THE hunt institute

GOVERNORS' ADVISORS RETREAT

Leveraging State Leadership To Support Workforce Development

2020
KEY TAKEAWAYS

KEYNOTE REMARKS: JON SCHNUR

Achieving maximum impact for students requires business, government, and education to work collaboratively. Jon Schnur reflected on his experiences as an advisor to former U.S. Presidents and Secretaries of Education, and as Chairman and CEO of America Achieves to help attendees set a vision for how to move this important work forward.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

✉ *Jon Schnur,* Chairman and CEO, America Achieves

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- In 1973, one out of four jobs in the U.S. required a postsecondary degree. Now, 60 percent of jobs require some sort of training beyond high school. This requires our education systems to fundamentally change.
  - ▶ **Collective action is essential to leading systemic change.**
  - ▶ There is no single institution that is responsible for developing this new system, but governors and employers are strategic stakeholders who can help bring groups together in collective action.
- In order to be successful in the workforce, there are several skills beyond traditional academic skills that people need to develop:
  - ▶ The ability to have **cognitive collaboration** with teams and **effectively communicate**.
  - ▶ Personal **project management** skills that include the ability to prioritize and complete tasks in an efficient manner.
  - ▶ Critical thinking skills to **diagnose abstract problems** and identify solutions.
  - ▶ Technical skills that are not just for a specific job skill but also are the fundamental skillset for that job family, enabling a person to move up to different roles.
- In order to help people gain these skills, high schools and postsecondary institutions should be considering how to incorporate **work-based learning**.
- States face several challenges in the pursuit of successful long-term systems change:
  - ▶ **No successful change is short-term or led by a small number of people.**
  - ▶ Systematically connecting classroom learning and work-based experiences will require engagement of both "who" (i.e. employers, students, etc.) and "what" (i.e. skills, programs, etc.) in a coherent way.
  - ▶ Employers need an effective way to step up on these issues from a bottom-line perspective, not just as part of their civic duty.
    - » However, the **reforms cannot solely be employer-driven** because the business community's priority to screen for "talent" may have unintended consequences on equity goals.
  - ▶ Attainment goals not coupled with short- and long-term indicators are insufficient.
    - » Data are needed to identify **inequities** and progress to close gaps in outcomes.
    - » Earnings and economic mobility are good long-term indicators.
  - ▶ You must consider if the system and **human capacity** can deliver on the reforms you've proposed.

ACTION ITEMS

- Understand the data you have available to inform your thinking about goals and metrics.
- **Build partnerships with employers** in your state to identify workforce needs and create pathways for skill and knowledge development.
- If you have agreement about the vision, look at **building on strengths and assets** within your state as a first step.
- Consider the ways in which you can take steps now to make sure that this can be sustained after administrations change.

WORKFORCE TRENDS

We constantly hear about the "changing workforce," but what does that mean for your state's context? Participants learned how data can help policymakers better connect workforce and education needs. Additionally, participants heard from two states that have made great progress in building longitudinal data systems connecting the full continuum from early learning through workforce.

MODERATOR
✉ *Dr. John D. Denning,* Senior Program Officer, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
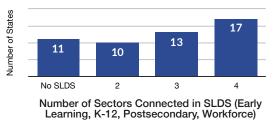
RESOURCE EXPERTS
✉ *Adam Edelen,* Former Chief of Staff, Office of Governor Steve Beshear
✉ *Dr. Angela K. Henneberger,* Principal Investigator and Director of Research, Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center

KEY TAKEAWAYS

■ To make data-informed policy decisions, we need two things:

▸ **Systems to compile, clean, and share key data.**

▸ **Analytic capacity** to leverage the data and make it understandable and usable.

■ Maryland and Kentucky have both been early adopters of state longitudinal data systems (SLDS); **both states codified their data systems in legislation.**

▸ **Kentucky's** longitudinal data system was led by Governor Steve Beshear during a tough economic situation and budget shortfalls and with a different party controlling the legislature. It was seen as a **relatively inexpensive** way to demonstrate a commitment to education and **build bipartisan support** for programs informed by data.

» The SLDS was an opportunity to bring the business community, government, and parties together.

▸ **The Maryland Longitudinal Data System (MLDS) Center** is an independent state agency that consists of three branches: Data and IT, reporting services (works with legislative staff on requests), and research (advanced statistical analysis).

» The MLDS is overseen by two boards: a Data and Governance board, which must include two members who are **cybersecurity experts**, and a Research and Policy board.

» Data-sharing partners all share a full-time position at the MLDS.

■ Conversations between researchers and policymakers are mutually beneficial to **identifying high-impact opportunities to leverage data**, identify gaps, and recognize the long-term benefits of SLDS.

▸ It can often feel like you are swimming in data, but don't have any information.

MAKING CONNECTIONS, 2019

Number of Sectors Connected in SLDS (Early Learning, K-12, Postsecondary, Workforce)

Source: Education Commission of the States.
View state specific data here.

ACTION ITEMS

■ Assess the current status of your state's longitudinal data system to identify the connections being made.

▸ Reach out to the lead agency or person overseeing the state longitudinal data system to discuss the capabilities of the system.

■ Convene relevant stakeholders representing **multiple sectors** to discuss opportunities to improve or build upon the current structure.

▸ Communicate with stakeholders that SLDSs can:

» Hold the government **accountable** for how it spends taxpayer dollars.

» Identify the **unique needs and challenges** of your state's constituents.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

■ Connecting the Continuum | This policy brief, authored by The Hunt Institute, explores state longitudinal data systems (SLDS) and provides two case studies on Kentucky and Washington's SLDSs.

SEEING ROI ON EDUCATION: BUSINESS LEADERS PRIORITIZING EDUCATION
Participants heard from political leaders who built coalitions with business leaders to advance education initiatives that support a strong workforce.

MODERATOR
✉ *Dr. Javaid Siddiqi,* President & CEO, The Hunt Institute

RESOURCE EXPERTS
✉ *Laura Fornash,* Former Secretary of Education to Governor Bob McDonnell; Senior Vice President, McGuireWoods Consulting

✉ *The Honorable Teresa Ruiz,* Senate President Pro Tempore and Chair of the Senate Education Committee, New Jersey State Senate

KEY TAKEAWAYS
🔖 Virginia's Business Higher Education Council provided a **direct voice for the business community** to engage with policymakers and work collaboratively towards the postsecondary attainment goals.

  ▸ **Adults with some college experience but no degree were a key target for policymakers.**

  ▸ Virginia created a grant program for community colleges offering programs in high-demand fields.

🔖 Senator Ruiz **leveraged the relationships that other departments and organizations** had with the business community to help inform the work of crafting the bills such that they reflected the business community's values and priorities.

  ▸ Inequities in participation and outcomes highlighted the need for more than just the postsecondary or apprenticeship program. **New Jersey is considering how access to early childhood education, transportation, and other services are barriers and create inequities in postsecondary attainment and workforce development.**

  ▸ People need a "one-stop" mechanism for navigating the system across agencies.

🔖 In both cases, statutory changes were critical to ensuring sustainability of initiatives.

ACTION ITEMS
🔖 Identify and engage the **major employers** in the state to help them understand the issues not only from a civic duty perspective, but also from a bottom-line perspective considering how postsecondary attainment benefits their business.

🔖 Consider what **additional barriers** may be preventing people from accessing postsecondary education and workforce opportunities.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
🔖 Building Pathways to Success | This report by JPMorgan Chase & Company highlights their New Skills for Youth initiative which seeks to address education and training systems, especially for economically vulnerable young people.

🔖 Growth4VA | Growth4VA is a broad-based bipartisan coalition of business, education, and political leaders and Virginians from all walks of life who believe that higher education is a crucial economic engine for our Commonwealth. The coalition is founded by the Virginia Business Higher Education Council and supported by all 16 public colleges and universities in Virginia, the Virginia Community College System, and Virginia's non-profit private institutions.

🔖 Senate Bill 3064 and Senate Bill 3066 | Sen. Ruiz was the primary sponsor of two apprenticeship bills which were signed by the Governor on January 13, 2020.

LEADING AT EVERY LEVEL: CONNECTING STATE AND LOCAL EFFORTS
Often, local leaders are the first to identify and respond to shifts in demand and demographics. As such, they are important partners for state leaders to engage in finding statewide solutions.

MODERATOR
✉ *Matthew W. Cook,* Public Finance Manager, Arnold Ventures

RESOURCE EXPERTS
✉ *The Honorable Levar Stoney,* Mayor, City of Richmond, Virginia
✉ *The Honorable Coral Evans,* Mayor, City of Flagstaff, Arizona
✉ *Mike Krause,* Executive Director, Tennessee Higher Education Commission and Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation

KEY TAKEAWAYS
- Tennessee's commitment to engaging local communities prior to the launch of TN Promise and giving them the flexibility to adapt the program **created strong buy-in from communities across the state.**
  - The TN Reconnect program, which engages adult learners, has given the state more local buy-in than the TN Promise because it addresses an immediate need in the community.
  - As state funding for postsecondary attainment and workforce development has increased, federal WIOA dollars have shifted to cover the supportive costs of earning a degree or credential such as transportation and living expenses.
- As Secretary of State, Mayor Stoney often looked to the members of the general assembly for "local context," but he now realizes that community leaders such as **mayors are often more entrenched in local issues.**
- Mayor Evans is working with mayors across her region in order to **amplify their voice** and strategically lead on issues collectively.
- State and local leaders don't always speak the same language, even if their goals are the same.
  - **A mayor might not be interested in "college-going rates" even though they are really focused on workforce development.**
- Engaging in conversations with mayors can help state leaders understand how a potential policy will work when implementing on a local level.
  - Unfunded state mandates can create a significant burden on the local government to raise revenue.
- It can be difficult for a municipality to set a meaningful **local postsecondary education attainment goal** if the state is not similarly committed to an attainment goal.

ACTION ITEMS
- State and local leaders should frame conversation to focus on **"what are we working on together"** so that there is shared ownership.
- State leaders should look for **feedback on ideas from local leaders** who can help provide context into the language, unintended consequences, and costs.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
- TN Promise Annual Report | Provides additional data about the TN Promise Program.
- Drive to 55 | Website provides information about the overall attainment strategy in Tennessee.

PUTTING PLANS INTO ACTION: EXPERIENCE IN IMPLEMENTATION
Participants learned from the experience across two different gubernatorial administrations about supporting implementation efforts to turn "big ideas" into action.

MODERATOR
✉ *Chuck Kaylor,* Chief of Staff, John M. Belk Endowment

RESOURCE EXPERTS
✉ *Sam Gutter,* Former Education Policy Advisor, Office of Governor Bill Haslam; Senior Director of Strategic Initiatives, Tennessee SCORE
✉ *Nicole Washington,* Higher Education Consultant, Lumina Foundation
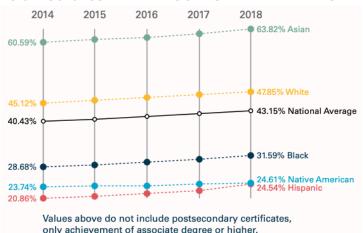
KEY TAKEAWAYS
- The pace of the policymaking process can often lead to a disconnect between policy and practice.
- Setting an attainment goal enabled Florida to **think beyond the short-term goals** and implement strategies that built toward long-term success.
   ▸ **Performance-based funding** was also a key piece in promoting fidelity in implementation.
   ▸ Having the goal **codified** helped ensure sustainability across time and administrations.
   ▸ Governor Scott's office had lots of conversations with the incoming administration's transition team communicating the goals and efforts towards the program.
- In Tennessee, major education reforms passed by Governor Phil Bredesen (D) were implemented by Governor Bill Haslam (R).
   ▸ When Haslam came into office, he:
      » Conducted a listening tour of teachers and local leaders.
      » Engaged in conversations with employers.
      » Called meeting with all community college presidents to help collectively set an attainment goal.
   ▸ **State leaders spent a year personally meeting with every single county mayor to "sell" the Drive to 55 program before implementation began. This gave the program collective ownership across the state.**
- Policymakers should be willing to **continue listening once implementation begins** in order to make some course corrections along the way.

ACTION ITEMS
- **Set a culture of looking for the "right" answer, not "our" answer.**
- Clearly define the goal, priorities, and message in order to build momentum and support.
- Actively seek out feedback to address implementation challenges or shortcomings.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
- State Strategy Labs | Strategy Labs is a resource provided by Lumina Foundation for state leaders to share research, data, and professional experiences so that significantly more residents can hold a degree or other high-quality credential.
- Lumina 2020 Stronger Nation Report | The Lumina Foundation recently released their 2020 Stronger Nation Report which provides state-specific information about progress on postsecondary education attainment.

U.S. POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION ATTAINMENT GAP

Values above do not include postsecondary certificates, only achievement of associate degree or higher.

Source: Lumina Foundation, Strong Nation Report.
View state specific data here.

STATE CEO: THE ESSENTIAL ROLE OF THE GOVERNOR

The final session allowed former governors to reflect on the role of the governor to promote the economic vitality of the state through education and the workforce.

MODERATOR
✉ *David Struhs,* Director, Hunt-Kean Leadership Fellows, The Hunt Institute
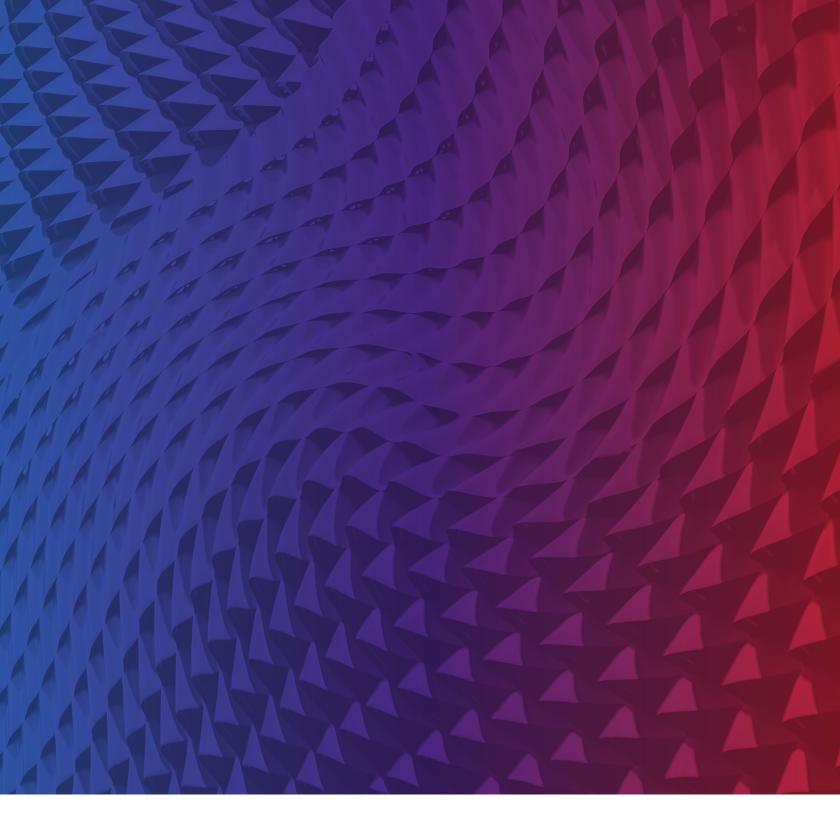
RESOURCE EXPERTS
The Honorable Don Carcieri, Governor of Rhode Island (2003-2011)
The Honorable Dannel Malloy, Governor of Connecticut (2011-2019)

KEY TAKEAWAYS
- Governors are uniquely positioned to bring together coalitions of stakeholders and elevate voices that may traditionally be underrepresented.
  - People must see and understand that the Governor cares about education.
- Governor Malloy led a number of postsecondary and workforce initiatives including:
  - Establishing a P-20 Council to support collaboration between early childhood, K-12, higher education, and the workforce; and
  - Leading the merger of the state's community college and university systems.
- Governor Carcieri also led a number of education initiatives aimed at growing the Rhode Island economy including:
  - Increasing graduation requirements to better align with postsecondary and workforce readiness; and
  - Establishing a PK-16 Council to better collaboration between the silos of the education system.
- Education is both a moral imperative for state leaders as well as a tool for economic development.
  - Governors need to communicate about the challenges and inequities facing our systems of education and workforce development so that it feels personal to each person.
  - People and businesses want to move to places that have strong school systems from K-12 to higher education. Without focusing on education, it is difficult to spur economic development.

ACTION ITEMS
- Leverage the Office of the Governor to encourage collaboration between stakeholders around a common goal.
- Remember that, in many cases, people's livelihoods and economic opportunities depends on the work you are leading.

THE hunt institute

www.hunt-institute.org | @Hunt_Institute | @thehuntinstitute

1000 Park Forty Plaza | Suite 280 | Durham, NC 27713 | *p:* 984.377.5200