Plenary Session IV
Blueprint for College Readiness

Tuesday, November 11, 2014
10:30 am – noon
Ballroom
Late last month the Education Commission of the States (ECS) released a significant policy paper entitled *Blueprint for College Readiness*. This fifty state analysis examines policies at the high school, higher education, and state levels that enhance college readiness, those that may impede college readiness, and those that are essentially benign but could be revise to enhance college readiness. This publication is just the latest in the leadership that ECS has provided over the years on the nexus between high-school and college. In particular, ECS has been a leader in examining the efficacy of current efforts in remedial education and promoting policy changes that would enhance the success of students who are assessed as needing and/or are assigned to participate in remedial education.

We are privileged to have Jeremy Anderson and Brian Sponsler of the Education Commission of the States joining us to discuss this report. They will focus specifically on the WICHE region – its strengths, weakness, and opportunities in enhancing college readiness, based on the findings of the *Blueprint*.

*Speakers:* Jeremy Anderson, president, Education Commission of the States, and Brian Sponsler, director, Postsecondary and Workforce Development Institute, Education Commission of the States

11:00 am - noon

**Facilitated Discussion on Blueprint for College Readiness**

*Facilitator:* David A. Longanecker

**Biographical Information on the Speakers**

Jeremy Anderson is president of the Education Commission of the States (ECS). ECS was created by states for states in 1965 to track policy, translate research, provide unbiased advice and create opportunities for state education policymakers to learn from each other. Anderson has a strong public service record working with officials in Washington, D.C., with many governors and legislators in states, and with education policy organizations around the country. Some of his accomplishments include providing strategic leadership on education policy design and implementation through projects with the National Governors Association, the Council of Chief State School Officers, the National Conference of State Legislators, and many other national policy organizations. Anderson has served in multiple policy and governmental affairs roles for governors on state and national education initiatives and was directly involved in brokering the bipartisan passage of the largest K-12 funding investment in Kansas history to avert a shutdown of Kansas schools. He currently serves on the Academy of Education Arts and Sciences Board of Governors. Anderson is serving as the eighth president of ECS since its establishment in 1965.
Brian A. Sponsler is the director for the Postsecondary and Workforce Development Institute at the Education Commission of the States (ECS). In his role, Sponsler oversees the strategic direction of the institute’s work, manages the institute’s policy research portfolio, and works to cultivate and maintain relationships with organizational funding partners, higher education policy researchers, policymakers and postsecondary administrators. Prior to joining ECS, he was the vice president for research and policy at the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), the leading professional association for the field of student affairs. Additionally, he served as associate director for research at the Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP), a leading higher education policy organization located in Washington, DC., and has held several campus-based professional roles. Sponsler’s research interests include college access for disenfranchised student populations, student development and success, college rankings, structural/geographic impediments to college-going and policy-adoption theory. His policy research work has been financially supported by the Lumina Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Kresge Foundation, among others. He has published policy research briefs with the Institute for Higher Education Policy, The Center for American Progress, Excelencia in Education, the NASPA Research and Policy Institute, and has presented at major policy gatherings and academic conferences. Sponsler holds a doctorate in higher education administration from The George Washington University.