

“Building a community of educators helping people achieve education and workplace success.”

This is the mission statement of the ACT State Organizations, which have been crucial to ACT’s growth as a provider of solutions that promote education and workforce readiness for individuals around the world. ACT’s management and staff have relied heavily on the network for advice both for ensuring that ACT’s programs and services remain relevant to the needs of students, schools, and colleges, and for designing new services responsive to the ever-changing challenges faced by those charged with preparing the nation’s people for education and workplace success.

The ACT State Organizations, consisting primarily of individuals in secondary and postsecondary institutions, have been in existence since ACT was founded in 1959. The network is widely credited with providing an effective communication channel for ensuring the relevance of ACT’s services.

Building a Network

The State Organizations were at the heart of ACT’s initial organizational structure. In 1959, ACT founders E.F. Lindquist and Ted McCarrel began organizing their professional colleagues—full-time employees of colleges and universities—into a network that would lay the foundation for the State Organizations.

The 16 states that joined in 1959 were Alabama, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, Ohio, Oklahoma, Tennessee, and Wisconsin. By the end of the school year, they were joined by Alaska, Idaho, and North Dakota.

The first ACT state coordinators were paid advisors who had direct involvement with ACT’s organization and development. Among their duties were communicating with high schools and colleges in their states; distributing materials such as announcements, publicity pieces, and registration forms to secondary and postsecondary institutions in their states; securing test facilities; handling registration forms; collecting fees; and forwarding reports to high schools and colleges. They also organized state advisory committees that eventually evolved into the State Organizations.

Upon ACT’s founding, McCarrel appointed regional directors to help State Organizations promote the ACT® test. By the time the first ACT test administration occurred in November 1959, the company had successfully recruited colleges and universities across the country to use ACT scores for college admissions.

In 1961, state coordinators became unpaid volunteers, serving as the governing body of and providing guidance to the organization. In subsequent years, steering committees were created. The role of the state coordinator evolved into that of state representative, a position that was either elected or appointed. When ACT established a 15-member Board of Trustees in 1965, state representatives filled eight of the seats,

giving State Organizations representation on the board. Also, new guidelines were created to determine how states could participate in the State Organization network.

Broadening the Scope

In July 2003, a task force was established to redefine the role of the State Organizations following changes to ACT’s governing structure. Prior to that time, many of the State Organizations worked primarily with postsecondary institutions. While ACT’s college admissions and placement exam continued to gain in popularity, ACT had expanded its scope to incorporate new audiences, including secondary educators, workforce professionals, and government administrators at the state and federal levels. As a result, ACT needed to broaden the composition and the role of its State Organizations. In 2004, the ACT Board of Directors adopted the recommendations of the task force. They included:

- Adopting a common statement of purpose for the State Organizations
- Developing and implementing an annual plan of work based on strategic objectives
- Adopting a set of principles addressing the organizational structure and membership of the State Organizations
- Updating the role of the state representative to emphasize the position’s leadership responsibilities
- Designing and implementing a State Organization leadership development program

State Organizations Today

As of ACT’s 50th anniversary in 2009, all 50 states are represented through the 44 ACT state and regional organizations across the country. These organizations have more than 8,000 members, and nearly 6,000 individuals attend the annual conferences. Generally, ACT State Organizations are led by a Council and an Executive Committee consisting of a State Representative, Chairperson, Chair-Elect, Past Chair, and Secretary.

Today, members of State Organizations provide advice and support to ACT. Their duties include:

- Serving as a communication link between educational institutions and agencies and ACT
- Coordinating and facilitating statewide professional development activities related to ACT’s mission
- Providing feedback on the utility and effectiveness of ACT programs and services
- Assisting ACT regional staff in identifying state service needs
- Providing input and advice on future ACT programs and services
- Identifying exemplary applications of ACT programs and services

ACT STATE ORGANIZATIONS

MISSION

Building a community of educators helping people achieve education and workforce success

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

ACT state organizations support and promote informed decision making by:

- Individuals engaged in education and career planning, preparation for further education and work, and lifelong learning
- Parties who are making or influencing decisions by those individuals

The Idaho ACT State Organization

In 1959, the year of ACT's founding, ACT cofounder McCarrel appointed John Phillips, Jr., who was then director of testing at Boise State College, as the first Idaho ACT state coordinator. That same year, Phillips appointed the Idaho ACT Advisory Committee, representing participating institutions, secondary school systems, and the State Department of Education. The committee eventually became the official Idaho ACT State Organization.

Today, the Idaho ACT State Organization is involved in many initiatives, including providing Idaho educators with resources to:

- Support and promote informed student decision making about postsecondary access and options
- Ensure that high school graduates are prepared for college-level courses
- Help students with career and educational planning
- Assist students with successful transitions from middle school to high school

Past Idaho ACT State Representatives

1959–1966	John Phillips, Jr., Director of Testing, Boise State College
1966	Jay Toews, Director of Counseling and Testing Service, Idaho State University
1966–1969	William Hedley, Associate Dean of Students, College of Idaho
1970–1974	Russell Monahan, Dean of Students, College of Idaho
1974–1988	J. Vance Hendricks, Counselor, Testing Services, Ricks College
1988–2003	James Morris, Director, Student Counseling Center and Professor (Retired), University of Idaho
2003–2006	Steven Bussolini, Director of Admissions/Market Development, Lewis–Clark State College
2006–2007	Barbara Fortin, Director of Admissions, Boise State University
2007–2009	Rob Ahrendsen, Career Development and Testing Specialist, Brigham Young University–Idaho

State Representatives are elected by the members of the State Organization to serve a term of three years, serving no more than three full consecutive terms.

State Representatives' duties and responsibilities include:

- Serving as a voting member of the Executive Committee and the Council
- Representing the views and interests of members of the State Organization
- Facilitating communications between ACT staff in its regional and national office and the members of the State Organization
- Reporting to the members of the State Organization on significant developments regarding ACT programs and services



Idaho Colleges and Universities That Have Accepted the ACT Since 1959

Boise State University
Brigham Young University–Idaho
College of Idaho
North Idaho College
Northwest Nazarene University

Current Idaho ACT State Organization Council*

ACT State Representative

Rob Ahrends
Career Development and Testing
Specialist
Brigham Young University–Idaho

Chairperson

Gary Kohlmeier
Principal
Eagle Elementary School of the Arts

Chair-Elect

Lloyd Scott
Director, New Student Services
University of Idaho

Secretary

Gary Mills
Testing Center Coordinator
Eastern Idaho Technical College

ACT Liaison

Stacey Ellmore
Senior Consultant
ACT West Region

Patty Bolinger
ISCA Representative
William Thomas Middle School

Dale Bower
Chief Academic Officer
Office of the State Board of Education

Jenny Cardenas
Director of Admissions
Boise State University

Ed Castledine
Director of Academic Advising and
Assessment
Northwest Nazarene University

Kristi Enger
Guidance/Special Projects Coordinator
Idaho Division of Professional–Technical
Education

Merilyn Hardy
Testing Center Coordinator
North Idaho College

Debra Klimes
Director, Academic Development Center
College of Southern Idaho

Sandy Rumpel
Supervisor of Counseling
Boise School District

Val Schorzman
Gifted and Talented Coordinator
Idaho State Department of Education

Tracy Waffle
Admission Coordinator/Application
Specialist
Lewis–Clark State College

* As of May 2009

