

STATEWIDE DATA SYSTEMS

Accurate, high-quality data is essential to improving graduation rates and college-readiness. Statewide longitudinal data systems that track individual student performance from the time students first enter the education system to the time they exit can help calculate accurate graduation rates, identify individual students who may be at risk of dropping out of school, and inform the implementation of interventions at the district, school, and student-level to retain students in school and ensure that they graduate from high school ready for college and the workforce. Federal policy solutions include supporting the development and implementation of data systems in all 50 states, ensuring that data systems are comparable across districts and states, and improving professional development and capacity to ensure that the data is used to effectively address student needs.

Related Federal Legislation

A bill to provide for statewide longitudinal data systems to improve elementary and secondary education, and for other purposes, S. 2014. The legislation establishes a \$100 million competitive grant program for states to build or improve statewide prekindergarten through high school longitudinal data systems. The data systems would include statewide student and teacher identifiers; track student participation and achievement over time; and, the capacity to link to data systems connected to higher education, workforce development, unemployment insurance, child welfare, juvenile justice, and the military. In addition, S. 2014 awards matching grants to states to enhance the capacity of educators and policy-makers at the district and school level to effectively use data and data systems.

Measuring and Evaluating Trends for Reliability, Integrity, and Continued Success (METRICS) Act, H.R. 3253. The METRICS Act requires states receiving Title I funding to develop and implement statewide prekindergarten through high school longitudinal data systems within four years of enactment. The legislation establishes a \$150 million formula grant program to support the development of these data systems. The legislation requires the inclusion of the data elements described in S. 2014 (above). The METRICS Act reserves up to \$2 million to create a state education data center to provide technical assistance to states developing data systems, to disseminate best practices on the development, implementation, and use of such systems, and to serve as a central repository for education and school safety data.

Related Research and Publications

Every Student Counted (2007)

Data Quality Campaign

<http://www.dataqualitycampaign.org/tools/>

Every Student Counted summarizes the National Governors Association (NGA) Graduation Counts Compact, including the commitment to using a common method to calculate high school graduation rates. The benefits of using a longitudinal graduation rate are described. The components needed for a state data system to calculate a longitudinal graduation rate are also summarized.

Identifying Potential Dropouts: Key Lessons for Building an Early Warning Data System (2006)
Achieve, Inc.

<http://achieve.org/dropouts>

Identifying Potential Dropouts summarizes the research on factors affecting students who drop out of school as well as the methods of predicting which students will not complete high school. The brief also provides recommendations for building an early warning data system that can signal which students and schools are most in need of interventions.

Recommended Federal Policy Experts

Aimee Guidera
Director, Data Quality Campaign
National Center for Educational Achievement
Austin, Texas
aimee@dataqualitycampaign.org
www.dataqualitycampaign.org

Bethany Little
Vice President for Policy and Federal Advocacy
Alliance for Excellent Education
Washington, DC
(202) 828-0828
blittle@all4ed.org
www.all4ed.org

Christopher Swanson
Director of Editorial Projects in Education
Education Week
Bethesda, MD
(301) 280-3100
cswanson@epe.org
www.edweek.com

Lee Hoffman
Program Director
National Center for Education Statistics
Washington, DC
(202) 502-7356
Lee.Hoffman@ed.gov
www.nces.ed.gov