ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND STATE EDUCATION ORGANIZATION

In the United States, public education is largely a state and local responsibility. To govern the state’s education system, states typically charge a Chief State School Officer, often called the State Superintendent, and a State Board of Education with oversight and directing powers. Who serves in these positions, however, is determined in different ways depending on the state in which they serve. Most states operate using one of the following four models.

**Four Models**

**Model One**
- The Electorate
- The Governor
- The State Board of Education
- The Chief State School Officer

States: Delaware, Iowa, Maine, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia

**Model Two**
- The Electorate
- The Governor
- The State Board of Education
- The Chief State School Officer

States: Alaska, Arkansas, Connecticut, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, Rhode Island, West Virginia

**Model Three**
- The Electorate
- The Governor
- The Chief State School Officer
- The State Board of Education

States: Arizona, California, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Montana, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Wyoming

**Model Four**
- The Electorate
- The Governor
- The State Board of Education
- The Chief State School Officer

States: Alabama, Colorado, Kansas, Michigan, Nebraska, Utah

Eight out of the ten highest performing states on the NAEP in 2017, in contrast to Alabama, operate under a State Board of Education with members who are appointed by their governors. One state, Minnesota, fully abolished their State Board of Education in 1999.

"States perform better when governors are empowered to appoint leaders of state education agencies."

Dr. Paul Manna
Professor of Government and Public Policy
College of William & Mary

A bill currently in the Alabama State House would shift the state from a Model Four state to a Model Two state, aligning Alabama with some of the highest performing states in the nation.