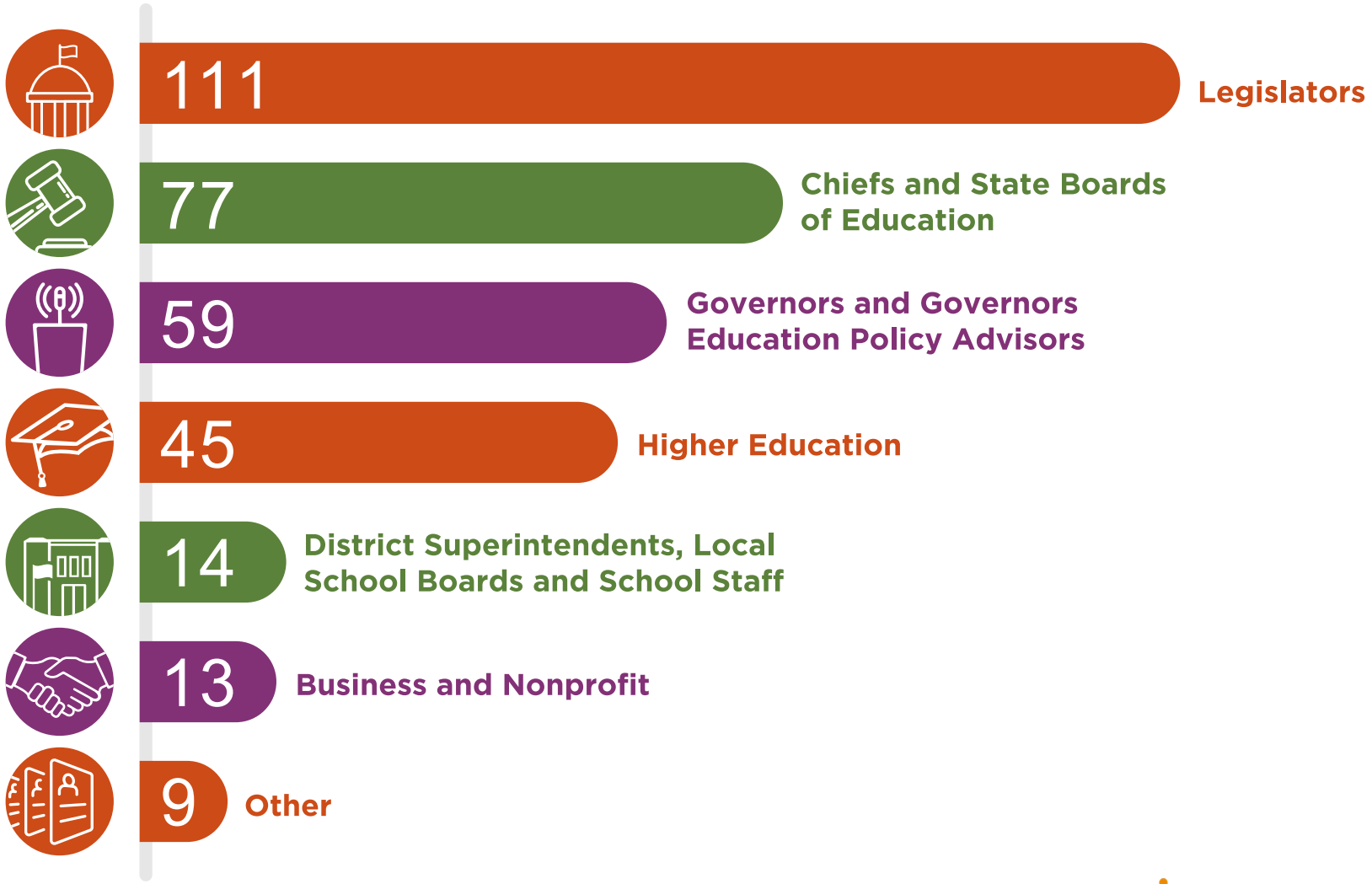
Education Commission of the States

Education Policy Trends & Resources

WHO WE ARE: THE COMMISSION



OUR MISSION

Advance the attainment of an excellent education for all.



EDUCATION COMMISSION
OF THE STATES

HOW WE DO IT

…A partnership between the political and professional forces in education could stimulate the kind of cooperation that could be crucial to the future of American education.

– The Compact For Education



WHAT WE DO



Research

Report

Convene

Counsel

EDUCATION COMMISSION
OF THE STATES

Current ECS Priority Areas

- Accessible, Affordable and High-Quality **Early Care and Education** systems
- Student **Attendance**, **Engagement** and **Wellbeing**
- The **Educator Pipeline**
- **K-12 Finance**
- Holistic Skills and Aligned **Pathways**
- The Value of **Postsecondary Education** & **the Future of Work**

Creating Accessible, Affordable and High-Quality Early Care and Education Systems

- **Recent ECS Resources**
  - 50-State Comparison: State K-3 Policies
  - State K-3 Policies: State Profiles
  - Report: Maximizing Early Care and Education Funding
  - 50-State Comparison: State Data Dictionaries and Manuals
  - States With Universal Pre-K

Strengthening the Educator Pipeline

- **Recent ECS Resources**
  - How States Recruit and Retain Rural Teachers
  - Teacher Recruitment and Retention: State Profiles
  - Policy Brief: State Level Efforts to Support School Leaders
  - 50-State Comparison: Charter School Policies
  - Webinar: Innovative State Policies for Strengthening the School Leader Pipeline
  - Webinar: Recruiting and Retaining the Next Generation of Teachers

Improving Student Attendance, Engagement and Wellbeing

- **Recent ECS Resources**
  - Snapshot: How States Are Rethinking and Redefining Student Technology Use in Schools
  - 50-State Comparison: Free and Compulsory School Age Requirements
  - A Playbook for State Policymakers and Place-Based Partnerships
  - Report: Student Health & Wellness at the State Level
  - Webinar: Strategies for Student Screen Time

Reforming and Refining K-12 Finance

- **Recent ECS Resources**
  - Report: Funding Special Education Services
  - Webinar: Funding High-quality Special Education Services
  - 50-State Comparison: Postsecondary Funding

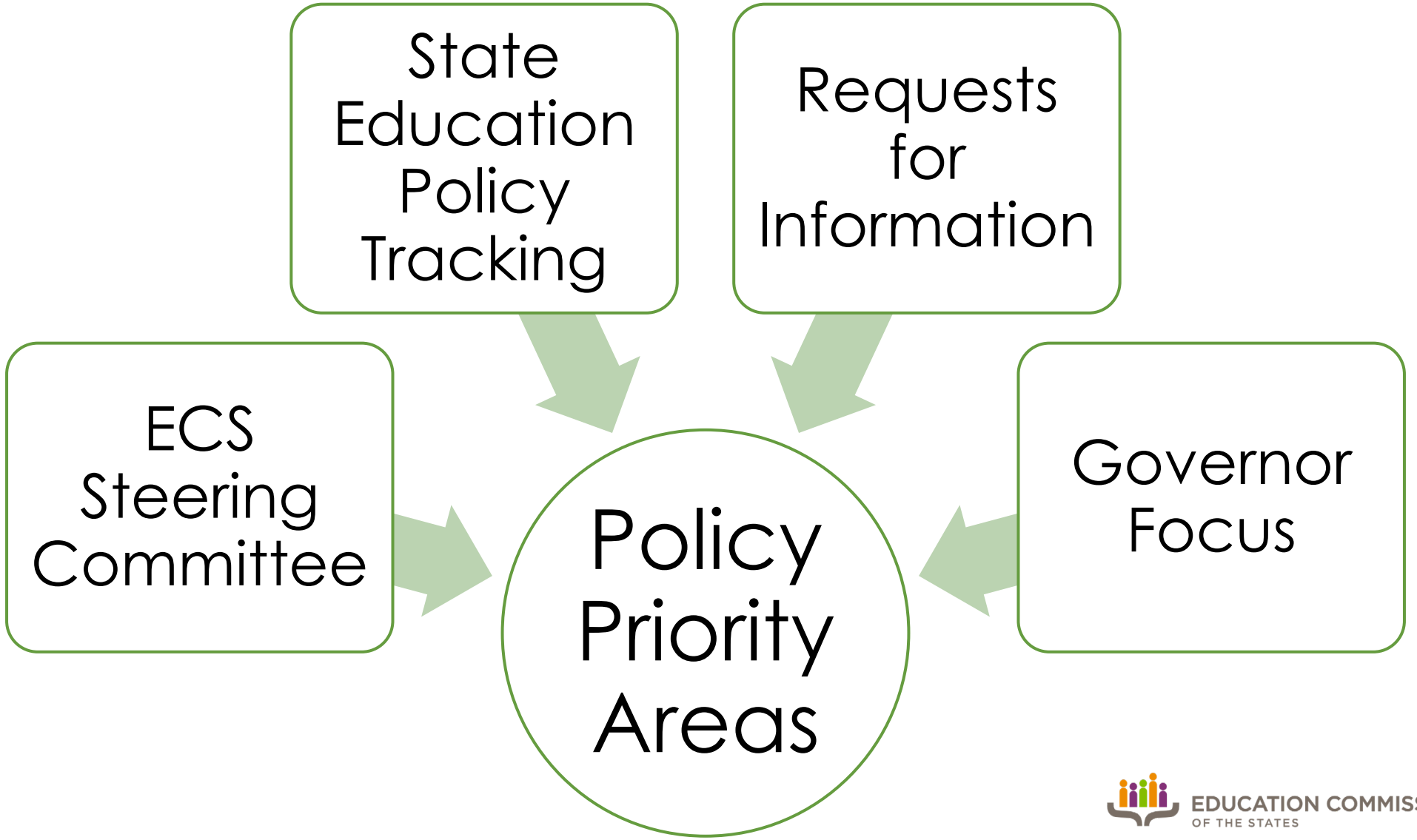
Building Holistic Skills and Aligned Pathways

- **Recent ECS Resources**
  - Webinar: Program Readiness to Pave Effective CTE Pathways in States
  - Building Future-Proof Workforce Pathways Through Responsive Data Systems
  - The Standard of Career and Technical Education in Oklahoma
  - Webinar: Aligning K-12, Postsecondary and Workforce Data

Enhancing the Value of Postsecondary Education by Preparing for the Future of Work

- **Recent ECS Resources**
  - Workforce Pell Blog Series
  - 50-State Comparison: Statewide Admissions Policies
  - Statewide Admissions Policies: State Profiles
  - Accurate and Accessible Data Could Be the Backbone of Direct Admissions
  - 50-State Comparison: Postsecondary Funding
  - From Classroom to Career: How Tennessee is Preparing Students for the Future

Looking Ahead



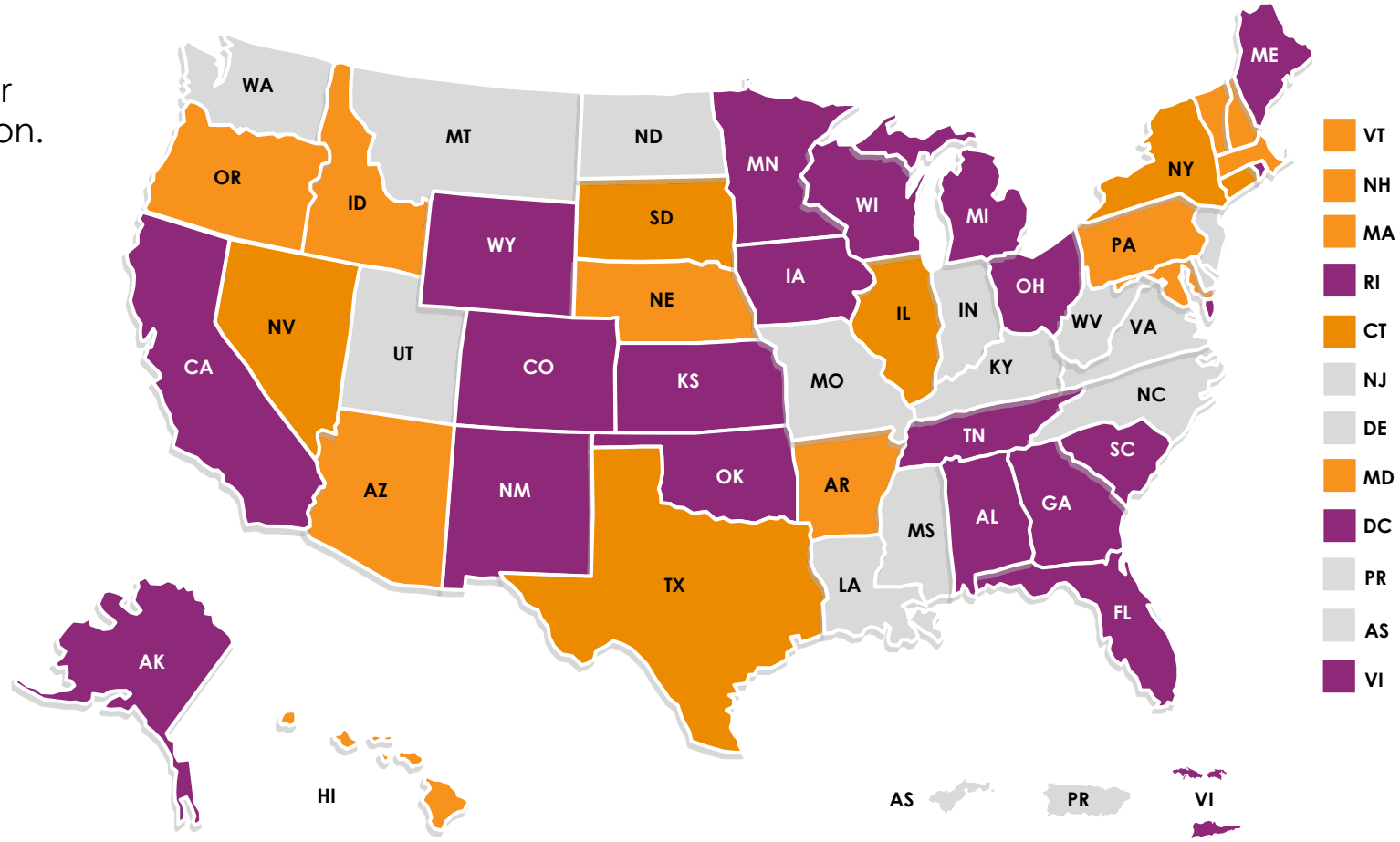
Upcoming State Elections

2026 State Elections

- 38 Executive Elections
  - 36 states, D.C., and USVI
- 8 Chief State School Officers
- 9 State boards of education
  - Plus, USVI Board of Education
- 88 state legislative chambers
  - Plus, D.C. Council, and legislatures in American Samoa and USVI

2026 Governor Elections

- Incumbent governor running for re-election.
- Guaranteed new governor.



Governor Candidate Priorities

Priorities Across All Candidates:

- Literacy and Reading
- Education Investments
- K-12 Educator Pay
- Workforce Development and Training
- Postsecondary or Adult Apprenticeships

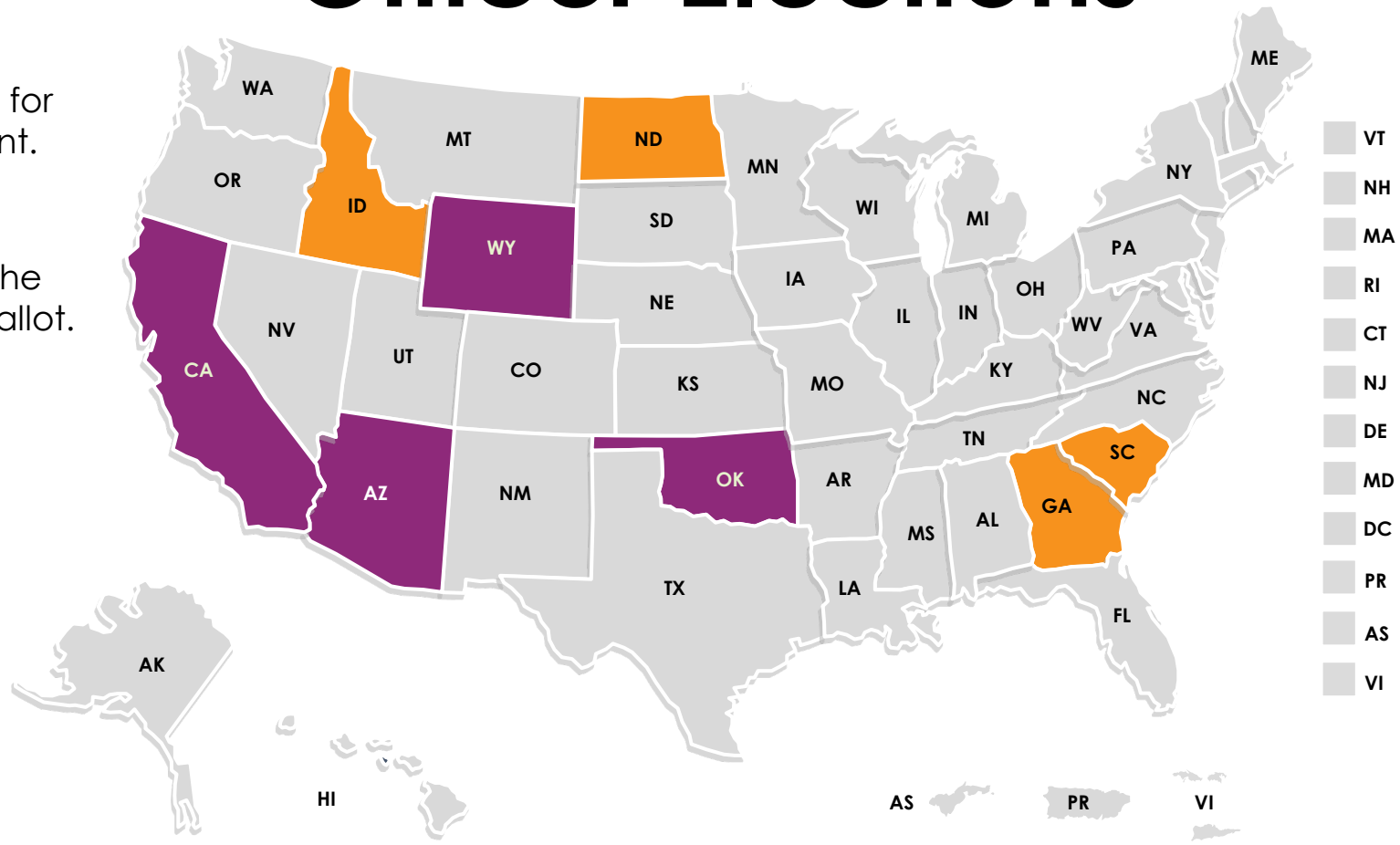
Governor Appointing Authority

Gubernatorial appointing authority varies across the country.

- **20 governors** can appoint their Chief State School Officer.
- **42 governors** appoint at least one voting member of their State Board of Education.
- **46 governors** appoint at lease one member of their state's postsecondary governance board.

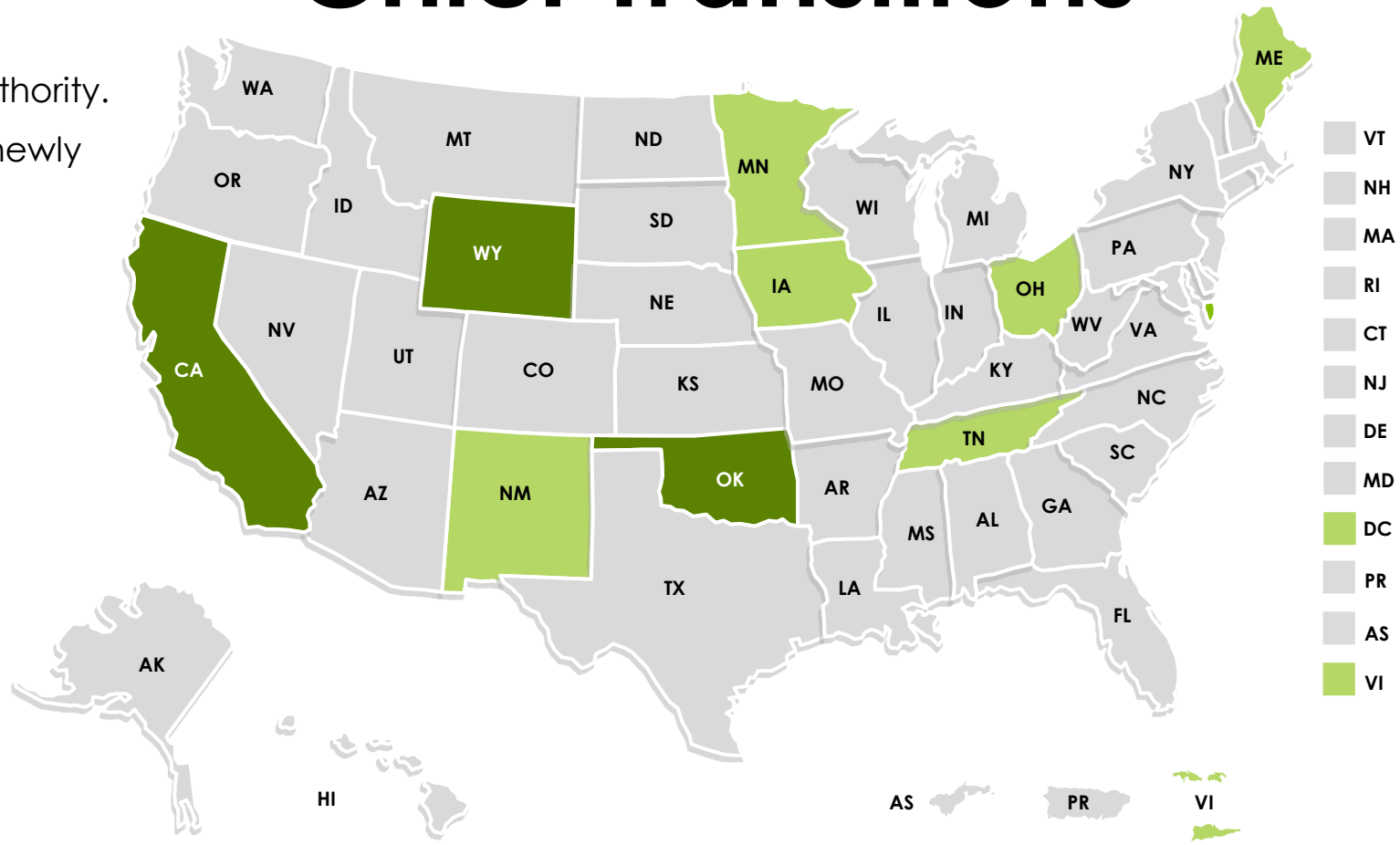
2026 Chief State School Officer Elections

- Incumbent running for state superintendent.
- No incumbent on the general election ballot.



Guaranteed Governor and Chief Transitions

- New governor with CSSO appointing authority.
- New governor and newly elected CSSO.



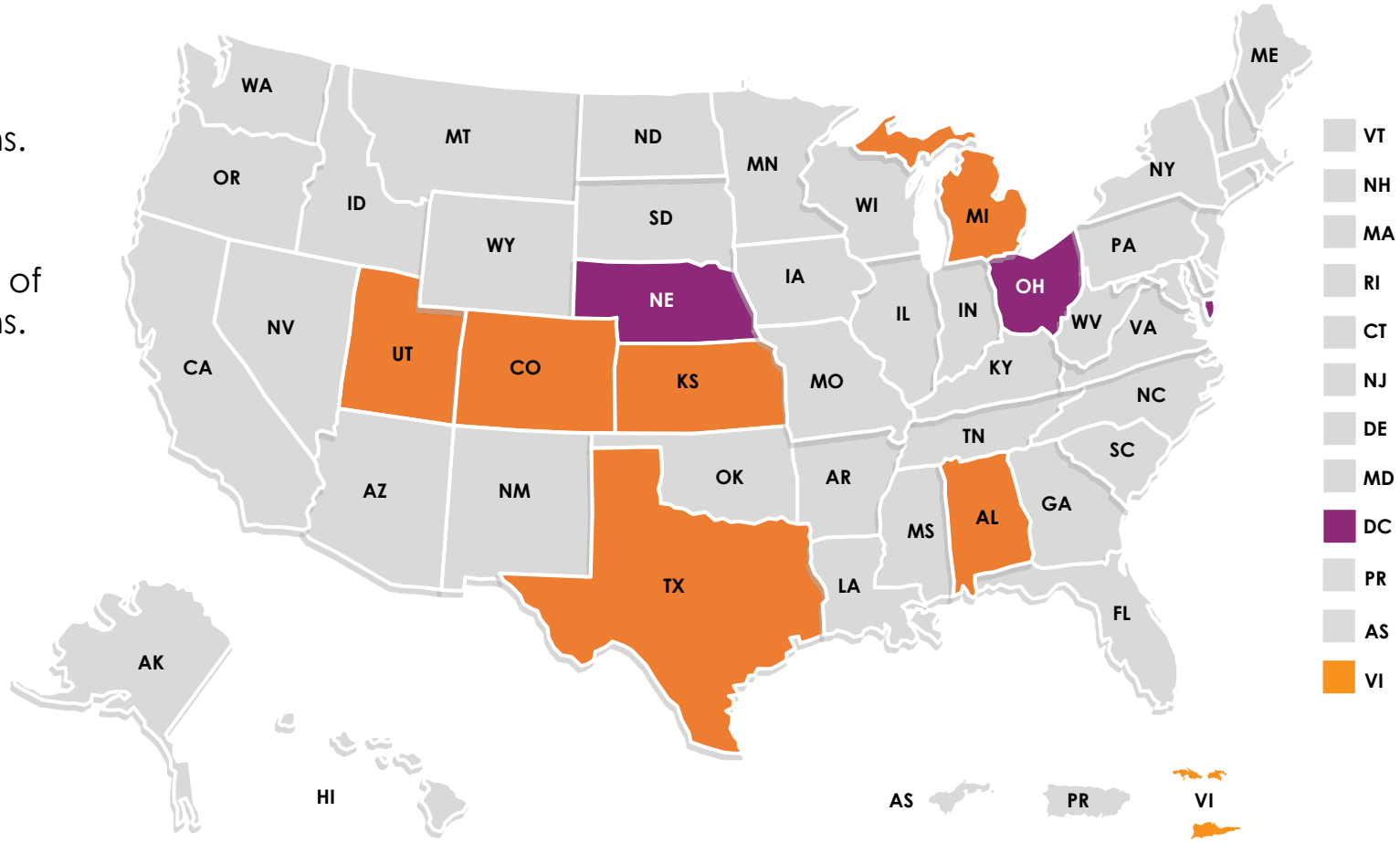
Chief State School Officer Campaign Priorities

Bipartisan Campaign Priorities

- Educators:
  - Pay and benefits.
  - Workforce pathways.
  - Professional development.
- Funding and transparency.
- Family engagement.
- Math, literacy, financial literacy.
- CTE and workforce readiness.
- AI approaches that prioritize digital safety.

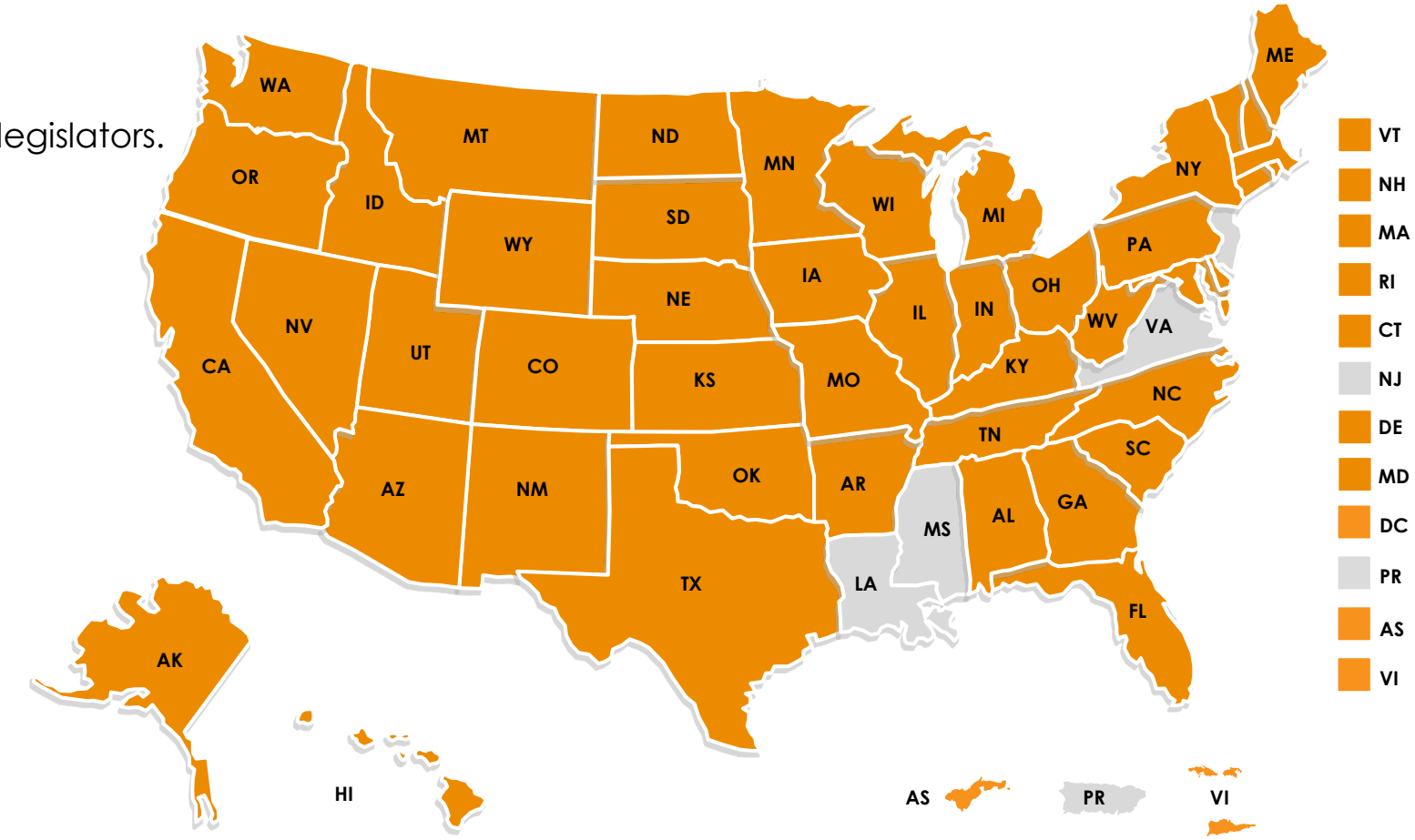
2026 Board of Education Elections

- Partisan board of education elections.
- Nonpartisan board of education elections.



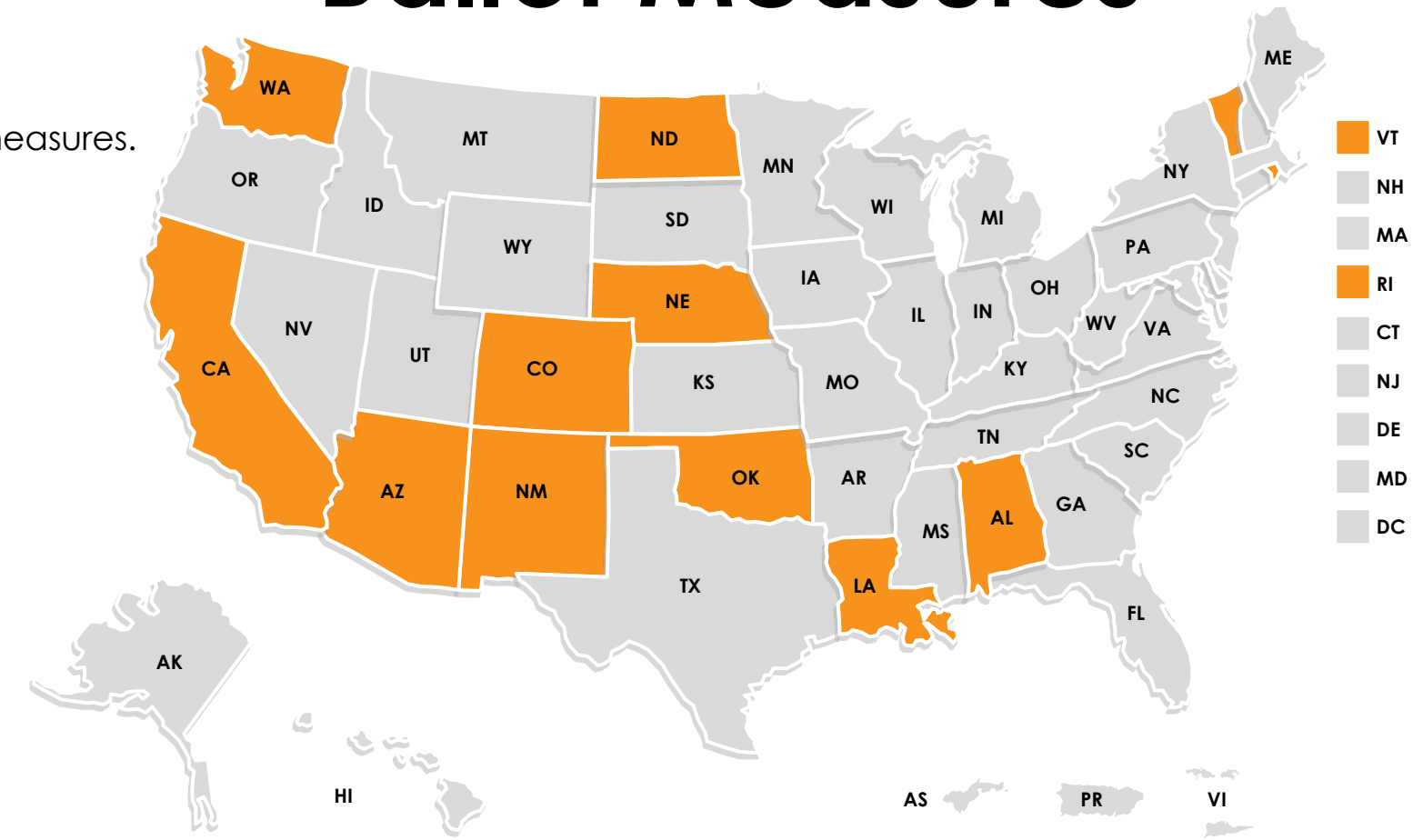
2026 Legislative Elections

2026 elections for legislators.



2026 Education-Related Ballot Measures

States with ballot measures.



As leadership transitions take place and states set new priorities, your work helps ensure military-connected students remain part of the conversation.

EDUCATION COMMISSION OF THE STATES

Your education policy team.

THANK YOU

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