

THE NEED FOR BETTER WAYS TO MEASURE OUR CIVIC INFRASTRUCTURE

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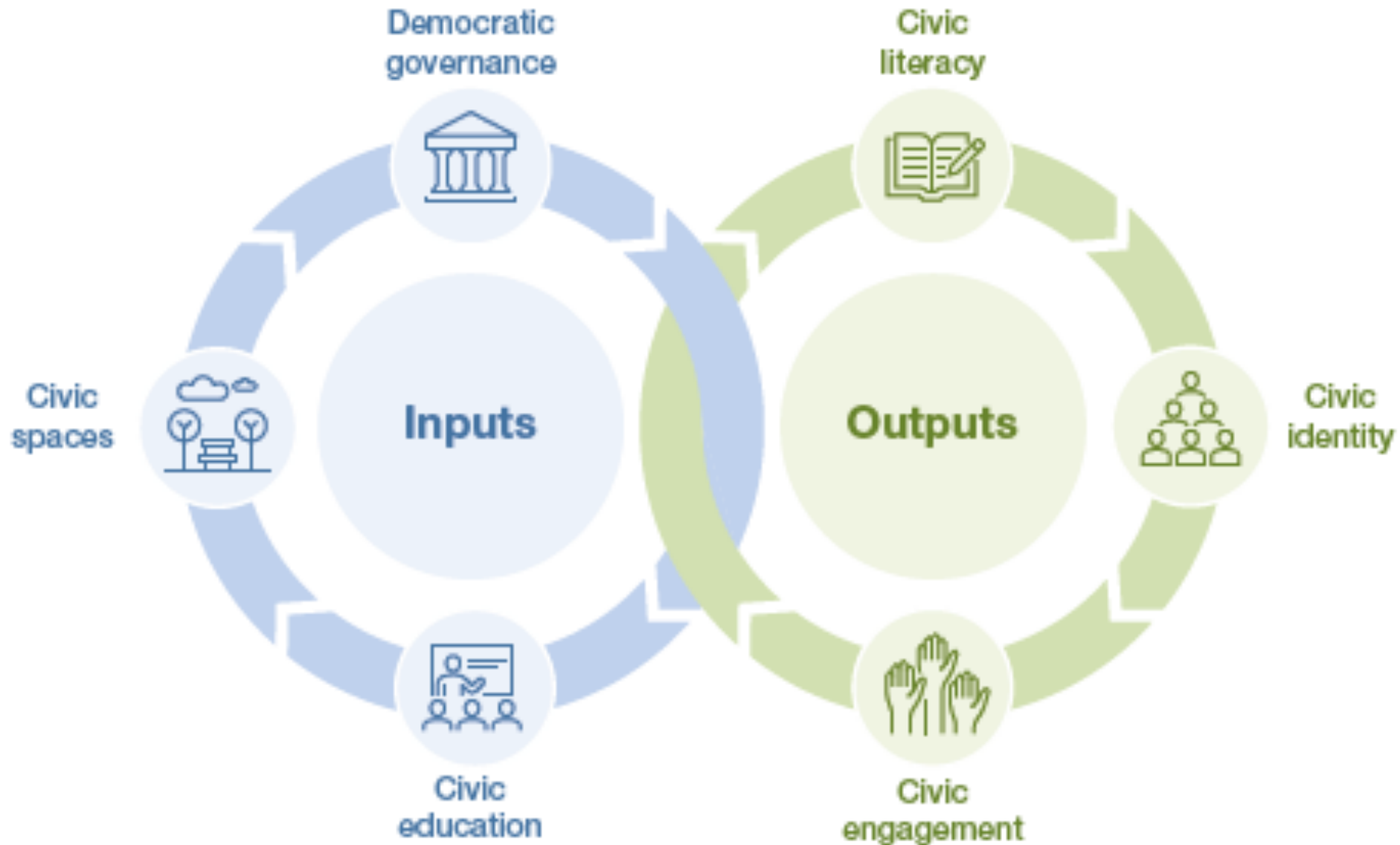


What Is Civic Infrastructure (and why should we care about it)?

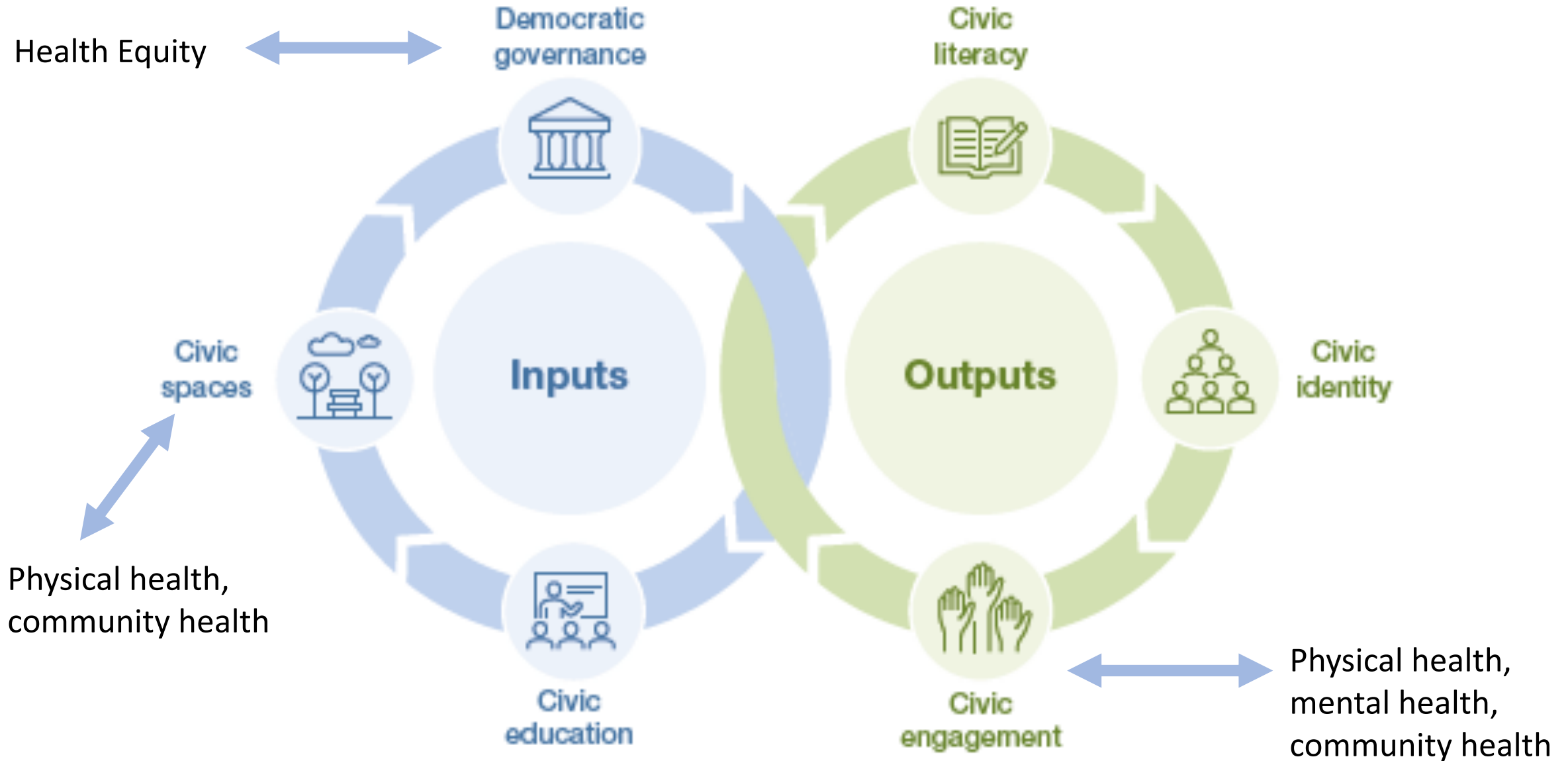
“the individual structures and processes through which the social contract is written and rewritten in communities . . . the formal and informal processes and networks through which communities make decisions and solve problems” - John Parr (1993)

“the foundation on which ordinary people participate in ordinary civic life It is the places, policies, programs, and practices that enable us to connect with each other, define and address shared concerns, build community, and solve public problems.”
- Stephen Patrick and Shari Brady (2015)

Our Civic Infrastructure Framework

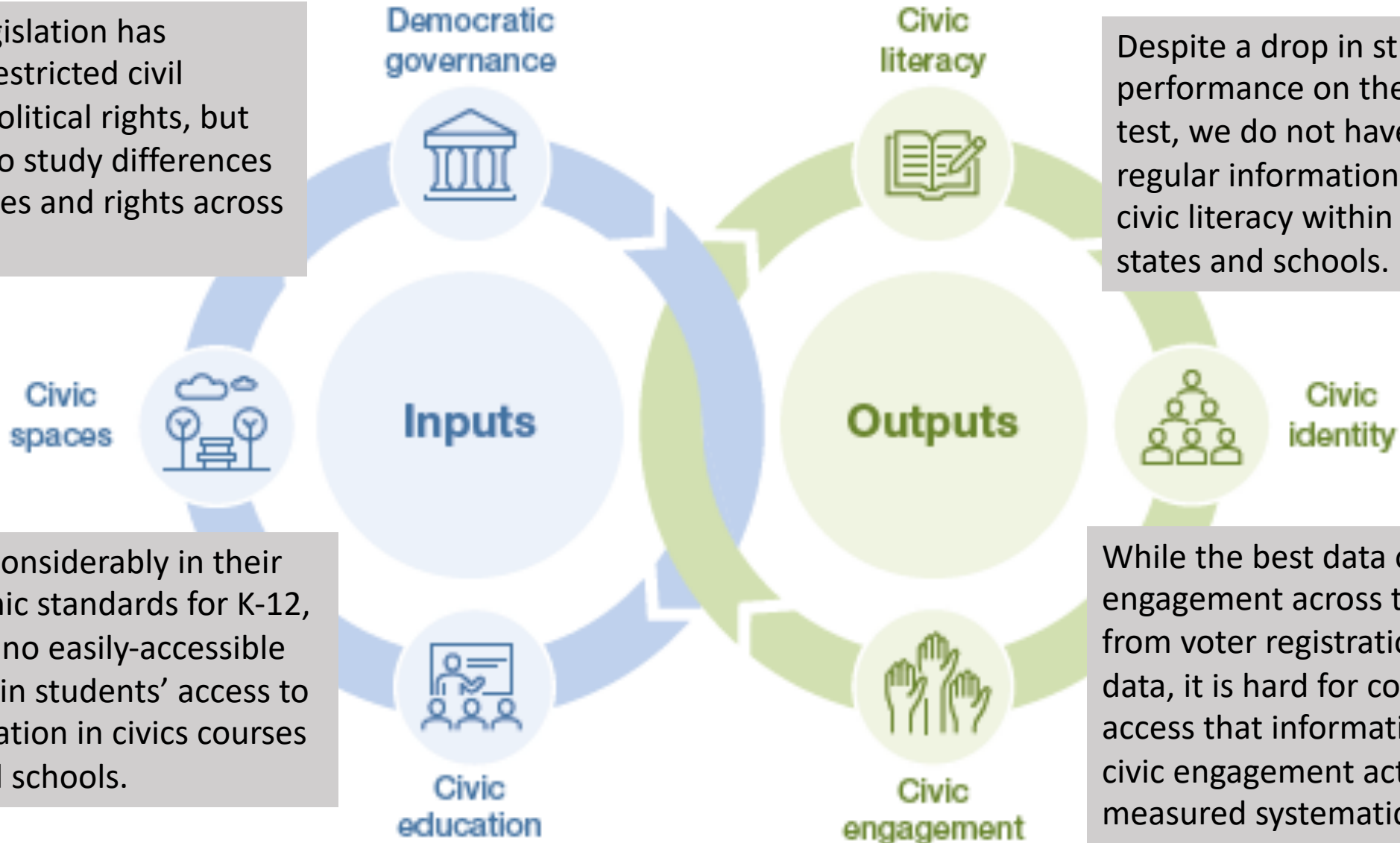


Civic Infrastructure & Public Health



Why We Need Better Civic Infrastructure Data and Measures

Much state legislation has expanded or restricted civil liberties and political rights, but we lack ways to study differences in those liberties and rights across states.



Despite a drop in students' performance on the NAEP civics test, we do not have systematic, regular information about K-12 civic literacy within or across states and schools.

States vary considerably in their civic academic standards for K-12, yet we have no easily-accessible information in students' access to and participation in civics courses in states and schools.

While the best data on civic engagement across the U.S. comes from voter registration and turnout data, it is hard for communities to access that information, and other civic engagement activities are not measured systematically.

Strategies for Moving Toward Better Measures

The federal government could support states to work together on standardization of measures.

The federal government could prioritize participation in international data collection.

Organizations that collect state by state and county data could be better supported to make their data more usable to researchers and non-researchers.

Data that is collected at the national level could be collected more regularly and state-by-state.