
SREB States Sharing Data: Policies that Work

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Southern Regional Education Board

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Methods

Background

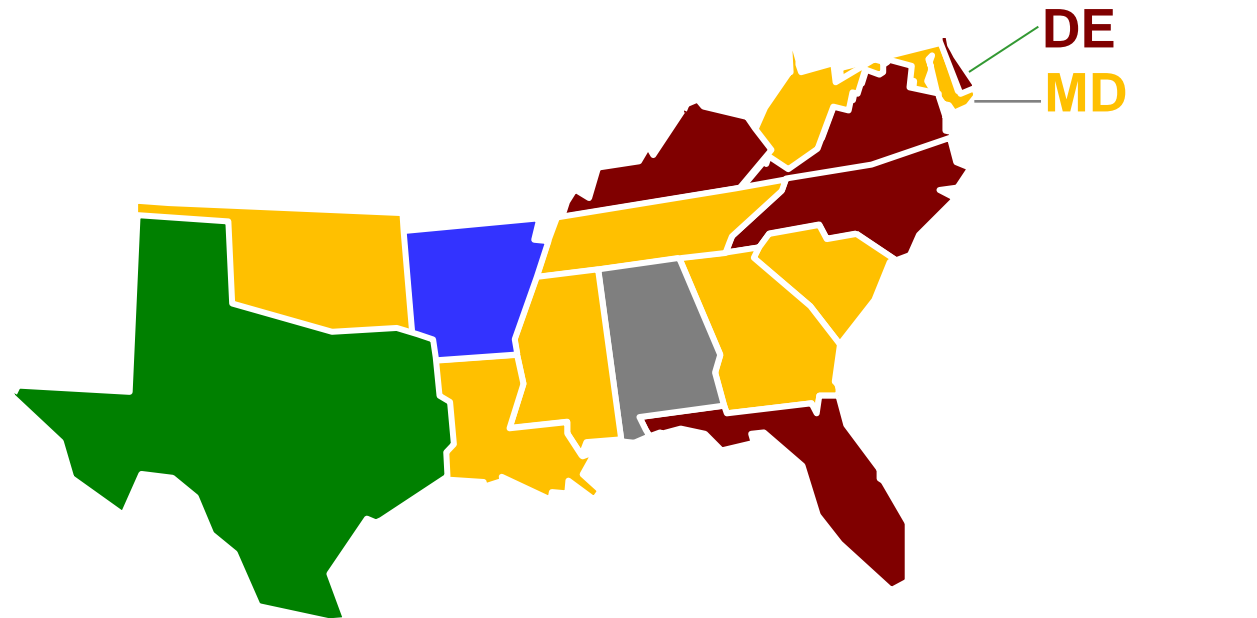
- Regional meeting on linkages November 2008; cohosted by DQC and SREB. Attended by representatives from K-12, postsecondary and P-20 Councils.
- National surveys: Data Quality Campaign (DQC) and State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO).
- SREB regional phone interviews, Fall 2009 to Winter 2010.

Survey Participants

- 65 data system and/or accountability stakeholders appointed by agency heads at 38 agencies (K-12 and higher education 4-year, 2-year and technical).
- Obtained both perspectives from all 16 SREB states.
- Typical participant: CIO, Director of Policy.
- 16 K-12 agencies.
- 22 higher education agencies.

10 Actions States Should Take to Ensure Effective Data Use, 2009

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**8 to 9
actions**

**6 to 7
actions**

**4 to 5
actions**

**1 to 3
actions**

**0
actions**

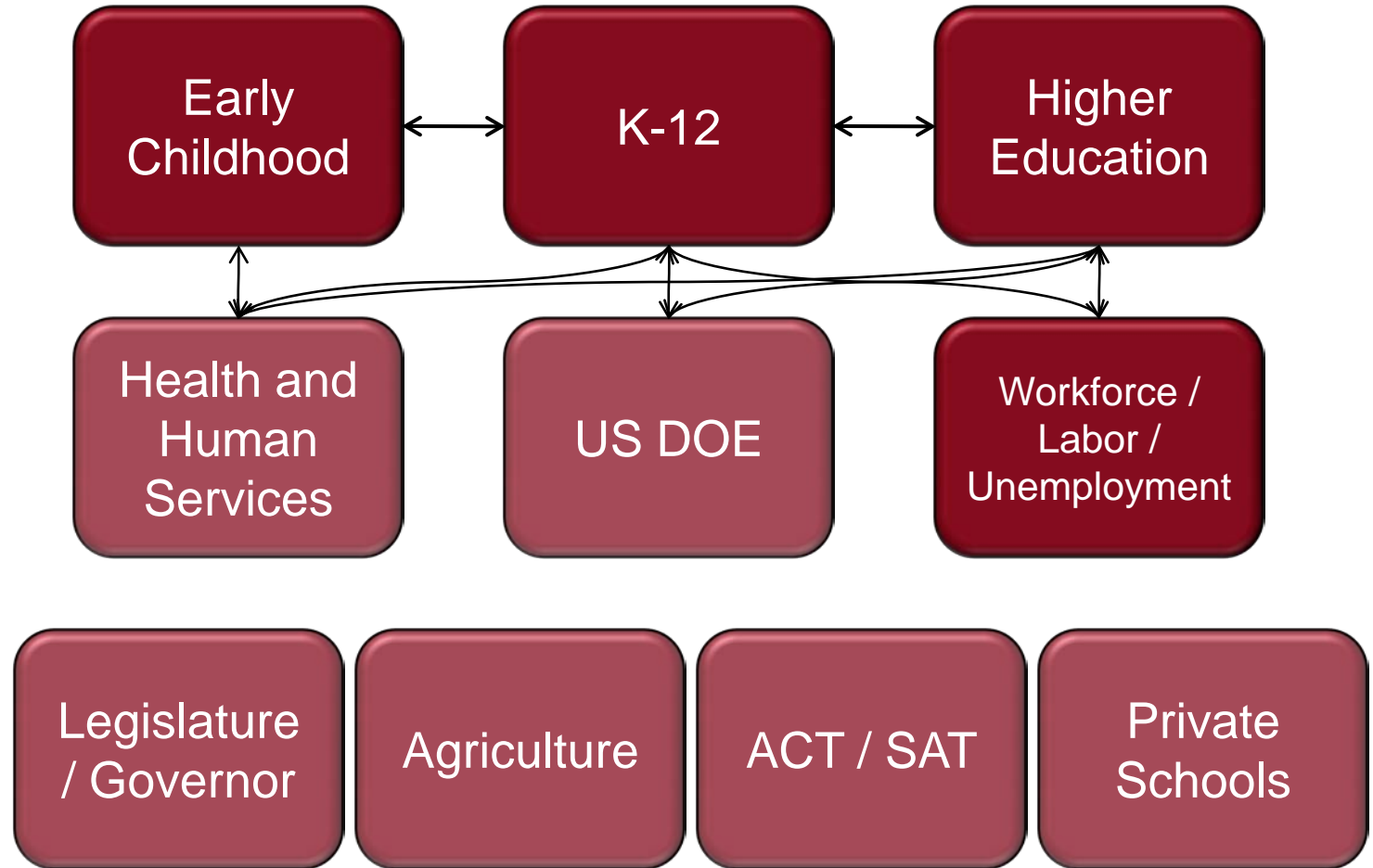
The Questions

What are current products of inter-agency linkages?

Where do SREB states stand in developing technology and using linked data?

What is being done, based on the linked data, to improve outcomes?

Agency Linkages



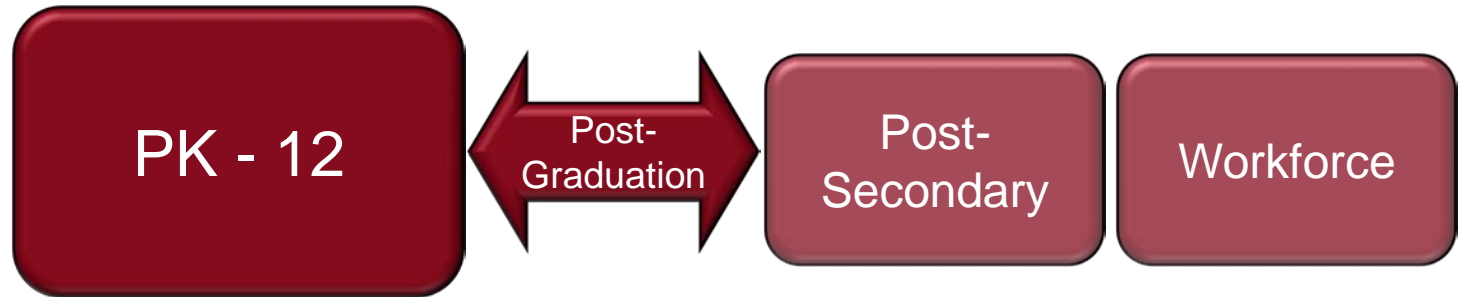
Common Linked-Data Products

- 15 states reported postsecondary feedback reports.
 - Remediation reports, first-time freshmen reports, high school feedback reports
 - Content varies
- 14 states reported some transmission of electronic transcripts.
 - Could be K-12 to postsecondary
 - Could be within level
 - Could be PDF

Key Questions...

Requiring Interagency Data

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What programs work in producing college ready graduates?

What programs result in graduates being successful in the workforce?

What policies contribute to improving success rates for at risk students?

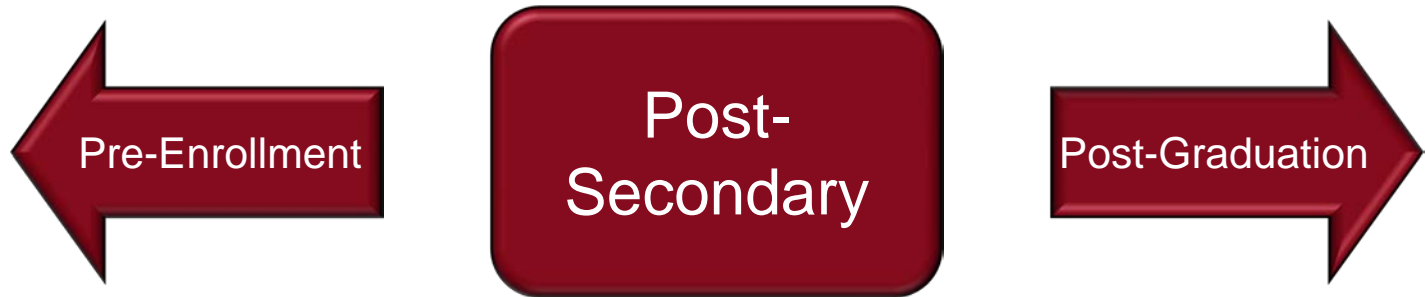
Which teachers' students have unusually high college and workforce success rates?

What high school performance indicators predict success later?

Key Questions...

Requiring Interagency Data

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Which students will benefit from accelerated programs?

How effective are our teacher training programs?

Are specific schools producing better than average students for specific majors?

How does dual enrollment influence student success?

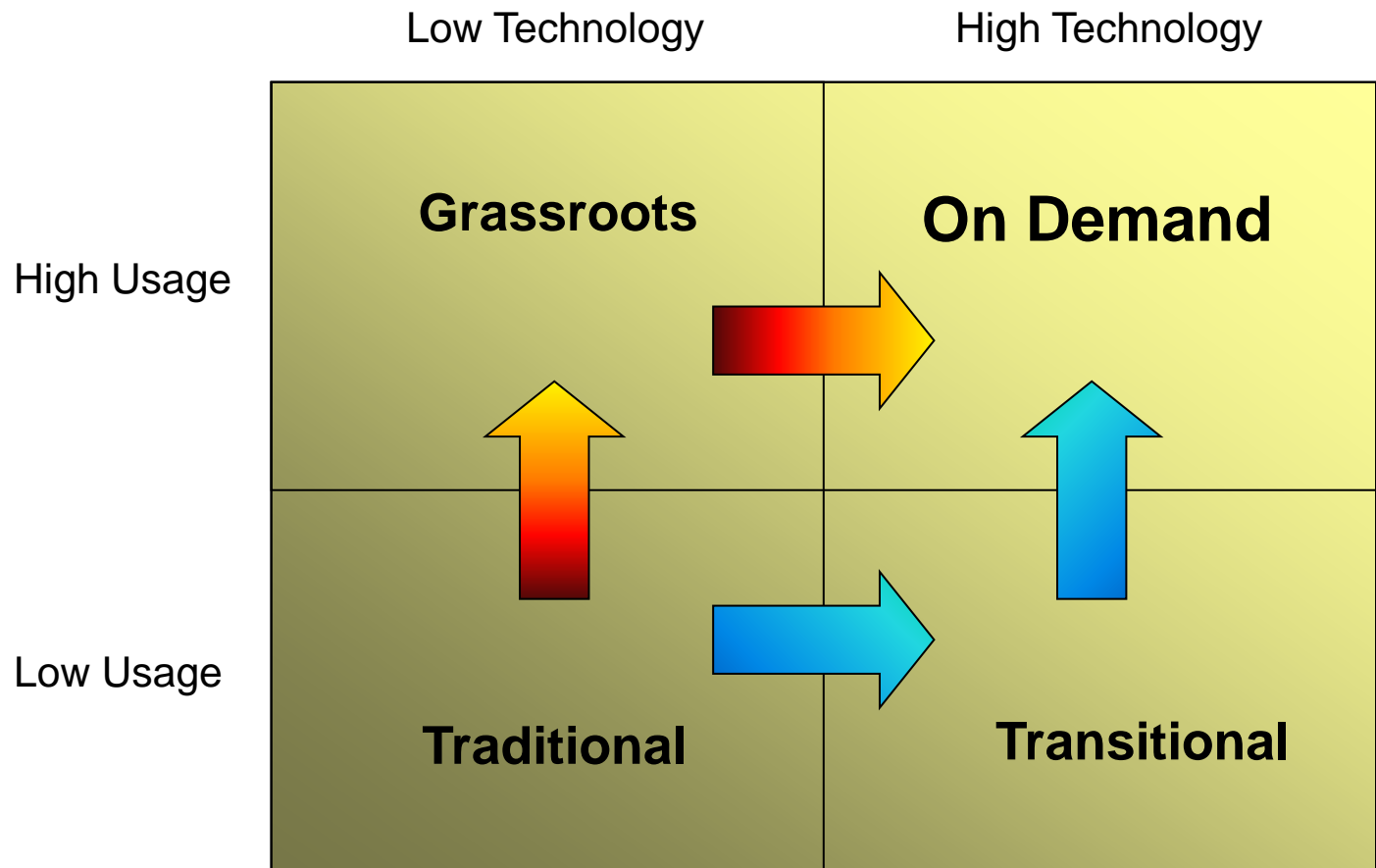
Which majors lead to workplace success?

Which programs lead to higher income?

What graduates have careers in their major field?

What predicts who gives back?

Dimensions of Linked Data



Two paths to the same goal...

Dimension: Technology for Linkages

High Technology

Regularly scheduled, comprehensive, automated linkages within and between agency data systems. Easy access to timely data. Tiered access for stakeholders.

Low Technology

Data in unlinked silos. Individual, manual file transfers on request or with approval.

Data access is limited to those with significant expertise or permissions. Data sharing is ad hoc and not automated.

Dimension: Usage

High Usage

Usage of data is integral to agency mission and employee workplans. Usage is frequent and regular. Data are easily requested, while still protecting privacy. Users are taught how to interpret data. Users' feedback is sought to improve data products. Guidance is provided on what interventions might follow from the results of an analysis.

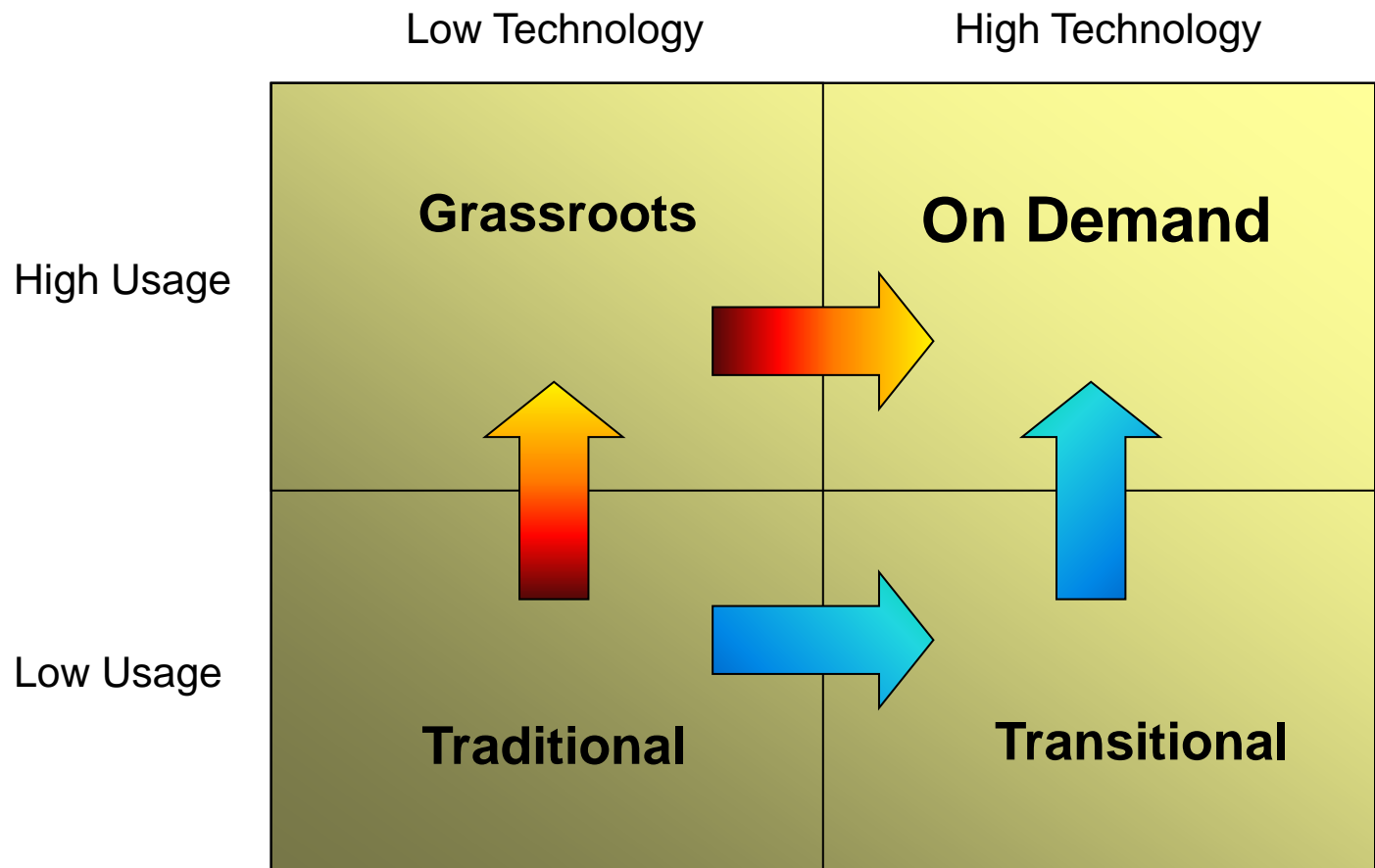
Low Usage

Usage of linked data is occasional and irregular. It is complicated or time-consuming to request data. Data are reported, but no one is sure how they are being used — there is no feedback loop between providers and users.

Remarks from states about usage

- “Ten years of feedback reports and I have no idea what they’re doing with them.”
- “We have great data, but we don’t use it.”
- “In the early days, we did a lot of follow-up and asking them what was useful. Now it’s institutionalized.”
- “Some principals and superintendents look forward to the [reports]. They call if they’re late.”

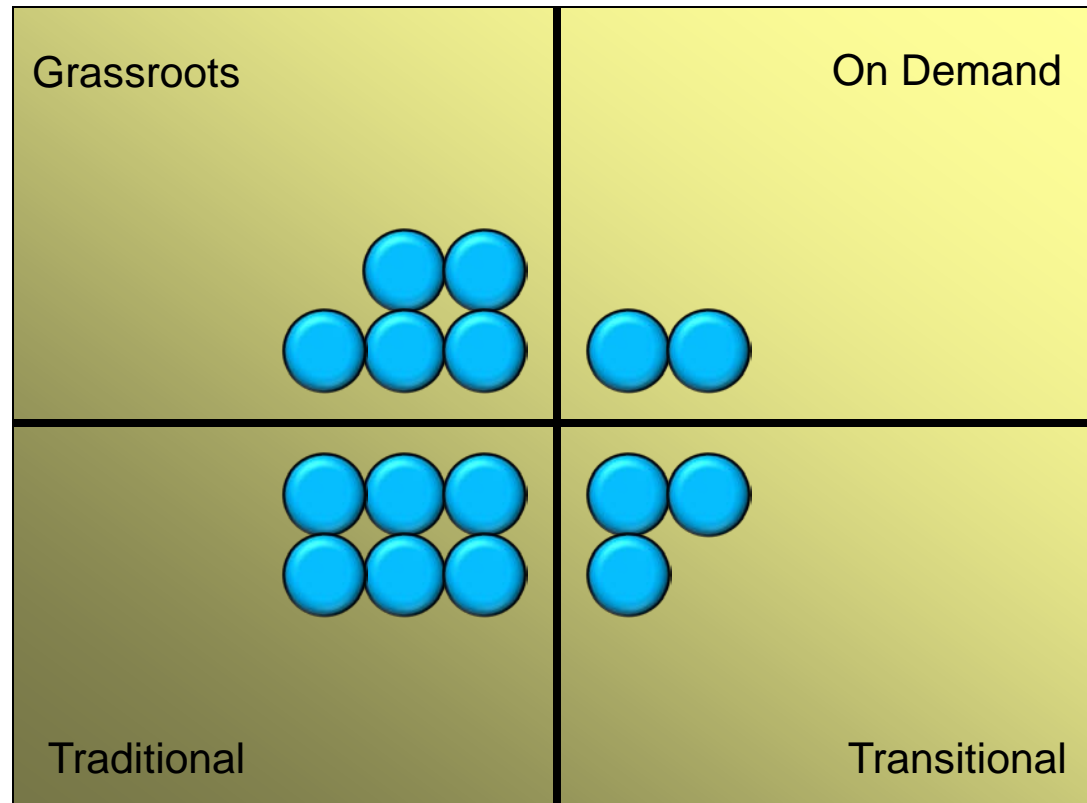
Dimensions of Linked Data



Two paths to the same goal...

Where states have been....

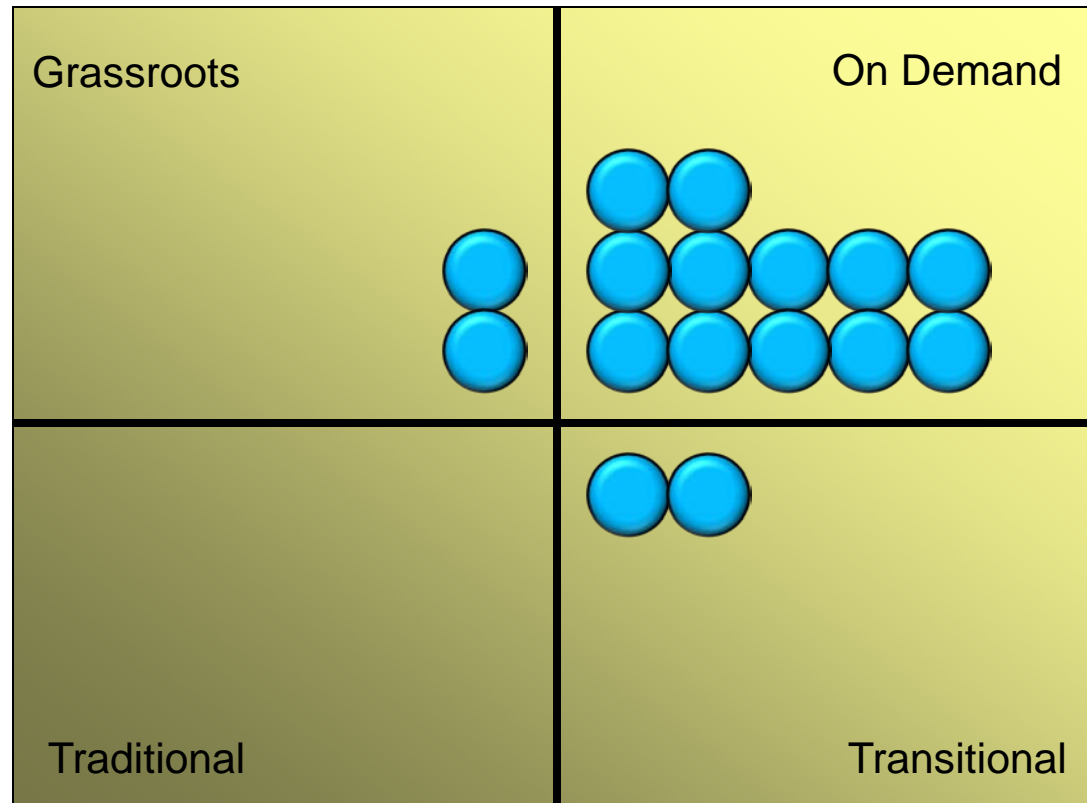
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- ***Two main paths to “On Demand”***
- ***All states are making or planning progress***

Where states are going in the next few years:

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- ***Two main paths to “On Demand”***
- ***All states are making or planning progress***

Issues that prevent progress toward “On Demand” quadrant:

- Technical
- Resources
- Legal
- Fear of Consequences
- “Turf” Issues

With all these issues, how does linkage ever happen?

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**Legislation OR money
OR grass-roots effort...**

There's no guarantee that linkages will improve outcomes...

Measurable outcomes:

Policy issues for which interagency data is needed

K-12

- Fulfilling Legislative Mandates
- Saving Money
- Influencing Policy
- Improving Student Learning
- Improving College Readiness
- Improving Teaching Practices
- Improving Curriculum Alignment

Higher Ed

- Fulfilling Legislative Mandates
- Saving Money
- Influencing Policy
- Improving Completion Rates
- Reducing Remediation Rates
- Improving Teacher Training
- Improving Enrollment Rates
- Improving Retention/ Re-enrollment Rates

Saving Money



Georgia technical colleges, Louisiana and South Carolina have documented reductions in costs since implementing electronic transcripts.


- One state's postsecondary agency found that K-12 teachers' out-of-field master's degrees had no impact on student achievement.
 - The 10% salary bonus is being reconsidered, with implications for teacher training.




South Carolina K-12 is running a pilot with the state Medicaid office to pre-identify students for free/reduced price lunch status.


- Will likely increase the number of students who qualify – especially in high school.

Influencing Policy

 Arkansas K-12 used an analysis of AP enrollment and college success to validate their current policy of a minimum of 4 AP classes offered per high school.

 Based on their first-time freshman report, Louisiana is raising admission standards for higher education.

 Oklahoma's technical schools used wage data associated with former students combined with data on poverty level to redefine which target jobs (and majors) were "high wage".

 Florida recently changed the high school accountability system to include measures of student preparation for postsecondary.

Improving Student Learning

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North Carolina Community Colleges found an improvement in the percentage of transfer students who have a 2.0 GPA or better 1 year after transfer.

- It increased after the postsecondary performance reports were linked to institution funding.

Improving Completion Rates



Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education linked data with the DMV to track students with 90+ hours of college credit and no bachelor's degree.

- Implemented a statewide plan to bring those people back to school, resulting in *hundreds of bachelor's degrees completed*.





Texas Higher Education Coordination Board tracked 7th graders through college.

- 17,000 students were found in *postsecondary* who had been previously coded as *high school dropouts* (left state, got GEDs, attended private schools).

Improving Enrollment and Retention

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-  The Technical College System of Georgia documented an increase in application rates and enrollment rates since implementing electronic transcripts.
-  The West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission tightened admissions standards based on data from SAT about high school course taking patterns and retention and graduation rates.

Improving Curriculum Alignment



Based on college readiness data, Oklahoma passed a state law to require more math and other rigorous courses in the high school curriculum.



Maryland is considering a similar requirement.



Texas used remediation data to decide that the college prep curriculum should be the default in high school.

- They also adjusted the Algebra 2 curriculum so that there is less review of Algebra 1, improving districts' student achievement in college.

Remediation and Teacher Training

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Reducing Remediation Rates

Texas found that making the college prep diploma the default diploma improved preparation at 4-year and 2-year colleges.



Improving Teacher Training and Teaching Practices

North Carolina is planning to study the differences in student achievement based on teacher training programs.

So What Seems to Help?

Enterprise-wide Standards Help

- Standards for data collection and handling
- Specific content standards
- Standard curriculum and pacing
- Grading/GPA calculation standards
- Standard course numbering
- Transcript standards
- Standards for remediation



CAVEAT: Must have local buy-in

Balanced Policy Helps

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- Budgets, system requirements and Institutional Research *in support of policy*
- Data to make decisions, not just to keep systems accountable
- Focusing on data from good schools to find best practices – “Improvement, not punishment”
- Public accountability for results
- Tie money to important outcomes



Relationships Between Agencies Help

- “Spirit of cooperation”
- Trust between agencies (or a trusted third party)
- Buy-in from multiple agencies
- Buy-in from local stakeholders
- Cooperation from Governor’s office
- Legislative support



Culture of Data Use Helps

- Clear governance – who owns the data?
- Legislation that supports data sharing
- Share data back and forth – “one-way data sharing is unpopular”
- Policy research and analysis done by people “who know the data well enough to know when the outcomes look odd”
- Present data in ways that users find helpful by asking them



Ongoing Efforts Help

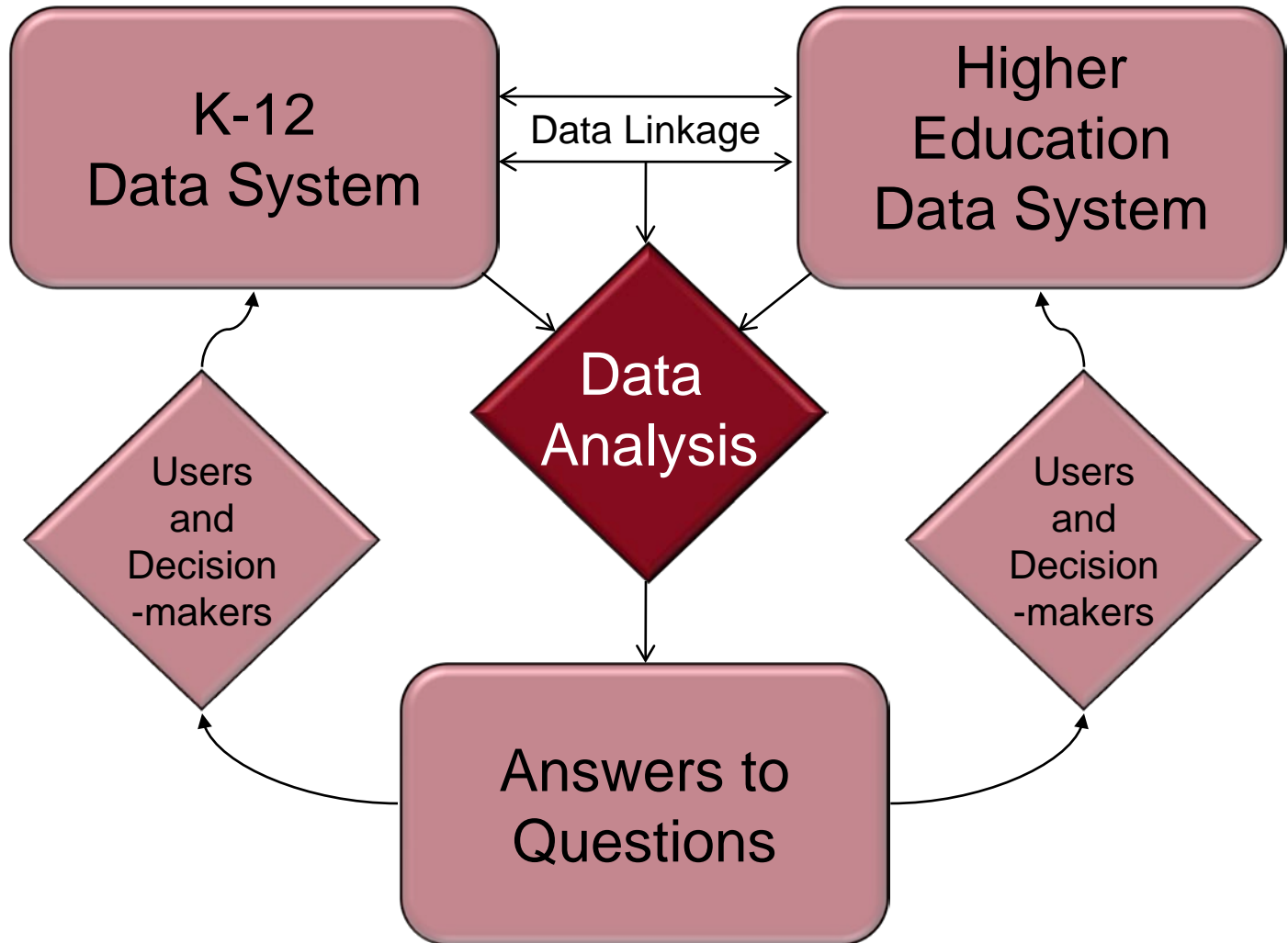
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Constant, frequent, ongoing...

- ... communication between agencies
- ... marketing of current reports
- ... professional development of data users, collectors and providers
- ... collection of feedback from data users (surveys, blog comments, conferences)
- ... adaptation of reports to meet needs

The Role of Analysis



Bottom Line

It's not just about the technology;

**It's the people (especially the analysts!),
the relationships and the cultural
emphasis on using the data.**

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