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HUNT | KEAN
LEADERSHIP FELLOWS



HUNT-KEAN LEADERSHIP FELLOWS

The Hunt-Kean Leadership Fellows program partners with senior-level political leaders who have the knowledge, skill, and will to be effective, reform-minded education policymakers at the state level. Named for renowned education governors Jim Hunt (D-NC | 1977-1985; 1993-2001) and Tom Kean (R-NJ | 1982-1990), the national, nonpartisan Fellowship launched in the fall of 2014. Since its development, the program now boasts a network of more than 263 Fellows representing all 50 states and the District of Columbia, with each year adding an incoming cohort of 25 - 30 Fellows.

The Hunt Institute offers ongoing support to Fellows through The Institute's research, tools, mentors, and access to The Institute's wide network of policymakers and experts.



VISION

Education is the most important investment we can make to strengthen our nation's economy and society. Senior, state-level policymakers have enormous influence over our complex education system, and yet, all too often, these leaders are required to assume massive responsibilities with little background in education policy. Our goal is to help political leaders develop a deeply-rooted vision for educational improvement.

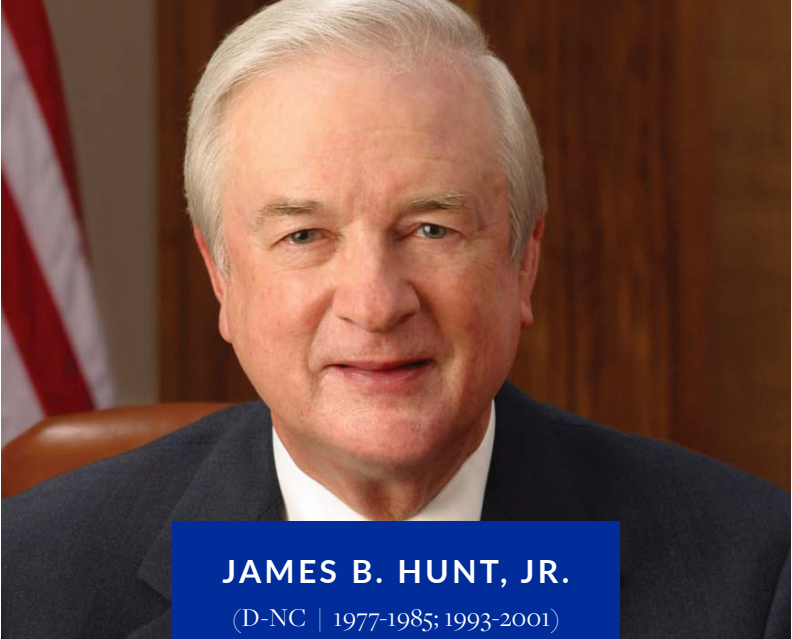
The Hunt-Kean Leadership Fellows program—**unlike any other Fellowship in the nation**—provides political leaders from across the country with the knowledge they need to cultivate smart and effective education agendas. The nonpartisan Fellows program:

- Exposes Fellows to the best research and analysis on innovative and successful education policies and practices;
- Provides an environment that welcomes distinct views and fosters debate on multifaceted education issues; and
- Introduces Fellows to other leaders directing successful reform efforts across the nation.

The Fellows are part of an elite group of high-ranking, elected state officials who have committed themselves to a nine-month immersion in the full education continuum, from prenatal care and early childhood to postsecondary education and the workforce.

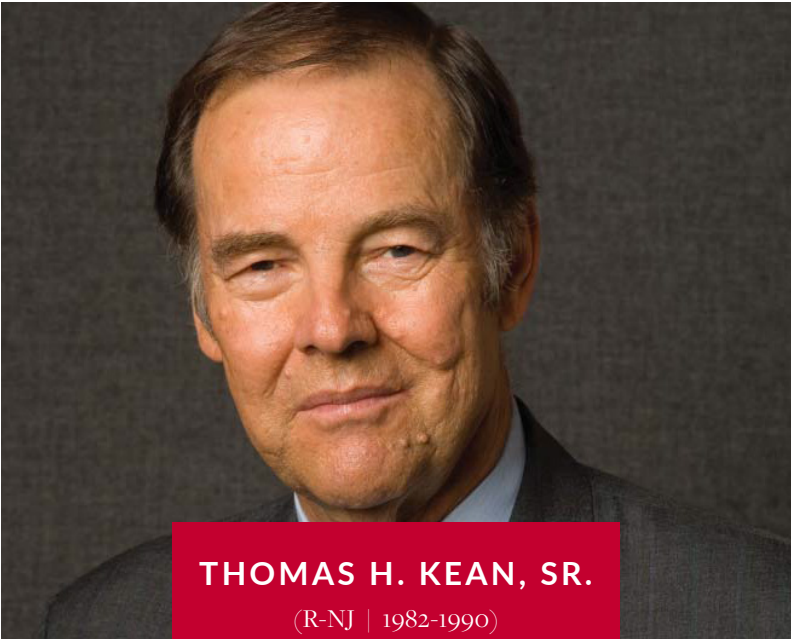
By investing in America's political leaders, we aim to build a cadre of informed and motivated educational change agents with the necessary influence to reform state education systems and improve outcomes.





JAMES B. HUNT, JR.

(D-NC | 1977-1985; 1993-2001)



THOMAS H. KEAN, SR.

(R-NJ | 1982-1990)

THE PROTOTYPES

Both Democrat Jim Hunt and Republican Tom Kean are uniquely qualified for the title, “Education Governor.” As the state’s only four-term governor, Jim Hunt led North Carolina through an unprecedented period of educational improvement and economic growth. With a particular focus on early childhood development and improving the quality of teaching in America, Governor Hunt is ranked with U.S. presidents and secretaries of education as one of the 10 most influential people in American education by the Editorial Projects in Education Research Center.

As a former teacher, education policy was of special importance to Governor Tom Kean, who propelled change in New Jersey following the report, *A Nation at Risk*. Governor Kean proposed, among other things, raising beginning teacher salaries, instituting statewide high school graduation tests, and adopting new approaches to education in urban schools. He, too, has been rated among America’s most effective state leaders.

Whether blazing bold trails in early childhood education, establishing national teacher certification, connecting education and economic development, making historic gains, or fighting to raise teacher salaries, these governors understood the essential components of creating and implementing a coherent education policy agenda, establishing and articulating a long-term vision, and using the bully pulpit to inform and move public policy.



PROGRAM DESIGN

The Fellowship includes two in-person sessions – five days total – where Fellows engage with leading minds in education, policy, and politics. Throughout the program, Fellows interact with outstanding educators and school leaders, as well as participate in an intensive site visit of an area school.

The curriculum is designed to equip participants with the knowledge, relationships, and inspiration they need to engage in critical conversations about equity and lead on education reform in their current roles and as they pursue higher office. Fellows, educators, and experts engage in critical dialogue about key education issues such as prenatal to three years, early childhood, policies affecting educators, school leadership, school choice, standards and assessments, school accountability, postsecondary education, and the workforce.



OUR PROGRAM

Throughout the nine-month program, Fellows are afforded a wide range of learning experiences, including:

Policy Discussions featuring experts who probe Fellows' thoughts on the challenges and policy implications of the topics at hand and provide additional knowledge building as needed.

Strategy Breakouts featuring former governors. This session allows Fellows to consider political and strategy implications in an intimate setting.

Site Visits and Professional Perspectives which provide Fellows a chance to see various issues firsthand and points of view of current practitioners. Fellows are equipped with the tools they need to conduct future site visits in their home states.

A Personalized, In-State Session guided by Hunt Institute staff. Fellows delve into specific policy areas in a private setting, which allows time for individual consultation.

Monthly Virtual Sessions which provide Fellows a venue to discuss timely education policy activities occurring in their states, other states, and at the national level.

Regional Site Visits where Fellows from across multiple Cohorts participate in small groups to see innovative models in action. Fellows meet with policymakers, practitioners, and stakeholders involved in those models.

“*Through the Hunt-Kean Fellowship program, we reach out to those who have that responsibility in legislative or executive roles to give them the information they need to succeed, to put them in touch with experts who have the institutional and experiential knowledge. To provide the kind of support that's going to be helpful to them. And I think that's what is going to make the difference in terms of educational outcomes in all of our states.*

— **Former Vermont Governor Jim Douglas**

PATHWAYS TO LEADERSHIP

The growing network of Fellows boasts eleven sitting governors, six members of Congress, and many gubernatorial candidates. Fellows across all Cohorts continue to build their influence in their home states, running for elected office, including governor, lieutenant governor and state legislators.

CURRENT GOVERNORS



COHORT 1

Governor Spencer Cox

Utah | 2020-Current

Spencer Cox is Utah's 18th Governor. He previously served as Utah's Lieutenant Governor, and as member of the Utah House of Representatives from the 58th district.



COHORT 1

Governor Bob Ferguson

Washington | 2025-Current

Bob Ferguson is Washington's 24th Governor. He previously served as Washington's Attorney General.



COHORT 4

Governor Maura Healey

Massachusetts | 2022-Current

Maura Healey is Massachusetts' 73rd Governor. She previously served as Massachusetts' Attorney General.



COHORT 7

Governor Katie Hobbs

Arizona | 2022–Current

Katie Hobbs is Arizona’s 24th Governor. She previously served as Arizona’s Secretary of State, Minority Leader of the Arizona Senate, member of the Arizona Senate from the 24th district, and a member of the Arizona House of Representatives from the 15th district.



COHORT 7

Governor Mike Kehoe

Missouri | 2025–Current

Mike Kehoe is the 58th governor of Missouri. He previously served as Lieutenant Governor of Missouri.



COHORT 1

Governor Brad Little

Idaho | 2019–Current

Brad Little is Idaho’s 33rd Governor. He previously served as Idaho’s Lieutenant Governor, and a member of the Idaho Senate.



COHORT 1

Governor Tate Reeves

Mississippi | 2020–Current

Tate Reeves is Mississippi’s 65th Governor. He previously served as Lieutenant Governor of Mississippi and Treasurer of Mississippi.



COHORT 1

Governor Kim Reynolds

Iowa | 2017–Current

Kim Reynolds is Iowa’s 43rd Governor. She previously served as Iowa’s Lieutenant Governor and was a member of the Iowa Senate from the 48th district.



COHORT 4

Governor Josh Stein

North Carolina | 2025-Current

Josh Stein is North Carolina's 76th Governor. He previously served as North Carolina's Attorney General.



COHORT 7

Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders

Arkansas | 2022-Current

Sarah Huckabee Sanders is Arkansas' 47th Governor. She previously served as White House Press Secretary and White House Deputy Press Secretary.



COHORT 3

Governor Gretchen Whitmer

Michigan | 2019-Current

Gretchen Whitmer is Michigan's 49th Governor. She previously served as a Prosecuting Attorney of Ingham County, Minority Leader of the Michigan Senate, member of the Michigan Senate from the 23rd district, and as a member of the Michigan House of Representatives.

FORMER GOVERNORS



COHORT 1

Governor Kate Brown

Oregon | 2015-2023

The Honorable Kate Brown served as the 38th Governor of Oregon from 2015 to 2023. She previously served as Secretary of State, a member of the Oregon Senate, and a member of the Oregon House of Representatives.



COHORT 2

Governor Jeff Colyer

Kansas | 2018-2019

The Honorable Jeff Colyer served as the 47th Governor of Kansas from 2018 to 2019. He previously served as the Lieutenant Governor of Kansas, member of the Kansas Senate from the 37th District, and member of the Kansas House of Representatives from the 48th district.

MEMBERS OF THE U.S. CONGRESS



COHORT 2

Senator Jon Husted

Ohio | 2025-Current

Jon Husted is a U.S. Senator from Ohio since 2025. He previously served as Ohio's Lieutenant Governor.



COHORT 8

Representative John James

Michigan | 2020-Current

John James is a member of the US House of Representatives from Michigan's 10th District.



COHORT 7

Representative Seth Magaziner

Rhode Island | 2022-Current

Seth Magaziner is a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from Rhode Island's 2nd District. He previously served as Rhode Island's Treasurer.



COHORT 1

Senator Catherine Cortez Masto

Nevada | 2017-Current

Catherine Cortez Masto is a US Senator from Nevada since 2017. She previously served as Nevada's Attorney General.



COHORT 4

Representative Jennifer McClellan

Virginia | 2023-Current

Jennifer McClellan is a member of the US House of Representatives from Virginia's 4th district.



COHORT 3

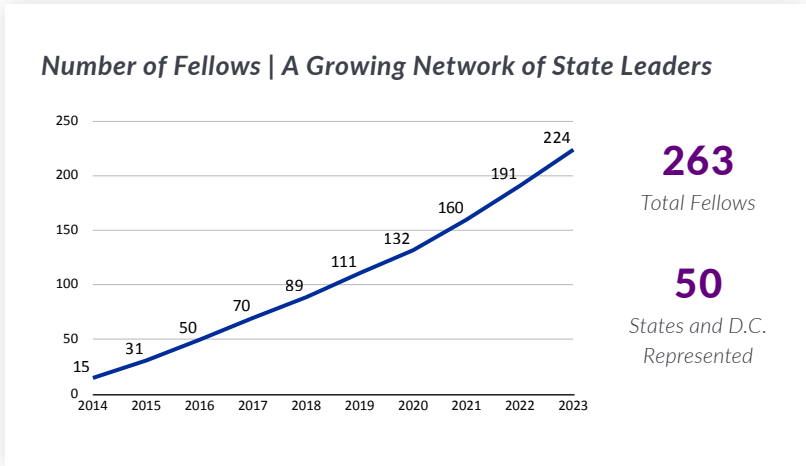
Representative Tim Moore

North Carolina | 2025-Current

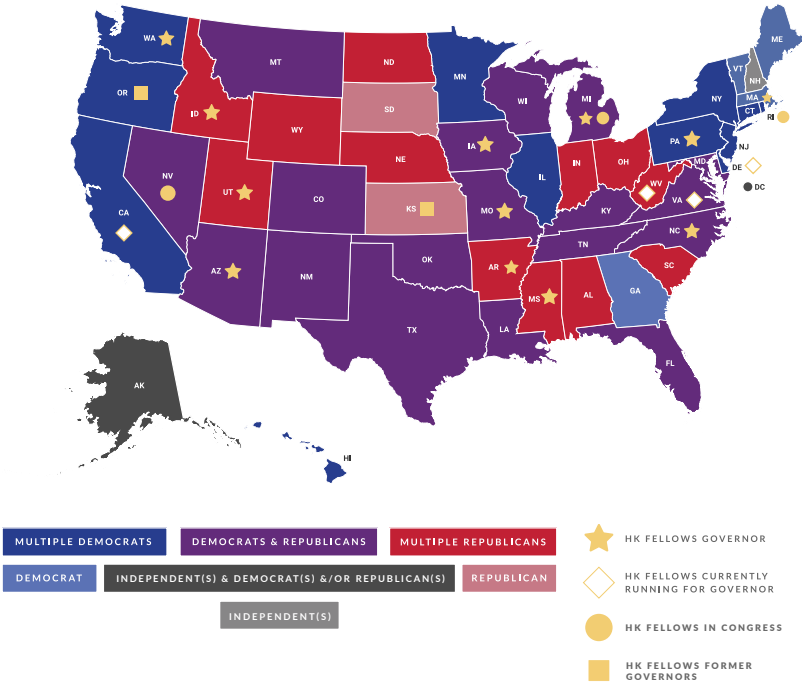
Tim Moore is a member of the US House of Representatives from North Carolina's 14th district. He previously served as speaker of the North Carolina House of Representatives.

A GROWING NETWORK OF STATE LEADERS

Cohorts 1-11



ACROSS THE STATES



ADVISORY BOARD

The Fellows Advisory Board consists of former governors who have put education at the center of their agendas, learned from the practical experiences of other governors, and utilized gubernatorial leadership as a lever to make systemic changes that resulted in improved student achievement. The in-person sessions offer Fellows the opportunity to meet with a wide array of former governors, representing both political parties, who generously share their invaluable knowledge and advice. Bipartisan Advisory Board members serve as experts and provide counsel to participants throughout their Fellowship experience.



“

I love being a fellow, it's great to hear insights from experts, and wonderful to engage with people who have different backgrounds and perspectives, whose states are working on the same issues, but maybe have approached them in a different way.

It's also challenging at times, everyone comes with their own perspective and beliefs. It's been helpful to engage with people who all share the common concern for making sure that every child receives a great education.

— State Senator Lauren Arthur

HUNT-KEAN LEADERSHIP FELLOWS ADVISORY BOARD

The Honorable James B. Hunt, Jr.

Governor | North Carolina
(1977-1985, 1993-2001)

The Honorable Roy Barnes

Governor | Georgia (1999-2003)

The Honorable Phil Bredesen

Governor | Tennessee (2003-2011)

The Honorable Kate Brown

Governor | Oregon (2015-2023)

The Honorable Don Carcieri

Governor | Rhode Island (2003-
2011)

The Honorable Mike Castle

Governor | Delaware (1985-1992)

The Honorable Mitch Daniels

Governor | Indiana (2005-2013)

The Honorable Jim Douglas

Governor | Vermont (2003-2011)

The Honorable John Engler

Governor | Michigan (1991-2003)

The Honorable Christine Gregoire

Governor | Washington (2005-
2013)

The Honorable David Heineman

Governor | Nebraska (2005-2015)

The Honorable Brad Henry

Governor | Oklahoma (2003-2011)

The Honorable Ted Kulongoski

Governor | Oregon (2003-2011)

The Honorable Tom Kean

Governor | New Jersey (1982-1990)

The Honorable Dannel Malloy

Governor | Connecticut (2011-
2019)

The Honorable Jack Markell

Governor | Delaware (2009-2017)

The Honorable Susana Martinez

Governor | New Mexico (2011-
2018)

The Honorable Janet Napolitano

Governor | Arizona (2003-2009)

The Honorable Tim Pawlenty

Governor | Minnesota (2003-2011)

The Honorable Dick Riley

Governor | South Carolina (1979-
1987)

The Honorable Jane Swift

Governor | Massachusetts (2001-
2003)

The Honorable Bob Taft

Governor | Ohio (1999-2007)

The Honorable Bob Wise

Governor | West Virginia (2001-
2005)



About The Hunt Institute

The Hunt Institute, an affiliate of the Duke University Sanford School of Public Policy, is a recognized leader in the movement to transform public education. Marshaling expertise from a nationwide partner network since its establishment in 2001, The Institute brings together people and resources that help build and nurture visionary leadership and mobilize strategic action for greater educational outcomes and student success.

Learn more at www.hunt-institute.org.



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