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## POSTSECONDARY PRACTICE

### OUR BROAD REACH MEANS BETTER TRACTION

State and federal policies affect students, colleges and communities. **The HCM team has an unparalleled set of relationships in 50 states as well as relationships with national employers, polling organizations and civil rights and student organizations** that help build an understanding of how change is possible in different environments. Our team members are present across the country doing impactful work on the ground and advocating for change, whether that is on a campus, in a state agency, or around the family dinner table. **With staff and consultants based in over 15 states**, our team at HCM is able to help clients nimbly assess and apply strategies that can improve student success.

### WE WORK TO MAKE POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION MORE EFFECTIVE

It might start as policy change for a single institution, a multi-campus system of colleges, a large employer, a federal program or an entire state, but innovative thinking can go a long way to bring about

meaningful change. **Our strategists have built an extensive knowledge base of postsecondary policies that is updated and expanded regularly.** Along with a deep understanding of the policy development process, our team's thought leadership helps leaders adapt and adopt approaches that are proven to improve challenging issues such as affordability, student outcomes and productivity in postsecondary education.

### WE ARE NON-TRADITIONAL CONSENSUS BUILDERS

As policy experts and advocates, we are consensus builders who **work side by side with elected leaders and policymakers, students and their families**, to form and advance agendas for positive change. HCM's team excels at bringing non-traditional groups together in coalitions that focus on students and the more affordable, clearer pathways to credentials and needed jobs. We are bipartisan, hands-on front line advocates who know that context and relationships matter when advancing solutions that meet our client partner goals.



*A mission to increase student success &*  
**EXPAND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY**

**HCM Strategists advances and aligns policies that improve educational outcomes** beyond high school. We advocate for students – particularly those who have been left behind by the traditional system of higher education – and focus on eliminating such inequities that continue to place far too many students at a disadvantage in pursuing and completing a postsecondary credential. Our team does not shy away from the hard

challenges, and we tackle them head-on by working with elected state and federal leaders, colleges and universities, business leaders, nonprofit organizations, foundations and alternative providers of postsecondary credentials. With these diverse leaders, we partner with clients who share our desire and dedication to improving postsecondary outcomes for students, communities and states.

## Our PRACTICE AREAS

We are effective because we provide the **appropriate aspects of engagement that lead to positive outcomes**. Our practice groups offer solutions through the following areas of expertise:



### FEDERAL & STATE POLICY

- + Provide non-partisan facilitation, content expertise and advice to leaders and their staffs in government, legislative and executive branches.
- + Track policy and budget adoption across 50 states.

### STRATEGY

- + Support clients in thinking through long term strategic plans and associated opportunities and metrics.
- + Conduct strategic planning exercises with clients to address their short and long term needs.
- + Advise clients on aligning their priorities, investments and tactics with existing efforts in the field.

### ADVOCACY

- + Build networks of organizations and coalitions to advocate for policy change at the federal and state levels.
- + Identify effective partners to engage in campaigns focused on improving outcomes and closing achievement gaps.
- + Collaborate with various organizations to amplify voices and use student outcome data to build will for change.

### SYSTEM & INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

- + Provide technical support (e.g., training, facilitation) to systems and institutions to support student success.
- + Provide system and institutional assessments to identify barriers and opportunities to increase student retention and completion.

### CAPACITY BUILDING

- + Serve as an intermediary to drive adoption of policies and strategies and elevate lessons learned.
- + Co-develop and manage sub-grants and contracts to facilitate policy and advocacy capacity-building.
- + Partner with clients to create new platforms and methods for serving students better.

### RESEARCH

Conduct qualitative and quantitative research to:

- + Assess impacts of policies designed to improve student outcomes.
- + Understand how to effectively communicate to stakeholders.
- + Create evidence-based policies and communication materials.