TRANSFORMING EDUCATION TO UNLOCK LIFELONG OPPORTUNITY AND SUCCESS FOR EACH AND EVERY CHILD
As each new year begins, we gratefully take stock of how far we’ve come in 12 months’ time. Despite the myriad of challenges that families, students, teachers and policymakers faced in 2021, our momentum to transform education did not waver.

I’m especially excited that new opportunities for students unfolded in more than a dozen states through expanded private and public school choice. An additional 1.7 million students gained eligibility for private choice alone, and strong investments by states supported learning options, with an impressive total of more than $1 billion for new choice programs and funding for charter schools.

States also invested deeply in closing the digital divide and building better workforce training and college acceleration programs. Florida set an example with a comprehensive education-to-workforce package that was supported by ExcelinEd’s Pathways Matter policy research and resources.

And states continued to strengthen early literacy through policy improvements and new funding totaling $330 million in Arizona, Connecticut, Florida, Tennessee and Wisconsin alone.

Progress like this isn’t possible without leaders and partners like you. Each year, as we seek to accomplish our ambitious student-centered goals, I stand firmly with a heart of gratitude for all that you do and ask you to remain committed. To push harder. To be bolder. And to continue partnering with us along the way.

Patricia Levesque
CEO, ExcelinEd
ExcelinEd Board Of Directors

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31st Governor of New Mexico

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42nd Governor of Illinois

About ExcelinEd

**CHANGING POLICY, CHANGING LIVES**

**OUR CHALLENGE**
Organized around the needs of adults more than a century ago, America’s outdated education system is failing too many of today’s students, leaving them unable to access a learning environment that best meets their needs and underprepared for college and the workforce.

**OUR SOLUTION**
To address this education and economic crisis, former Florida Governor Jeb Bush launched the Foundation for Excellence in Education (ExcelinEd) and ExcelinEd in Action to support state leaders in transforming education so that all children are equipped for success.

For more than a decade, ExcelinEd has been advancing student-centered policy solutions that are:

- Improving student learning
- Increasing opportunity
- Eliminating inequities
- Readying graduates for college and higher-quality, in-demand jobs

**OUR FIVE GOALS**
Massive challenges created by 2020’s global pandemic underscored the need to reexamine every aspect of education and act with urgency on behalf of students and their future. To create a 21st-century learning environment, ExcelinEd established five goals—each with student-centered policy solutions—to impact 5 million students over 5 years. These goals have the power to change lives:

- Bridge the Digital Divide
- Close Learning Gaps
- Empower Families with Opportunity
- Reimagine Learning
- Strengthen Pathways to College + Careers

**OUR APPROACH**
Policy Development & Implementation
We bring deep policy expertise and implementation experience to develop and support state leaders with customized, education policy solutions.

State Advocacy
We collaborate, coalition-build and advocate for change where states are ready to transform education.

Resources & Research
We develop state-specific policy resources and conduct and leverage research to understand how policy solutions translate to real-world student success.

Thought Leadership & Convening
We host the National Summit on Education to annually convene education policymakers, shapers and leaders, and we facilitate networks of states and partner collaboratives to inform policy and practice.

**OUR VALUES**
Collaboration | Integrity | Service | Expertise | Making a Difference

*Programme for International Student Assessment | *National Assessment of Educational Progress | *National Center for Education Statistics | ETS
**By the Numbers | 2021**

- **$579 million**
  - Funding for New Private School Choice Programs

- **1.7 million**
  - Additional Students Eligible for Private School Choice in 19 States

- **$222 million**
  - New Funding for Workforce Training and College Acceleration in 3 States

- **$14.6 million**
  - Funding for Computer Science Teacher Training

- **$330 million**
  - New Funding for Early Literacy

- **12 States**
  - Expanded Public School Choice

- **$437 million**
  - Funding Secured for Charter Schools

- **5 States**
  - Adopted New ESA Programs with Eligibility for 352K Students

- **$505 million**
  - For Digital Devices and Connectivity in 3 States

- **7 States**
  - Protected Accountability & Assessments

- **18 States**
  - Expanded Private School Choice

- **4 States**
  - Expanded Flexibility & Reimagined Learning

- **8 States**
  - Strengthened Early Literacy

- **15,000**
  - Struggling Readers Supported with Reading Scholarship Accounts

**ExcelinEd in the States | 2021**

- **42 States Engaged**
- **30 Policies Protected in 13 States**
- **113 Policies Passed/Improved in 28 States**
- **30 States Implementation Support**

- **250 Bills Engaged in 36 states**
- **35 Expert Testimonies in 17 states**
- **5,985 Lawmaker Connections from 6 Advocacy Campaigns in 5 States**
- **52 Coalitions in 22 States**
- **+90 State & National Speaking Engagements & Webinars**
- **+80 Partners Attending Webinar for Pathways Matter Launch**
- **32 States Participating in ExcelinEd’s Early Literacy, Innovation & ESA Administrator Networks**

- **1.2 million Digital Campaign Impressions**
- **4.3 million Social Media Impressions**
- **27 Op-Eds for Policy Advocacy**
- **670,452 Email Impressions**
- **392 News & Blog Posts**

- **22 Convenings of ExcelinEd’s 6 Policy Networks & Collaboratives**

**ANNUAL REPORT 2021 | EXCELINED.ORG**
Strengthened education to workforce by centralizing governance and $100 million for enhancing data collection, analytics and transparency.

+$57 million for workforce training and industry credential incentives.

Increased workforce readiness by awarding credit for work-based learning.

Expanded private school choice, giving +1.2 million low-income public school students access to scholarships, expanding use of funds and guaranteeing access for military families.

Protected $60 million to create 48,000 seats at Schools of Hope.

Protected funding equity for charter schools with $183 million for facilities.

Reduced bureaucracy for charter schools by expanding authorization pathways.

Expanded college acceleration with performance funding and +$15.6 million for dual enrollment scholarships.

Bridged the digital divide with grants for unserved areas.

Strengthened early literacy with enhanced supports and screening and +$207 million in additional funding.

Supported 15,000 struggling readers with Reading Scholarship Accounts.

Protected $344K for computer science professional development.

Secured +$3.3 million in operational funding to better serve 77,000+ charter school students.

+$1 million in new funding for charter school facilities.

Expanded special needs vouchers to include 50,000+ students with a 504 plan.

Expanded educational opportunity for low-income families.

Expanded tax credit scholarships to serve +3,500 students.

Improved charter school law to facilitate growth and expand public school options.

Expanded vouchers and tax credit scholarships to serve 11,000 low- and middle-income families.

Increased funding for all students eligible for private school scholarships.

Created a new $10 million ESA to serve students with special needs.

Secured +$39 million to increase equity for charter schools and students.

+$250 million in broadband grants for schools and at-home learning.

Secured $150 million in student learning recovery grants.

Protected $3 million for computer science teacher training.

Created a $25 million opportunity scholarship—the state’s first—to serve +7,000 low-income and special needs students.
MISSISSIPPI

Prevented backsliding in school accountability.

Extended computer science courses to all 1,060+ public schools.

$1 million for computer science teacher training.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Created the state’s first Freedom Account Program to serve 90,000 students.

OKLAHOMA

Expanded public school choice availability and transparency and improved the funding formula.

Prioritized military families for admission to the school district of their choice.

 PENNSYLVANIA

Raised the cap on the tax credit scholarship program by $40M to fund up to +15,000 scholarships.

UTAH

Prevented repeal of the state’s school letter grading system.

Expanded course access and virtual course offerings to middle schools.

NEVADA

Provided devices and connectivity for all 485,700 Nevada students.

Established seat-time flexibility.

$1.17 million to renew or restore tax credit scholarships for 2,300 students.

$15 million for Title I public charters serving +16,000 low-income students.

MONTANA

Expanded tax credit scholarships to +750 students.

OHIO

Created a $250 million grant program to expand broadband coverage to communities.

Allocated $367 million over two years to public school students and moved toward a more student-centered funding formula.

$41 million over two years in industry credential incentives.

Expanded access to the EdChoice scholarship program.

Provided $500 After School Enrichment grants to up to 100,000 students in low- and middle-income families.

Allocated $108 million over two years to attract high-quality community schools.

Doubled funding for community school facilities from $250 to $500 per student.

NORTH CAROLINA

Strengthened early literacy through stronger interventions and science of reading teacher training.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Created schools of innovation to provide schools with flexibility to implement student-centered learning approaches.

SOUTH DAKOTA

Expanded access to the EdChoice scholarship program.

Provided $500 After School Enrichment grants to serve up to 18,000 students.

Expanded the Jobs and Education for Texas program to include charter schools.

TEXAS

$1.29 million annually for AP Computer Science Principles grants.

$30 million in Special Needs Supplemental Education Grants to serve up to 18,000 students.

Wisconsin

Created a $250 million grant program to expand broadband coverage to communities.

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$1 million for computer science teacher training.
School Choice Week events in Arkansas, Mississippi and West Virginia. Ed also joined National Institute’s “Looking Back to Accelerate Forward.” Excel in ESA discussion, a CCSSO Student-Centered Learning Workshop and Aspen webinars, Digital Learning Annual Conference, AEI’s Early Childhood Education Workforce and Education Conference, Campaign for Grade Level Reading and Mackinac Institute ESA webinar, Aim Higher Big Show Series, Florida Charter School Conference, Louisiana’s Teacher Leadership state events, including PIE Network’s Summit and Recovery to Reinvention. Excel Ed’s policy experts participated on panels at more than 75 national and.

Thought Leadership Highlights

GOVERNOR JEB BUSH
Governor Jeb Bush contributed opinion pieces to CNN Business Perspectives: America is failing its workforce. National Review: The pandemic made it clear that we can do better for our children. Miami Herald and Seattle Times: Treat all public school students fairly, no matter what type of public school they attend. Governor Bush also participated in multiple interviews, including with Time 100 Talks, USA Today, a Chalkboard Review Podcast, a fireside chat at SSW EDU with Western Governors University President Scott Pulsipher and a panel with former US Secretary of Education John King for the World Education Summit. He served as keynote speaker for Harvard’s Kennedy School virtual webinar series, School Choice in the Post-Pandemic Era and the 2023 Florida Charter School Conference.

CEO AND BOARD MEMBERS
Patricia Levesque spoke at PIE Network’s Lining Stimulus Funds to Drive Recovery and Spark Reinvention, an Ed Reform Summit, hosted by the Louisiana Association of Business & Industry, a webinar with former U.S. Secretary of Education John King on Maximizing K-3 Opportunities in the American Rescue Plan, and podcasts on Education Next’s The Education Exchange and Fordham’s Gadfly. She authored blogs on assessments and ExcelinEd’s five year strategic goals and penned op-eds: Chis Serapis creating smarter plan for workforce, developing and Ensuring Opportunity to Attends Charter Schools Will Cost Hillsborough Students, Community

Gary Chartrand: Ensure low-income students have access to high-quality ‘Schools of Hope’

Board members Gary Chartrand and Al Hubbard authored op-eds: Ensure low-income students have access to high-quality ‘Schools of Hope’ by Gary Chartrand and Why are some students worth more than others? by Al Hubbard and Bob Koch. ExcelinEd Board member Gov. Susana Martinez of New Mexico convenes with former West Virginia Gov. Bob Wise and Ohio Gov. Bob Taft to discuss ensuring access for all students to a quality education.

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS
ExcelinEd’s policy experts participated on panels at more than 75 national and state events, including PIE Network’s Summit and Recovery to Reinvention Series, Florida Charter School Conference, Louisiana’s Teacher Leadership Summit, Michigan’s Big Show and Mackinac Institute ESA webinar, Am Higher Workforce and Education Conference, Campaign for Grade Level Reading webinars, Digital Learning Annual Conference, AEI’s Early Childhood Education ESA discussion, a CCSSO Student-Centered Learning Workshop and Aspen Institute’s “Looking Back to Accelerate Forward.” ExcelinEd also joined National School Choice Week events in Arkansas, Mississippi and West Virginia.

STATE OF BLACK EDUCATION
ExcelinEd published a blog series on The State of Black Education: What is the state of Black education in America? What is the state of Black education in Mississippi? and What is the state of Black Education in Louisiana? Written by policy experts Kymyona Burk and Tim Abram, the series explores Black education in select states to shed light on achievement and opportunity gaps, successful strategies and economic impacts on Black students who do not have access to a quality education. The series was capped with a strategy session at the 2021 National Summit on Education, bringing together solutions-minded experts in early literacy, teacher development and school choice for a frank discussion on improving outcomes for Black students.

RECOVERING FROM COVID-19

STRATEGIES FOR RELIEF FUNDS
Published American Rescue Plan: Guiding Principles and Essential Strategies for Education Funds to guide state spending of $122 billion in ARP funds allocated to the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund for safe school reopenings and recovering learning loss. The brief includes an overview of federal funding, guiding principles and essential strategies for implementing stimulus funds.

GEER ALLOCATIONS
Developed 2021 Update: How to Target GEER Funding, A Playbook for Governors to ensure that every GEER dollar has an impact, with strategic solutions to bridge the digital divide, close learning gaps, strengthen pathways to college and career, reimagine learning and empower families with opportunity.

SUPPORTING PARENTS
Developed a parent-centered playbook that introduces five state initiatives to halt learning loss and address uneven education opportunities. Policy concepts include LEAP Grants, State-Wide Tutoring Corps, Teacher-Parent Compacts, Open District Acts, and Broadening District Flexibility by adopting broad district contracting authority.
Dr. Cornel West and Professor Robert George shared personal insights and inspirational reflections with Fox News’ Juan Williams during a special keynote conversation on the value of civil discourse in society.

U.S. Marine Calvin Akery and his family joined Florida Speaker Chris Sprowls in opening the 2021 National Summit on Education in Lake Buena Vista, FL.

“The future we envision requires us to think big, to be bold and to never, ever relent. That’s how we put students and families first in everything we do. To me, that is future of education, and it’s why I’m excited that we’re gathered here today to reinvigorate our efforts to make our dreams come true.” – Governor Jeb Bush

ExcelinEd Chairman, Governor Jeb Bush, delivered #EIE21’s opening keynote address, followed by a conversation with Romy Drucker, K-12 education director at the Walton Family Foundation.

“Jo Boaler shared her research on brain science to explore how beliefs and bias can impact education, identifying six keys to unlocking everyone’s learning potential.”

“Think critically for yourself—by listening to other voices.” – Dr. Cornel West

“The greatest crisis in America is us losing from within because we are not educating our children well enough.” – Richard Corcoran, Florida Commissioner of Education

“All kids are capable of learning anything. When scientists try to find evidence that people can’t learn, they can’t find any.” – Dr. Jo Boaler

“I’m just a mom, a regular family, just wanting the best for my children, like everyone else. I want them to have an opportunity like everyone else, like we all should.” – Kelley Williams-Bolar, Parent Activist

Next steps for Florida’s transformative education agenda sparked a discussion with House Speaker Chris Sprowls, Education Commissioner Richard Corcoran, Senator Manny Diaz, Senator Kelli Stargel and T. Willard Fair, with moderator Lane Wright.

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“We need to push each other and to be pushed, to challenge each other. Conflict is the best shortcut to transformation. But it needs to be good conflict.” – Amanda Ripley

Author Tim DeRoche shared his research on the origin and long-lasting impact of inequities in school attendance zones in a panel discussion with parent activist Kelley Williams-Bolar, Georgia Representative Valencia Stovall, ExcelinEd CEO Patricia Levesque and moderator Derrell Bradford.

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STRATEGY SESSION: Education Unbundled: A New Education System for All Learners

“I found myself more as a learner than a presenter. It was a great Summit!” – Sydnee Dickson, Utah Superintendent of Public Instruction

STRATEGY SESSION: Learning from Disruptions: How States Can Reimagine Learning and Embrace Innovation

STRATEGY SESSION: The State of Black Education

A. D. McAlane
@McAlane

Thank you Governor @ JebBush and @ExcelinEd for convening nearly 1000 education policymakers and advocates at #EIE21 in Orlando. As we heard at lunch today, the first step to better policy is listening to other voices.

STRATEGY SESSION: The Year of School Choice

“Your team brings some of our country’s best thought leaders to the table.” – Katie Jenner, Indiana Secretary of Education

SPOTLIGHT SESSION with Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson: Silicon America: How Ed Policy Can Build a Diverse Workforce Pipeline for the Tech Industry

“I learned so much and was filled with energy and inspiration to keep working.” – Idaho Representative Wendy Horman

#EIE21 Highlights
- 900+ attendees
- 47 states plus Washington, DC, and Ontario, Canada
- 98% rated Summit content outstanding or above average
- 3.6 million reach on social media

2021 SUMMIT SPONSORS
Empower Families with Opportunity

PROVIDING FAMILIES WITH ACCESS TO THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT THAT BEST FITS THEIR CHILD’S NEEDS

Parent demand for education options is higher than ever. But fewer than 1 percent of the nation’s 50.8 million K-12 students have access to a private choice program. And for families seeking public options, more than 1 million students remain on waitlists for access to a charter school. With proven benefits ranging from increased college attendance and taxpayer savings to academic improvement, ExcelinEd is working to expand educational options for all students.

RESOURCE HIGHLIGHT

Index Tool for Meeting Charter School Facility Needs
ExcelinEd developed a calculation tool that assesses the extent to which a state is meeting the facility needs of its charter schools. The Indiana Charter Coalition used the facility index to successfully support an increase in charter facility index to successfully meet an additional 11.2% of facility needs for Ohio’s 322 community schools.

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

Expanding ExcelinEd’s ESA Administrator Network
Now in its second year, ExcelinEd’s first-of-its-kind ESA Administrator Network doubled the number of states participating in Network convenings. Fourteen states joined for one or more of the Network’s five virtual meetings plus the in-person event at the 2021 National Summit. The Network supports administrators from states with Education Scholarship Account (ESA) programs to share knowledge and resources for sound administrative practices, national and state-specific solutions, professional development and the policies, hallmarks and supports needed for successful ESA program implementation.

Walton Family Foundation on Governor Bush’s op-ed in the National Review:
"Thanks to Georgia lawmakers, students with a 504 accommodations plan can now receive a scholarship to attend a participating private school that meets their needs. I have seen how these opportunities change the trajectory of a child’s education."
Kimberly Leftwich is a parent, dyslexia advocate and co-founder of Cobb Dyslexia Network.

Lawmakers expanded Florida’s Family Empowerment Scholarship program to ensure children of active-duty military families are automatically eligible for a K-12 scholarship. U.S. Navy Veteran and military spouse Rachel Darrow was able to use a state scholarship so her older child could attend the school that works best for him.

Governor Ducey signed legislation to create a new $30 million transportation modernization program to support districts and charters, including direct grants to parents to cover transportation costs.
"These new grants will strengthen opportunities for K-12 kids and their families."
Arizona Governor Doug Ducey

Governor Ducey interviewed by the National Charter Schools Founders Library

West Virginia created the statewide Hope Scholarship program, available to all public school families, to help them purchase educational services for their children. "We are proud of our work to create the most expansive ESA program in the country."
West Virginia Senator Patricia Rucker

2021 earned the designation “Year of School Choice” following unprecedented progress in 26 states to expand opportunity for students and families. New education scholarship account (ESA) programs were adopted in five states, almost doubling the number of states that offer a customized education to those that need it most.

2021 PROGRESS

State Advocacy Highlights
Opportunity for K-12 kids and their families. New education scholarship account (ESA) programs were adopted in five states, almost doubling the number of states that offer a customized education to those that need it most.

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Reimagine Learning
TRANSFORMING THE WHEN, WHERE AND HOW OF EDUCATION TO INDIVIDUALIZE LEARNING

Schools and educators must put students at the center of learning, tailoring experiences to meet the unique strengths, interests and needs of individuals. Innovative strategies include flexible paths to academic mastery, credit for work experience and allowing students to learn anywhere. From delivery and pace to place and path, alternative learning models have become a necessity for a high-functioning, 21st-century education system.

RESOURCE HIGHLIGHT

Flexibility Guides for Alternative Learning Models
ExcelinEd continued to build on the success of its flexibility guides, adding state-specific guides for Michigan and South Carolina. The guides provide school districts and leaders with customized information to advance student-centered learning through their state’s education regulations and a look at the suite of learning models available to schools as they seek to reimagine education.

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

Network of State Innovation Partners
Each year, ExcelinEd convenes education leaders from more than a dozen states to advance innovations and flexibilities and to identify actionable strategies that support more personalized, student-centered learning models. Three convenings in 2021 drew 22 participants from 14 states and 3 partner organizations. Agenda topics included a state legislative summary of progress and a focus on how to help educators stabilize, recover and advance toward more student-centered learning models.

#EIE21 — Education Unbundled: A New Education System for All Learners
ExcelinEd CEO Patricia Levesque led a panel discussion at the National Summit to showcase emerging policies that can unbundle education. Student-centered innovations include part-time public school enrollment, expanded course access, microschools, parent-teacher compacts and parent-directed funding. Panelists identified what barriers exist today and what policy conditions can unbundle the system to customize learning.

“‘There was a good balance of learning and sharing.’ — Participant in the Network of State Innovation Partners"

“We know that we need to personalize learning to fill gaps and allow for learning acceleration. Removing seat time gives teachers the flexibility to get students the instruction they need.”

Jennifer Echols, Director of Online and Personalized Learning, Mesa Public Schools, Arizona

“Utah has been intentionally creating alignment and cohesiveness throughout the education system, from policy to practice. We understand the importance of establishing a common vision, providing flexibility and empowering local innovation.”

Sydney Young, Education Specialist, Utah State Board of Education

The work taking place in Utah, Nevada and New Hampshire is groundbreaking because leaders are expanding beyond the traditional model and inventing new approaches to instruction.”

Phyllis Lockett, Founder and CEO of LEAP Innovations

ExcelinEd supported states with technical assistance and policy implementation.

Several states made notable progress in reimagining learning through expanded flexibility for districts, schools and individual students. South Carolina created schools of innovation to support student-centered learning, and Arizona provided flexibility to its public schools to use innovative learning models. Nevada established seat-time flexibility, while Utah and Indiana expanded course access for students, with Utah also extending virtual course offerings to middle schools.

“‘The first sentence of this document hits the nail on the head. It says, ‘Indiana has taken significant steps to put local education leaders in the driver’s seat when it comes to reimagining education and transforming classrooms into 21st-century learning environments capable of meeting the unique needs of students they serve.’”

Dr. Katie Jenner, Indiana Secretary of Education

The work taking place in Utah, Nevada and New Hampshire is groundbreaking because leaders are expanding beyond the traditional model and inventing new approaches to instruction.”

Phyllis Lockett, Founder and CEO of LEAP Innovations

ExcelinEd in Action helped Pass policies to empower families with opportunity.

ExcelinEd in Action helped Pass policies to further empower families with opportunity.

ExcelinEd supported state with technical assistance and policy implementation.
Bridge the Digital Divide

ENSURING EVERY STUDENT HAS EQUITABLE ACCESS TO THE DIGITAL SUPERHIGHWAY

Bridging the digital divide is a pivotal step in ensuring all students have equitable access to a quality education. Prior to the pandemic, data from the National Center for Education Statistics and USAFacts showed that 14 percent of schoolchildren had no internet access at home, and 17 percent lived in households without a computer. As policymakers and practitioners help students recover from lost learning, they know that learning will occur both inside and outside of the traditional classroom setting. All students urgently need basic devices and access to the Internet in order to continue learning.

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

Digital Access & Equity Blog Series
ExcelinEd authored 14 blogs on topics including lessons learned from the first round of the Emergency Connectivity Fund, real solutions from state leaders on closing the digital divide, the future of learning and digital readiness, leveraging broadband emergency funds, ensuring high-speed internet in every student’s home plus spotlights on Ohio and Indiana.

ExcelinEd hosted Closing the Digital Divide: Real Solutions from State Leaders at the 2021 National Summit on Education, sharing effective strategies, such as procurement, affordability programs and 1:1 device policies from Indiana, West Virginia and Rhode Island.

Florida Virtual School meets a diverse set of students’ needs, with more than 12,500 full-time students and +100 courses—all tuition-free for Florida residents. The online school has served as a vital resource to families during pandemic-related disruptions, more than doubling its pre-pandemic enrollment. The Landreths, a military family, also depend on Florida Virtual School for stability in their two sons’ education.

“We moved 20 times in 26 years,” said Cheryl. But with her sons learning online, the boys don’t have to leave their education family.

“During the pandemic, their learning was seamless. We even had other families come to us and ask for ways to make it better for their children.”

“Supporting digital literacy is an important step in meeting the needs of our educators and students—yet also acknowledges the critical role that parents and families play in supporting learning every single day.”

Nevada Superintendent Jhone Ebert

With Florida Virtual School, we can take our community with us when we move,” said Luke, a high school senior.

States took action to address unmet needs for remote learning, with Indiana and Ohio each investing $350 million for digital devices and connectivity for students.

Nevada provided devices and connectivity for all +450,000 students, and Colorado added a $5 million grant program to connect 7,500 students.

Alabama expanded its high-speed broadband networks, services and technologies to support students.
Strengthen Pathways to College + Career

SUPPORTING EVERY STUDENT IN GAINING IN-DEMAND SKILLS FOR LIFELONG SUCCESS

To compete for higher-wage, in-demand jobs, our nation’s students need postsecondary credentials—either a college degree or technical skills and certifications, or both. College and career pathway policies bring purpose to learning by allowing students to earn authenticated skills informed by labor market demand. And they improve educational equity by ensuring more rigorous courses are available and incentivized for all students.

PATHWAYS MATTER

Pathways Matter Advisory Council
ExcelinEd hosted four convenings of the 13-member Pathways Matter Advisory Council to inform development of the ed-to-workforce policy continuum Pathways Matter. Plans are in place to launch a Pathways Matter State Implementation Network focused on helping states examine their pathway efforts, identify critical policy gaps and opportunities for action.

#EIE21 Spotlight Session – Silicon America: How Ed Policy Can Build a Diverse Workforce Pipeline for the Tech Industry

The 2021 National Summit on Education focused a spotlight session on one of the nation’s most dynamic industries—and its critical need for dynamic talent. Led by Governor Asa Hutchinson, the session explored how Arkansas created some of the nation’s strongest pathways into the tech sector. Panelists shared how employers and practitioners are building more diverse, creative pathways into industry through a mix of public investment, policy changes and employer buy-in.

"I would encourage my child to take the classes necessary, but I would highly encourage him to seek actual hands-on experience in internships/work experience to see how the industry actually operates and more to the point, whether he actually enjoys it."

Parent of Middle Schooler, featured in ExcelinEd’s Credentials Matter

"My top priority is Idaho’s children. We need to continue to invest in an education system that gives the next generation of Idahoans a solid foundation for lifelong learning and meaningful employment, here at home in Idaho."

Idaho Governor Brad Little, 2021 State of the State Address

"Job seekers and students can be confident that we are closer than ever to providing the most unified and exceptional workforce system in the nation to help them land and grow in an in-demand career."

Florida Speaker Chris Sprowls

RESOURCE HIGHLIGHT

Strengthening Career Pathways
ExcelinEd continued to build on Pathways Matter—the first and only comprehensive suite of policy solutions that connect K-12 educational paths with postsecondary and employer-valued decisions about high-quality credentials. It provides families and companion guide Your Child’s Pathway Matters, which provides families with information to make decisions about high-quality pathways and employer-valued credentials.

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

"Thank you, @BradLittle. I appreciated the opportunity to outline the importance of education. Investment in education is a top priority for the Florida Legislature. Together we will provide our students with the education and training they need to succeed in the 21st century economy. Happy Teacher Appreciation Week."

Florida Speaker Chris Sprowls, April 30, 2021

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Florida Speaker Chris Sprowls
Close Learning Gaps

GUARANTEING EVERY CHILD RECEIVES ACADEMIC SUPPORT TO LEARN, SUCCEED AND ACHIEVE THEIR FULL POTENTIAL

Progress over the past 30 years to close learning gaps has been limited. Almost two-thirds of fourth graders are not performing on grade level in math or reading, and Black and Hispanic students are trailing their white peers by up to two grade levels in those subjects. Effective state policies have the power to turn that around—by holding schools accountable for student success, ensuring all learners are reading by the end of third grade, directing funding to follow each student and empowering families with transparent information.

RESOURCES HIGHLIGHTS

Maximizing Funding Impact

This research-based report, Maximizing Funding Impact: How States Can Help Districts Create Opportunity for All Students, identifies obstacles that deter school districts from using resources effectively and policy solutions to overcome those barriers.

Equitable Assignment of Teachers

ExcelinEd’s model policy on equitable teacher assignments addresses inequities exposed by the pandemic. The policy draws upon Florida’s 2021 approach to ensure high-needs schools are assigned experienced, certified and in-field teachers.

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

Early Literacy Network Convenings

ExcelinEd’s Early Literacy Network met in person at the National Summit on Education and virtually during the year. Connecticut, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, Missouri and Texas grew the network to 22 states plus Washington, D.C., with 73 total members. Discussions among these expert practitioners explored ExcelinEd’s model policy for Aligning Educator Preparation Programs to the Science of Reading and a State-by-State Analysis of Fundamental Principles. The Network also explored innovative and effective early literacy implementation practices, with strategies and lessons learned serving as the framework for a comprehensive policy guide.

“I am so glad you have provided us a roadmap to support Alabama’s success, and a network to lean on one another!”

Bonnie Short, Alabama Reading Initiative

ExcelinEd supported state with technical assistance and policy implementation.

“Modernizing the funding formula ensures funding follows the student, not the school. These reforms are vital to getting Oklahoma to be a Top Ten state in education, and I am proud of our leaders for their dedication to putting students first.”

Kevin Stitt

Oklahoma Governor

“Ensuring students can read on grade level is a fundamental step to setting them up for future success.”

Bill Lee

Tennessee Governor

“Alabama Needs All the Tools to Ensure Our Youngest Students Can Read, in highlighting the importance of the Alabama Literacy Act.”

Kay Ivey

Alabama Gov.

“I appreciated your state-level perspective as North Carolina’s legislators consider ways to strengthen literacy instruction across the education continuum.”

Dr. Javaid Siddiqi, President & CEO, The Hunt Institute

ExcelinEd supported state with technical assistance and policy implementation.

ExcelinEd’s model policy on equitable teacher assignments addresses inequities exposed by the pandemic.
Fiscal Accountability

As with our formula for student achievement, the Foundation for Excellence in Education believes in accountability and transparency in our operations.

As trusted stewards, we are committed to sound fiscal management and maximizing the use of every dollar toward policy solutions that are increasing student learning, eliminating inequities and readying graduates for college and career.

In 2021, 80 percent of ExcelinEd’s expenses were invested directly into our policy, advocacy and communications work to support states in transforming education.

REVENUE & EXPENSES

2021 REVENUE

- Foundations/Non-Profits: 85.0%
- Corporate: 8.0%
- Individuals: 2.4%
- Event Registrations: 4.1%
- Other Revenue: 0.5%

2021 EXPENSES

- Program Services: 80.0%
- Management & General: 13.0%
- Fundraising: 7.0%

ExcelinEd Donors

We often think of education reform as policies written in legislation or rules enacted by elected officials and appointed boards. Rather, reform is a profound game changer in the lives of individual children, a gift that allows them to maximize their potential.

We are deeply grateful to our donors who believe in the gift of a quality education, and with their generous support of our work, we are transforming policy and transforming lives.

Bellwether Education Partners
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Golden Fleece Foundation
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Ann and Charlie Johnson
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The Crown and Kunkler Family
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The Foundation for Excellence in Education is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, nonpartisan organization.
Remembering our friend, Zach

Zach Eckert, ExcelinEd’s Midwest Regional Advocacy Director, passed away on December 18, 2021. Zach was a passionate advocate for students and a relentless warrior for ExcelinEd’s mission. He was a talented, kind, humble and loving colleague who embodied a passion for our work. In two short years, Zach’s boundless energy and warm personality made him an important part of the fabric of the ExcelinEd family.

Zach was a proud son of Indiana, a graduate of Indiana University and a stalwart fan of IU sports. He earned his law degree from the Indiana University Robert H. McKinney School of Law in Indianapolis. Zach lives on in our hearts and the many students he helped through his dedicated work.

“I am grateful for the time we had together with Zach, and I’m confident his legacy will remain strong in the lives of countless individuals and students who are better off due to Zach’s selfless attitude, passion and hard work.” —Patricia Levesque, CEO

“Zach was a treasured colleague who was as known for his humor and affability as he was for his humility and compassion. Zach’s passion for improving education and opportunity for all students ran deep, and it was obvious to all those who met and interacted with him how much he cared for others.” —Governor Jeb Bush, Chairman

SAVE THE DATE

2022 NATIONAL SUMMIT ON EDUCATION

Transforming education to unlock lifelong opportunity and success for each and every child.

November 17-18 - Salt Lake City, Utah

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