

The Role of State Policy in Promoting Higher Education Attainment

Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

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Renewing the Promise: State Policies to Improve Higher Education Performance

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http://www.gse.upenn.edu/pdf/irhe/renewing_promise_national.pdf

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The
**Attainment
Agenda**

State Policy Leadership

— | *in* | —

Higher Education



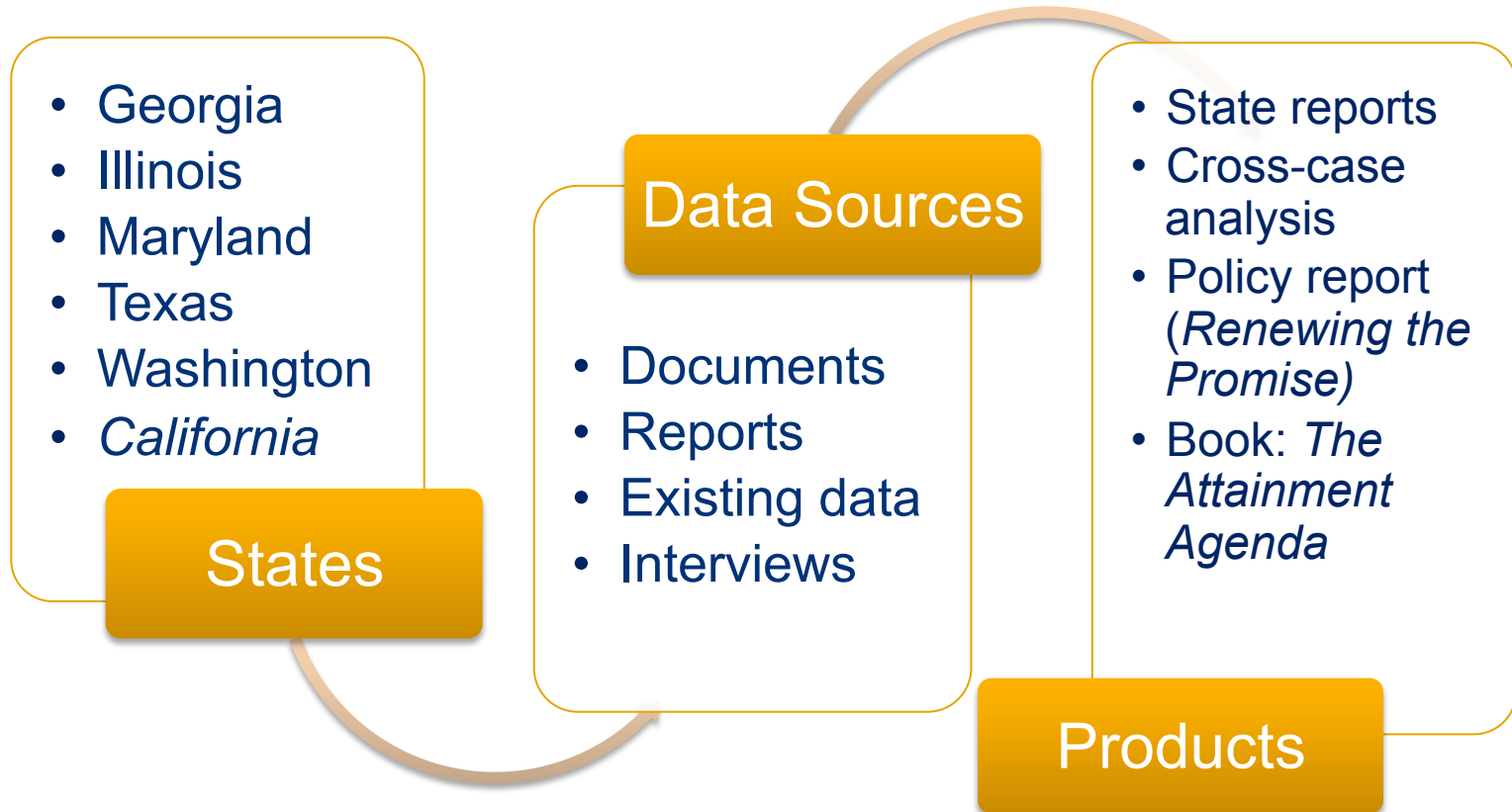
Johns Hopkins Press 2014

Laura W. Perna & Joni E. Finney

Foreword by Patrick M. Callan



What We Did



Variations in Current Levels of Educational Attainment

Percentage of 25- to 64-Year Olds With at Least an Associate's Degree

State	Percentage
Maryland	44%
Illinois	41%
Washington	42%
Total – U.S.	38%
Georgia	36%
Texas	33%
<i>California</i>	<i>38%</i>

Source: National Center for Management Systems
www.higheredinfo.org



Annual % Increase Required for 55% of Population Age 25-64 to Hold at Least an Associates Degree by 2020

- **Georgia** **10%**
- **Illinois** **5.4%**
- **Maryland** **5.1%**
- **Texas** **11.5%**
- **Washington** **6.2%**
- ***California*** **4%**
- **Nation** **7.9%**

(55%=current levels of top OECD countries)

Source: National Center for Management Systems,
www.higheredinfo.org



Variations in Performance Indicators

Grades in *Measuring Up* 2000- 2008

State	Preparation	Participation	Completion
Georgia	D+ to C+	F to D-	B- to B-
Illinois	A to B	A to C	C+ to B+
Maryland	B+ to A-	A to C	B- to B-
Texas	C to B	D to D-	D+ to C-
Washington	C+ to C+	C- to D	B- to A-
California	C- to C+	B+ to C	C to B-

Source: *Measuring Up* 2008



Variations in Demographic Characteristics and Trends

Racial/Ethnic Diversity of the Population: 2012

State	% Blacks	% Hispanics	Projected Growth Hispanic H.S. Grads 2012 - 2027
Georgia	31	9	89%
Maryland	30	9	120%
Total – U.S.	13	17	27%
Illinois	15	16	-8%
Texas	12	38	49%
Washington	4	12	59%
California	7	38	5%

Knocking At the College Door (2013) WICHE; Census Quick Facts 2012



Variations in State Higher Education Systems

Distribution of Total 12-month Unduplicated Undergraduate Headcount by Sector: 2008-09

State	Public 4-year	Public 2-year	Private NFP	Private For-Profit
Illinois	15%	60%	13%	12%
Texas	30%	55%	6%	9%
Washington	38%	51%	7%	4%
Maryland	36%	49%	9%	6%
Total – U.S.	31%	44%	13%	12%
Georgia	41%	37%	10%	12%

Source: Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). 2009 enrollment survey. Retrieved from Institute of Education Sciences website: <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/datacenter/login.aspx>



Five State Stories

California: From Master Plan to Mediocrity

Illinois: A Story of Decline

Georgia: Perpetuating Disparity

Maryland: Much Accomplished, Much at Stake

Texas: Hard Choices Ahead

Washington: State Leadership Vacuum

California

- **Complex political environment and political indifference**
- **Ineffective transitions from high school to postsecondary education and transfer from 2 year to 4 year institutions**
- **Lack of strategic use of resources**

Georgia

- **Historical legacy of segregation**
- **State higher education policies focused on economic development and workforce readiness**
- **Absence of policies to ensure adequate preparation and smooth transition to postsecondary education and from technical colleges to USG**



Illinois

- **Political corruption**
- **Inability to establish shared goals and priorities**
- **Failure to allocate available resources strategically**

Maryland

- **Stable and respected political and higher education leadership**
- **Record of collaboration across and within educational sectors but few policies that ensure college readiness**
- **Challenges in resolving the state's history of segregation**
- **Strategic use of fiscal resources to address goals and priorities**

Texas

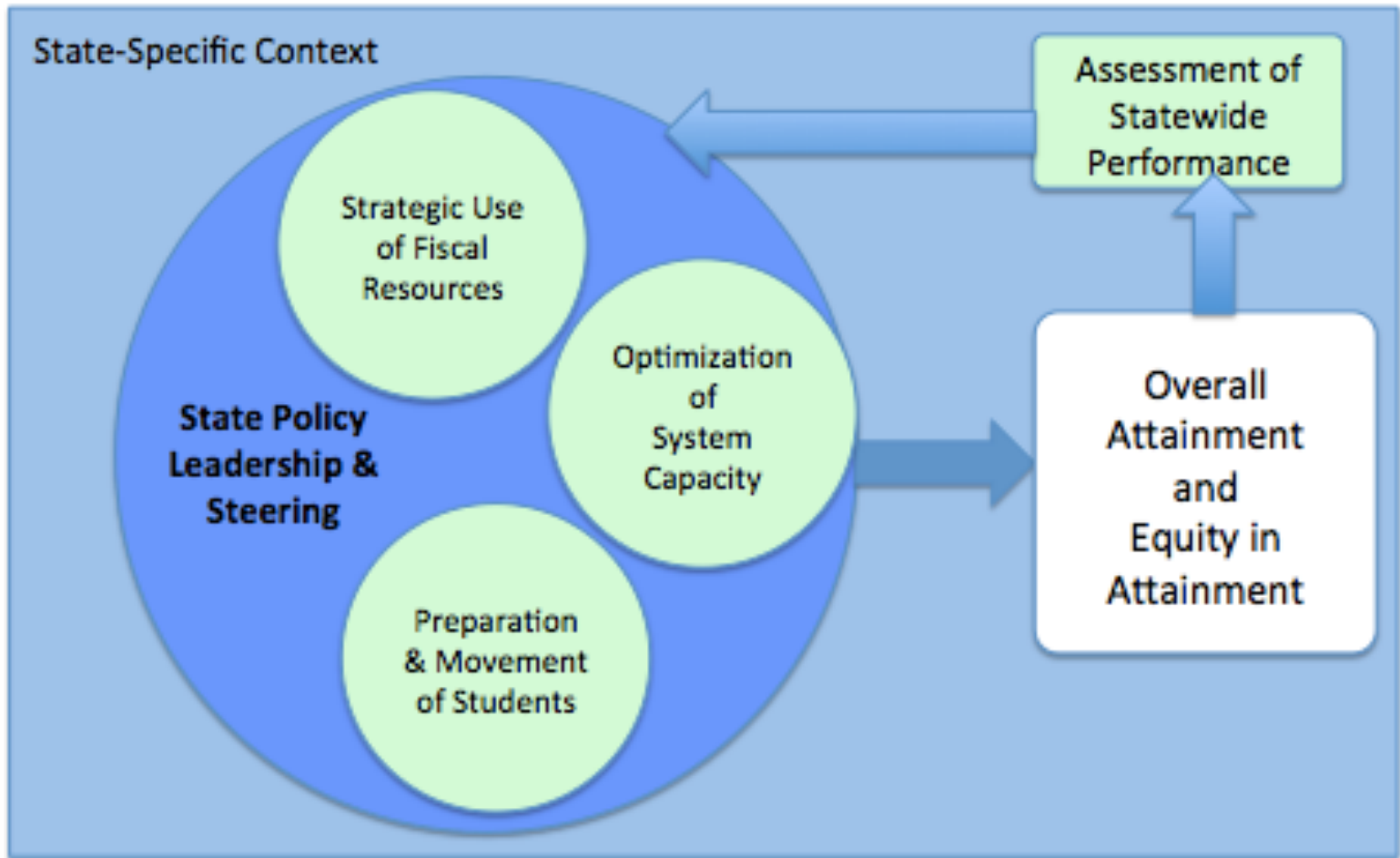
- **Challenges associated with regional differences**
- **Shared but potentially conflicting statewide goals and priorities for higher education**
- **Opportunities created by college readiness strategies**
- **Failure to strategically allocate state fiscal resources**



Washington

- **Lack of political commitment to implementing a statewide plan for higher education**
- **Insufficient strategies to support student readiness for and participation in bachelor's degree programs**
- **Efforts – but challenges – to strategically use available fiscal resources**

What We Found



Source: Perna & Finney (2014).



Lessons Learned

- **State context is important in understanding relationship between state policy and higher education performance**
- **State policy leadership and steering are required to improve performance**
- **Improving performance requires policies to increase the demand for and supply of higher education**
- **Improving equity in higher education attainment requires policies that level the playing field**
- **Improving performance requires data and policy adjustment**