THE GOVERNANCE DIVIDE

The Case Study for Florida

By
Andrea Venezia
Joni E. Finney

May 2006

The Institute for Educational Leadership
The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education
The Stanford Institute for Higher Education Research

Contents

Foreword

This report is based on research conducted by the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education and its partners, the Institute for Educational Leadership and Stanford University's Institute for Higher Education Research. The project, called Partnerships for Student Success (PSS), was funded by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation. Its findings are presented in four case studies and a cross-cutting report called *The Governance Divide: A Report on a Four-State Study on Improving College Readiness and Success*.

The primary goal of the research project was to examine state policies and governance structures that span K–12 and postsecondary education in order to assist states in identifying promising reforms and ways to connect their education systems. The project is based on two major premises: (1) the current disconnected systems of K–12 and postsecondary education are not effective in ensuring that sufficient numbers of students complete some form of education or training beyond high school, and (2) it is the states who are in the best position to lead efforts to align the systems, create incentives for joint budgeting, and monitor improvement through cross-system data collection and accountability.

The research was conducted in 2003 and 2004 in four states, Florida, Georgia, New York, and Oregon, each of which has a distinct approach to K–16 reform that may offer other states important options for connecting K–12 and postsecondary education:

- Florida has implemented some of the most sweeping education governance changes of any state; all levels of education are housed in the Department of Education, which is overseen by a commissioner who reports to the governor.

- Georgia was the first state to have state and regional P–16 councils, and its regents' office in the University System of Georgia oversees a variety of projects that focus on connecting K–12 and postsecondary education.

- The New York Board of Regents oversees all education in the state and has been in place for over 200 years; this lends the regents' office a stature and a historical legitimacy and tradition unlike any other state education governance structure in the nation.

- Oregon has been a leader in K–16 reform through its development of the Proficiency-based Admission Standards System (PASS), which articulated postsecondary expectations and linked them with K–12 reforms.

We hope that this research, by documenting the processes used in each state to develop, implement, and institutionalize the reforms, will assist other states in identifying opportunities for K–16 successes.

I. Introduction

Florida's education governance systems have undergone some of the most drastic restructuring of any in the country, making Florida the first state to develop and implement a K–20 governance system. Almost all lines of state education authority, from early childhood education through postsecondary education, fall under the State Board of Education, whose commissioner reports to the governor. The state is using major governance changes to aid in the creation of a K–20 education system. Many elements of the system have been in place for decades, such as a statewide articulation agreement and a common course numbering system. Others are new, such as the evolving accountability, data, and performance-funding systems—as well as a new Board of Governors, which replaces the recently abolished Board of Regents.

This study examines the state's recent K–20 reforms, with a focus on state-level initiatives, governance, and related structures. The primary research questions included the following:

- To what extent is K–20 reform perceived as a state policy concern? What are the incentives and disincentives for improved connections?

- What are the main goals and objectives of current state-level K–20 reforms? Who is responsible for developing and implementing those changes?

- What have been the main successes and failures to date?

Interviews were conducted with state-level policymakers, administrators, business leaders, researchers, and others involved in reforms. The research was conducted in November 2003, during a time when the governance and policy reforms were undergoing significant transformation. Much has changed since the research was conducted.

Some interviewees described Florida's governance restructuring as a series of political events. Others said the changes were developed in line with state priorities (for example, economic development within a competitive global market). In light of these differences in perspective by interviewees, this study seeks to describe the path the reforms have taken and the role of recent governance changes in enabling the development and institutionalization of K–20 reforms.

This report begins with a summary of recent relevant political, governance, and education reforms in order to provide a context for later discussions of specific K–20 efforts. It outlines the previous policies and programs that contributed to the development of a K–20 foundation in the state. Next, the report summarizes the content of the current K–20 reforms, their effects, and the challenges they face in aligning K–12 and postsecondary education. The report concludes with reflections about the sustainability of the K–20 reforms and the role of the current governance structure in their development and implementation. An appendix provides the interview questions for the research visit to the state.

II. Context for K–20 Reform and Governance in Florida

RE-SHAPING THE EDUCATION BUREAUCRACY

Florida's education governance system is now K–20 in structure. Prior to the reforms that created the new structure, Florida had three statewide education boards—the State Board of Education for K–12, a coordinating board for community colleges, and the Board of Regents for the universities. The previous State Board of Education was composed of the state's elected cabinet members.

Many political factors had to be in place for Florida's recent education changes to occur. In 1994, Republicans gained control of the Senate and became the majority in the House in 1996. In the same year, the State Board of Education approved a series of K–12 content standards called the Sunshine State Standards. In 1998, Jeb Bush became governor and was re-elected in 2002. The following provides a summary of the overall K–20 changes:

1998   Constitutional amendment passed to restructure Florida's education cabinet and system, effective 2003.

2001   Education Governance Reorganization Implementation Act passed; new State Board of Education, commissioner of education, and local state university boards of trustees appointed.

2002   School code rewritten to describe K–20; Constitutional amendment passed to establish a Board of Governors for the State University System and class size requirements for public schools.

2003   New State Board of Education strategic plan developed and adopted.

2005   New commissioner of education appointed by the State Board of Education.[1]

The Constitutional amendment that passed in 1998 created a single governance structure for the state's public schools, community colleges, and state universities. It also established an appointed rather than elected State Board of Education and commissioner of education. The amendment reads, in part, "The State Board of Education shall consist of seven members appointed by the governor to staggered four-year terms, subject to confirmation by the Senate. The State Board of Education shall appoint the commissioner of education."[2]

As a result of the passage of the Constitutional amendment, the State Board of Education now has oversight for all of the state's public education systems. Many interviewees view this as an improvement from the previous state board in which the cabinet members came from either party and oversaw a wide range of issues outside of education, including insurance, agriculture, and the environment. As one interviewee said, "Their attention span was limited in terms of

K–12 issues" and the reorganization allows for more focus on education. Some other interviewees saw the change as a partisan takeover.

In 2000, the State Legislature passed the A+ Plan for K–12 education reform, whose main objectives are to:

- Use the Sunshine State Standards;
- Test students in K–12 schools (Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test);
- Develop an accountability model;
- End social promotion;
- Give financial rewards to improving and high performing schools;
- Provide for K–12 school choice;
- Have more stringent school safety and discipline;
- Continue to use the lottery for education;
- Increase education funding;
- Close the achievement gap;
- Raise standards for K–12 educators;
- Rate colleges of education on performance;
- Raise standards for admission to colleges of education; and
- Improve teacher quality and access to the teaching profession.[3]

While this legislation was being developed, the governor created the Education Governance Transition Taskforce, which brought leaders together to discuss education issues such as K–20 accountability and governance. Based on recommendations from the taskforce, the Legislature passed the Education Governance Reorganization Implementation Act in 2001 and abolished the Board of Regents (governing public universities); established the State Board of Education to oversee K–20 education; established separate boards of trustees for each of the public universities; created the position of secretary of education; required a K–20 education budget; and reorganized the State Department of Education (DOE).[4] The mission of the K–20 initiative is to "increase the proficiency of all students within one seamless, efficient system, by allowing them the opportunity to expand their knowledge and skills through learning opportunities and research valued by students, parents, and communities." The goals are for Florida to have: (1) high student achievement, (2) seamless articulation and maximum access, (3) a skilled workforce and economic development, and (4) high-quality, efficient services.[5]

In 2002, in reaction to the elimination of the Board of Regents, U.S. Senator Bob Graham sponsored a Constitutional amendment to re-create the Board of Regents as a new entity called the Board of Governors (BOG). The amendment passed and stipulates the following:

- For the State University System: "There shall be a single state university system comprised of all public universities. A board of trustees shall administer each public university and a board of governors shall govern the State University System."

- For local university boards: "Each local constituent university shall be administered by a board of trustees consisting of thirteen members dedicated to the purposes of the state university system. The Board of Governors shall establish the powers and duties of the boards of trustees."

- For the Board of Governors: "The Board of Governors shall be a body corporate consisting of 17 members. The board shall operate, regulate, control, and be fully responsible for the management of the whole university system. These responsibilities shall include, but not be limited to, defining the distinctive mission of each constituent university and its articulation with free public schools and community colleges, ensuring the well-planned coordination and operation of the system, and avoiding wasteful duplication of facilities or programs." The governor appoints 14 members to the Board of Governors. The other members are the commissioner of education, the chair of the Advisory Council of Faculty Senates (or the equivalent), and the president of the Florida Student Association (or the equivalent).[6]

The Board of Governors is now in charge of the State University System (SUS), but when the field research was conducted it did not have a budget or a separate staff nor could it hire chancellors or presidents.[7] One of the first issues the board intends to tackle is the development of a strategic plan for the university system. The proposed plan would concentrate on issues such as the allocation of state resources and the mission creep of many postsecondary institutions (for example, community colleges that offer bachelor's degrees and four-year undergraduate colleges that offer graduate degrees). Some within the Department of Education are concerned that the board, by removing some facets of postsecondary education policy deliberation from the K–20 education structure, could create a situation with competing interests, duplication, conflicts, and inconsistencies.

The Department of Education, which was restructured to reflect the new K–20 focus, wrote a new school code that was adopted in 2002. The new State Board of Education officially took over in 2003. It is now considered a governor's agency. During the restructuring process, the department experienced, according to an administrator, "tremendous turnover; a lot of institutional memory walked out the door… The school code re-write was something … just carrying it out was pretty amazing."

The restructuring placed all public education staff under one jurisdiction. The commissioner's cabinet is comprised of the three chancellors who oversee each of the major areas within the department: K–12 education, community colleges, and four-year colleges and universities. The chancellors are also members of the commissioner's K–20 policy council. Since the Board of Governors was not given a staff, the chancellor for colleges and universities is, in effect, the executive director for the board and her staff is its staff. There is a dual reporting relationship.

The governor has extensive authority over public education in the state. He appoints members to the new Board of Education, in addition to the university boards, community college boards, the board of the Council for Educational Policy Research and Improvement (CEPRI), and the Board of Governors. A legislative staff member said that "the complaint that you would hear from one side of the old system is, 'There was no single person responsible for education.' And now there is: it's the governor." The reforms were described by one interviewee as "unprecedented in terms of one governor's influence on the structure from top to bottom."

The commissioner and the state board visibly lead the charge, but state education leaders said that it would have been difficult to develop and implement the reforms without the governor's "tremendous support." Several interviewees said that major governance change must be led by a governor, but that the leadership from the House speaker and Senate president were also of "monumental" importance. As many interviewees mentioned, the right people were there at the right time to make these changes.

Since the education reform legislation passed, Florida has experienced difficult economic times. Postsecondary education enrollment is booming, but institutional representatives are concerned that the Legislature is not appropriating enough money to offset the increased number of students. An administrator at Florida State University said, "This is the first time in the history of the State of Florida that the Legislature broke the contract. Every other time, they said that if you enroll them, we will fund you." For the first time, in 2003–04, the Legislature did not provide the funding it promised to support the increased enrollment, and Florida's postsecondary education institutions were not able to provide courses for all their students.

Enrollment is a major issue in Florida higher education politics. In recent years, the University of Florida (UF) and Florida State University (FSU) have disagreed with the Legislature over the control of tuition and fees. University representatives believe they are being asked to serve more students with fewer resources. The universities have raised student fees but claim that this is not sufficient and have asked the Legislature to increase tuition. As one state education employee stated, "When you talk to the universities, they'll tell you they're getting reamed and they are. They're getting hammered and I'm not sure why that is other than they're not compulsory attendance, they are viewed as a cash cow [by the Legislature], and they've done a good job getting external support." At one point, the two universities proposed a plan to opt out of the State University System so they could control their own finances and tuition.

Enrollment at the state's community colleges has increased six percent in recent years. An education department administrator stated that the increase in enrollment would have been about eight percent if the community colleges had not turned students away. He said that in 2003–04 approximately 22,000 prospective community college students could not enroll in the courses they needed. Community colleges across the state have not been able to hire new full-time faculty or open new courses, despite increases in their student populations and waiting lists for the most popular majors.

The state's community colleges will likely bear the brunt of projected enrollment growth because they are less expensive and more flexible than universities. As a former community

college president said, "If you say to universities that we want you to increase their enrollment by 1,000, they say, 'We need more faculty, buildings, and five years to plan.' Community colleges say, 'Okay, we just need some help with facilities.' There's a history there of community colleges taking the enrollment when there's no money." Some community colleges in Florida are starting to offer bachelor's degrees to offset the problems in the four-year sector, and to reap some financial gain.

FLORIDA'S HISTORICAL FOUNDATION FOR K–20 REFORM

Many interviewees emphasized the importance of state policies that laid the groundwork for the current K–20 initiative. While the recent K–20 governance reforms were rapidly enacted and sweeping in nature, there was an established foundation on which to build. As a DOE administrator said:

> An advantage that Florida has is that there is a history of collaboration between the sectors from years past before we even had K–20. For example, in the 1970s, we spent time coming up with common course numbers. So we broke down barriers across institutions, universities and community colleges… There have been opportunities for community college graduates to be admitted to the universities through the statewide articulation agreement for years… And then, of course, in community colleges and universities, there were dual enrollment courses that were offered at the high school and so those students could immediately come to the university or community college and have those credits taken.

The following policies promote inter-level collaboration:

- *2+2 Policies.* Florida has established policies that promote 2 + 2 programs, that is, community college programs that include two years of study leading directly to junior- and senior-year coursework at a university. The state's 2 + 2 policies include a statewide articulation agreement, a common course numbering system, and common prerequisites.

- *Statewide Articulation.* If students graduate from a Florida high school with a standard diploma, they are guaranteed entry into a community college. Once they earn an associate's of arts degree, or an approved associate's of science degree, they are guaranteed entry into a public university. In addition, the statewide articulation agreement governs many areas, including "articulation between secondary and postsecondary education; admission of associate's degree graduates from community colleges and state universities; admission of applied technology diploma program graduates from community colleges or technical centers; admission of associate in science [or applied science degree] graduates from community colleges; the use of

acceleration mechanisms; and general education requirements and statewide course numbers."[8]

- *Common Course Numbering System.* Legislation was passed in the 1970s that requires all postsecondary institutions to submit their entire inventories—from undergraduate through graduate school. Each course that public universities, community colleges, and vocational centers offer must be in the common course numbering system. If a student takes a course at one institution with a course number that matches a number at a receiving institution, the latter institution has to accept that course and award the same number of credits normally awarded at the institution. The common course numbering system is used in accelerated classes as well; in order for high school courses to be considered accelerated, they must use the appropriate postsecondary course number on the students' transcripts. This policy allows for electronic data collection, analysis, and transcript processes across the state. In addition, there is a single, statewide, postsecondary education transcript that uses the common course numbering system. The transcript process helps build and align programs between two- and four-year institutions.

- *Common Prerequisite Rule.* Florida's common prerequisite policy requires that every discipline area with a bachelor's degree have common prerequisites. The DOE produces a common prerequisite manual so that students can perform a 2 + 2 audit and develop an educational plan spanning from entering community college to achieving a four-year degree.

- *Acceleration Mechanisms.* Florida's statewide policies to accelerate student progress to the bachelor's degree fall under the statewide articulation agreement and include, for example, dual enrollment, Advanced Placement (AP), and the International Baccalaureate (IB). There is no tuition collected for dual enrollment courses. This eliminates competitiveness and territoriality over funds. Most of the state's dual enrollment occurs between high schools and community colleges. High schools receive additional state funds for enrollments in Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses.

- *The 36-Hour Rule.* This policy stipulates that all postsecondary institutions must require 36 hours of general education for associate's degrees. This helps to facilitate the transfer function, since all systems have the same requirement.

- *Data Collection.* Florida is well-known for collecting a wide range of K–12 and postsecondary education data. This is discussed in more detail in the next section.

- *Common Application.* Students can fill out one application and send it to any public four-year university in Florida.

- *Bright Futures.* Like Georgia's HOPE Scholarship, Florida's Bright Futures is a scholarship program that seeks to retain talented high school students in-state for postsecondary education and to improve student preparation for college. This lottery-funded program began in 1997. The Academic Scholars Award pays 100% of tuition and fees at an in-state public institution and provides a $600 stipend per year. The Medallion and Gold Seal Vocational Scholars Award pays 75% of tuition and fees, plus up to $300 for lab fees, at public institutions.[9] Bright Futures is a large item in the state budget, costing about $240 million per year. In 2003–04, there were about 117,903 Bright Futures students.[10] Most students at the University of Florida and Florida State are Bright Futures recipients. In 2000–01, 77% of the recipients of the Academic Scholars Award were white, 3% were black, 9% were Hispanic, 7% were Asian American, 0.3 percent were American Indian, and 5% were multiethnic or of unknown ethnicity.[11] There are charges and concerns that the program constitutes a subsidy for higher income students. Over 50% of Bright Futures recipients did not fill out a federal financial aid form—an indication that their families might not need financial assistance. Bright Futures is perhaps the largest high-school-to-college preparation program in the state. As one interviewee stated, "We [Florida] don't do anything in terms of a curriculum… We don't align the high school curriculum to the standards in college, but I think in a roundabout way, we are through the Bright Futures program because we're encouraging people to take higher-level courses."

Florida has a greater array of statewide policies that connect community colleges and four-year institutions, and community colleges and high schools, than do most states. Many of these policies encourage community college attendance. Over 50% of the upper-division students in Florida's public universities attended a community college either for a course or for an associate's degree.

Like most other states, Florida's community colleges and universities have precollege outreach programs for underrepresented student populations. In the Tallahassee area, for example, Florida State University has developed a program in partnership with Tallahassee Community College (TCC) called Partners in TCC. The program admits students to the community college but provides them with the athletic and social benefits of Florida State and with the promise of graduating from Florida State if students meet its requirements. Students in the partners program cannot take any classes at the university until they graduate from Tallahassee Community College, but when they complete their two-year degree they are guaranteed an enrollment at the university. Florida State also has reading programs in local high schools and partnerships with select charter schools.

Although Florida has a wide array of K–20 program and policies focused on student transitions between education sectors, at least two broad challenges remain. One challenge, according to a former community college president, is to "put the pieces together" of the various reform efforts. Another challenge is to connect the new K–20 initiative with the preexisting foundation in a way that establishes meaningful changes for students.

III. Florida's K–20 Initiative

Given Florida's history of developing policies across education sectors, some logical questions arise, namely: What is the value-added of the recent and ongoing K–20 governance changes? What are the goals and objectives? Are there plans to create changes in teaching and learning across the K–20 continuum? In addition to the governance changes, interviewees stated examples in several areas in which K–20 progress is either being made or is planned. These include: data and accountability systems, assessments, finance and budgeting, the governor's One Florida plan, and teacher training-related reforms.

DATA AND ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEMS

The K–20 accountability plan, performance-funding model, and K–20 data warehouse appear to be the most highly evolved of all the recent K–20 initiatives. They are all interrelated, since the accountability and performance funding models depend on a sound data system, and the two models share the same indicators. Florida, which is well known for connecting its databases for K–12, postsecondary, workforce, corrections, and other programs, has developed one of the most comprehensive state databases for tracking student progress. The databases were developed to lay a foundation for performance-based funding of education.

The State Department of Education has three K–12 databases: one that contains all K–12 students, a second that tracks students who earn a General Education Development (GED) diploma, and a third that tracks students based on their scores on the statewide assessment, the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT). A new data warehouse being developed by education department staff connects these databases and gives students one identification number. The department tries to safeguard the data by, for example, avoiding letting schools, districts, or postsecondary institutions calculate any tabulated statistics that are reported to the state. (Data for community college students are more difficult to use at the aggregate level because the sector is relatively decentralized and has little control over individual campuses' data collection activities.)

The Department of Education is seeking to examine and evaluate the relationships between student participation in K–12 programs and achievement in postsecondary education, and between teacher participation in education and professional development programs and student achievement throughout the K–20 continuum. For example, the department has been able to examine completion rates in postsecondary education more effectively and plans to focus on the retention of students at the postsecondary level. The department has also begun tracking students who took the FCAT to learn more about their course-taking patterns and other related issues. Several interviewees questioned the validity and reliability of the data, stating their

concerns about the accuracy of data (particularly high school dropout rates) and their belief that the department takes too much of a hands-off approach to quality control.

The state's accountability and performance funding models are mandated by the Legislature and overseen by the K–20 Taskforce. The taskforce is, according to a legislative staff member, "a little different than the ones in the past where basically the taskforces and committees were advising governors and legislators and [the] State Board of Education." This taskforce is an advisory group but reports to high-level staff, such as the director of the Office of Education Information and Accountability in the Department of Education. As a result, the taskforce addresses issues of content, such as defining accountability measures that accurately reflect educational progress and that make sense to the public.

According to an administrator at the education department, the accountability system is designed 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, efficient services."

The performance funding system is expected to be based on formulas developed through the K–20 accountability standards.[12] House Bill 915 calls for 10% of the budget to be based on performance funding, with an initial roll-out of December 2004. To develop the indicators, the Department of Education created four taskforces—one each for K–12 education, community colleges, four-year colleges and universities, and the workforce. Each taskforce is charged with developing measures in its own area; that process originally yielded over 600 measures. By the end of 2002, however, staff organized the measures into themes and the taskforces focused on identifying goals across the sectors for high student achievement, articulation and access, employment and earnings, and quality and efficiency. After developing five indicators per goal, they identified the sector with the most accurate measure(s) for each indicator and they applied that as the standard across the board.

The primary test used within the accountability system for K–12 education is the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test. For the workforce it is the Test of Adult Basic Education Skills. In the vocational arena, Florida has curricular standards defined by employers and academics that serve as an external assessment for vocational education. When the field research was conducted, however, the state had not yet determined which postsecondary education assessment would be best to use in the accountability system—both for students transferring from community colleges to four-year institutions and for students enrolling in four-year universities at the start of their college career. A staff member from the Department of Education said that although there is not a one-size-fits-all model for postsecondary accountability, there "will definitely be some general agreement as to how we measure accountability." But when the research was conducted, this was in the discussion stages.

STATE ASSESSMENTS

K–12 Education

Florida's Legislature authorized the use of statewide K–12 student assessments in the early 1970s. In 1976, it approved assessments in Grades 3, 5, 8, and 11 and the nation's first high school graduation test.[13] The Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) has been the state's primary K–12 assessment since 1998 and the test results form the basis for the accountability program.[14] The FCAT, which is administered to students in Grades 3 to 11, contains two basic components: criterion-referenced tests that measure selected benchmarks in mathematics, reading, science, and writing from the Sunshine State Standards; and norm-referenced tests in reading and mathematics, measuring individual student performance against national norms.[15] Student achievement data from the FCAT are used to report annual progress and educational status for students, schools, districts, and the state. The grades given to schools as part of the A+ Plan are based on the percentage of students meeting the standards and the percentage of students making learning gains.[16]

Students cannot earn a standard high school diploma until they pass the exit-level 10th grade FCAT. Some interviewees expressed concern that the current high school assessments will push many students out of the system, rather than help them proceed through it. Several interviewees said that more students are receiving a GED since the exit-level FCAT was implemented. Others were concerned about the high school exit exam exacerbating current inequalities. As one interviewee stated, "In a state where only a shade over 50% are finishing high school, in terms of a standard high school diploma, to do things that tell half of the black students that you can't graduate so you can't go on, even though you finished all the course requirements—because you didn't pass the FCAT—is counterproductive. We need to try to keep people in the system until they achieve the competencies we want them to achieve."

Postsecondary Education

Florida has several postsecondary exams. The statewide postsecondary placement exam, called the College Placement Test (CPT), is taken by about 60,000 to 70,000 entering students per year according to a staff member at the education department. There are criteria that exempt students from taking it, such as high SAT or ACT scores. (All entrance requirements for state universities are higher than the exemption criteria.) An effort is underway to examine the use and utility of the CPT. In addition, individual postsecondary institutions use their own placement exams.

Another postsecondary assessment is the College-Level Academic Skills Test (CLAST), also known as the Rising Juniors Test, which measures student achievement in writing, English language skills, reading, and mathematics. Students must pass it (or meet the standards through some other means) in order to receive an associate's degree or advance to upper-division status.[17] It is a minimum-level test, but several interviewees said that pass rates are quite low—under 20% in some institutions. However, a state education leader said that 70% of students are exempted from taking the Rising Juniors Test and that "the only people who have to take it now are those

who are guaranteed not to pass it." Although fewer students take the Rising Juniors Test than the College Placement Test, data from the Rising Juniors Test are included as part of the K–20 accountability system. When this research was conducted, however, there was much discussion as to which test to include.

Representatives from postsecondary education expressed concerns about the governor's plans to develop another postsecondary exam to be used for accountability purposes. An administrator at Florida State University said, "We have to vote on this… We never agreed on it in the first place and now we have to vote on it."[18]

Assessment Disjunctures

State policymakers are aware that the state's K–12 and postsecondary assessments are not aligned in terms of content and expectations. The exit-level FCAT for K–12 education is not aligned with either the College Placement Test or the Rising Juniors Test and neither the College Placement Test nor the Rising Juniors Test is used widely. The FCAT is a 10th grade exam and there are no standards—in terms of test content or student performance—that bridge the gap between grades 10 and 13.

According to the deputy commissioner of the education department, the state is working to address this disjuncture between K–12 and postsecondary assessments. The department commissioned studies to analyze the level of concordance between the exit-level FCAT and the SAT, and between the exit-level FCAT and the state's college placement test. An education department administrator said that the ideal is "to have a rational progression of skills from the 10th grade FCAT to the end of the sophomore year of college… It's partly for accountability, but more than anything else, it's to inform instruction and … to help students better understand what they [need]. If test alignment happens, the state will eliminate several tests that will no longer be necessary." For example, under that circumstance, the state could eliminate placement exams developed by individual universities.

FINANCE AND BUDGETING

Part of the rationale behind the development of a K–20 system in Florida was to improve the extent to which the sectors would plan together and to develop a unified state budget for the K–20 system, as opposed to three distinct budgets. A state representative stated, however, that having a unified budget has not eliminated the competition for funding: "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… The same situation exists as before with each system kind of looking out for itself." Others concurred with this view. Thus, although the changes in the governance structure have resulted in the development of a statewide unified budget process, this has not yet resulted in many tangible changes for K–12 or postsecondary education.

ONE FLORIDA

Governor Bush started One Florida as a statewide program to increase opportunity in the State University System after the ban on using affirmative action in the admissions processes of postsecondary institutions. One Florida, which seeks to increase opportunity without using "race, gender, or ethnic quotas or preferences in admissions," is an umbrella program that includes many initiatives within it. For example, the Talented Twenty program offers a place at one of the state's public universities to the top 20% of each high school graduating class if they take the SAT or ACT and complete 19 college preparatory units in high school. One Florida also includes a partnership with the College Board focused on test preparation; precollege outreach programs across the state; and need-based financial aid.[19]

REFORMS IN TEACHER TRAINING

Many interviewees, in discussing K–20 policy changes that affect the schools, emphasized the importance of several of Florida's new professional development programs for teachers. Legislation was passed recently to ensure that teachers are qualified to teach to the Sunshine State Standards. In addition, teachers are being trained to implement the governor's new reading program and there is additional teacher training around the FCAT. Since this research project focused on governance and structural changes rather than teacher training, these programs were not examined in detail.

EFFECTS OF THE K–20 REFORMS

Aside from general discussions about hopes for a seamless system with connected policies at the state level, it is difficult to identify the effects of the recent K–20 reforms on students as they progress from K–12 to postsecondary education. There are many changes that will affect student learning in K–12 education, but these do not appear to be connected to postsecondary education.

The restructuring within the state government in Tallahassee is highly visible and many interviewees believe that these governance changes could spark some real change in student learning. For example, one of the major architects behind many of the K–20 changes said:

> There are two areas of focus in bringing [together] a whole K–20 environment. One is structures. If you don't have structures and, for example, if you have voluntary K–16 or P–16, you've got almost nothing… What happens [with K–20 structures in place] is you get people creating new ideas themselves on how they can collaborate and work together and add value to it… Every year, we have to push a little less because we've succeeded in getting structures and … we've changed the way we talk about education. And then the other whole half of the role is just about personal relationships and time and thinking … people who had worked for 14 years and had

seen people in the elevator every year and never spoke to them and never been in a meeting together … the curriculum person in K–12 and the curriculum person or academic affairs person in higher ed [and now they talk].

Thus, the major K–20 accomplishments may be that some of the long-standing territoriality within the Department of Education has started to fade, a new language that spans the sectors has been developed, and people are currently divided more by function than by sector. Almost every interviewee talked about breaking down turf battles, being able to communicate more effectively across sectors, and having regular meetings with K–12 and postsecondary representatives. As one administrator at the education department said:

> What's changed now is … I'm going to a meeting in 15 minutes where the commissioner of education and the three chancellors and our policy coordinator will be in the same room together deciding what our K–20 legislative agenda will be. It is a joy to be in meetings to decide together what the overall budget request is going to be, what the major policy issues are going to be … with the focus on how do we help students succeed and move through these systems rather than how are we going to take care of the universities and community colleges… It has stimulated collaboration in a real sense.

Many expressed hope that these programmatic and bureaucratic changes will lead to more substantive ones affecting students and educators.

Most of the policy accomplishments that people highlighted, however, were related to K–12 education only. Besides the changes in education governance, the FCAT and the Sunshine State Standards are the centerpieces of the governor's education reforms. An administrator at the Department of Education said, "If we weren't focusing on reading and requiring high standards for all students, whatever governance structure you had wouldn't matter because your kids wouldn't be prepared to move upward… I think the governance structure is going to facilitate their movement. I also think eliminating social promotion" is in the same category. While both the FCAT and the Sunshine State Standards are connected with changes in teacher education programs, there were few concrete examples of systemic, student-focused, K–20 changes beyond those already in place. Other than data collection and analysis changes, project researchers could not pinpoint a new reform that is aimed at students above grade 10 or 11 (depending upon when a student passed the FCAT). According to an administrator at Florida State, "K–20 in Florida has become K–12 reform."

A business representative who has been a strong proponent of the K–20 reform effort said that the K–20 governance reforms have not made an impact outside of Tallahassee. Between the FCAT, No Child Left Behind, third-grade social promotion, class size reduction, the state's reading initiative, and other recent reforms, she reported that schools do not have the time to notice the governance changes in Tallahassee: "I think they're just treading water to stay up with

just what they have to do, let alone think about what the overall governance looks like." Another interviewee stated, "We [state education] had some superintendents and school board members come here to our last meeting who basically said, 'Nothing is different.' … Nothing has changed dramatically at the local level."

Others said that the partisan nature of the reforms has been detrimental. For example, a university administrator said, "I don't think there's any education policy in Florida. Period. It's all political." Another interviewee said:

> The state adopted a new governance structure … because the president of the University of Florida was not getting along with the chancellor of the university system, so they decided to do away with the Board of Regents. That's a fact. That is why it was done. I don't care what was in the newspapers. Then Bob Graham and others realized what the results of that would be—all of the universities going separately to the Legislature to get all their programs and aspirations done, instead of having a state plan. That had disaster written all over it. You'd have universities all over the state having more high-level doctoral programs, many of which wouldn't be needed, and would take a lot of money. And there is no plan to take care of the large enrollment we're having. When this movement started, there was no plan and there is no plan now. So Bob Graham got an amendment—a people's initiative—on the ballot to put the Board of Regents back in place. It passed.

Other interviewees said that it may be too early to identify the impact of the new reforms, particularly in comparison with Florida's long history of articulation agreements and other K–20 reforms. For example, a legislative staff member said:

> It's hard to point your fingers to exact changes that have been taking place. We had an articulation agreement … common course numbering … [and] dual enrollment since the 60s. We've had cooperative agreements for a long time with publics and privates. We've had turf wars between community colleges and universities over freshmen in the past and we still have them. We had turf wars over vocational education and we still have them. But this thing is only two and a half, three years old. So we're really early in seeing how it's being implemented.

Thus, Florida's K–20 governance initiative remains in transition, with many questions unanswered, such as: Will assessments, content standards, and performance standards be aligned across K–12 and postsecondary education? How will student learning be measured at the postsecondary level? It may be too early to answer these questions or to identify improved student transitions from K–12 to postsecondary education. But except in accountability and performance funding, we did not see evidence of clearly articulated goals, objectives, or timeframes in areas that affect student learning across the K–12 and postsecondary continuum.

15

IV. Challenges to K–20 Reform

FUNDING

Many interviewees said that the scarcity of funding is one of the largest hurdles to making the K–20 system "seamless." The budget is still divided along traditional system lines, and the turf battles among K–12 education, the community colleges, and the four-year colleges and universities remain. In addition, Florida has committed to many expensive education programs, including its state assessments (FCAT), class size reduction, a prepaid tuition program, Bright Futures, universal pre-K, and the governor's reading initiative. The costs of these programs reduce budget flexibility. One interviewee said, "If you fund Medicaid and class size, you have no dollars to fund anything else in the State of Florida. So there is no money. You can't do reform with the budget without dollars."

Representatives from postsecondary institutions described their funding problems as significant and said they do not have enough money to function at previous levels. As an administrator at Florida State described, "The community college system has also run out of money. They've still got their open door policy and they have to take you but they don't have any classes to give you because they just don't have any more to put up… There hasn't been a funding of the base budget… So students are frustrated and they get in the system and drop out or they just don't bother coming into the system because they churn in the system too long."

POSTSECONDARY CONCERNS

Currently, it is unclear how postsecondary education will be affected by Florida's new governance structure, what the powers of the universities will be within the system, and what their incentives are to participate in K–20 reforms. In addition, it is too early to identify how performance funding might impact these issues. Many postsecondary interviewees discussed the universities' efforts to advocate for a more decentralized system that would allow them to set their own tuition rates.

A considerable challenge for postsecondary education reform relates to the development of the data warehouse and the state's accountability and performance funding model. K–12 education is mandatory for students and the system must provide certain services for all students, which makes it easier to develop accountability indicators for K–12 education. Postsecondary institutions, on the other hand, have diverse missions, they are relatively independent and autonomous, and attendance is voluntary. As a result, developing statewide mandatory indicators that are relevant for all postsecondary institutions is very difficult. For example, a six-year graduation rate might be relevant for Florida State and the University of Florida, but might not

be appropriate for the other nine institutions. In addition, universities often wish to use data from the federal government's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) to calculate graduation rates, but staff members from the Department of Education consider those data to be the "lowest common denominator" and "dumbed down." If they do not use those data, however, universities will not be able to compare themselves to their peers. As the final report from the K–20 Performance Accountability Taskforce stated, "A better reflection of the K–20 approach is to use a definition of 'graduation rate' that includes transfers-in and excludes certain transfers-out. But that definition requires a host of new decisions: What students are full-time and part-time? When does a student accumulate enough credit hours to be defined as an enrollment? Does the system reward a technical center the same for an occupational completion point as it does a university for a baccalaureate degree?"[20] When this research was conducted, the state was deliberating these and other related questions.

DROPOUT AND CAPACITY PROBLEMS

Some interviewees suggested that the state should focus more on two problematic areas in the education pipeline: the transition from grades 9 to 10, and from grades 13 to 14. They asserted that those are the major dropout points—the first because the FCAT is taken in grade 10, and the second because students are underprepared for college-level work. Several charged that the dropout rate from sixth to ninth grade has worsened in recent years and that the problem is difficult to detect because the education department calculates dropout rates starting with students in later grades. Many interviewees expressed concern that the high school dropout rate is large, but they were also concerned that if it is diminished, there will be a capacity problem throughout the K–12 and postsecondary education continuum.

Thus, if the reforms succeed in increasing student preparation, then the current capacity problems at the state's colleges and universities would be exacerbated. Recently, community colleges have not offered sufficient classes to meet demand. In 2003–04, approximately 30,000 students applied to Florida State for about 7,000 slots. An incentive is for many institutions to over-enroll, since enrollment is a reliable way to receive funding. As a university administrator said, "The incentive is to keep growing."

Some interviewees said that as a result of capacity constraints, the transfer function might become severely weakened over time. They pointed to an increase in the percentage of first-time freshman that the public universities enroll (currently at about 23%; the cap used to be around 13%). These students diminish the number of seats available to students with associate's degrees who are guaranteed admission as juniors.

THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS (BOG)

While some interviewees were proponents of the newly formed Board of Governors, many interviewees described it as a potential obstacle, particularly those within the Department of

Education. Specifically, these interviewees were concerned that the board will encourage the universities to "go their own way" and not collaborate with the other sectors. Secondly, because governance for universities will reside in both the education department and the Board of Governors, there is now the potential for duplicative or conflicting regulations—particularly with regard to articulation and transfer. It is unclear what the power of the board will be, if it has much power at all.

OVERBURDENED SCHOOLS

From all accounts, K–12 schools in Florida are reeling from the many new initiatives underway—especially the implementation of the FCAT and class size reduction. If any K–20 initiatives do filter down from the state level, some interviewees speculated, K–12 schools would be hard pressed to attend to them. For example, a state representative said that schools have "a lot of other more pertinent issues" to tackle.

V. Conclusion

According to a former community college president, "The tune is right in Tallahassee, but we [outside of Tallahassee] can't hear it. What they're talking about is right, but … from a policy standpoint, you should start from the back end: What do we need? We need 70 to 80 percent [of the total K–12 student population] to have competencies to go on to postsecondary education." This quote reflects both the positive and negative aspects of the current reform effort, as described by interviewees. Much of the talk in Tallahassee is focused on student learning, teacher education, and mechanisms that connect K–12 and postsecondary education systems. So far, however, the actions have been relatively limited—especially with regard to improving access to and completion of postsecondary education.

The Department of Education's data warehouse is a sizable achievement, and analysis from Florida's data could drive important policy change. Another positive development is the breaking down of institutional divisions within the department.

It is difficult, however, to determine the impact of the K–20 reforms on classrooms because these reforms were not driven by student- or educator-centered goals and objectives for change. The extent of the impact of the structural reforms on teaching and learning is not yet known. In addition, Governor Bush will be termed out in 2006 and it remains to be seen what policies will continue.

Florida is similar to other states in that it has a great deal of reform occurring in K–12 and little change in postsecondary education. As in most states, Florida's high school exit standards and college entrance and placement standards are disparate. In addition, although Florida's governance spans the K–20 continuum, the obstacles and challenges the state faces are similar to those facing virtually every other state.

Florida has a long history of policy development and implementation in areas that have a significant impact on students (for example, articulation agreements and a common course numbering system). But it remains to be seen if the state can connect these elements with the new K–20 reform agenda in ways that align K–12 and postsecondary education more substantially. Most interviewees agreed with the overall direction Florida is taking in seeking to develop a seamless system of K–20 education. Yet only a few interviewees articulated a vision for K–20 content and performance alignment across the continuum. If Florida can connect its existing foundation of K–20 reforms with its the new governance structures, there is great potential.

Florida Interview Protocol

CONTEXT QUESTIONS

These data to be gathered from web sites and other sources:

- High school dropout rate (and accuracy of data).
- College-going rate (in-state public institutions of higher education, in-state private institutions, out-of-state, disaggregated…).
- College persistence/completion rates (same as above).
- Projected growth in K–12 population (next 20 years, disaggregated by race/ethnicity, geography).
- Projected growth in postsecondary population (next 20 years, disaggregated by race/ethnicity, geography).

QUESTIONS FOR K–12 INTERVIEWEES

[For state agencies:] Please describe the following functions in your agency: information management, education budgeting, program planning, and articulation and collaboration.

Please describe your state's high school assessment system. What is the last high school-level assessment? At what grade level is it benchmarked? What are the stakes for students, educators, and schools? How well are students doing on the assessment? How does its content relate to the content of your state's public postsecondary placement exams?

Please describe your state's K–12 accountability system.

Please describe any collaborative projects/endeavors with postsecondary institutions/systems. How did they start? How are they governed? What are their goals and objectives? How are they working?

Is your [agency, district] brought to the table for state-level K–20 policy discussions? Please describe those discussions (content, goals, objectives, who attends, outcomes).

What kinds of K–12 data are collected? How are they used?

Is Florida able to connect its K–12 and postsecondary education data? If so, how are they used?

Please tell me what you think about the accessibility of Florida's postsecondary institutions for students who are traditionally underrepresented in college. What kind of college preparatory opportunities do students who are traditionally underrepresented in college have in Florida?

QUESTIONS FOR POSTSECONDARY INTERVIEWEES

In Florida, who is responsible for regulating higher education in terms of:
- Budgeting and resource allocation.
- Review of existing programs and approval of new ones.
- Strategic planning and enrollment management.
- Information management and accountability reporting.

How well are these responsibilities currently being performed?

[For state agencies/system offices:] Please describe the following functions in your agency: information management, program planning, and articulation and collaboration with K–12.

What is the role of, and relationship between, state government and postsecondary education?

What role(s) do two-year institutions play in K–20 reform? Four-year institutions?

Please describe any collaborative projects/endeavors with K–12 districts or schools. How did they start? How are they governed? What are their goals and objectives? How are they working?

Please describe any "blended institution" efforts (dual enrollment, middle college, early college high schools). Who started those efforts? Who governs them? Who funds them? What are their goals and objectives? How are they working?

Are your institutions/is your system brought to the table for state-level K–20 policy discussions? Please describe those discussions (content, goals, objectives, who attends, outcomes).

What kinds of postsecondary education data are collected? How are they used?

Is Florida able to connect its K–12 and postsecondary education data? If so, how are they used?

Are there any discussions about developing a postsecondary education accountability system? If so, please characterize those discussions.

Please tell me what you think about the accessibility of Florida's postsecondary institutions for students who are traditionally underrepresented in college. What kind of college preparatory opportunities do students who are traditionally underrepresented in college have in Florida?

QUESTIONS FOR ALL INTERVIEWEES

In what ways, and under what circumstances, do cooperation and conflict between the levels manifest themselves?
- Please describe education governance in your state over the past 10 years (governor, Legislature, K–12, and postsecondary). Why does your state have its current coordinating/governance structures and processes? How do all the different entities interact (legislatively, behind closed doors, territoriality…)

- Please describe the recent restructuring of education governance. Why did it evolve that way? Who promoted the changes? Why? Who was opposed to the changes? Why? What were the main goals and objectives of the restructuring? Do you believe they have been accomplished?

- How do you think the recent restructuring has impacted relationships between education sectors (for example, the ability to work together)?

- Who are the major players for K–12 education? Two-year institutions? Four-year institutions? K–20? What are their roles? How do they create change? How would you characterize their working relationships? How do they fit into the new governance structure?

- Is there a history of collaboration across K–12 and postsecondary education? If so, please give some examples.

- Is there a history of territoriality between education sectors? If so, please give some examples.

- Would you change your state's governance system(s) in any way? If so, how?

To what extent is K–20 reform perceived as a state policy concern?

- What are the major K–12 and postsecondary (two- and four-year) issues facing Florida?

- What are the major issues facing Florida that bridge the different education sectors? What are the major student needs (for example, problems regarding school readiness, high school completion, college-going rates, remediation, college completion)? How does your state assess those needs (especially across the K–20 continuum)?

- Where do they fit on the state's education agenda in terms of the priority level? Who views those as major issues? Who is taking action?

What are the main goals and objectives of current state-level K–20 reforms?

- Please characterize any discussions about (or actions regarding) developing and implementing the following changes:
  - Restructuring state governance to reflect a K–20 frame.
  - Creating a K–20 accountability system (holding postsecondary education accountable for persistence and completion).
  - Restructuring state education finance within a K–20 frame (joint budgeting).
  - Connecting data systems across K–12 and postsecondary education.
  - Funding K–12 and postsecondary education collaborations.
  - Broadening the scope/number of dual enrollment and related programs.
  - Alignment of K–12 and postsecondary education assessments (or use of relevant cut scores).

- Administering postsecondary education placement exams to high school students (diagnostic testing across the continuum).
- Connecting K–12 and postsecondary education standards.
- Public articulation of postsecondary standards (for example, entrance, placement, graduation/general ed, major-specific).
- Public articulation of transfer requirements.

- In each area in which there have been reforms, what have been the main goals and objectives? How have those been measured?
- What was the evolution of each of Florida's K–20 reforms? What changes in these structures, processes, and relationships, if any, have taken place since the reforms were initiated?

What are the incentives and disincentives for improved coordination?

- What are the main barriers to creating Florida's K–20 changes? What are the main barriers to institutionalizing these changes? Will the current budget crisis impact the K–20 reform agenda?
- How institutionalized are these reforms? What is the best way to give traction to these issues? What are some incentives Florida has considered using to create and institutionalize some of these changes?
- What are some incentives for postsecondary institutions and systems to work with K–12 to improve student preparation?
- What are some incentives for postsecondary institutions and systems to improve their student persistence and completion rates?
- What are some incentives for postsecondary institutions and systems to improve their placement and advising practices?

Who is responsible for developing and implementing those changes? How do governors, key legislators, and agencies influence inter-level programs?

- How did K–20 reforms get on the state agenda—what sparked the changes?
- Who has led the charge in developing these changes? In implementing them?
- What has been the role of [interviewee's organization] in developing and implementing K–20 reforms?
- What role do nongovernmental groups play in the K–20 governance arena [for example, the Education Trust, the National Association of System Heads (NASH), the Southern Regional Educational Board (SREB), and the College Board]? How do they interact with public governing entities? How effective have their K–20 initiatives been?
- What has been the role of the business community in K–20 reform and governance?

What have been the main successes and failures to date? What changes in education structures, processes, and relationships, if any, have taken place since the K–20 reforms were initiated?

- What have been the main successes and failures to date (and why does the interviewee consider them successes/failures—based on what evidence)?
- What has changed since the K–20 reform(s) went into place (for example, at the state level and at the district and school level)? Would you characterize these as positive or negative changes (and why)?

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

- Please describe how the various education entities in the state are funded (please describe your state's education finance system).
- What is the current education budget? What financial challenges are you currently facing? How have the different education sectors been impacted by budgetary problems?
- How well do you think it works in terms of supporting and creating the necessary capacity? Equity?
- How does the state's finance structure impact the development, implementation, and institutionalization of K–20 reform? (Does money matter? Does how its flow is structured matter? What kind of behavior does your funding stream create? What kinds of incentives and disincentives does it create?)
- Would you change your state's finance system in any way? If so, how?

What are the short- and long-term outlooks for inter-level relationships? Is legislative or gubernatorial action to promote collaboration likely? Are specific connective mechanisms operational or being proposed?

- Can you predict what will happen in 5 years, 10 years, with the K–20 reform agenda?
- How institutionalized will the reforms be? What will be the major changes for students? Teachers?

Endnotes

1. See http://www.fldoe.org/Strategic_Plan/history.asp.

2. See http://www.flsenate.gov/Statutes/index.cfm?Mode=Constitution&Submenu=3&Tab=statutes#A09S02.

3. See http://www.myflorida.com/myflorida/government/governorinitiatives/aplusplan/planEducation.html.

4. See http://www.fldoe.org/cc/leg/Governor_Press_Release.asp.

5. See http://www.fldoe.org/Strategic_Plan/default.asp.

6. See http://www.flsenate.gov/Statutes/index.cfm?Mode=Constitution&Submenu=3&Tab=statutes#A09S02.

7. In an opinion filed on March 22, 2004, Florida's First District Court ruled, "The board [BOG] shall operate, regulate, control, and be fully responsible for the management of the whole university system… The board's management shall be subject to the powers of the Legislature to appropriate for the expenditure of funds, and the board shall account for such expenditures as provided by law." *Florida Public Employees Council 79, AFSCME, AFL-CIO v. Public Employees Relations Commission and Florida Board of Governors*.

8. See http://www.flsenate.gov/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=Ch1007/SEC23.HTM&Title=-%3E2002-%3ECh1007-%3ESection%2023.

9. See http://www.firn.edu/doe/bin00072/awardamt.htm.

10. See http://66.102.7.104/search?q=cache:osgjUAY3fvsJ:www.state.fl.us/edr/conferences/financialaid/sfa11120.3.pdf+bright+futures+number+of+participants&hl=en.

11. See http://www.fairtest.org/univ/univbrighfutures.htm.

12. See www.k20accountability.org.

13. See http://www.firn.edu/doe/sas/fcat/pdf/fcatfaq1.pdf.

14. See http://www.firn.edu/doe/sas/fcat/pdf/myths-facts.pdf.

15. See http://www.firn.edu/doe/sas/fcat.htm.

16. See http://www.firn.edu/doe/sas/fcat/pdf/fcatfaq1.pdf.

17. See http://www.firn.edu/doe/sas/clsthome.htm.

18. Ibid.

19. See http://www.firn.edu/doe/faq/talented20.htm and http://www.ebudget.state.fl.us/govpriorities/education/one_florida.asp.

20. See http://www.k20accountability.org/docs/12.10.FinalReportTaskForceNoApp.pdf.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

ANDREA VENEZIA is senior policy analyst and project director at the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education. Her work examines education policy, particularly as related to equity and the transition from K–12 to postsecondary education. Prior to joining the National Center, she directed Stanford University's Bridge Project and co-authored *Betraying the College Dream* and *From High School to College*. She has worked for a variety of state, federal, and not-for-profit entities, including the Stanford Institute for Higher Education Research, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, and the National Education Goals Panel.

JONI E. FINNEY is vice president of the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education. Finney oversees the research, communication, and administration of the National Center. She directs research studies related to higher education finance, governance, and performance, including developing the nation's first state-by-state report card for higher education, *Measuring Up*. Prior to her position at the National Center, Finney held senior policy positions with the California Higher Education Policy Center, the Education Commission of the States (ECS), the Pennsylvania State University, and the University of Southern Colorado.

THE INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

The Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization based in Washington, D.C. 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.

THE STANFORD INSTITUTE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION RESEARCH

The Stanford Institute for Higher Education Research (SIHER) is home to sponsored research projects that examine contemporary higher education planning and policy issues from a wide range of analytical perspectives, including those of social scientists and policy audiences in the United States and abroad. Since its establishment in 1989, SIHER has sought to understand the dynamics of systemic change, productivity, management, and effectiveness of higher education organizations, as well as to offer suggestions for their improvement.

THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY AND HIGHER EDUCATION

The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education promotes public policies that enhance Americans' opportunities to pursue and achieve high-quality education and training beyond high school. As an independent, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, the National Center prepares action-oriented analyses of pressing policy issues facing the states and the nation regarding opportunity and achievement in higher education—including two- and four-year, public and private, for-profit and nonprofit institutions. The National Center communicates performance results and key findings to the public, to civic, business, and higher education leaders, and to state and federal leaders who are in positions to improve higher education policy.

Established in 1998, the National Center is not affiliated with any institution of higher education, with any political party, or with any government agency; it receives continuing, core financial support from a consortium of national foundations that includes The Pew Charitable Trusts, The Atlantic Philanthropies, and The Ford Foundation.

152 North Third Street, Suite 705, San Jose, California 95112
Telephone: 408-271-2699 • FAX: 408-271-2697
www.highereducation.org

National Center Publications

The National Center publishes:
- ★ Reports and analyses commissioned by the National Center,
- ★ Reports and analyses written by National Center staff,
- ★ National Center Policy Reports that are approved by the National Center's Board of Directors, and
- ★ *National CrossTalk*, a quarterly publication.

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.

American Higher Education: How Does It Measure Up for the 21st Century, by James B. Hunt Jr. and Thomas J. Tierney with a Foreword by Garrey Carruthers (May 2006, #06-2). These essays by former Governor James B. Hunt Jr. and business leader Thomas J. Tierney lay out in succinct fashion the requirements of both our nation and our states for new and higher levels of performance from America's colleges and universities.

Claiming Common Ground: State Policymaking for Improving College Readiness and Success, by Patrick M. Callan, Joni E. Finney, Michael W. Kirst, Michael D. Usdan, and Andrea Venezia (March 2006, #06-1). To improve college readiness and success, states can develop policies that better connect their K–12 and postsecondary

education systems. However, state action in each of the following policy areas is needed to create college-readiness reform: alignment of coursework and assessments; state finance; statewide data systems; and accountability.

Measuring Up on College-Level Learning, by Margaret A. Miller and Peter T. Ewell (October 2005, #05-8). In this report, the National Forum on College-Level Learning proposes a model for evaluating and comparing college-level learning on a state-by-state basis, including assessing educational capital. As well as releasing the results for five participating states, the authors also explore the implications of their findings in terms of performance gaps by race/ethnicity and educating future teachers.

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, supported by case studies in Florida, Georgia, New York, and Oregon, identifies and examines policy options available to states that are interested in creating sustained K–16 reform.

> ***The Governance Divide: The Case Study for Florida***, by Andrea Venezia and Joni E. Finney (May 2006, #05-4).

> ***The Governance Divide: The Case Study for Georgia***, by Andrea Venezia, Patrick M. Callan, Michael W. Kirst, and Michael D. Usdan (April 2006, #05-5).

> ***The Governance Divide: The Case Study for New York***, by Andrea Venezia, Michael W. Kirst, and Michael D. Usdan (May 2006, #05-6).

> ***The Governance Divide: The Case Study for Oregon***, by Andrea Venezia and Michael W. Kirst (April 2006, #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. It 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 costs 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.

www.highereducation.org