Health Staff Network to sponsor a joint breakfast on school nutrition and physical activity. The breakfast attracted approximately 50 legislative education staff, health staff and others interested in school nutrition and physical education. Speakers included Amy Winterfeld, NCSL Health Program Director; Cheryl Reinhart, LESN Steering Committee member, Arkansas; and Miriam Fordham, LHSN Steering Committee members, Kentucky. Power points and handouts from the session have been made available online. LESN also held a business meeting and Dutch Treat dinner for staff in Louisville.

<http://www.ncsl.org/default.aspx?tabid=20931>

Legislative Institution on Higher Education, Denver, Colorado, August 15-17, 2010. This annual meeting will support 12 state teams (legislators and legislative staff) to work on higher education issues.

ECS – ECS National Forum in Portland, Oregon on July 18 – 20, 2010. Legislative staff have been invited to participate in a select seminar with the Data Quality Campaign, followed by a business meeting, roundtable discussion and Dutch Treat dinner. The 2010 ECS National Forum on Education Policy was organized around state teams. Three LESN members were selected to represent their state at the national meeting.

NCSL E-Learning Funds – NCSL was awarded approximately \$1,300 to video tape and make available online presentations from the LESN/IES Fall STEM seminar.

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Webinars – LESN partnered with the NCSL Staff Sections to host a webinar on April 15, 2010 on writing for the legislative audience featuring Stan Stenersen. An audio recording of the webinar is available on the LESN webpage. LESN, along with the NCSL Staff Sections, will be hosting another webinar this fall on “How to Give a Good Presentation” by John Turcotte this fall.

2010 LESN Recognition Award Recipient – The Steering Committee has selected Helen James, Senior Legislative Attorney, Office of Legal Services, Tennessee General Assembly, as this year's recipient. Helen will be recognized at the Salute to Legislative Staff session at the NCSL Legislative Summit and at the ECS National Forum.

<http://www.ncsl.org/?tabid=20699>