# THE GOVERNANCE DIVIDE:
# A Report on a Four-State Study on Improving College Readiness and Success

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September 2005

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# Foreword

The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education and its partners, the Stanford Institute for Higher Education Research, and the Institute for Educational Leadership, have spent many years analyzing reforms that span K–12 and postsecondary education, and advocating for K–16 reform. Our current, fractured systems do not serve students well and are based on the outdated view that only an elite group of students attends college. Now, the majority of students attends some form of postsecondary education after high school, but there are a host of problems confronting them. Many do not complete their programs of study, almost half the students in higher education require remediation, and college-going and completion rates are highly inequitable in terms of income level, race, and ethnicity. As student demographics shift in the coming years, and students who are traditionally under-represented in postsecondary education become the majority, our nation could face an educational crisis.

To reverse this course, we must connect high school and postsecondary education standards, policies, and practices. Much of this must occur at the state level. Many of our previous projects, such as those discussed in *The Learning Connection*, *From High School to College*, *Betraying the College Dream*, and *Gathering Momentum*, spurred us to focus on state governance policies and structures as vehicles to create these changes. This report is an important next step in understanding the role of state governance in K–16 reform.

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# Executive Summary

This report is based on findings from Partnerships for Student Success (PSS), a four-state study that analyzed K–16 educational governance and policies at the state level, such as organizational structures, leadership, finance, curricula and assessment, accountability, and data systems.[1] An underlying belief of PSS is that changes in statewide governance policies and structures can enable deep, classroom-level effects. The focus of the research is on students who attend "broad access" postsecondary institutions (colleges and universities with relaxed admission criteria); approximately 80% of college students enroll in these kinds of institutions. A central question driving the PSS research concerns whether particular kinds of governance structures are more effective than others in using policy levers to facilitate and maintain K–16 reforms. This attention to governance structures is particularly relevant now, when some states are looking toward the development of K–16 commissions and other possible ways to connect their educational systems.

The findings in this research report move the K–16 agenda forward by proposing a set of state policy levers that can be used to create meaningful changes for students. In addition, this report identifies the role of other factors—such as leadership and state culture and history—in implementing and sustaining K–16 reforms within states. The findings of this research demonstrate the real challenges—and opportunities—that states face as they seek to improve transitions between high school and college. This report provides state leaders with real-world policy choices, showing the kinds of steps several states have taken, and the implications of these policy decisions over time. The report also offers recommendations to help states transform ad hoc approaches into sustained action and institutionalized, long-term K–16 reforms. Every state needs to increase the percentage of students who complete high school and finish some form of postsecondary education; existing governance structures and policies cannot meet this overwhelming need. For most states, these structures and policies must be revised in significant ways.

This work spurred the development of a forthcoming publication by the authors, entitled *Claiming Common Ground*, based on all of their work in the field, including *The Learning Connection, Gathering Momentum,* and Stanford University's Bridge Project and the related book, *From High School to College*. *The Governance Divide*, as the title suggests, focuses on state governance mechanisms that can help students' readiness for, and success in, postsecondary education. *Claiming Common Ground* goes a step further, making the case for why such work is a state and national imperative.

Currently, K–12 and postsecondary education exist in separate worlds in the United States. Policies for each system of education are typically created in isolation from each other—even though, in contrast to the past, most students eventually move from one system to the other. Students in K–12 rarely know what to expect when they enter college, nor do they have a clear sense of how to prepare for that next step. Particularly now, in the 21st century, when more students must complete some postsecondary education to have an economically secure life, the need for improved transitions from high school to college is urgent. This need for some postsecondary education extends beyond individual aspirations. In this global economy, businesses and communities—and our nation as a whole—must have residents who have achieved educational success beyond high school.

It is good public policy to make sure our education systems better suit students' needs and aspirations—and our country's needs. America's high school students have higher aspirations for their own education than ever before. Over 90% of high school seniors in the United States plan to attend college (including two- and four-year colleges), and about 70% of high school graduates actually do go to college within two years of graduating.[2] *Measuring Up 2004*, a report card focusing on higher education, demonstrated that students' aspirations are continuing to rise, yet college opportunity has not increased, particularly for traditionally under-represented student groups, whose numbers are growing.[3] These educational aspirations extend across income, racial, and ethnic groups and are grounded in economic reality. In 2000, the median annual earnings for workers ages 25 and over with a high school diploma were $24,267, compared to $26,693 for those with an associate's degree and $40,314 for those with a bachelor's degree.[4]

Despite their high aspirations, many students are not well prepared for college, and too few complete their college programs. Nationally, 63% of students in two-year colleges and 40% of those in four-year institutions take some remedial education.[5] About half of first-year students at community colleges do not continue on for a second year. Approximately a quarter of first-year students at four-year colleges do not stay for their second year.[6]

State policies send important signals to students about what they need to know and be able to do, to educators about what is important, and to researchers and policymakers about issues such as student needs. States have created disjointed systems with separate standards, governing entities, and policies. As a result, they have also created unnecessary and detrimental barriers between high school and college—barriers that undermine students' aspirations and their abilities to succeed.

## FINDINGS

### Policy Levers States Can Use to Create Change

Our research found that there are four policy levers that are particularly promising for states interested in creating sustained K–16 reform: assessments and curricula, finance, data systems, and accountability.

> **Alignment of Courses and Assessments**. States need to make sure that what students are asked to know and do in high school is connected to postsecondary expectations—both in coursework and assessments. Currently, students in most states graduate from high school under one set of standards and face a disconnected and different set of expectations in college. Many students enter college unable to perform college-level work.

> **Finance.** State education finance systems must become K–16; this includes the legislative committees and staff functions that oversee finance and budgetary decisions. State finance structures are lagging behind other areas in existing K–16 reform. If education finance can span education systems, it has the potential to drive change in many other policy arenas as well.

**Data Systems.** States must create high-quality data systems that span the K–16 continuum. K–16 data systems should identify good practices, diagnose problems, provide information about all education levels, provide students with diagnostic information to help them prepare better, assess and improve achievement, and track individual students over time across levels.[7] Without such systems, it is impossible to assess needs effectively, understand where the problems are, gain traction for changes needed, and evaluate reforms.

**Accountability.** States need to connect their accountability systems to span K–12 and postsecondary education. Currently, accountability systems are usually designed for either K–12 or postsecondary education without much attention to the interface between the two. Accountability systems need to reflect, better, the reality of students' educational paths.

As states seek to engage in K–16 reforms, it is important that each state does so with an understanding of its culture and history. For this reason, a one-size-fits-all model will not work in developing K–16 reforms. Nonetheless, the culture and history of a state do not create insurmountable barriers to the establishment of such reforms.

Establishing and empowering organizational structures that can transcend the barriers between educational sectors is essential in promoting K–16 reforms. These bodies should be charged with specific responsibilities, provided with the requisite resources, empowered with enough influence and authority to make real change, and held accountable for performance. State agency collaboration—both in terms of the content of work and the organizational structures supporting that work—is essential, and having components of K–16 reform in statute appears to be useful but not sufficient for creating change.[8]

Leadership at the state level is of crucial importance in establishing a vision and sustaining long-term change. These initiatives must be collaborative; it is not possible for a governor, postsecondary education system, or K–12 system to drive these efforts alone. Also, it is important to consider and implement broad-based and deeply embedded incentives to promote collaboration across sectors. The policy levers described above—particularly in the areas of finance and accountability—provide examples of such incentive structures.

We caution state education leaders that convening a commission and holding cross-system discussions may be helpful, but are not sufficient for creating meaningful and lasting K–16 reform. At the end of the day, the litmus test will not be the establishment of commissions or panels. To be lasting and effective, the deliberations must be anchored in policy and finance reform, and those policies must drive the type of governance structure that is needed.

K–16 reform cuts into the heart of major education issues and needs currently confronting this nation: the ability of students to complete K–12 and finish some form of postsecondary education, and the ability of states to provide students with a clear and consistent set of policies and programs. The findings in this report demonstrate the real opportunities—and challenges—that states face as they seek to improve transitions between high school and college. These findings focus on actions and reforms that have the potential to effect change in every classroom in a state. As the findings reveal, the responsibility for reform cannot be carried by one sector, but rather must be shared across systems to reach common ground, focusing on improving K–12 and postsecondary education for all students.

# I. Introduction

For years, state policymakers, business leaders, and educators have been concerned about the lack of clear policies and information that could help guide students in making a smooth transition from high school to college. The need to improve this transition is particularly crucial now, in the 21st century, when students who aspire to an economically secure lifestyle must complete at least some education or training beyond high school. As Mark Warner, governor of Virginia, and Kerry Killinger, chairman and CEO of Washington Mutual, wrote to open the National Education Summit on High Schools:

> For more than a century, our nation's high schools embodied America's promise: a free public education preparing conscientious students for good jobs with decent wages. Today, however, this legacy is in jeopardy because most new jobs— two-thirds during the next decade—will demand educational achievement above and beyond a high school diploma.[9]

Having opportunities for higher education is crucial for individuals; offering such opportunities is equally important for communities, states, and the nation as a whole. In this global economy, the most economically secure communities, states, and nations are those whose residents have a strong knowledge base. Likewise, many of the most successful businesses are those that have access to and make good use of educated workers. Given the economic realities of the 21st century, providing opportunities for residents to prepare for, enroll in, and succeed in postsecondary education is vital to the health of our communities, our states, and our nation.

From students' perspectives, there is a wide gap between our systems of K–12 education and our systems of higher education—a rift that students must cross if they are to gain access to education or training beyond high school. This disjuncture between K–12 schools and postsecondary education can be found in

**From students' perspectives, there is a wide gap between our systems of K–12 education and our systems of higher education.**

every state, and it derives from a tradition in which schools have developed separately from higher education. As Michael Kirst writes:

> A profound organizational, political, and cultural chasm persists in most states between the governance systems of K–12 and higher education. The two sectors continue to operate in separate orbits and to live apart in separate professional worlds, associations, and networks… Within each state—and at the federal level as well—a division exists that is based on the historical and pervasive assumption that K–12 schools and colleges and universities should be guided by policies exclusive to each sector. As a result, the public policy "tools" that influence one sector—funding, accountability, and governance systems, for instance—have little in common with the policy tools that influence the other. Moreover, there are separate state boards of education for each level; separate legislative committees, and boards that coordinate one level (e.g. postsecondary education) without the other.[10]

The vast majority of students in the United States—with the assistance of their parents, guidance counselors, teachers, and others—do try to negotiate the divide between high school and college. But they often face unexpected hurdles, such as graduating under one set of expectations in high school and, several months later, entering into a whole new set of standards in college. Other problems have been documented in the following areas:

- the intensity and quality of high school courses,
- inequities in college preparation opportunities,
- high school achievement gaps,
- a confusing array of state and institutional exams within and between the education sectors,
- high postsecondary remediation rates,
- insufficient college persistence and completion, and
- postsecondary achievement gaps.[11]

Although the disjunctions between K–12 and higher education—and their effects on students—have been described by state policymakers and educational leaders for years, they are often perceived by those within schools and colleges as existing outside their educational enterprise. Nonetheless, the responsibility for building transitions from high school to college remains at the heart of the educational missions of both K–12 and higher education. As Kati Haycock writes:

> Regardless of one's vantage point—from higher education looking downward, from K–12 education looking upward, or from policymakers looking at both—it is almost immediately obvious that the problems in one sector cannot be solved without the cooperation of the other sector. Colleges and universities may want to increase the number of minorities entering the freshman year or to decrease the number of such students requiring remediation, for example, but meeting that goal is largely beyond their control… Likewise, the success of K–12's efforts to improve achievement and close gaps between groups is hugely dependent upon the quality and quantity of teachers produced by higher education.[12]

Several states are working to improve the connections between their systems of K–12 and postsecondary education, and some have established governance structures and policies that seek to bridge the systems. In order to learn from these initiatives, the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, Stanford University's Institute for Higher Education Research, and the Institute for Educational Leadership, with support from The Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, created Partnerships for Student Success (PSS)—a joint effort to analyze those statewide educational governance structures and policy levers that are most likely to support successful efforts to connect K–12 and postsecondary education systems, particularly those efforts that directly affect students.

Partnerships for Student Success focuses on state-level educational governance policies, with an emphasis on policies that can affect classroom-level practices. A major goal is to improve policies that impact student transitions into, and between, broad access institutions (postsecondary institutions with

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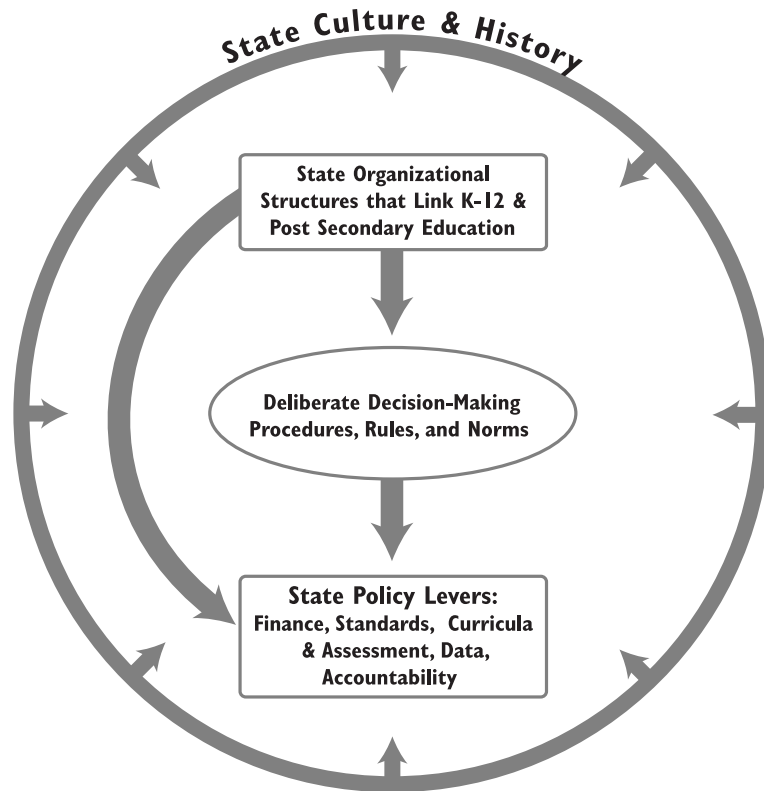
relaxed admission criteria); approximately 80% of college students enroll in such institutions. Understanding the role of governance structures in developing and sustaining K–16 reform is crucial, especially since many states are currently creating K–16 councils and commissions to connect their education levels.

The findings from this project illustrate the hurdles and successes faced by these four states as they work to improve student transitions between high school and college. These issues are relevant for all states, and provide education leaders with a variety of policy options and related implications. The recommendations are focused on helping states transform ad hoc approaches into institutionalized, long-term, K–16 reforms. Every state needs to improve its high school graduation and college persistence rates, and existing governance structures and policies cannot meet this overwhelming need. Most states will need to revise, significantly, their governance policies and structures to make them K–16. Many states, if they are to sustain K–16 reforms, will also need to improve K–16 data collection, usage, and accountability. [13]

Figure 1 portrays the contours of governance as identified by PSS research. State organizational structures and the people within them (for example, governors, legislators, state agencies, and state committees) affect the decision-making procedures, rules, and norms of state governance. These procedures and rules, in turn, influence state policy levers, such as finance mechanisms, education standards, curricula and assessments, data systems, and accountability—each of which is considered a component of state governance. State culture and history also influence all facets of state governance. For example, legislative committees usually reinforce separations between education sectors; they do not necessarily create an environment that is conducive to joint budgeting or creative policymaking between K–12 schools and higher education. Even strong K–16 leadership within the executive branch of government cannot succeed for the long term if it is not reinforced through legislative action.

> **Existing governance structures and policies cannot meet this overwhelming need.**

*Figure 1*

**State Culture & History**

State Organizational
Structures that Link K-12 &
Post Secondary Education

Deliberate Decision-Making
Procedures, Rules, and Norms

State Policy Levers:
Finance, Standards, Curricula
& Assessment, Data,
Accountability

In conducting this research, we found that many state leaders, in discussing K–16 reforms, described initiatives that spanned a broad spectrum from universal preschool to teacher education programs. We recognize that many of these programs can have a beneficial effect on improving student preparation for college.

In addition, we found many good examples of local and regional efforts to improve transitions from high school to college. We urge people to learn more about programs and policies such as Running Start in the State of Washington and the El Paso Collaborative in Texas. Local and regional policymaking should be stimulated and supported by purposeful, aligned, and coherent state policymaking, for the most effective route to reform builds upon local, regional, and state policymaking.

We also found pre-college outreach programs to be a common institutional, systemwide, and statewide response to the problems associated with the divide between high schools and colleges. Such outreach programs teach students how

to succeed within dysfunctional systems and that is of crucial importance—particularly for students who are the first in their families to attend college.

The PSS research, however, focuses primarily on statewide governance and policy levers, rather than on individual programs, local or regional initiatives, or pre-college outreach efforts. Although many of these efforts can be successful on the margins, they do not address the overall inter-level disconnections that students across the state face when moving from one system to another. Partnerships for Student Success explores those systemic issues that require more coherent statewide policymaking—those efforts that seek to connect the systems to ensure that all students can be prepared for, gain access to, and succeed in postsecondary education.

*Measuring Up 2004*, a report card focusing on higher education, demonstrated that most states face serious challenges in preparing students for education or training beyond high school, providing them with opportunities for college, and promoting completion of certificates and degrees in a timely manner. The report card found that although more high school students are taking rigorous courses today than a decade ago, smaller proportions of students are finishing high school and enrolling in college right after graduating. College participation gaps among students of different races, ethnicities, and income levels have persisted and, in some cases, widened. Compared with a decade ago, only slightly more students who do enter college are completing their degree programs.[14] In light of these significant challenges, Partnerships for Student Success raises awareness of the growing impact of K–16 governance problems on the performance of public schools and colleges. It also provides state policymakers with the tools to develop and institutionalize their K–16 reforms successfully.

> **K–16 issues are often relegated to the margins of educational and political debates.**

K–16 reform is not a discrete, isolated issue; nor is it a nonessential altruistic gesture. It cuts into the heart of major education issues and needs currently confronting this nation: the ability of students to complete K–12 and finish some form of postsecondary education, and the capacity of states to provide students with a clear and consistent set of policies and programs. K–16 issues are often relegated to the margins of educational and political debates because there is no natural constituency or accountable group for this issue that spans the established education sectors. Students and their families are the constituency for enhanced K–16 articulation; students and their families deserve better from public education systems and state education policies.

# II. The Context for K–16 Reform

America's high school students have higher aspirations for their own education today than ever before. Over 90% of high school seniors in the United States plan to attend college (including two- and four-year colleges), and approximately 70% of high school graduates do enroll in college within two years of graduating.[15] *Measuring Up 2004* showed that college aspirations are continuing to rise, yet college opportunity has not increased, particularly for traditionally under-represented student groups.[16]

These high educational aspirations cut across income, racial, and ethnic lines, and they are grounded in economic reality. Data from the U.S. Census Bureau illustrate the significant economic returns of enhanced education. In 2000, the median annual earnings for workers ages 25 and over with a high school diploma were $24,267, compared with $26,693 for workers with an associate's degree and $40,314 for those with a bachelor's degree.[17] There are also economic benefits associated with completing community college certificates, although the amount of the benefit varies by field of study.[18]

Despite having high aspirations for college, many students are under-prepared for college and too few complete their college programs. Once they enroll in college, many students are startled to learn that getting into a college is often the easiest step. Nationally, 63% of students at two-year institutions and 40% of students at four-year institutions take some remedial education.[19] Only 34% of students who are required to take one remedial reading course complete a two- or four-year degree, compared with 56% of students who do not have to take a remedial course.[20] About half of first-year students at community colleges do not continue on for a second year. Approximately a quarter of first-year students at four-year colleges do not stay for their second year.[21]

While issues such as student finances are closely tied to preparation for college and persistence while in college, the intensity and quality of the secondary school curriculum is the best predictor of whether or not a student will go on to complete a bachelor's degree.[22] In 1992, 72% of students went on

to college within two years of graduating from high school, but only 47% of them had enrolled in a college preparatory curriculum in high school.[23] These are issues for students from all backgrounds, but they are particularly relevant for students who are the first in their families to go to college, and for low-income students.

Of every 100 white, non-Latino students, 93 graduate from high school, 62 complete some college, and 29 obtain a bachelor's degree. For African-American students, the numbers are lower: 86 graduate from high school, 48 complete some college, and 15 obtain a bachelor's degree. For Latino students, the numbers are lower still: 61 graduate from high school, 31 complete some college, and 10 obtain a bachelor's degree.[24] Not only are African-American and Latino students not obtaining college certificates and degrees at the same rate as their white, non-Latino counterparts, they are not graduating from high school with the same level of academic skills. Across the country, African-American and Latino 12th graders read and do math at about the same levels as white, non-Latino 8th graders. This is particularly problematic, given the data on college remediation and the extent to which the necessity of one or more remedial courses (particularly in math or reading) negatively influences the chances that some students will obtain a bachelor's degree.[25] Thus, while all students are affected by poor, fractured, inter-level state policies, historically under-represented students are usually the most negatively impacted.

States have created unnecessary and detrimental barriers between high school and college—barriers that undermine students' aspirations and their ability to succeed. As Kirst outlines, the fractures between K–12 and postsecondary education in the United States stem, in part, from "the laudable way the nation created mass education systems for both K–12 and higher education."[26] High schools were designed for many purposes, and did not focus primarily on college preparation. Historically, because college was for an elite group of students, college preparation was provided to a minority of students. While there used to be some links between high school and college standards (for example, the College Board's work to set uniform standards for each academic subject and develop syllabi for college entrance requirements), those connections frayed after World War II. Richardson et al. document how, when

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postsecondary enrollment grew dramatically between 1950 and 1980, states began creating new organizational structures to govern higher education; by 1979, every state had such an entity.[27] Those groups rarely interacted with states' K–12 governing bodies and state agencies.

As a result, the states have disjointed systems with separate standards, governing entities, and policies, and a large college-going population. While there are many regional and local efforts to connect the systems, state-level K–16 reform is in its infancy. Public postsecondary education is a part of the nation's mass system of education, yet we have outdated systems based on the assumption that only an elite group attends college. Our fractured systems send students, their parents, and K–12 educators conflicting and vague messages about what students need to know and be able to do to enroll and succeed in college. For example, Stanford University's Bridge Project found that high school assessments often stress different knowledge and skills than do college entrance and placement requirements. Similarly, the coursework between high school and college is not connected. Current data systems are not equipped to address students' progress across systems. This means that no one is held accountable for issues related to student transitions from high school to college.[28] Now that a majority of high school graduates attend some form of post-secondary education, and almost all students aspire to attend college, states must take action to ensure that all students have access to high quality academic preparation opportunities, affordable postsecondary options, and increased opportunities to succeed in college. Postsecondary institutions and systems need to become involved in resolving these issues while students are preparing for college, rather than waiting for students to arrive on their doorstep.

While many of these issues are common across states, our research reaffirms that state-specific contexts matter a great deal. The next section outlines important contextual information for the four states that Partnerships for Student Success studied. The information presented helps to identify how state political cultures, traditions, and governance policies and structures can affect K–16 approaches and reform efforts.

**We have outdated systems based on the assumption that only an elite group attends college.**

# III. Overview of Public Education Governance in Four States

This report is based on three main sources of information: state-level interviews conducted in Florida, Georgia, New York, and Oregon; a review of related literature and research; and data from relevant Web sites.[29] In addition, the research team drew upon its previous work in this area, including the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education's *Measuring Up* series,[30] Stanford University's Bridge Project,[31] and the Institute for Educational Leadership's wealth of experience with both K–12 and postsecondary issues.[32]

The challenges and opportunities of K–16 reform are of national concern, and the four states selected for this research reflect that. Florida, Georgia, New York, and Oregon were chosen because of their varied approaches to, or governance contexts regarding, K–16 reform. Two of the states have state education governance structures that encompass both K–12 and postsecondary education, while the other two have relied more on specific projects to improve student preparation and success.

New York, with its centuries-old governance structure that connects K–12 and postsecondary education, was a logical choice for inclusion in the study. In studying New York, we wanted to know if such an historic and institutionalized K–16 structure helps promote systemic change and collaboration across sectors.

Unlike New York, Florida's entrance into K–16 governance is recent. Florida reorganized its entire education governance structure in 2001. Responsibility for both public K–12 and postsecondary education is now under the State Department of Education, and chancellors representing the education sectors report to the commissioner of education, who reports to the governor. In studying Florida, we wanted to understand the goals and objectives of the new system; how these goals are affecting policy change outside of the state capital; the levers used to connect the systems; and the results, if any, at this early stage.

Georgia and Oregon have engaged in extensive project-based work at the state level to connect their education systems, but they have taken different approaches. Both have housed the work primarily in postsecondary agencies

and have focused on such issues as proficiency-based learning across the systems, standards and assessments across the systems, and teacher education reform. Georgia is well known for having state and regional P–16 councils, while Oregon has spent over 10 years working to connect its systems, including institutionalizing components of its Proficiency-Based Admission Standards System into the state's K–12 reforms. Georgia has elements of its P–16 reforms in statute, including a statutory P–16 governing body, while Oregon does not. By conducting research in these two states, we wanted to understand the role of governance and related policies in the development, implementation, and institutionalization of the substance of the K–16 reforms.

Since the field research was conducted almost entirely within state agencies in four states, it is not conclusive, nor can we generalize extensively. Nonetheless, there are important lessons to be learned from the states' efforts. The conclusions and recommendations presented in this report must be viewed within this context. Like most case studies, this work provides information from a snapshot in time (2003–2004), in ever-changing political and policy contexts.

In each of the four states, the project focused on the following questions:

- What are the main goals and objectives of current K–16 governance-related reforms at the state level?

- What are the organizational structures in place to support K–16 reform?

- What K–16 policies have been developed and implemented? By whom? How? More specifically, has the state made changes in the areas of finance, curricula and assessments, data systems, and accountability?

- Does the state have a history and political culture that supports relationships and reforms among the educational systems?

- What are the incentives and disincentives for improved connections?

- Who is responsible for developing and implementing these kinds of reform efforts? Is legislative or gubernatorial action to promote collaboration likely?

- What are the main successes and failures of governance change to date?

- To what extent do state budgetary practices impede or encourage the establishment and viability of inter-level programs?

- How do the reforms, incentives, disincentives, successes, and barriers differ among the four states, and why?

- In what ways, and under what circumstances, do cooperation and conflict between the educational systems manifest themselves?

## STATE-BY-STATE GOVERNANCE

The fragmented manner in which most state policy is created on issues that span the K–16 continuum suggests a need for a better understanding of the state governance structures that promote improved planning and connections across the education sectors. The structure and organization of legislative committees in most states reinforce the divide between K–12 and postsecondary education. Among the states in this study, Georgia and New York have separate K–12 and higher education committees in the House and Senate; Oregon and Florida have committees that oversee both sectors in the House and Senate. Florida has committees charged with overseeing K–20 education, and it will be important to learn from their work over time. In addition, having separate legislative committees that coordinate education policymaking versus the appropriation of funds makes it very difficult to coordinate policies across the systems. Appropriations committees are of crucial importance in seeking to connect K–12 and higher education, but they usually have different subcommittees for these two sectors of education. More work needs to be done to understand the inner workings of legislative committees in relation to K–16 reform. In the meantime, however, legislative bodies can and should seek to resolve their own structural divisions between K–12 and postsecondary education.

This section provides state-specific information about the context of K–16 reforms in each of the four states. Additional information about education performance in each of the states is included in the appendix. Since every state has its own methods and traditions of overseeing public education, as well as its own strengths and challenges in educational performance, this information provides an important context that helps to clarify states' diverse approaches to education reform.[33]

## FLORIDA GOVERNANCE AND REFORM

Florida's education governance system has recently undergone one of the most drastic changes of any state governance system. In 1994, Republicans in the state gained control of the Senate. In 1996, they gained control of the House. In the same year, the state's K–12 Sunshine Standards were approved by the State Board of Education. In 2001, under Governor Jeb Bush, the state abolished the

Board of Regents. All lines of state education authority, from early childhood through postsecondary education, now fall under the Department of Education (DOE); the Commissioner of Education reports to the State Board of Education, which in turn reports to the governor. All public education staff—kindergarten through graduate school—falls within the purview of the DOE. The department was restructured to reflect the new K–20 focus, and staff wrote a new school code. The new duties of the State Board of Education officially began in 2003; the DOE is now considered the governor's agency. A Commissioner's Cabinet is comprised of three chancellors, each of whom oversees one of the major areas within the department: K–12 schools, community colleges, and colleges and universities. The chancellors are also members of the commissioner's K–20 policy council.

In reaction to the elimination of the Board of Regents, U.S. Senator Bob Graham (Florida) in 2002 sponsored an amendment to the state's constitution to re-create the Board of Regents as a new entity called the Board of Governors (BOG). This was not a part of the governor's K–20 reforms and was opposed by Governor Bush's administration. The amendment passed. The BOG is now in charge of the State University System, but it does not have a budget or a separate staff (its staff is from the DOE), it cannot allocate money, and it cannot hire chancellors or presidents. The Commissioner of Education is a member of the BOG.

The governor appoints all members of the Board of Education, in addition to the university boards, community college boards, the Council for Educational Policy Research and Improvement (CEPRI), and the BOG.

Florida has a long history of collaboration and policy development between K–12 and postsecondary

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### FLORIDA STATE CONTEXT

**Share of State Appropriations**

K–12 receives 25%.
Higher education receives 20%.

**Legislative Committee Structure\***

*Senate*

Education Committee includes K–12 and higher education.

Appropriations Committees handle requests from both K–12 and higher education.

Commerce, Economic Opportunities, and Consumer Services Committee addresses financial aid issues for higher education.

*House*

Education K–20 Committee is divided into the following subcommittees: Education Innovation, Higher Education, and Pre-K Through Grade 12.

Appropriations Committee handles both K–12 and higher education.

\* This list is not exhaustive.

education. While the K–20 governance reforms have been rapidly enacted and sweeping in nature, there is an established foundation on which to build. This foundation includes: a statewide articulation agreement; a common course-numbering system; common prerequisites; acceleration mechanisms (for example, Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate); a 36-hour rule for general education courses (all postsecondary institutions must require 36 hours of general education for both two- and four-year degrees); extensive data collection across the sectors; a common student-identifying number across the sectors; a common application for all public four-year universities; and Bright Futures (a lottery-funded scholarship program geared toward improving student preparation for college and promoting in-state college attendance).

In terms of Florida's current K–20 reforms, the most highly evolved of its inter-level initiatives appear to be its K–20 accountability plan, its performance-funding model, and its K–20 data warehouse. The DOE is investigating the level of alignment between the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (the FCAT) and the statewide postsecondary placement exam. In conjunction with the College Board and the U.S. Department of Education, the state is also piloting a program to increase the rigor of high school coursework.

For more information, see *The Governance Divide: The Case Study for Florida* at www.highereducation.org.

## GEORGIA GOVERNANCE AND REFORM

Georgia is often cited as being one of the nation's leaders in the area of P–16 reform. It has been working on innovative ways to develop, implement, and institutionalize P–16 reform for approximately a decade. Unlike most states engaged in this work, Georgia created both state and regional P–16 governance entities. At the state level, it has a statewide P–16 council called the Education Coordinating Council (ECC), which has had particularly strong gubernatorial support from the administrations of former governors Zell Miller and Roy Barnes. At the more local level, it has regional and local P–16 councils.

In addition to these efforts, there are scores of cross-sector projects in the state focusing on issues such as teacher preparation and professional development, standards development across the systems, and proficiency-based teaching and learning. The major drivers pushing this P–16 work are efforts to improve students' academic achievement and college preparation, and efforts to keep the best college students in-state.

State governance of education is divided between K–12 and postsecondary education. For K–12 schools, the Department of Education is governed by the State Board of Education, headed by the state superintendent of schools, an elected official. There are 13 board members—one from each congressional district—appointed by the governor. In terms of four-year universities, the Board of Regents governs the University System of Georgia (USG); it is a constitutional board comprised of members who are appointed to seven-year terms by the governor. The board elects a chancellor, who serves as its chief executive officer and the chief administrative officer of the USG. The Department of Technical and Adult Education (DTAE) oversees the state's system of technical colleges, the adult literacy program, and many economic and workforce development programs. The department is governed by the State Board for Technical and Adult Education.

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### GEORGIA STATE CONTEXT

**Share of State Appropriations**

K–12 receives 26%.
Higher education receives 27%.

**Legislative Committee Structure\***

*Senate*

Education Committee.
Higher Education Committee.
Appropriations Committee (has 9 subcommittees, including separate K–12 and higher education subcommittees).
Finance Committee.

*House*

Education Committee.
Higher Education Committee.
Appropriations Committee.
Ways and Means Committee.

\* This list is not exhaustive.

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P–16 efforts have the support of state legislation; staff dedicated to P–16 issues has an official office within the USG. Gubernatorial support has lent the P–16 issue momentum, a degree of institutionalization, and visibility. The beginning of the P–16 efforts in Georgia traces back to when the Regents' Office (under then-Chancellor Stephen Portch), Governor Miller, and other education entities began to have informal talks about connecting the systems.

In 2000, Governor Barnes signed legislation that created the now dormant Education Coordinating Council (ECC)—the statewide P–16 council—and served as chair. The development of the ECC was an instance in which: (1) a state legislated the meeting of representatives from each public education sector; (2) the entity was given a set of priorities; and (3) a governor officially

led the charge. In addition to the governor, the other members of the council are: the state superintendent of schools, the chair of the State Board of Education, the chancellor of the University System of Georgia, the chair of the Board of Regents, the commissioner of the Department of Technical and Adult Education, the chair of the State Board of Technical and Adult Education, the executive secretary of the Professional Standards Commission, the chair of the Professional Standards Commission, and the director of the Office of School Readiness.

Georgia has instituted some components that bridge the sectors, including the HOPE Scholarship (geared toward keeping students in-state for college and improving preparation), dual enrollment, and systemwide admission and placement testing in USG universities.

The regents' P–16 Office has numerous projects focused on P–16 reform. For example, Georgia has several state-level teacher preparation initiatives, such as: the regents' Principles for the Preparation of Teachers, Principals, and Counselors; the Reading Consortium; the Teacher Preparation Recruitment Initiative; and the Leadership Institute for School Improvement. Efforts that are more student-centered tend to be more project-based, with the exception of the P–16 Data Mart—an effort of the University System of Georgia to improve student achievement and educator preparation. This project involves developing a series of subject-area data marts designed to address the informational and reporting needs of P–16 and its partners.

Major student-centered projects include: the Post-Secondary Readiness Enrichment Program (an institutionally based, supplemental program focused on increasing college readiness for students in grades 7 through 12 in at-risk situations); the Partnership for Reform in Science and Mathematics (a project funded by the National Science Foundation to improve math and science achievement for K–12 students); and Performance Assessment for Colleges and Technical Schools (PACTS). Modeled after Oregon's Proficiency-Based Admission Standards System, PACTS seeks to change the focus of student preparation for college from seat-time and courses taken to a proficiency model that focuses on student learning and knowledge.

For more information, see *The Governance Divide: The Case Study for Georgia* at www.highereducation.org.

## NEW YORK GOVERNANCE AND REFORM

History and tradition are important factors in education governance and politics in New York. The state's education governance structures are inherently Pre-K–16, with a history dating to 1784, when the Board of Regents was created by several of the nation's Founding Fathers. This lends the regents a stature and a fixed historical legitimacy and tradition unlike any other state education governance structure in the nation. Over 100 years ago, the State Superintendent's Office merged with the Board of Regents, and the Department of Education became the administrative arm for both sectors; it is all one system. The overall structure of New York's education governance systems has changed little since its inception.

The main umbrella entity that oversees every segment of education in the state, and many cultural entities as well, is the University of the State of New York (USNY). USNY includes all pre-K, K–12, and postsecondary institutions and systems, as well as libraries, museums, public radio and television, and other organizations. Within USNY, the Department of Education serves as the administrative unit for the regents, and the commissioner is chosen by the regents to implement its policies. The commissioner is both the president of USNY and commissioner of education. Traditionally, the commissioner focuses more time and energy on K–12 than on postsecondary education.

The regents set education policy for New York and serve as the Board of Directors for USNY. The Legislature appoints the regents, and all members have one vote—meaning that the much larger and Democratic-controlled Assembly carries more weight than does the Republican-controlled Senate. In practice, the regents have typically been appointed by the Democratic majority of the Assembly. There are

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### NEW YORK STATE CONTEXT

**Share of State Appropriations**

K–12 receives 24%.
Higher education receives 20%.

**Legislative Committee Structure\***

*Senate*

Education Committee.
Higher Education Committee.
Finance Committee (separate budgets for education and higher education).

*House*

Education Committee.
Higher Education Committee.
Ways and Means Committee (separate budgets for education and higher education).

\* This list is not exhaustive.

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16 regents—one from each judicial district and four at-large—and they each have five-year terms. There is no requirement for an even-party split. The governor does not participate in the selection or confirmation of appointments.

The partisan nature of education is deeply embedded in the structure and long historical traditions of New York's education systems. For several administrations, the governor has been Republican, and relationships between the governor and the regents, the governor and the commissioner, and the governor and the Department of Education have been contentious. The governor appoints the board of the State University of New York (SUNY). Consequently, SUNY and the regents are often at odds. In New York, politics often seem to derail many opportunities for significant change.

The regents oversee the Regents Exams—assessments that traditionally have connected K–12 and postsecondary education by testing students on knowledge and skills needed to enter postsecondary institutions in New York. The current commissioner changed the content of the Regents Exams, and the state now requires all students to pass five Regents Exams in order to graduate from high school. In addition, the Regents Exams now offer two diplomas: a regular diploma signifying high school graduation, and an advanced diploma certifying that the student passed the exams at a high level.

In terms of K–16 programs in New York, the department has an Office of K–16 Initiatives and Access Programs that administers over $115 million in grants, contracts, and scholarships, and oversees the following divisions: Pre-Collegiate Preparation Programs, Collegiate and Professional Development Programs, and Scholarships and Grants Administration.

The State University of New York, or SUNY, is the largest comprehensive university system in the United States. In 2004, SUNY institutions served more than 400,000 students in 6,688 degree and certificate programs on its 64 campuses.[34] SUNY institutions conduct their own K–16 programs in the areas of teacher preparation, teacher professional development, and student outreach. In addition, many SUNY institutions receive state or federal funds for K–16 programs (for example, Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act funds). Because of the diversity of missions and institutions within SUNY, and the decentralized nature of the system, little K–16 reform is spearheaded by the SUNY System Office.

The City University of New York (CUNY), on the other hand, has established some well-known K–16 projects, policies, and programs. In the wake of a 1999 report that found that over 50% of CUNY's first-year students failed more than one remedial class, CUNY eliminated remediation on its four-year campuses. CUNY uses a score of 75 or above on the Regents Exams to place students into college-level work. CUNY's best-known K–16 project is College Now, a 20-year collaborative with the New York Public Schools geared toward improving high school students' academic achievement and ensuring that they graduate ready to do college-level academic work. There are three main components of College Now: dual enrollment, curriculum development, and workshops and related activities with postsecondary staff. Seventeen CUNY institutions and over 200 public schools participate.

College Now is funded and staffed entirely from the CUNY system. This helps buffer CUNY from pressure from both the New York Public Schools and the Legislature. College Now is housed within Academic Affairs, rather than Student Services, in order to give it more respect and clout.

For more information, see *The Governance Divide: The Case Study for New York* at www.highereducation.org.

## OREGON GOVERNANCE AND REFORM

Over the past 13 years, Oregon has embarked upon several ambitious K–16-related initiatives. The Oregon Department of Education (ODE) and its higher education counterpart, the Oregon University System (OUS), have each led and collaborated on several major reforms. While the reforms resided within specific educational agencies, much work was done to connect high-school-to-college elements.

From a governance perspective, the State Board of Education, whose members are appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Legislature, oversees the ODE. The board is comprised of seven members who are appointed by the governor for up to two four-year terms. The state super-intendent of schools is a nonpartisan elected official. Governance for the state's 17 community colleges is also under the auspices of the State Board of Education. The community colleges are currently and historically a decentralized group; there is no community college system in Oregon. The community colleges have never had much policymaking clout in Oregon, and are often not at the table, or even considered, when K–16-related policies are

made. When the original legislation for the CIM (Certificate of Initial Mastery, issued after grade 10) and the CAM (Certificate of Advanced Mastery, issued after grade 12) passed, and in the early years that followed, many viewed the Department of Education as a relatively regulatory- and compliance-focused organization. In reaction to this, and because of its concerns over the content of the CIM and CAM, the University System took an active role in developing and promoting K–16 reform.

The University System is governed by the Oregon State Board of Higher Education, whose members are appointed by the governor. Nine members have four-year terms and two have two-year terms. The current governor reconstituted the board and all the members are new. The chancellor of the University System serves as CEO and is appointed by the State Board of Higher Education. The president of each campus reports through the chancellor to the board.

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**OREGON STATE CONTEXT**

**Share of State Appropriations**

K–12 receives 11%.

Higher education receives 15%.

**Legislative Committee Structure***

*Senate*

Education Committee has jurisdiction over K–12 and higher education.

*House*

Education Committee has jurisdiction over K–12 and higher education.

*Joint*

Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education has jurisdiction over K–12 and higher education.

Special Legislative Committee on Public Education Appropriation is focused on K–12.

* This list is not exhaustive.

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There is a K–16 governance entity in Oregon, but it is not established by statute. The Joint Boards, which represent the boards of education and higher education, provide a forum for K–12, community college, and University System representatives to meet and talk about common issues and concerns. The main initiative the Joint Boards have overseen is the Articulation Commission. The Joint Boards monitored the implementation and revision of the Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer degree policy and common course numbering for lower-division courses.

Traditionally, education policymaking in Oregon is decentralized and entrepreneurial in nature. The Governor's Office does not usually play a direct role in education reform; however, the current governor appears to be more active than most.

In terms of specific reforms, the Oregon Educational Act for the 21st Century in 1991, and the later amendment to that act in 1995, marked the beginning of a sustained period of education reform in Oregon. The act authorized the development of benchmarks for all students; assessments in grades 3, 5, 8, 10 and 12; the CIM (issued after grade 10); and the CAM (issued after grade 12). The legislation did not call for the CIM or the CAM to be connected to college entrance or placement requirements.

In reaction to the 1991 K–12 legislation, the Oregon University System developed the Proficiency-Based Admission Standards System (PASS) to develop proficiency-based admission standards for college-level academic work, move the admission process for Oregon's public universities toward proficiencies, and ensure that entering college students meet a high standard of academic preparation prior to matriculation. For years, the University System led collaborative efforts between the PASS and the CIM; recently, the tables turned, and the Department of Education is now driving much of the remaining collaboration. Although the CIM and CAM are in statute, PASS is not, and much of this work has been done with little state support in terms of high-level leadership or funding.

It appears that some of the hopes for PASS have been tempered, given its rocky development and implementation, and the recent finance and governance crises affecting the state. On a positive note, however, OUS and Department of Education staffs aligned the content standards for grades 3, 5, 8, 10, and 12 with the PASS proficiencies. Currently, approximately one-third of PASS proficiencies are embedded in the CIM assessment. PASS has also altered the CAM; in order to earn a CAM, students need to have a collection of evidence (to demonstrate proficiency) that uses the same rules as the collection of evidence requirement for PASS. To fulfill the CAM requirement, students can have college-based credit through the PASS standards or career learning for the CAM. As a result, the CIM, the CAM, and PASS are all interlocked—even if PASS itself, as an admission system, does not have as big an impact as was intended originally.

Other K–16 work in the state has included the ongoing development of an integrated data system, dual enrollment, GEAR-UP, and teacher education reforms.

For more information, see *The Governance Divide: The Case Study for Oregon* at www.highereducation.org.

# IV. Primary Findings

Recent national efforts that have highlighted the need for K–16 reforms—such as the National Education Summit on High Schools and *Accountability for Better Results* by the National Commission on Accountability in Higher Education—are promising in raising awareness about K–16 issues and in providing political impetus for change. The primary findings of the Partnerships for Student Success research are in accord with the Summit's recommendation that all states should "create a permanent Education Roundtable or Commission to foster coordination between early childhood, K–12, and higher education."[35]

> **To be lasting and effective, K–16 deliberations must be anchored in policy and infrastructure reform.**

At the same time, our findings—together with a wealth of policy and research work[36]—suggest that convening a commission or holding cross-sector discussions is necessary but not sufficient for reform. To be lasting and effective, K–16 deliberations must be anchored in policy and infrastructure reform. These bodies should be charged with specific responsibilities, provided the requisite resources, have enough influence and authority to make real change, and be held accountable for performance. State agency collaboration—both in terms of the content of work and the organizational structures supporting that work—is essential, and having components of K–16 reform in statute appears to be useful but not sufficient for creating change.[37] State-level efforts can support, spur, and hold accountable reforms at the local and regional levels, so that improvements can be achieved across the state to create deep and lasting changes within schools and classrooms.

Our findings also suggest that this work needs to be comprehensive; K–16 reforms cannot be truly effective if they are instituted by addition—that is, by simply grafting new programs onto existing policies that divide the levels. Traditionally, states, systems, schools, and postsecondary institutions have responded to student needs by adding new policies and programs while maintaining existing policy structures. In order for all students to be affected

by the reforms, however, states must move beyond these limited approaches to adopt more lasting and ambitious changes to their underlying K–16 structures. As Virginia Governor Mark Warner summed up some of the difficulties by stating:

> How do you more systematically connect K–12 and higher education? [We're all familiar with] the silo approach where they don't seem to talk at all and there is no connectivity between K–12 and higher ed. We talk a lot about K–16 or K–20. How do we make sure that we don't just help our high school students who come from the high-performing, well-off jurisdictions? How do we make sure those kids from the more rural, the harder-to-staff schools, can make the transition to additional learning in one form or another?[38]

The findings in this section focus on actions, structures, and policy levers that have the potential to effect change in every classroom in a state. As these findings reveal, the responsibility for reform cannot be carried by one sector, but rather must be shared across systems to reach common ground, focusing on improving K–12 and postsecondary education for all students.

## STATE-LEVEL LEADERSHIP AND COLLABORATION

*Establishing and empowering organizational structures that can transcend the existing educational sectors is essential in promoting K–16 reforms. Leadership at the state level is of crucial importance in sustaining long-term change.*

Respondents in all four states emphasized that establishing organizational structures that can transcend educational sectors is crucial in building and sustaining K–16 reforms. As New York demonstrates, however, if there is no high-level K–16 advocate, there will be no real state-level K–16 agenda to pursue. Oregon was able to create much positive change behind the scenes, but respondents stated that they would have been more successful in institutionalizing the Proficiency-Based Admission Standards System (PASS) if a governor or legislative leader had encouraged public support and promoted efforts to create changes in statute. Oregon's PASS leaders had pinned their hopes to the CIM (the 10th grade initial mastery exam) becoming a more high-stakes test. The CIM never became a high stakes test. They believed that the

**Respondents in all four states emphasized that establishing organizational structures that can transcend educational sectors is crucial.**

CIM would become mandatory for high school graduation and, if PASS were attached to the CIM, then it too would become a standard component of students' curricula. This led to successful alignment efforts between the CIM and PASS that will sustain components of PASS in Oregon's high school curricula, but the miscalculation might not have occurred if PASS had developed as a central part of Oregon's educational policymaking.

Much of Georgia's success in the P–16 arena appears to be due to extensive groundwork laid by former governors, in addition to the dedicated follow-through and innovation of the regents' P–16 staff. The now-dormant statutory K–16 structure, the Education Coordinating Council, does not appear to be able to transcend the state's political and educational cultures, but there appears to be enough ongoing momentum to continue the P–16 agenda.

When this research was conducted, Florida was in the process of connecting its new education governance structure with existing policies. Florida created enormous fragmentation by establishing local postsecondary boards; this structure will complicate the development and implementation of a state-level K–20 agenda. Respondents in the state indicated that there are now too many committees and too much governance clutter. The inconsistencies between centralized and decentralized education governance will need to be resolved if the K–20 agenda is to be successful.

The fractured and often competitive nature of existing education governance structures can be a major impediment to K–16 reform. Some states, such as Georgia, have more than one postsecondary education system, while other states, such as Oregon, have only one. Almost every state has some form of state board of higher education, but the ways these bodies interact with institutions of higher education and K–12 systems depend upon the history and culture of each state. To be successful in establishing K–16 reform, governors and legislative committees must move beyond the traditional divide between K–12 and postsecondary education and address public education as a continuum of related issues and needs. At a minimum, states must have staff and funds that are dedicated to K–16 reform efforts.

### STATE CULTURE AND HISTORY

*An understanding of the state's culture and history is essential in creating lasting change. For this reason, a one-size-fits-all model will not work in developing K–16 reforms. Nonetheless, the culture and history of a state do not create insurmountable barriers to the establishment of such reforms.*

Even though New York's education system was designed hundreds of years ago to include K–16 education institutions, it has fewer innovative K–16 reforms than do the other three states in the study. This may be partly due to its long history of divisive politics, the lack of strong gubernatorial investment or power with regard to education, and related issues. In embarking upon K–16 reform, states need a clear understanding of their own political and educational cultures. In many cases, it may make sense to begin with real policy change (for example, in finance, assessments and curricula, accountability, or data collection) and let the organizational and structural components evolve from those changes. Sustained reform, however, will not occur if the educational systems remain disconnected.

As Michael Kirst and Andrea Venezia suggest, states might find it useful to initiate K–16 reform efforts by asking themselves the following kinds of questions:

- Are your state's K–12 academic content standards similar to the academic content in first-year courses at public colleges and universities?

- Does your state's K–12 assessment ask students to know and be able to do the same things that are required by your state's public colleges and universities for admission and placement into college-level work?

- Does your state have a statewide postsecondary education placement exam? If not, how do individual institutions' tests relate to each other or to the content of the state's exit-level high school assessment? How can your state consistently assess its needs regarding postsecondary remediation? How can students understand what is expected of them when they start college-level work? How can K–12 educators gauge the appropriate level of their college preparation courses?

- Do your schools have a sufficient number of counselors whose main role is to advise students about college options?

- Do all students have early and repeated access to college preparation information?

- How affordable are your public colleges and universities?

- Do your colleges and universities have outreach programs that connect with local schools and districts? Are these outreach programs coordinated with national, state, and nonprofit outreach programs? Are the programs evaluated using comparison groups of students who did not participate in the programs?

- Are there course articulation agreements between your state's public universities, community colleges, and high schools?

- Can your state agencies (K–12 and postsecondary) link their databases in order to assess needs throughout the K–16 continuum? Can policy-makers and researchers tell whether there are inequalities in terms of who enters and graduates from college? Can they address college preparation issues by tracking student success in higher education by district or school? Can your state measure persistence rates among different types of students and determine which students drop out of college and when they do so?

- Does your statewide accountability system hold high schools accountable for offering college preparatory courses, including Advanced Placement courses? Does it hold postsecondary education institutions accountable for graduating their students?

- Is there a stable or permanent entity or mechanism that allows K–12 and postsecondary education stakeholders to work together and overcome fragmentation concerning policy alignment, faculty interaction, and information systems across the sectors?[39]

**One of the most important and difficult issues that states must tackle is creating the motivation for systems, institutions, and people to change.**

Engaging representatives from relevant educational sectors, business groups, and governmental agencies can be useful in discussing these kinds of issues. These deliberations can assist in identifying the breakdowns between the current systems, building upon the unique cultural and historical strengths in the state, and establishing common ground for moving forward with significant reform.

### INCENTIVES FOR K–16 REFORM

*As states seek to engage K–12 and higher education systems in more ambitious levels of K–16 reform, they should consider and put in place broad-based and deeply embedded incentives to achieve this aim. The policy levers described later in this section—particularly in the areas of finance and accountability—provide examples of such incentive structures.*

One of the most important and difficult issues that states must tackle is creating the motivation for systems, institutions, and people to change. Haycock describes two primary ways to create incentives for K–16 collaboration:

The first, and probably the most popular, is to put dollars on the table for joint K–16 work. Those dollars can be made conditional on the creation of a K–16 governance structure and/or on the willingness to undertake particular action…The alternative is to approach this issue through the lens of accountability. The core idea is simple: policymakers should design their accountability systems for both K–12 and higher education to include outcomes that each system cannot possibly deliver alone…This approach has the advantage of getting the close attention of institutional leaders and forcing collaborative activity closer to the top of institutional priorities.[40]

Haycock suggests that while money can help motivate institutions to engage in reform more promptly, it is important to avoid the type of programmatic allocations that keep K–16 reform on the margins of institutional missions. There is little incentive, for example, for an institution to work with K–12 to reduce the number of students who require remediation because those students bring with them valuable funds. A good strategy, she suggests, is combining financial and accountability incentives: to "use the 'push' of a reconstructed accountability system together with the 'pull' of recaptured funding for institutional or departmental priorities."[41]

In contrast, most of the K–16 reforms we analyzed in the four states relied in large part on people's desire to "do the right thing" for students. Many interviewees said that it would be beneficial for postsecondary institutions if students were better prepared academically when they enrolled in college. In each of the states studied, however, many postsecondary institutions had larger potential student enrollment levels than existing capacity to meet that demand.

None of the states had created major positive incentive structures—that is, carrots instead of sticks—for collaborative work between K–12 and higher education. Although the states had taken steps to establish small incentive structures, these structures were targeted to specific areas and were not deeply embedded in the systems. For example, Florida helps to pay for buildings on community college campuses that are used collaboratively by the college and a four-year institution. Although the state is working to create a larger system of performance-based incentives, this work is still in its infancy. In Georgia,

both K–12 and postsecondary education institutions receive funding for dual enrollment courses. This is rare, since most states view this as a form of double-dipping and try to ensure that both systems do not receive full funds for enrolling these students. In Oregon, the incentives for K–16 collaboration derive primarily from the state's reforms of its 10th and 12th grade exams (the CIM and CAM) to promote better student preparation for postsecondary education.

Part of the challenge in creating broader, more deeply embedded incentive structures can be traced to public finance and accountability mechanisms that traditionally are focused on either K–12 schools or postsecondary education, and that rarely span both systems. In addition, state budget shortfalls during the time of this research study have made it more difficult for states to develop and implement finance-based incentives. Nonetheless, the long-term success of K–16 reform depends to a large extent on states' abilities to create and sustain incentives for K–12 and postsecondary education systems to collaborate more effectively to meet the needs of students.

**There are four key policy levers for promoting K–16 reform: curricula and assessments, finance, data systems, and accountability.**

## POLICY LEVERS STATES CAN USE TO CREATE CHANGE

Our research findings suggest that there are four key policy levers that are particularly promising for states that are interested in promoting K–16 reform: curricula and assessments, finance, data systems, and accountability. Each of these policy levers can have significant impacts on students. For example, K–16 finance structures can provide an incentive mechanism to reduce territorialism and systems' self-preservation efforts, and thereby focus efforts on students. Currently, high school assessments and curricula in most states are not connected with postsecondary assessments and curricula, which is confusing for students and impedes their abilities to prepare for college. While every state either has or is working to develop an accountability system for K–12 schools (and some have accountability indicators or systems for postsecondary education), very few states have established K–16 accountability systems. Our research suggests that states need an accountability structure for K–16 reform so that educational institutions can focus more effectively on student progress and completion. Finally, data systems seem far removed from students, but in fact they can provide states with the information they must have in order to address student needs and learn where, and which, students are falling through the cracks. In addition, data systems can help states understand whether their reforms are having the intended effects on students.

**Alignment of Curricula and Assessments**

*States need to make sure that what students are asked to know and do in high school is connected to postsecondary expectations—both in coursework and assessments. Currently, students in most states graduate from high school under one set of standards and face a disconnected and different set of expectations in college. Many students enter college unable to perform college-level work.*

While most states have some kind of high school graduation standards, they are usually not aligned with postsecondary entrance and placement standards. As David Conley indicates, "The challenge is to connect high school instruction and state testing more directly with measures of college success."[42] For example, most states' high school assessment programs end with 10th grade exams that are not linked to what students need to know and be able to do to place into college-level courses. Students are left believing that their 10th grade assessments and curricular standards are what they need in order to succeed in college.

Defining what students need to know and be able to do in college is a difficult task—especially if a state has institutions with a wide variety of missions (e.g. community colleges, technical institutions, liberal arts institutions, and large universities). The National Education Summit on High Schools addressed this issue by recommending that states: (1) define a rigorous college preparatory curriculum for high school graduation, (2) give college readiness assessments in high school, (3) create common course agreements so that college-level work in high school counts toward a postsecondary credential, (4) provide financial incentives for economically disadvantaged students to take Advanced Placement exams and college preparatory courses, (5) expand college-level learning opportunities in high school to students who are traditionally under-represented in postsecondary education, (6) design literacy and math recovery programs, and (7) develop and fund supports to help students pass their high school exit exam(s).[43]

Georgia, Oregon, and New York have all taken curricular- or assessment-based approaches to K–16 reform, and much of Florida's previous K–16 efforts were in this area. Georgia is working to develop math and science standards across the P–16 continuum, as well as end-of-course tests for high school.

Oregon has spent much of its K–16 resources on ensuring that the proficiencies in its new admission standards system (PASS) are embedded in its 10th and 12th grade assessments (the CIM and CAM). The state conducted perhaps the most in-depth work of the four states to determine the knowledge and skills its universities look for in entering students. However, PASS does not offer students tangible incentives (e.g., financial aid or placement into college-level work). New York's Regents Exams have historically been the connective tissue between K–12 and postsecondary education. Many interviewees in New York were concerned, however, that the exams have changed dramatically under the current commissioner and that the regular diploma does not indicate that a student is college-ready (the advanced diploma does indicate college-readiness).

In Florida, the K–12 exam (the FCAT) does not assess the knowledge and skills required to enter and succeed in the state's postsecondary institutions. Students must pass the FCAT to graduate from high school, but it is a 10th grade exam. Florida's Bright Futures program, on the other hand, does provide an incentive for students to take college preparatory courses. One concern voiced in the state, however, is that Bright Futures reaffirms incentives to take college preparatory classes among those students who are already planning to go to college, rather than creating incentives for students who traditionally do not attend college. There are not many incentives to take college preparatory classes for those students who plan to go to community colleges or other similar broad-access institutions.

Although there have been discussions in Oregon and New York about using high school test data for college placement, no state policies have been developed in that area.

**Finance**

*State education finance systems must become K–16; this includes the legislative committees and staff functions that oversee finance and budgetary decisions. If education finance can span education systems, it has the potential to drive change in many other policy arenas as well.*

State finance structures can be used to pull systems of education together. While some of the states we studied had financial incentives for K–16 reform, none of them truly had a K–16 system of funding that reduced territorialism and friction

between the sectors. A Georgia state agency representative summed up most people's thoughts across the four states by stating:

> Education is very bifurcated in this state and so there are definite little fiefdoms. The Board of Regents has their own little world and K–12 has its own little world, and pre-K has its own little world, and for funding reasons there is not a lot of incentive for those individual agencies to work together. [Former Governor] Barnes didn't really add a lot of incentives and the current governor so far has not done that, either.

As David Longanecker writes, "Using finance as intentional policy to achieve specific public goals is a relatively new concept in American higher education." He lists four models of performance funding for postsecondary education currently in use; none of them focus on connecting K–12 and postsecondary funding streams. Those models are: "skimming" for marginal funding; rewarding excellent programs; doing all or nothing (providing funds on the basis of achieving purposeful goals); and "pretending" to connect budget and performance. He contends that postsecondary institutions and systems need financial incentives for student completion and retention, additional resources for "difficult-to-serve students," and rewards when students finish their individual courses and their full courses of study.[44]

Georgia made a very promising finance decision by allowing both K–12 and postsecondary institutions to receive funding for dual enrollment. We saw few other examples of true K–16 finance-related decisions in the areas of joint budgeting, incentives for student retention or persistence, student course completion, and so forth. In addition, we did not see financial incentives geared toward non-college-bound students to encourage them to plan and prepare for college.

Within New York's and Florida's combined governance structures lie traditional funding streams that serve to create divisions between systems. In Florida, a major problem with the previous education system was the lack of consultation or coordination between sectors with regard to the budget. Part of the rationale behind the K–20 system was that the sectors would plan together and that the state would have a unified budget for the K–20 system, as opposed

**State finance structures can be used to pull systems of education together.**

to three distinct budgets that promote competition rather than collaboration among the sectors. Currently, there is a new board that develops a K–20 budget; the hope was that the board would help reduce territorialism regarding allocation of funds across the sectors. As a state representative stated, however:

> That competition still exists—particularly now that we've got the budget deficits that we have. We've got universities out there now looking out for universities and trying to get their funding restored and…the public schools are crying because they don't have adequate resources to do their job. So that competition still exists. It has not gone away completely, practically. Theoretically, yes…but for all practical reasons, the same situation exists as before with each system kind of looking out for itself.

Others concurred with this view. Although the governance structure has changed, the budget remains divided in traditional revenue streams.

In New York, the Education Department and the regents have experienced cuts in state funding and personnel, partly because of disagreements with the governor and Legislature. The cuts are not necessarily transparent. As a Senate staff member said, "You won't see a decrease, but there are chokeholds put in throughout the system. An appropriation can be made and no money flows unless the executive branch okays the budget." Thus, the regents' purview as an overarching K–16 entity does not necessarily diminish competition or political wrangling for funds.

It is telling that we did not find many changes in the area of finance and budgeting. This is a very entrenched area, structurally, given the different committees that oversee state appropriations. New initiatives in a time of budget crises and constraints will be difficult, and the necessary changes likely will not come from K–12 or postsecondary education alone. They will need to be driven by strong state-level leadership, perhaps with support from the business community.

**Data Systems**

*States must create high-quality data systems that span the K–16 continuum. K–16 data systems should identify good practices, diagnose problems, provide information about all education levels, provide students with diagnostic information to help them prepare better, assess and improve achievement, and track individual students over time across*

*levels. Without such systems, it is impossible to assess needs effectively, understand where the problems are, gain traction for changes needed, and evaluate reforms.*

In many states, the data systems in existence today for education were created to provide reports and audit expenditures, not to meet accountability and assessment demands—particularly those associated with K–16 reforms, such as documenting student achievement across the education systems and identifying systemic barriers. Hans L'Orange explains that establishing statewide goals for education is crucial in creating effective data systems to measure student success:

> Determining the goals for the entire state, regardless of sector, should be addressed early in the process of developing a data system. Sectors often act independently, potentially at cross-purposes with one another. Identifying common goals and providing a means for the elementary, secondary, and post-secondary sectors to work together addresses some of the "turf" issues that inevitably arise.[45]

L'Orange states that effective K–16 data and accountability systems should: (1) identify good practices, (2) diagnose problems, (3) inform people about the condition of education at all levels, (4) help students master necessary material to prepare for college, (5) help assess and improve achievement, and (6) follow individual students across levels and over time. He proposes that a shared data system would require shared responsibility; it should either have explicitly mandated cost-sharing or a separate funding mechanism.[46]

The Action Agenda of the National Education Summit highlighted the need for states, "to dramatically improve their ability to collect, coordinate, and use secondary and postsecondary data."[47] The National Center for Educational Accountability found that nine states collect student-level data on high school course completion; six states collect data for results on SAT, ACT, and Advanced Placement exams; fewer than ten states link their K–12 student records with postsecondary enrollment; and eight states have available information about student remediation in postsecondary education.[48] The lack of information available suggests that data tracking is a problem nationwide.

The development of integrated data systems is a political as well as a technical process, fraught with potential landmines along the way. Georgia, Florida, and Oregon are in the stages of designing or implementing integrated data systems; New York has begun discussions in this area.

In Georgia, interviewees said that building an effective data system cannot succeed if someone addresses the need head-on. As one interviewee stated, "Just to stand out there and say, 'We need this P–16 database that's got to have all of this stuff [in it],' I mean, I wouldn't live long enough to see it through." Consequently, state education staff members are taking their time, letting people get used to the idea by showing useful results, and slowly building the database. Respondents indicated that it is important to ensure that the staff members developing the database have credibility with each of the sectors and use a nonthreatening model. Nonetheless, there are many difficulties to overcome along the way. For example, the various agencies involved have not agreed upon the definition of a high school dropout. A student could transfer districts, but be counted as a dropout if the first district could not find that student. Also, the agency databases do not always have the data elements needed to answer essential questions. When the regents' P–16 Office first started working on a P–16 database, staff members could not find data on students' high school course-taking patterns. In order to examine college readiness, they could only tell what kind of diploma a student had: college prep, tech prep, or special education. The Department of Education had separate testing and student databases, and the student database used social security numbers while the testing database used names, so the two could not be linked together. There are also some concerns that the course placement data for the University System and the Department of Technical and Adult Education (DTAE) are not particularly reliable or valid.

Florida is well-known for connecting its data systems for K–12 education, postsecondary education, workforce training, corrections, and other areas. The original reason why the databases were developed was to lay the foundation for education funding. For example, K–12 schools are allocated money based primarily on their full-time-equivalent enrollment, and those data are collected by the Department of Education.

The department has three K–12 databases: one that contains all K–12 students, a second that tracks students who earn a GED, and a third that tracks students based on their scores on the K–12 assessment (the FCAT). Community college data are more difficult to use at the aggregate level because the sector is relatively decentralized and has little control over the data collection activities of individual campuses. A data warehouse being developed by the Department of

Education connects all of these data and gives each student one identification number. The department safeguards the data by trying, for example, to avoid allowing schools, districts, or postsecondary institutions to calculate any tabulated statistics from data reported to the state.

The Department of Education plans to be able to assess relationships between K–12 programs and postsecondary education achievement, and between teacher education programs and student achievement throughout the K–20 continuum. Through this work, department staff members have been able to assess postsecondary education completion rates and have plans to focus on postsecondary retention. In order to learn more about their course-taking patterns and other related issues, they have also begun tracking students who took the FCAT.

Like Georgia, Oregon does not have significant funding allocated for an integrated data system. In 1997, the Legislature passed HB 3636, which directed the Department of Education to update the K–12 school budget and accounting system in order to produce comparable spending information for districts and schools. To fulfill the mandate of the legislation, the department is working closely with the University System to oversee the Database Initiative Project. As a first step, staff members are developing a conceptual framework with a K–16 focus to guide the development of the data system. Currently, K–12 and postsecondary education have their own data systems, and much of K–12 data are on paper—not in electronic files. There are concerns that performance-based assessment will not survive if the data cannot be moved quickly and efficiently; staff members are hoping that a more effective and comprehensive data system will promote the continued use of the 10th and 12th grade assessments (the CIM and CAM).

**Accountability**

*States need to connect their accountability systems for K–12 and postsecondary education. Currently, accountability systems are usually designed for either K–12 or postsecondary education without much attention to the interface between the two. Accountability systems need to reflect, better, the reality of students' educational paths.*

Across the country, accountability for high schools is generally geared toward graduation rates and proficiency on state assessments. There are very few accountability systems in place for postsecondary education, and even fewer

that connect K–12 and postsecondary education. Historically, states and localities have been viewed as the entities responsible for establishing goals for and overseeing the performance of K–12 schools. At the postsecondary level, however, students have been viewed as responsible for their own success or failure in completing their educational programs. Given inequities and systemic problems regarding persistence and completion rates in colleges and universities, it makes sense to establish and monitor performance based on measurable goals for higher education, and to require K–12 and postsecondary education to work together toward common objectives. As the Action Agenda for the National Education Summit on High Schools stated, "Governors, business leaders, and secondary and postsecondary educators and officials need to work together to set measurable goals for improving the performance of high schools and colleges and universities."[49]

Peter Ewell has indicated that the incentives inherent within current accountability systems are not effective from a K–16 perspective. One reasonable objective of a K–16 system, he suggests, would be to increase the percentage of traditionally under-represented students who persist throughout the education systems and complete some form of postsecondary education. Currently, however, postsecondary institutions can improve completion rates by becoming more selective in admissions (and thereby diminishing access) or by reducing their standards (and thereby reducing the worth of a credential). An effective accountability system spanning K–16 education, Ewell says, would counteract those responses.[50]

Florida's work to develop a K–20 accountability system made it unique among the four states studied. According to several respondents, the state's accountability system is the driving force behind the K–20 reforms. As a DOE administrator stated, one objective of the accountability system is to provide "seamless, student-centered articulation so you don't know whether you're being governed by public schools, community colleges, or universities." The official charge from the Legislature is to establish "a unified K–20 accountability system that holds each education delivery sector responsible for high student achievement; seamless articulation and access; a skilled workforce; and quality,

**It makes sense to establish and monitor higher education performance and to require K–12 and postsecondary education to work together.**

efficient services. The legislation also requires…a performance-based funding formula that applies accountability standards for the public education system at every level, kindergarten through graduate school."[51]

Ewell notes that there are three typical state policy mechanisms regarding accountability: direct regulation, performance reporting, and performance funding.[52] In its K–20 accountability system, Florida is drawing from both performance-based incentives and regulatory requirements. In establishing the accountability mandates (in House Bill 915) the Legislature has called for 10% of the education budget to be dedicated to performance-based funding.[53] The Department of Education has created four task forces that are working to develop measures for each sector: K–12 schools, community colleges, workforce training institutions, and universities. The task forces are seeking to measure performance based on four goals across the sectors: high student achievement, articulation and access, employment and earnings, and quality and efficiency. An issue under consideration is the assessment used for postsecondary education, both for students transferring from a community college to a four-year institution, and for students who first enroll in a four-year institution.

# V. Conclusion

Education governance structures establish the overall framework through which state education systems—including elected officials, policy leaders, and system leaders—interact with each other, and in turn can shape and influence the structures of governance. In addition, governance structures are affected by state history and the political and educational cultures of the state. Our research suggests that for states seeking to initiate and sustain K–16 reforms, governance does have a strong impact on the range of available options. On the other hand, our study did not reveal a strong relationship between a particular governance structure, the types of reforms in place, and the ability of states to institutionalize the reforms. That is to say, governance structures by themselves cannot carry the day in embarking upon and supporting the processes of change. For more state policy examples and recommendations, see the forthcoming report, *Claiming Common Ground*.

**Across the four states, the more innovative K–16 reforms were dependent on leaders with a vision.**

The complexity of state education governance, state context and history, and the politics of education reform defy any simplistic or readymade K–16 solutions for states. For example, our research found that strong leadership directed toward collaborative work—from elected officials, from those in state agencies, and from those within and across state systems of higher education—appears to make a significant difference in terms of creating the support and energy necessary to move the agenda forward and create sustainable change.

We found that leadership can help create opportunities for reform, set parameters, and embed policies in statute. Across the four states, the more innovative K–16 reforms were dependent on leaders with a vision. Oregon, for example, did not have a political leader who took charge, but it did have people working within its state agencies who had a vision for change. That, combined with the state's decentralized nature and entrepreneurial ways, led to much groundbreaking work. Georgia, on the other hand, had two strong governors backing P–16 reform and the institutionalization of a governance structure at the state level. The state also benefited from a chancellor and director of P–16 initiatives at the state level who promoted these efforts. The convergence of

personalities at the right time and place led to innovative work at both the state and regional levels.

As well as revealing the importance of leadership, our research suggests that creating incentives for systems to work together—whether through finance structures, accountability mechanisms, or other means—appears to be essential. The research identified four key policy levers that are particularly promising for states seeking to engage in K–16 reforms: assessment and curricula, finance, data systems, and accountability. At the state level, the current structure of legislative committees, in which oversight and finance is typically divided between K–12 and postsecondary education subcommittees, appears to calcify the existing disjunction between K–12 and postsecondary education, and to make a shift toward K–16 systems of funding and accountability all the more difficult.

Taken as a whole, our research suggests common tools that states can use to embark upon K–16 reform. At the same time, it reveals that each state must seek its own path, shaped by its leaders, its culture, its history, and its prospects for change. For example, a state with a K–16 structure established by statute or by extensive state history may appear to have a greater ability to develop and implement necessary reforms than a state with ad hoc, grant-funded, K–16 projects. Yet New York, perhaps because of the politics of its education system and its lack of leadership on K–16 issues, has less active and less extensive K–16 policies and programs than the other three states studied. Compared with New York, states with more entrepreneurial, project-based environments such as Georgia and Oregon have been able to achieve K–16 reforms without focusing on governance per se. In Georgia, for example, Governors Miller and Barnes successfully used the bully pulpit and other public means to create state and regional P–16 councils that created active constituents and specific objectives for cross-sector reforms. In Oregon, incentives—such as providing funding for both K–12 and postsecondary education for dual enrollment—have helped to overcome territorialism. Likewise, behind-the-scenes efforts within the state to achieve curricular and assessment alignment reveal that improvements can be made without toP–down leadership and statute-driven change.

In fact, working under the radar can be effective when the political support is not sufficient to enact widespread changes in governance. In Oregon, for example, state agency staff members working in K–12 and postsecondary

education, outside the limelight of state politics, were able to embed proficiencies for college admission (PASS) into the state's 10th grade assessment (CIM).

This behind-the-scenes approach is vulnerable, however, because few funds are typically allocated for such work, and since the work is not institutionalized in statute, the efforts can dissipate over time. Another downside is that the reforms are politically vulnerable—particularly if a new leader comes into power. As we found in Georgia, the electoral defeat of Governor Barnes reduced the impetus for P–16 reform in the state.

These findings suggest that having active leadership of K–16 reform supported by statutory language and institutional change may be most effective—when the political will for such across-the-board efforts is present. The statutory language can create formal support for the endeavor, as well as spur action. Interviewees in Oregon repeatedly stated that their work would be farther along if proficiencies for college admission (PASS) had been mandated by the state or connected to a mandated reform. Such a mandate, they said, would bring the fiscal and institutional support necessary for more comprehensive design and implementation.

Although implementing an effective state-level K–16 structure might not be practicable politically, interviewees in Florida, Georgia, and Oregon emphasized that it is nonetheless crucial to engage all relevant educational sectors in the reform effort. For at least three of the states, representatives from all sectors found ways to meet and deliberate together. The research also found that when efforts are driven wholly by governmental entities or by postsecondary education systems, the perception is that the changes are shaped too much from above. While it is crucial to get support from elected officials and state agencies, it is also important to reach out to teachers and others from the beginning in order to promote ground-level involvement and support.

Much can be learned from the K–16 reforms in Florida, Georgia, New York, and Oregon, but these are still works in progress. The efforts of these states reveal effective practices and policies in a wide range of areas, but they also illuminate how far the states need to go in combining policies, structures, and programs across K–12 and postsecondary education to improve student performance across a single, coherent system. It is time for states, according to their own histories and traditions, to take the next step in finding common ground.

# Appendix
# Education Performance in the Four States

This appendix provides information about postsecondary education performance for each of the four states studied. As with state culture and history, educational performance becomes an important context that helps to clarify states' diverse approaches to and needs for educational reform.[54]

## FLORIDA

### Preparation for College

High school completion: 84% (77% earn a diploma; 7% earn a GED)

9th to 12th graders taking at least one upper-level math course: 38%

9th to 12th graders taking at least one upper-level science course: 26%

8th graders taking algebra: 19%

Number of SAT/ACT scores in top 20% nationally per 1,000 high school graduates: 164

Number of scores that are 3 or more on AP subject test per 1,000 high school juniors and seniors: 179

### Participation in College

Chance for college by age 19: 32%

18- to 24-year-olds enrolled in postsecondary education: 31%

### Postsecondary Affordability

Percent of income needed to pay for college expenses minus financial aid at:

Community colleges: 25%

Public four-year postsecondary institutions: 25%

### Postsecondary Completion

First-year community college students returning for their second year: 70%

Freshmen at four-year postsecondary institutions returning for their second year: 77%

First-time, full-time students completing a BA degree within six years of college entrance: 52%

Certificates, degrees, and diplomas awarded at all institutions per 100 students: 20

**Benefits**

Population ages 25 to 65 with a BA degree or higher: 27%

## GEORGIA

**Preparation for College**

High school completion: 85% (79% earn a diploma; 6% earn a GED)

9th to 12th graders taking at least one upper-level math course: n/a

9th to 12th graders taking at least one upper-level science course: n/a

8th graders taking algebra: n/a

Number of SAT/ACT scores in top 20% nationally per 1,000 high school graduates: 144

Number of scores that are 3 or more on AP subject test per 1,000 high school juniors and seniors: 132

**Participation in College**

Chance for college by age 19: 32%

18- to 24-year-olds enrolled in postsecondary education: 26%

## POSTSECONDARY AFFORDABILITY

Percent of income needed to pay for college expenses minus financial aid at:
Community colleges: 21%
Public four-year postsecondary institutions: 24%

**Postsecondary Completion**

First-year community college students returning for their second year: 54%

Freshmen at four-year postsecondary institutions returning for their second year: 79%

First-time, full-time students completing a BA degree within six years of college entrance: 42%

Certificates, degrees, and diplomas awarded at all institutions per 100 students: 20

**Benefits**

Population ages 25 to 65 with a BA degree or higher: 25%

## NEW YORK

**Preparation for College**

High school completion: 87% (81% earn a diploma; 6% earn a GED)

9th to 12th graders taking at least one upper-level math course: 55%

9th to 12th graders taking at least one upper-level science course: 34%

8th graders taking algebra: n/a

Number of SAT/ACT scores in top 20% nationally per 1,000 high school graduates: 207

Number of scores that are 3 or more on AP subject test per 1,000 high school juniors and seniors: 219

**Participation in College**

Chance for college by age 19: 34%

18- to 24-year-olds enrolled in postsecondary education: 38%

**Postsecondary Affordability**

Percent of income needed to pay for college expenses minus financial aid at:
Community colleges: 30%
Public four-year postsecondary institutions: 32%

**Postsecondary Completion**

First-year community college students returning for their second year: 61%

Freshmen at four-year postsecondary institutions returning for their second year: 81%

First-time, full-time students completing a BA degree within six years of college entrance: 54%

Certificates, degrees, and diplomas awarded at all institutions per 100 students: 19

**Benefits**

Population ages 25 to 65 with a BA degree or higher: 32%

## OREGON

### Preparation for College

High school completion: 86% (76% earn a diploma; 10% earn a GED)

9th to 12th graders taking at least one upper-level math course (2002): 37%

9th to 12th graders taking at least one upper-level science course (2002): 19%

8th graders taking algebra (2002): 23%

Number of SAT/ACT scores in top 20% nationally per 1,000 high school graduates: 160

Number of scores that are 3 or more on AP subject test per 1,000 high school juniors and seniors: 69

### Participation in College

Chance for college by age 19: 34%

18- to 24-year-olds enrolled in postsecondary education: 35%

### Postsecondary Affordability

Percent of income needed to pay for college expenses minus financial aid at:
   Community colleges: 29%
   Public four-year postsecondary institutions: 34%

### Postsecondary Completion

First-year community college students returning for their second year: 43%

Freshmen at four-year postsecondary institutions returning for their second year: 78%

First-time, full-time students completing a BA degree within six years of college entrance: 52%

Certificates, degrees, and diplomas awarded at all institutions per 100 students: 14

### Benefits

Population ages 25 to 65 with a BA degree or higher: 30%

# Endnotes

1. The case study reports for the four states—Florida, Georgia, New York, and Oregon—are available on the National Center's Web site at www.highereducation.org.

2. Education Trust, "Ticket to Nowhere: The Gap Between Leaving High School and Entering College and High Performance Jobs," in *Thinking K–16 3:2* (Washington, DC: Fall 1999).

3. National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, *Measuring Up 2004: The National Report Card on Higher Education* (San Jose, CA: 2004).

4. U.S. Bureau of the Census, "CPS Annual Demographic Survey," Supplement, March 2001. Available online at http://ferret.bls.census.gov/macro/032001/perinc/new03_001.htm.

5. U.S. Department of Education. *The Condition of Education* (Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, 2001).

6. For completion rates see C. Adelman, *Lessons of a Generation* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1994). For other statistics on completion and remediation, see U.S. Department of Education, *The Condition of Education* (Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, 2001); U.S. Department of Education, *Projections of Education Statistics to 2011* (Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, 2001); U.S. Department of Education, *Digest of Education Statistics: 2000* (Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, 2001); and American Council on Education, Access and Persistence (Washington, DC: American Council on Education, 2002).

7. Hans P. L'Orange, "Data and Accountability Systems: From Kindergarten Through College," in Richard Kazis et al. (eds.), *Double the Numbers: Increasing Postsecondary Credentials for Underrepresented Youth*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press, 2004), p. 166.

8. For example, Georgia passed legislation mandating that a statewide P–16 council meet on a regular basis. This worked under former Governor Barnes, but council has not met under Governor Perdue.

9. Warner and Killinger, welcoming letter, conference materials from the National Education Summit on High Schools (Washington, DC: 2005).

10. Michael Kirst, "Separation of K–12 and Postsecondary Education: Impact, Policy Implications, and Research Needs," in Susan Fuhrman and David Cohen (eds.), *State of Education Policy Research* (forthcoming).

11. Kirst and Venezia (eds.), *From High School to College: Improving Opportunities for Success in Postsecondary Education* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2004).

12. Kati Haycock, "Why Is K–16 Collaboration Essential to Educational Equity?" in *Gathering Momentum: Building the Learning Connection Between Schools and Colleges*, The Hechinger Institute on Education and the Media, The Institute for Educational Leadership, and the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, April 2002.

13. Each state uses a different term for what this paper refers to as K–16 reform. Florida uses K–20; Georgia, P–16; New York, PK–16; and Oregon, K–16. When we refer to each state's particular reforms, we use the terminology used by that state; otherwise, we use K–16. This final report is based on four state case reports that can be found at www.highereducation.org.

14. National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, *Measuring Up 2004*.

15. Education Trust, "Ticket to Nowhere."

16. National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, *Measuring Up 2004*.

17. U.S. Bureau of the Census, "CPS Annual Demographic Survey," Supplement, March 2001. Available online at http://ferret.bls.census.gov/macro/032001/perinc/new03_001.htm.

18. W. Norton Grubb, *Learning and Earning in the Middle: The Economic Benefits of Sub-baccalaureate Education*. New York: Community College Research Center, Columbia University, 1999. (ED 431 459)

19. U.S. Department of Education, *The Condition of Education* (2001).

20. Ibid.

21. For completion rates see Adelman, *Lessons of a Generation*. For other statistics on completion and remediation, see: U.S. Department of Education, *The Condition of Education*; U.S. Department of Education, *Projections of Education Statistics to 2011*; U.S. Department of Education, *Digest of Education Statistics: 2000*; and American Council on Education, *Access and Persistence*.

22. C. Adelman, *Answers in the Tool Box: Academic Intensity, Attendance Patterns and Bachelor's Degree Attainment* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 1999). See also L. Horn and L. Kojaku, *High School Academic Curriculum and the Persistence Path through College: Persistence and Transfer Behavior of Undergraduates 3 Years after Entering 4-Year Institutions* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, 2001).

23. U.S. Department of Education, *The Condition of Education* (Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, 1997).

24. Education Trust, *Youth at the Crossroads* (Washington, DC: 2001).

25. Education Trust, "Improving Achievement and Closing the Gap, K–16," presentation to the Institute on Education Reform, (Washington, DC: 1998).

26. Kirst, "Separation of K–12 and Postsecondary Education."

27. Richard C. Richardson, et al., *Designing State Higher Education Systems for a New Century* (Phoenix, AZ: American Council on Education and Oryx Press, 1999).

28. Kirst and Venezia (eds.), *From High School to College*.

29. Each state was visited by a team of researchers for approximately one week. Interviews were conducted with state-level education leaders, policymakers, researchers, and others in state education agencies. In New York, interviews were also conducted in New York City. In Georgia, phone interviews were conducted with regional P–16 representatives. The field research was conducted between September 2003 and May 2004. Follow-up phone interviews were conducted when additional information was necessary. A list of interview questions can be found at www.highereducation.org. Interview transcripts were analyzed for common themes and were utilized only when the themes were consistent across interviews.

30. See www.highereducation.org for more information.

31. See http://bridgeproject.stanford.edu for more information.

32. See www.iel.org for more information.

33. Data on share of state appropriations are from the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, *Measuring Up 2004*. Descriptions of the states' educational and governance contexts are from state case reports available at www.highereducation.org.

34. See www.suny.edu.

35. Achieve, Inc., and National Governors Association (NGA), *Ready? Set? Go! Redesigning the American High School* (Washington, DC: 2005).

36. Maeroff, Usdan, and Callan, *The Learning Connection: New Partnerships Between Schools and Colleges*; Hechinger Institute, Institute for Educational Leadership, and the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, "Gathering Momentum"; Kirst and Venezia (eds.), *From High School to College*; and http://bridgeproject.stanford.edu.

37. For example, Georgia passed legislation mandating that a statewide P–16 council meet on a regular basis. This worked under former Governor Barnes, but council has not met under Governor Perdue.

38. Governor Mark R. Warner, Remarks at the Education Commission of the States' National Forum, Governors' Panel, (Orlando, FL: July 14, 2004).

39. Kirst and Venezia (eds.), *From High School to College*.

40. Haycock, "Why is K–16 Collaboration Essential to Educational Equity?"

41. Ibid, p. 4.

42. David T. Conley, "Connecting Measures for Success in High School and College," in Richard Kazis et al. (eds.), *Double the Numbers: Increasing Postsecondary Credentials for Underrepresented Youth*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press, 2004), p. 139.

43. Achieve and NGA, *Ready? Set? Go!*

44. David A. Longanecker, "Financing Tied to Postsecondary Outcomes: Examples from States," in Richard Kazis et al. (eds.), *Double the Numbers: Increasing Postsecondary Credentials for Underrepresented Youth* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press, 2004), p. 114.

45. Hans P. L'Orange, "Data and Accountability Systems: From Kindergarten Through College," in Richard Kazis et al. (eds.), *Double the Numbers: Increasing Postsecondary Credentials for Underrepresented Youth*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press, 2004), p. 166.

46. Ibid.

47. Achieve and National Governors Association, *An Action Agenda for Improving America's High Schools*, (Washington, DC: 2005), p. 16.

48. National Center for Educational Accountability, "Minimum Requirements for a Student Achievement Information System," survey, (Austin, TX: NCEA, 2003). Cited in Achieve and NGA, *An Action Agenda for Improving America's High Schools*, p. 16.

49. Achieve, Inc., and National Governors Association, *An Action Agenda for Improving America's High Schools* (Washington, DC: 2005), p. 16.

50. Peter Ewell, "An Accountability System for 'Doubling the Numbers,' " in Richard Kazis et al. (eds.), *Double the Numbers: Increasing Postsecondary Credentials for Underrepresented Youth* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press, 2004).

51. From www.k20accountability.org.

52. Ewell, "An Accountability System for 'Doubling the Numbers.' "

53. From www.k20accountability.org.

54. Data are from the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, *Measuring Up 2004*.

## About the Authors

**Patrick M. Callan** is president of the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education. He has previously served as executive director of the California Higher Education Policy Center, the California Postsecondary Education Commission, the Washington State Council for Postsecondary Education, and the Montana Commission on Postsecondary Education, and as vice president of the Education Commission of the States (ECS).

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The Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization based in Washington, DC. For more than 40 years, IEL's mission has been to build the capacity of individuals and organizations in education and related fields to work together across policies, programs, and sectors. The Institute provides services in the following three program areas: Developing and Supporting Leaders, Strengthening School-Family-Community Connections, and Connecting and Improving Policies and Systems that Serve Children and Youth. IEL brings together diverse constituencies, such as federal, state, and local government agencies and nonprofit organizations, and focuses on empowering leaders with knowledge and applicable ideas. The Institute facilitates dialogue across boundaries of all sorts, building alliances and partnerships for change. Its publications translate research and experience into practical recommendations about what works to improve American education.

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## NATIONAL CENTER PUBLICATIONS

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The following National Center publications—as well as a host of other information and links—are available at **www.highereducation.org.** Single copies of most of these reports are also available from the National Center. Please FAX requests to 408-271-2697 and ask for the report by publication number.

**The Governance Divide: A Report on a Four-State Study on Improving College Readiness and Success**, by Andrea Venezia, Patrick M. Callan, Joni E. Finney, Michael W. Kirst, and Michael D. Usdan (September 2005, #05-3). This report identifies and examines four policy levers available to

states that are interested in creating sustained K–16 reform: finance, assessments and curricula, accountability, and data systems. In addition, the report examines the importance of other factors—such as leadership and state history and culture—in initiating and sustaining K–16 reform.

> *The Governance Divide: The Case Study for Florida* by Andrea Venezia and Joni E. Finney (September 2005, #05-4).

> *The Governance Divide: The Case Study for Georgia* by Andrea Venezia, Patrick M. Callan, Michael W. Kirst, and Michael D. Usdan (September 2005, #05-5).

> *The Governance Divide: The Case Study for New York* by Andrea Venezia, Michael W. Kirst, and Michael D. Usdan (September 2005, #05-6).

> *The Governance Divide: The Case Study for Oregon* by Andrea Venezia and Michael W. Kirst (September 2005, #05-7).

*Borrowers Who Drop Out: A Neglected Aspect of the College Student Loan Trend*, by Lawrence Gladieux and Laura Perna (May 2005, #05-2). This report examines the experiences of students who borrow to finance their educations, but do not complete their postsecondary programs. Using the latest comprehensive data, this report compares borrowers who drop out with other groups of students, and provides recommendations on policies and programs that would better prepare, support, and guide students—especially low-income students—in completing their degrees.

*Case Study of Utah Higher Education*, by Kathy Reeves Bracco and Mario Martinez (April 2005, #05-1). This report examines state policies and performance in the areas of enrollment and affordability. Compared with other states, Utah has been able to maintain a system of higher education that is more affordable for students, while enrollments have almost doubled over the past 20 years.

*Measuring Up 2004: The National Report Card on Higher Education* (September 2004). *Measuring Up 2004* consists of a national report card for higher education (report #04-5) and 50 state report cards (#04-4) The purpose of *Measuring Up 2004* is to provide the public and policymakers with information to assess and improve postsecondary education in each state. For the first time, this edition of *Measuring Up* provides information about each state's improvement over the past decade. Visit **www.highereducation.org** to download *Measuring Up 2004* or to make your own comparisons of state performance in higher education.

> *Technical Guide Documenting Methodology, Indicators, and Data Sources for* **Measuring Up 2004** (November 2004, #04-6)**.**

*Ensuring Access with Quality to California's Community Colleges*, by Gerald C. Hayward, Dennis P. Jones, Aims C. McGuinness, Jr., and Allene Timar, with a postscript by Nancy Shulock (May 2004, #04-3). This report finds that enrollment growth pressures, fee increases, and recent budget cuts in the California Community Colleges are having significant detrimental effects on student access and program quality. The report also provides recommendations for creating improvements that build from the state policy context and from existing promising practices within the community colleges.

*Public Attitudes on Higher Education: A Trend Analysis, 1993 to 2003*, by John Immerwahr (February 2004, #04-2). This public opinion survey, prepared by Public Agenda for the National Center, reveals that public attitudes about the importance of higher education have remained stable during the recent economic downturn. The survey also finds that there are some growing public concerns about the costs of higher education, especially for those groups most affected, including parents of high school students, African-Americans, and Hispanics.

*Responding to the Crisis in College Opportunity* (January 2004, #04-1). This policy statement, developed by education policy experts at Lansdowne, Virginia, proposes short-term emergency measures and long-term priorities for governors and legislators to consider for funding higher education during the current lean budget years. *Responding to the Crisis* suggests that in 2004 the highest priority for state higher education budgets should be to protect college access and affordability for students and families.

*With Diploma in Hand: Hispanic High School Seniors Talk about Their Future*, by John Immerwahr (June 2003, #03-2). This report by Public Agenda explores some of the primary obstacles that many Hispanic students face in seeking higher education—barriers that suggest opportunities for creative public policy to improve college attendance and completion rates among Hispanics.

*Purposes, Policies, Performance: Higher Education and the Fulfillment of a State's Public Agenda* (February 2003, #03-1). This essay is drawn from discussions of higher education leaders and policy officials at a roundtable convened in June 2002 at New Jersey City University on the relationship between public purposes, policies, and performance of American higher education.

*Measuring Up 2002: The State-by-State Report Card for Higher Education* (October 2002, #02-7). This report card, which updates the inaugural edition released in 2000, grades each state on its performance in five key areas of higher education. *Measuring Up 2002* also evaluates each state's progress in relation to its own results from 2000.

>   *Technical Guide Documenting Methodology, Indicators, and Data Sources for Measuring Up 2002* (October 2002, #02-8).

*State Policy and Community College–Baccalaureate Transfer*, by Jane V. Wellman (July 2002, #02-6). This report recommends state policies to energize and improve higher education performance regarding transfers from community colleges to four-year institutions.

*Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education: The Early Years* (June 2002, #02-5). The Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) attained remarkable success in funding innovative and enduring projects during its early years. This report, prepared by FIPSE's early program officers, describes how those results were achieved.

*Losing Ground: A National Status Report on the Affordability of American Higher Education* (May 2002, #02-3). This national status report documents the declining affordability of higher education for American families, and highlights public policies that support affordable higher education. Provides state-by-state summaries as well as national findings.

>   *The Affordability of Higher Education: A Review of Recent Survey Research*, by John Immerwahr (May 2002, #02-4). This review of recent surveys by Public Agenda confirms that Americans feel that rising college prices threaten to make higher education inaccessible for many people.

*Coping with Recession: Public Policy, Economic Downturns, and Higher Education*, by Patrick M. Callan (February 2002, #02-2). This report outlines the major policy considerations that states and institutions of higher education face during economic downturns.

*Competition and Collaboration in California Higher Education*, by Kathy Reeves Bracco and Patrick M. Callan (January 2002, #02-1). This report argues that the structure of California's state higher education system limits the system's capacity for collaboration.

*Measuring Up 2000: The State-by-State Report Card for Higher Education* (November 2000, #00-3). This first-of-its-kind report card grades each state on its performance in higher education. The report card also provides comprehensive profiles of each state and brief states-at-a-glance comparisons.

*Beneath the Surface: A Statistical Analysis of the Major Variables Associated with State Grades in* **Measuring Up 2000**, by Alisa F. Cunningham and Jane V. Wellman (November 2001, #01-4). Using statistical analysis, this report explores the "drivers" that predict overall performance in *Measuring Up 2000*.

*Supplementary Analysis for* **Measuring Up 2000***: An Exploratory Report*, by Mario Martinez (November 2001, #01-3). This supplement explores the relationships within and among the performance categories in *Measuring Up 2000*.

*Some Next Steps for States: A Follow-up to* **Measuring Up 2000**, by Dennis Jones and Karen Paulson (June 2001, #01-2). This report suggests a range of actions that states can take to bridge the gap between state performance identified in *Measuring Up 2000* and the formulation of effective policy to improve performance in higher education.

*A Review of Tests Performed on the Data in* **Measuring Up 2000**, by Peter Ewell (June 2001, #01-1). This review describes the statistical testing performed on the data in *Measuring Up 2000* by the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems.

*Recent State Policy Initiatives in Education: A Supplement to* **Measuring Up 2000**, by Aims McGuinness, Jr. (December 2000, #00-6). This supplement highlights education initiatives that states have adopted since 1997–98.

*Assessing Student Learning Outcomes: A Supplement to* **Measuring Up 2000**, by Peter Ewell and Paula Ries (December 2000, #00-5). This report is a national survey of state efforts to assess student learning outcomes in higher education.

*Technical Guide Documenting Methodology, Indicators and Data Sources for* **Measuring Up 2000** (November 2000, #00-4).

*A State-by-State Report Card on Higher Education: Prospectus* (March 2000, #00-1). This document summarizes the goals of the National Center's report-card project.

*Great Expectations: How the Public and Parents—White, African-American, and Hispanic— View Higher Education*, by John Immerwahr with Tony Foleno (May 2000, #00-2). This report by Public Agenda finds that Americans overwhelmingly see higher education as essential for success. Survey results are also available for the following states:

*Great Expectations: How Pennsylvanians View Higher Education (May 2000, #00-2b).*
*Great Expectations: How Floridians View Higher Education (August 2000, #00-2c).*
*Great Expectations: How Coloradans View Higher Education (August 2000, #00-2d).*
*Great Expectations: How Californians View Higher Education (August 2000, #00-2e).*
*Great Expectations: How New Yorkers View Higher Education (October 2000, #00-2f).*
*Great Expectations: How Illinois Residents View Higher Education (October 2000, #00-2h).*

*State Spending for Higher Education in the Next Decade: The Battle to Sustain Current Support*, by Harold A. Hovey (July 1999, #99-3). This fiscal forecast of state and local spending patterns finds that the vast majority of states will face significant fiscal deficits over the next eight years, which will in turn lead to increased scrutiny of higher education in almost all states, and to curtailed spending for public higher education in many states.

*South Dakota: Developing Policy-Driven Change in Higher Education*, by Mario Martinez (June 1999, #99-2). This report describes the processes for change in higher education that government, business, and higher education leaders are creating and implementing in South Dakota.

*Taking Responsibility: Leaders' Expectations of Higher Education*, by John Immerwahr (January 1999, #99-1). This paper reports the views of those most involved with decision-making about higher education, based on focus groups and a survey conducted by Public Agenda.

***The Challenges and Opportunities Facing Higher Education: An Agenda for Policy Research***, by Dennis Jones, Peter Ewell, and Aims McGuinness (December 1998, #98-8). This report argues that due to substantial changes in the landscape of postsecondary education, new state-level policy frameworks must be developed and implemented.

***Higher Education Governance: Balancing Institutional and Market Influences***, by Richard C. Richardson, Jr., Kathy Reeves Bracco, Patrick M. Callan, and Joni E. Finney (November 1998, #98-7). This publication describes the structural relationships that affect institutional effectiveness in higher education, and argues that state policy should strive for a balance between institutional and market forces.

***Federal Tuition Tax Credits and State Higher Education Policy: A Guide for State Policy Makers***, by Kristin D. Conklin (December 1998, #98-6). This report examines the implications of the federal income tax provisions for students and their families, and makes recommendations for state higher education policy.

***The Challenges Facing California Higher Education: A Memorandum to the Next Governor of California***, by David W. Breneman (September 1998, #98-5). This memorandum argues that California should develop a new Master Plan for Higher Education.

***Tidal Wave II Revisited: A Review of Earlier Enrollment Projections for California Higher Education***, by Gerald C. Hayward, David W. Breneman, and Leobardo F. Estrada (September 1998, #98-4). This review finds that earlier forecasts of a surge in higher education enrollments were accurate.

***Organizing for Learning: The View from the Governor's Office***, by James B. Hunt Jr., chair of the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, and former governor of North Carolina (June 1998, #98-3). This publication is an address to the American Association for Higher Education concerning opportunity in higher education.

***The Price of Admission: The Growing Importance of Higher Education***, by John Immerwahr (Spring 1998, #98-2). This report is a national survey of Americans' views on higher education, conducted and reported by Public Agenda.

***Concept Paper: A National Center to Address Higher Education Policy***, by Patrick M. Callan (March 1998, #98-1). This concept paper describes the purposes of the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education.

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