



NATIONAL SKILLS COALITION
Every worker. Every industry. A strong economy.

Middle Skills Agenda

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Washington Economic Development
Association

February, 2014

About the National Skills Coalition

- We Organize

National and State Coalitions

- We Advocate

Across Policy Silos

- We Communicate

To Members and Many Audiences



Our Vision

We seek an America that grows its economy by investing in its people, so that every worker and every industry has the skills to compete and prosper.



Investing in the Forgotten Middle

Middle-skill jobs, which require more than high-school, but less than a four-year degree, make up the largest part of the American's labor market.



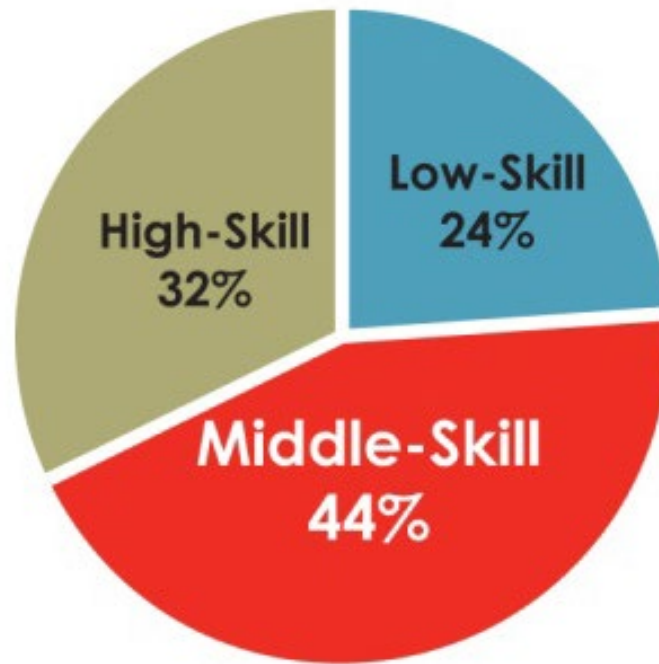
Skills Gap?



- 64% of companies say they cannot find qualified applicants for management, scientific, engineering or technical positions.
-McKinsey Survey
- 67% of small and midsize manufacturers report moderate to severe workforce shortages, and they predict this will get worse not better.
-National Manufacturing Institute Survey

Job Openings by Skill Level 2008–2018

In the decade between 2008–2018, **44 percent** of all *job openings* will be middle-skill.



The Workforce of Tomorrow is the Workforce of Today

State's cannot address their middle-skill challenges by focusing solely on the next generation of workers coming out of high school.



What's the Problem?

- The Skills Gap!
- Lots of issues competing for time, attention, funding, etc.
- Workforce should be more central in economic policy
- Need to raise visibility

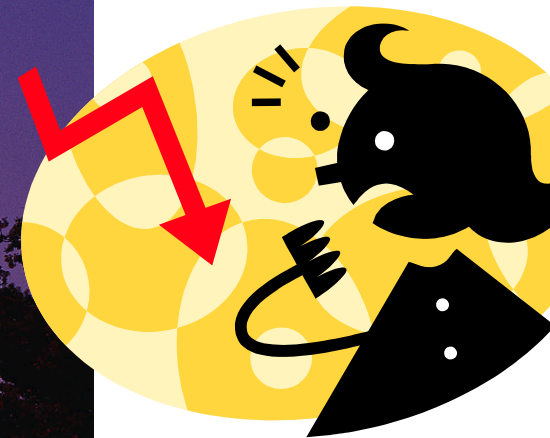


Current Challenges

- Major skills gaps in the US labor market (relative to demand).
- Education and workforce policies have not been sufficient to date to close these gaps.
- These efforts are needed more than ever in aftermath of the “Great Recession” but their expansion or even survival are threatened by grim budgetary climate.



A Word About Federal Policy



Whatever Happens in DC...

Federal funding cuts over a range of human capital investments are having a significant impact on states' ability to educate and train their workforce.



But it's not all bad news...

Though austerity talks continue to dominate the conversation, there are still opportunities to talk about a skills agenda



Policymakers are Paying Attention

- **President Obama** in the State of The Union called for increased investments in skills training and policy changes
- **Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL)** has called for a renewed focus on career and technical education
- **House Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-VA)** has called for increased skills training and education
- **Committee Chairs Tom Harkin (D-IA) and John Kline (R-MN)** want WIA reauthorized



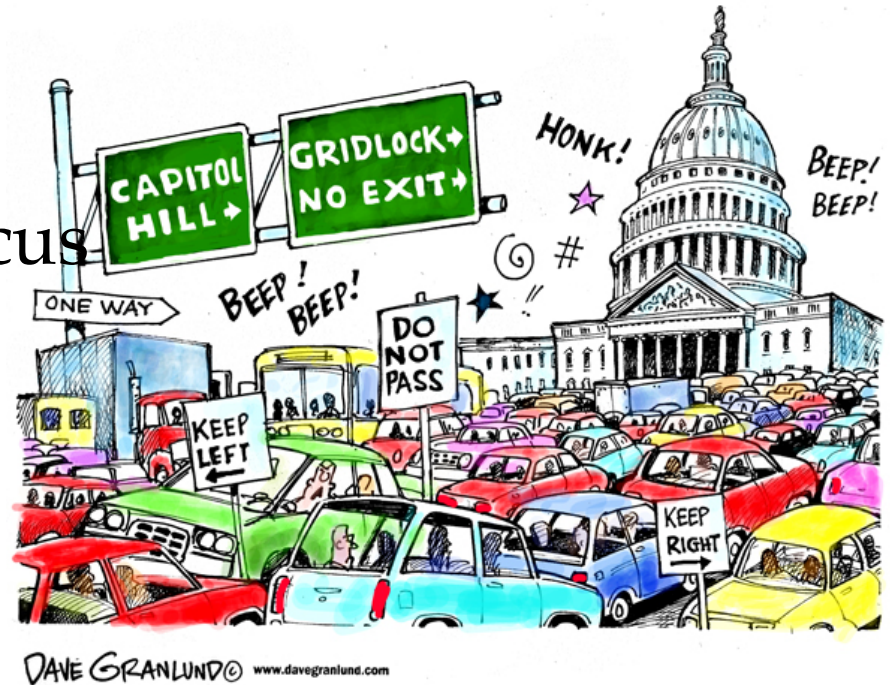
And so is the press...

Policymaker attention has generated substantial press -- so has the “skills gap” conversation.



The Result?

- There is a growing consensus among policymakers and the public that we should focus on workforce education and training.
- However, there is a substantial gap when it comes to developing solutions



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In the States...



Workforce Programs in the States

- Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Title I for Youth, Adults and Dislocated Workers
- Employment Service
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Secondary Career and Technical Education
- Adult Basic Education
- TANF Employment and Training
- SNAP Employment and Training
- Community and Technical College Training
- Apprenticeship



Workforce Programs in the State

How do we get these programs to function as a system for middle skill training?



A Policy Framework: What Works?

- **Sector/Industry Partnerships** - engaging employers in a meaningful way
- **Career Pathways** - Sequential/Integrated Education and Training –increasing access and employment
- **Cross Agency Measurement** – creating system-wide information for policy leaders and consumers



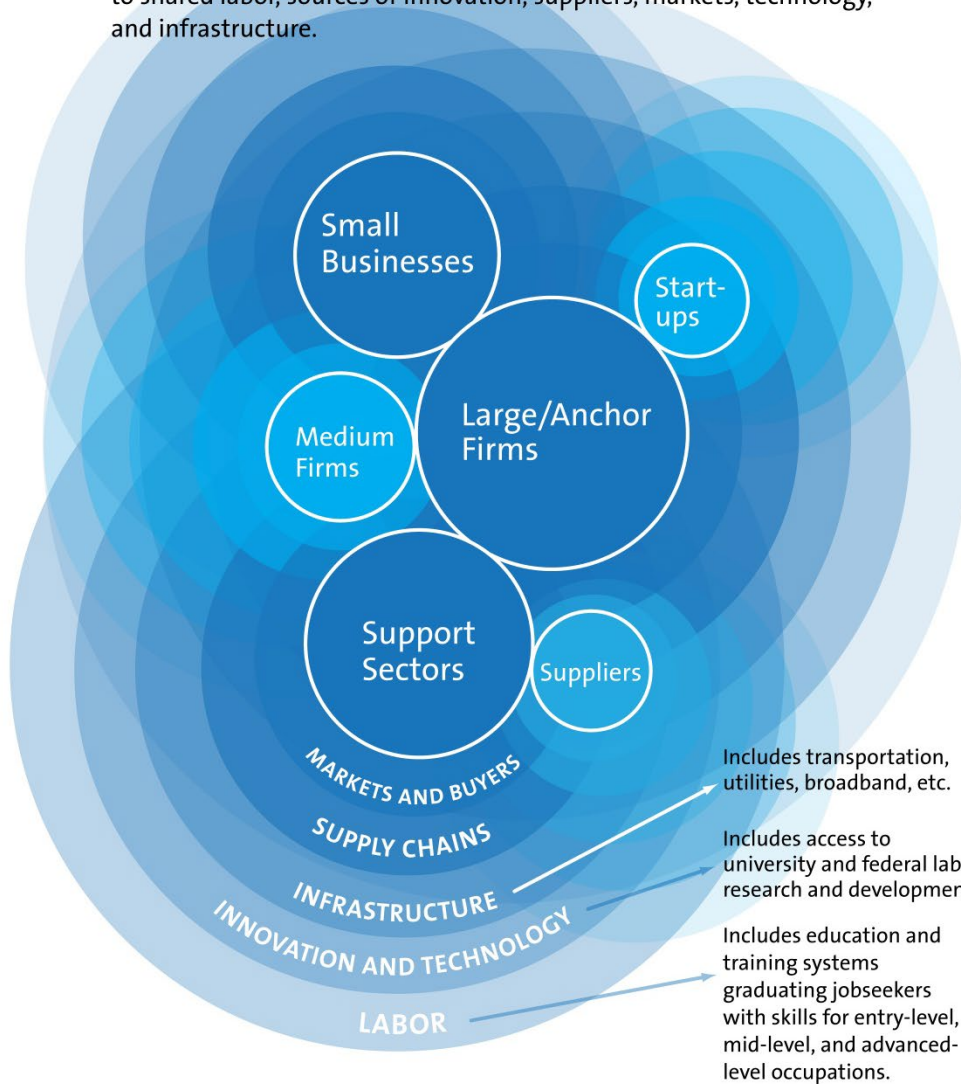
Sector/Industry Partnerships

- ✓ Convene *multiple* employers from an industry sector. (WIBs, Chambers, Industry Assns., etc.)
- ✓ Assess and *validate* labor market information.
- ✓ Identify expected job openings and *skills and credential required for these jobs*.
- ✓ Engage education/training providers and other stakeholders to develop solutions and training programs targeted to the skills needs.



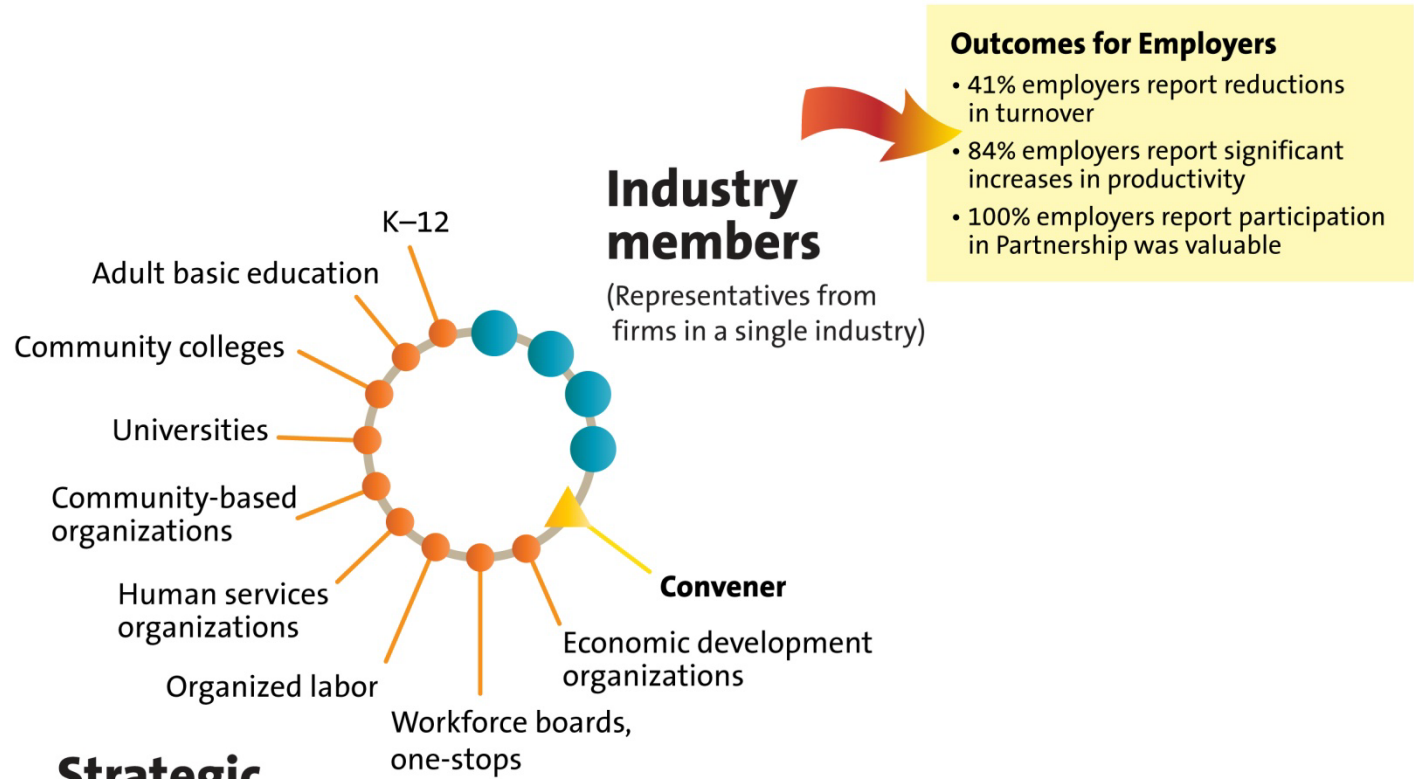
Industry Cluster

An industry cluster consists of large and small firms in a single industry. Firms in industry clusters benefit from synergies of association related to shared labor, sources of innovation, suppliers, markets, technology, and infrastructure.



Sector Partnership

The partnership addresses common needs of employers and generates coordinated solutions that benefit workers.



Outcomes for Employers

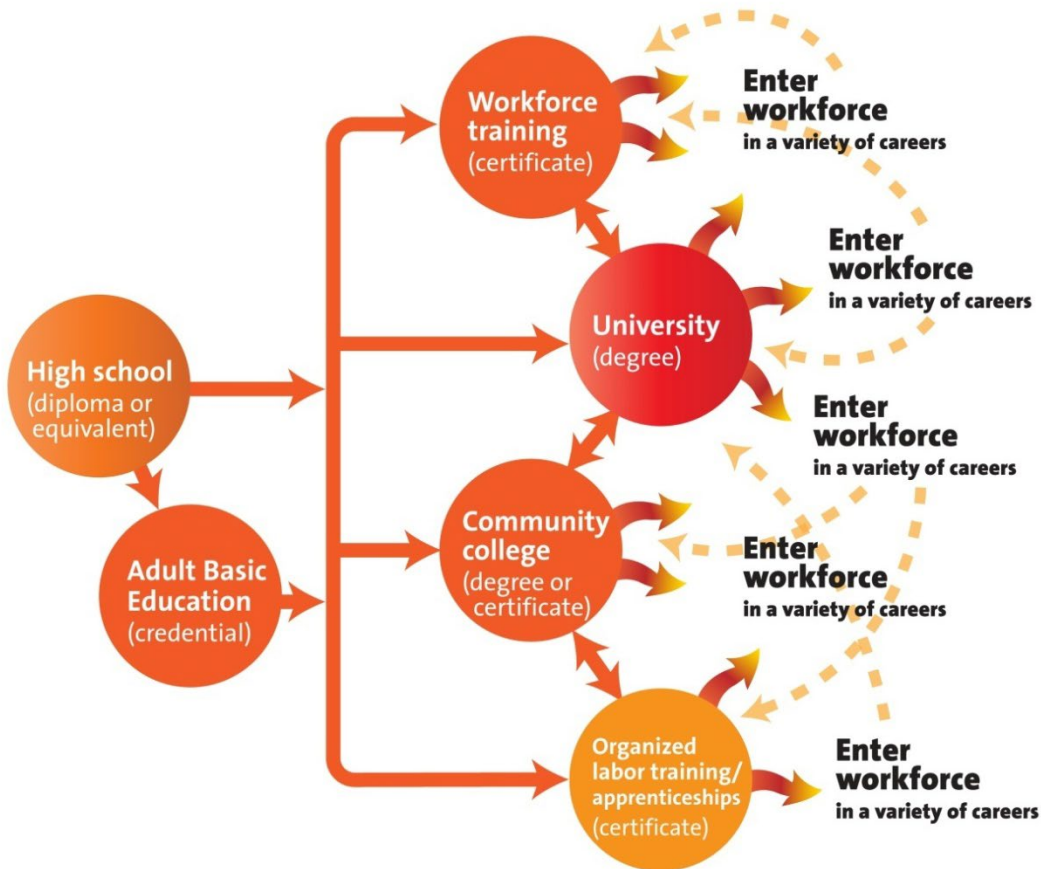
- 41% employers report reductions in turnover
- 84% employers report significant increases in productivity
- 100% employers report participation in Partnership was valuable

Outcomes for Workers

- 48% worker participants exited poverty
- 18% higher earnings
- more likely to work and in jobs with benefits

Career Pathways

Effective career pathways rely on coordination across education and training programs in order to offer a clear sequence of industry-relevant coursework and credentials to job seekers. Today's education and training programs include online and in-person opportunities.



After being in the workforce, a person may choose to go back for more credentials to make an upward or lateral career move.

Designs by



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Career Pathways

A sequence of education and training courses and credentials that are built around:

- ✓ the skill needs of employers and industry sectors;
- ✓ contextualized learning;
- ✓ multiple entry and exit points;
- ✓ stackable credentials or credits leading to industry recognized credentials;
- ✓ intensive wraparound support services and job placement.

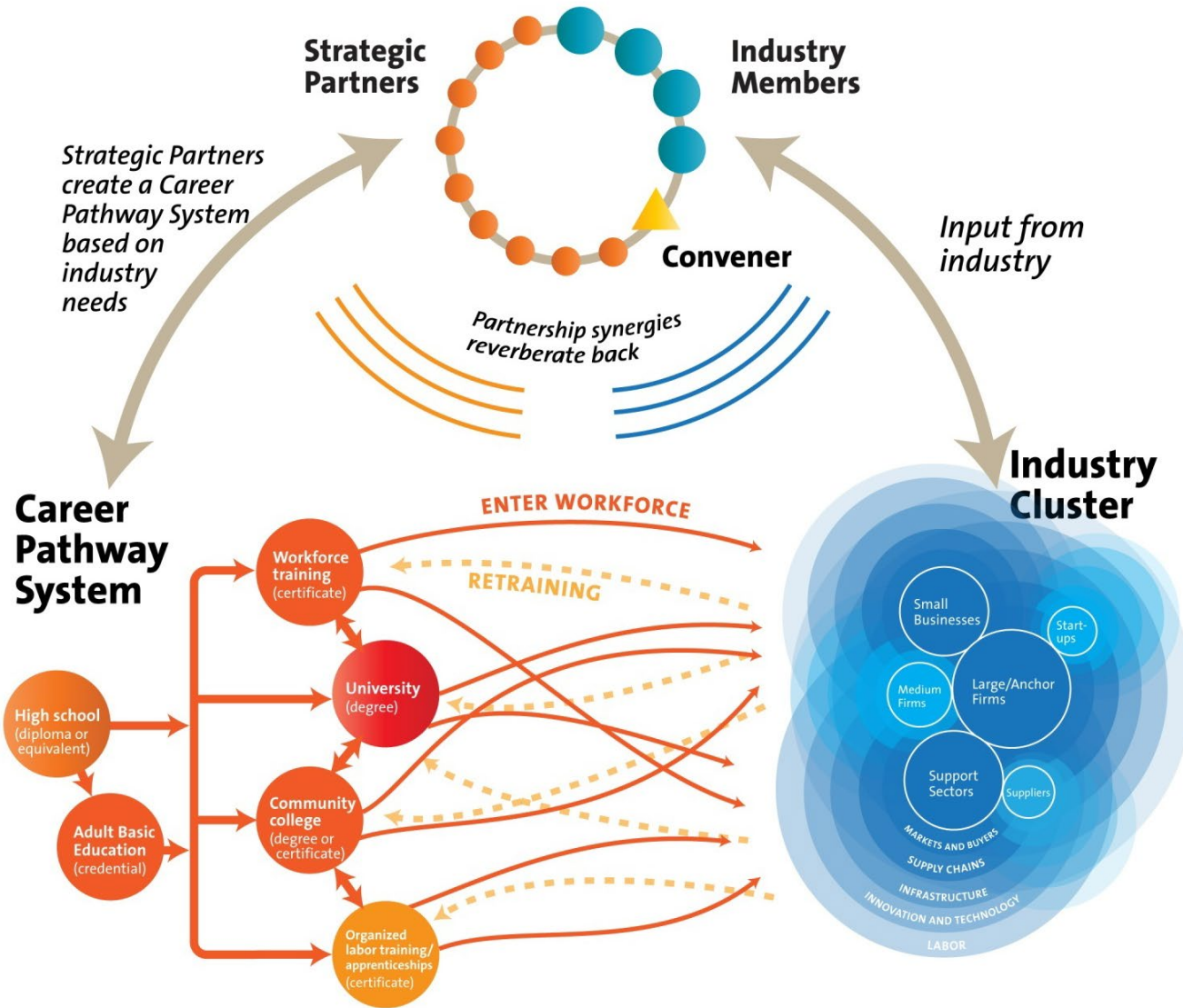


Accelerated/Integrated Education and Training

- Accelerated learning better aligns adult basic education or ESL with technical training;
- Integrates ABE or ESL with postsecondary technical training leading to an industry recognized credential (IBEST, FastTRAC)
- Creates pathways to postsecondary credentials for people while they continue to work and support their families.
- Enables workers to skill up faster and further.



Sector Partnership



Cross Agency Measurement

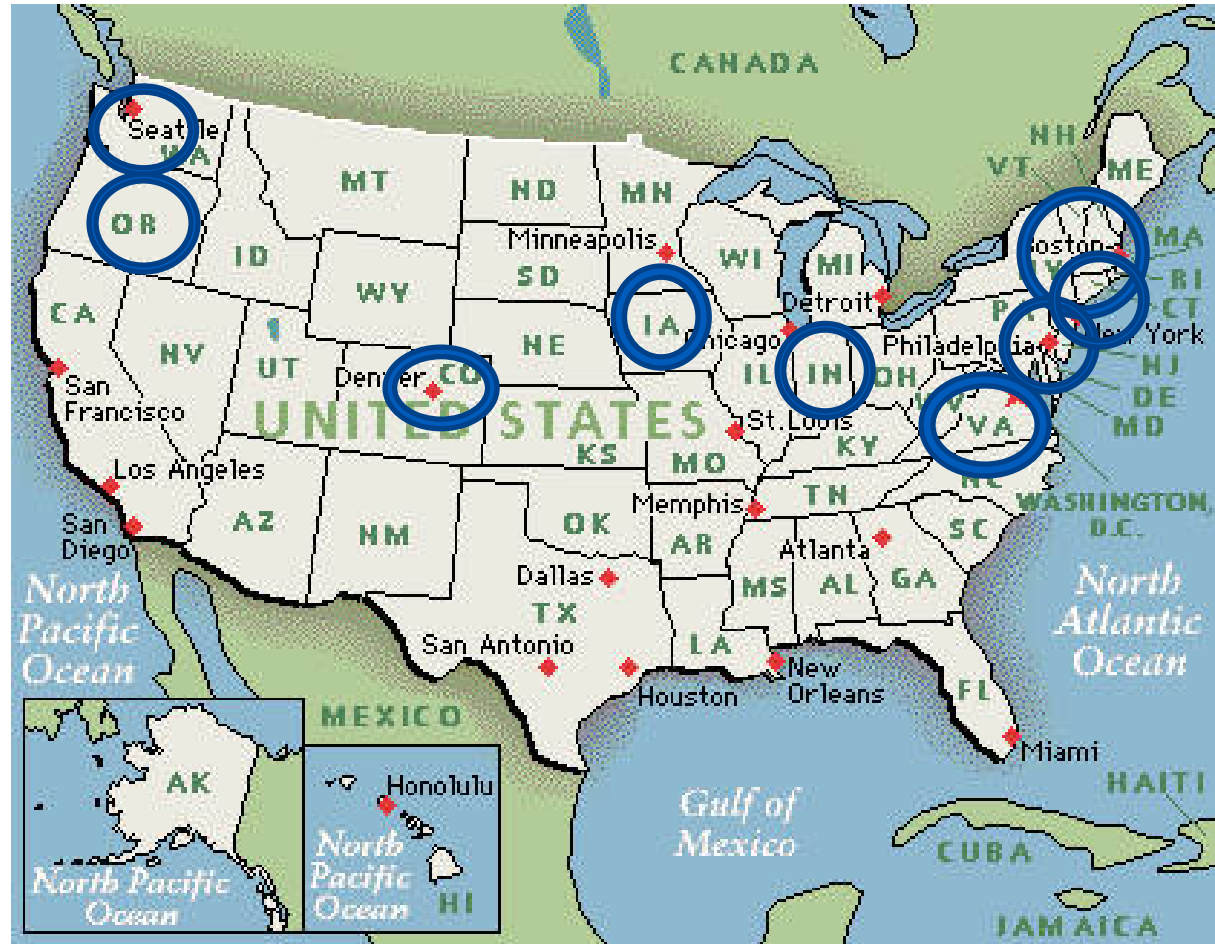
- Credential Measurement
- Skill Gap Reports
- System Dashboards
- College Scorecards

Tools to help policy leaders see the system



What are Other States Doing?

- Pennsylvania
- Iowa
- Massachusetts
- Indiana
- Wisconsin
- Oregon
- Maryland
- Colorado
- Virginia



Sample State Legislation+

- Pennsylvania - Sector/Industry Partnerships [SB 552](#) and [SB 1460](#), Industry Partnership Tax Credit
- Colorado – Measuring Credential Outcomes
[HB 1061, Skills For Jobs Act](#)
Adult Basic Education Partnerships
[HB 1085 Adult Education and Literacy Act](#)
- Indiana – Cross Agency Credential Measurement
[House Enrolled Act 1314](#)

Legislation+, cont.

- Maryland - Employment Assistance Right Now (EARN)–
[Senate Bill 0278](#)
StateStat (Executive Action)
- Iowa - \$5m for Pathways for Academic Career and
Employment Program (PACE)
- Wisconsin –\$15m Proposed
for sector skills training
- Virginia - \$1m Proposed for
Career Pathways and sector
strategies



Legislation+, cont.

Executive Action

- Michigan – Michigan Industry Cluster Approach (MICA)
- Arizona – Sector Partnerships



What are other States Doing?

Building on what WA and other leading edge states have done:

- Sector Partnerships
- Career Pathways
- Cross Agency Measurement
- Making Investments



Contact

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