The release of the 2022 National Assessment of Educational Progress scores realized the greatest fears of education leaders and policymakers across the country. Already behind other leading countries’ performance, the nation’s report card illustrated a historic decline in student performance and learning loss during the past two years of disruption. However, this generational decline is only a symptom of ongoing issues that have long plagued state education systems. While tragic, this crisis provides a unique once-in-a-generation opportunity for policymakers and state education leaders to innovate and rethink existing education models. Participants in this Masterclass will come together in a forum to discuss and learn about promising policy solutions, share the benefits and drawbacks of existing strategies, and brainstorm ways to ensure a resilient regional recovery from this devasting educational crisis.

The opioid epidemic continues to ravage communities across the CSG South region. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), from 2019 to 2020, opioid-involved death rates increased by 38 percent. While there have been efforts around the prescription and legal side of opioids, fentanyl and its derivatives are causing even further harm to communities. Due to its potency (roughly 100x more potent than morphine) and the ease with which it can be synthesized, fentanyl is becoming more prevalent, and increasingly is being mixed with other substances, often to deadly effect. From 2019 to 2020, the CDC found that synthetic opioid-involved death rates increased by 56 percent. What legal and criminal justice policies can states employ to attack the supply side of the problem? What can states do from the human services side to prevent deaths and assist those seeking recovery? Participants in this Masterclass will learn about successful policies undertaken in other states and engage with subject-matter experts on emerging solutions.

Recent events, including the COVID-19 pandemic, Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, and lingering supply chain disruptions, have once again highlighted the importance of energy independence. With this push for greater domestic production, states are seeking to expand their portfolios with an “all of the above” energy strategy. Despite its small size, West Virginia is the fifth largest state for energy production. While West Virginia has traditionally been known for coal, the Mountain State has moved to expand its energy portfolio in recent years. In 2022, the Legislature passed bills ending the state’s moratorium on new nuclear energy sites, promoting geothermal energy development, and supporting the use of hydroelectric power. During this two-day Masterclass, participants will learn about West Virginia’s energy strategy and ways to emulate and implement these processes in their home states.

* open to all CSG members nationwide.