DATA POLICY TOOLKIT

IMPLEMENTING THE STATE BLUEPRINT

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SECTION 1 Why Focus on Workforce Data?

This toolkit offers information about policies and legislative templates that states can enact to improve data infrastructure and promote data use.

Multiple audiences need workforce data to help make good decisions. State leaders want to know that they are investing in education and training that aligns with economic growth. Employers seek information about the skills of workers in their area. Training providers need to know whether their graduates are succeeding in careers. Students and workers want to select training programs with a track record of success. Advocates need solid research to demonstrate that workforce development programs get results.

Most states have built data systems designed to answer these types of questions, as documented in an annual survey conducted by Workforce Data Quality Campaign (WDQC).¹ This survey asks states to report about their progress on WDQC's State Blueprint, which contains 13 key features of a strong state data infrastructure. Over the past decade, states have made remarkable progress on developing and effectively using data systems. Just between the 2014 and 2015 surveys, 10 or more states reported making progress in several areas, such as: measuring skills gaps, sharing employment data with other states, and using labor market information.²

However, there are still gaps in many state data systems, including missing information on non-credit training and programs like Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) that assist low-skilled workers.³ In addition to improving data system capacity, states should make better use of the information contained in these systems. The right data tools and research can help align education with labor market demand, and ensure that students and workers from all backgrounds have a chance to earn valuable credentials.





SECTION 2

Purpose of the Toolkit

This toolkit offers information about policies that states can enact to improve data infrastructure and promote data use. The policies do not exactly correspond with elements in the State Blueprint, but are important steps to help states achieve the Blueprint's vision. We chose to highlight these particular policies because multiple states have had some success with their implementation, and additional states have expressed interest in similar action.

Even states with strong data systems may want to consider enacting policies. Although some data systems and tools can be developed without legislative change, state policy can formalize best practices and ensure that they outlast changes in leadership.

To assist policymakers and advocates, the toolkit provides the following resources:

- Descriptions of selected data challenges that can be addressed with state policy
- Examples of states that successfully enacted data policies
- Legislative templates that can provide a basis for new bills or Executive Orders

The toolkit divides policies into two categories: 1) building data infrastructure and 2) creating data tools. States do not need to complete infrastructure improvements before implementing data tools. In fact, putting existing data into usable formats often generates demand for better data, and facilitates infrastructure progress.

States can pick specific policies to focus on, and select the relevant language from the comprehensive legislative template provided for each category. The individual policies in each category do not all need to be enacted at the same time.

Finally, while legislation can be critical in catalyzing advances in state data capacity and use, we caution against legislation that is overly prescriptive. The legislative templates in this toolkit attempt to strike a balance between compelling action and permitting flexibility. For issues such as the specific metrics required in data tools, states should allow room for changes as the needs of data users evolve.



SECTION 3

Building Data Infrastructure: **Policy Guide**

ESTABLISHING LONGITUDINAL DATA SYSTEMS

All states should have longitudinal data systems that can illustrate how combinations of education, workforce, and human service programs are providing opportunity for lifelong learning and sustainable employment.

Longitudinal data systems allow states to fully utilize data they already collect to administer programs. These systems work by matching data from different programs and agencies across time. For example, Wyoming uses its system to research paths of high school graduates into college and the workforce. Longitudinal data systems protect individuals' private information, while allowing measurement of aggregate results.

State legislation should define the purpose and scope of the longitudinal data system. Many states started with a focus on K-12 education and branched out, later incorporating data from early childhood services, postsecondary education, and workforce programs to create a P-20W system. Legislative language should be broad enough to allow the data system to evolve with changing state priorities, but mandate essential components such as a full spectrum of workforce and education data. Requiring linkages to Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage records (in compliance with state and federal confidentiality requirements) also is critical. Wage records contain information about dates of employment and wages that show whether program completers are getting jobs that pay family-sustaining wages.

Laws establishing state longitudinal data systems should also set clear expectations for privacy and security practices. To protect privacy, the system should include only data necessary to fulfill the identified purpose and scope. Access to data should be restricted to a limited number of individuals who have training and experience with protecting confidential information. Legislation also should require industry standard security practices, such as encryption.

EXAMPLE

In 2015, Governor Robert Bentley, of **Alabama**, issued **Executive Order** 6, creating the Alabama P-20W Longitudinal Data System, "to match information about students from early learning through postsecondary education and into employment," thereby improving decision-making and program evaluation.⁴ The order also created the Alabama Office of Education and Workforce Statistics to implement and maintain the system. Although this is an executive order rather than legislation, it contains many elements that should be included in legislative language to establish a state data system.

Executive Order 6 was issued upon the recommendation of the Alabama Workforce Council, which was created by the legislature to foster collaboration between education, industry, and government, and is composed of educators and employers.

The document encourages support for the system by making its benefits clear. It notes that P-20W systems can aid student decision making, help state policymakers allocate resources towards high-quality programs, allow educators and program administrators to identify and implement best practices, and help industry identify talent pipelines.

Furthermore, this Executive Order 6 mandates the inclusion of a wide variety of workforce and education data from entities across the education and employ-

ment spectrum, while simultaneously emphasizing the importance of data security, privacy, and transparency. Specifically, the document requires data submission "to the extent permitted by law" from 10 different entities, including the Alabama State Department of Education, the Alabama Community College System, the Alabama Commission on Higher Education, the Alabama Department of Labor, and State Department of Veteran's Affairs.⁵ Private secondary and postsecondary institutions may also submit data, although it is not required.

Despite inclusive data sharing, the Executive Order 6 maintains that "protecting and safeguarding the privacy and security of students' personally identifiable information is of the utmost importance," and assures that "student information will be protected, safeguarded, kept confidential, and used only by appropriate education and workforce authorities in order to serve the best interests of students."⁶ The document promotes transparency by requiring that data governance policies must be posted online for public viewing.

Since issuing Executive Order 6, Governor Bentley has pushed for funding, and set up an advisory board for the forthcoming longitudinal data system. In addition, the state's department of labor has engaged in conversations about data sharing between agencies.

GOVERNANCE BODY

States should use legislation to establish interagency councils tasked with overseeing their longitudinal data systems. At a minimum, the council should include representatives from agencies that administer or coordinate workforce programs, early childhood education, K-12, career and technical education, higher education, and social services.

States also should consider including representatives from private higher education institutions, as well as business and industry. Data governance councils are important to build trust across agency boundaries and make sure that the data system will be used to answer a range of policy questions.⁷

Duties of governance councils should be outlined in legislation. Councils address both policy and technical issues, and can establish workgroups with different sets of expertise to handle different issues.⁸ It is important to have high-level executive input on policy issues, such as:

- Research agenda aligned with state policy priorities
- Privacy and security policy
- Data system management plan
- Interagency data sharing agreements and data access for external entities

Staff-level agency officials and information technology experts can focus on technical issues, such as:

- Cataloging data definitions, ideally based on the Common Education Data Standards developed by the U.S. Department of Education (ED)
- Strategies for conducting data matching
- Technology solutions to ensure data security

EXAMPLE

Indiana and Maryland each have legislation establishing the membership and duties of their governance councils. These bills both require participation from stakeholders across the education and workforce spectrum, and task those stakeholders with creating a research agenda, thereby ensuring that longitudinal data systems help answer policy questions that are important to stakeholders.

Indiana has successfully implemented a legislatively mandated cross-agency council to oversee the day to day activities of the state's longitudinal data system, the Indiana Network of Knowledge (INK). IC 22-4.5-10-7 outlines the powers and duties of the governance committee, giving them the ability to address policy and technical issues. Among those duties are overseeing INK, implementing a detailed data security plan, ensuring compliance with privacy laws, establishing INK's research agenda, creating policies to respond to requests from state and local agencies, the general assembly, and the public, as well as developing public access to aggregate INK data.

In addition, the legislation establishes the governance committees' membership. It must have at least six members, including representatives from the Department of Education, Department of Workforce Development, the Commission for Higher Education, private colleges and universities, and the business community.

Similarly, Maryland Senate Bill 275 established the Governing Board of the Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center (MLDS). The board of 12 includes seven ex officio members representing K-12, higher education, and labor; five members appointed by the Governor, one of whom must be a data systems expert; and three at-large positions. As of 2015, the at-large positions were filled by a workforce development professional, a teacher, and a parent. Senate Bill 275 outlines the Board's responsibilities including providing general oversight and direction to MLDS, establishing its research agenda, approving the annual budget, ensuring adherence to relevant privacy laws, creating an annual report to the Governor and General Assembly, and setting policies for the approval of research requests from the legislature, state and local agencies, and the public.

Since the bill's passage, the Governing Board has emerged as a model for transparency. The Governing Board holds public quarterly meetings, and makes meeting agendas and minutes available on MLDS's website.







AUTHORIZING DATA SHARING

States should consider legislation that explicitly authorizes or mandates data sharing that is necessary to answer high-priority policy questions. This type of legislation can be essential to advance data infrastructure. Even when data sharing is allowed under current laws and regulations, strict legal interpretations or risk-averse agency leadership often prevent state agencies from successfully negotiating agreements. To deal with these issues, states can pass laws that outline:

- Data that may or must be shared
- State agency that is responsible for sharing the data
- Entities that may receive the data, in either individual-level or aggregate format
- Purposes for which the data may be used
- Privacy and security procedures required of entities receiving data

State laws must comply with federal rules that govern data sharing, such as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and UI wage record confidentiality provisions in 20 CFR 603. ED has a variety of resources available through its Privacy Technical Assistance Center, and the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) offers advice to states about sharing UI wage records.

Legislation can address data sharing between:

- Multiple agencies in the same state. This type of data sharing is essential to develop state longitudinal data systems. Legislation often specifies when data may be shared with agents or contractors of state agencies, as well as with agency staff.
- A state agency and a quasi-governmental or non-public entity. In order to expand research capacity and allow education and workforce practitioners to use data, states can authorize sharing with colleges and universities, workforce development boards, or research centers.
- Agencies in multiple states. A full picture of education and career pathways requires systems that can match data across state lines. State laws can promote participation in multistate data exchanges.

Ideally, language on data sharing should be incorporated into statutes establishing P-20W data systems. However, if states are unable to pass comprehensive laws to formalize a state longitudinal data system, it may be useful to authorize specific data sharing activities.

EXAMPLE

Both California and New York have been able to conduct research about high-priority policy questions because their states have passed data sharing laws.

Assembly Bill 798, passed by the **California** Legislature in 2007, requires sharing of individual-level UI wage data with the California Community College Chancellor's Office. Although California does not have a P-20W data system, this legislation enabled the Chancellor's Office to create its own longitudinal data system that provides the foundation for data tools designed for educators and students.

One of the data tools, Launchboard, supplies aggregate information on student progress through career and technical education (CTE) courses and into the labor market, in order to help California community colleges and K-12 school districts evaluate the effectiveness of their CTE programs. Another tool, Salary Surfer, packages similar information for the public. Salary Surfer shows aggregated median earnings data from graduates of select degree and certificate programs two and five years after graduation. Students can use this data to make decisions about higher education institutions and potential career paths.⁹

Like California, **New York** lacks statewide data infrastructure but is still able to conduct some robust analysis because State Labor Law Sec. 537 was updated in 2013, adding parts 3(g)(ii) 10 and 11, to allow the New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) to share UI wage records with federal, state, and local agencies to use for delineated purposes, including program evaluation or legally required reporting. Education and training providers, such as the State University of New York (SUNY) system, and the City University of New York (CUNY) system, are considered state agencies under the labor law.¹⁰ According to New York City's Office of Human Capital Development, the bill passed, in large part, due to broad support from a diverse coalition.¹¹ The coalition supporting the bill included workforce development advocates, such as the New York Association of Training and Employment Professionals, as well as the business community.

After the legislation was passed, NYSDOL created tools and processes enabling it to quickly and easily share data with eligible entities. It created templates of memorandums of understanding (MOUs) and data sharing agreements (DSAs) that can be modified to accommodate new requests. The MOUs and DSAs include specific details about who will handle and use the data, as well as why the data will be used. In order to receive data, requesters must conduct an annual self-assessment of their data security processes so NYSDOL can audit them if need be. NYSDOL charges eligible entities a flat fee of \$1,000 to establish a DSA and MOU, as well as an hourly fee to fill data requests.¹²

The law enables entities like CUNY to conduct valuable research. CUNY's Office of Institutional Research and Assessment requests and matches its data (from each of CUNY's 25 institutions) with NYSDOL's wage record data. It then conducts comprehensive education and workforce data analyses, comparing labor market outcomes for all majors three, five, and 10 years after graduation. These analyses allow CUNY to measure the success of their students in the current job market. In addition, CUNY is hoping to use this information to understand the mobility of graduates with higher education and professional degrees.¹³

STATE FUNDING

State funding is required to support: maintenance of current systems; creation of additional data linkages; technology upgrades to ensure data security; and capacity to use and package data for performance management, research, and evaluation.

Many states relied on federal grants from ED and DOL to build state longitudinal data systems. In particular, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) provided more than \$200 million for these systems. Current annual funding to support state data systems is at \$35 million for ED and \$6 million for DOL. There is insufficient funding for all states to have federal grants each year, so it is essential for states to include funding in their own budgets. As state leaders have seen the value of state data systems in answering their policy questions, they have been increasingly willing to offer financial support. More than 15 states fund longitudinal P-20W data systems, according to the most recent WDQC survey.¹⁴

Funding sometimes appears as a single line item in the state budget and appropriations, or collaborating agencies may get funding increases to contribute to the system. Requiring funding contributions from multiple agencies can ensure cooperation. However, it can be more complicated for developing legislation and may not be appropriate if the data system is managed by an independent state agency.

EXAMPLE

Some states are able to secure funding for their longitudinal data systems by creating an independent state agency to maintain that data system. When states do this, the legislature will usually include funding for the data system as a part of its regular appropriations to state agencies for their operating budgets. One such state is **Kentucky**. KRS 151B.132 established the Kentucky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics (KCEWS) to manage the state's P-20W longitudinal data system. That bill specifically authorizes KCEWS to receive state appropriations. KCEWS receives about \$780,000 a year from the legislature, in addition to federal funding.¹⁵ Combined, these sources of income allow Kentucky to conduct a variety of research about education and workforce training programs in the state.

Other states have secured funding through legislative requests by multiple cooperating state agencies. For example, **Oregon** evenly shares the cost of funding its legislatively mandated workforce data system, **PRISM**, amongst the three participating agencies – the Department of Human Services, the Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development, and the Employment Department. Each agency applies for its share of funds in its annual state budget proposal. To date, the agencies have always received the requested funds. By splitting costs amongst all users of the systems, no single agency is saddled with the entire cost of system maintenance. $^{\rm 16}$

Additionally, **Kansas** has secured state funding because those in control of appropriations see the system's value. In 2015, the Kansas Board of Regents received approximately \$4.5 million from the state, about \$550,000 more than in previous years.¹⁷ The additional funds were intended to sustain the state's longitudinal data system.

Officials in charge of the Kansas data system believe they were able to secure large amounts of funding because their policy priorities align with the Governor (who requests the budget) and because they are responsive to the legislature (which subsequently approves the Governor's request). In 2012, Governor Sam Brownbeck launched an initiative that provides high school students with free tuition for approved technical courses offered by Kansas technical and community colleges. Officials believe the Governor increased funding for the data system to evaluate outcomes of the approved programs within the initiative. Those same officials believe the legislature approved the request because the Board of Regents always provides timely and accurate responses to legislative research requests. The Board fulfills most requests within 24 hours, and remains in constant contact with legislative researchers should a request take longer to fill.18

The legislation in this toolkit creates an independent state agency to house the system, because our experience working with states suggests this is the best structure for collaboration between K-12, postsecondary, and workforce agency leaders. However, states can use whichever structure is most appropriate for them, as long as it builds in interagency governance.



SECTION 4

Building Data Infrastructure: Legislative Template

SEC. 1) INTENT

The legislature finds that in order to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of the state's education and workforce programs, the state shall establish and maintain a longitudinal data system. The system shall enable students and parents to make better decisions; help educators and workforce program managers identify and scale best practices in order to improve the state's education and workforce training programs; assist industry to better understand the development of skilled talent; enable business and philanthropy leaders to target their resources towards programs with proven outcomes; help state and local leaders allocate resources towards effective programs; and allow transparency of the use of taxpayer dollars. Ultimately, the system shall improve student achievement and help close the skills gap through a focused, integrated, and comprehensive approach to data sharing and research statewide. The system shall protect and safeguard the privacy and security of personally identifiable information.

SEC. 2) DEFINITIONS

As used in this Act:

- a. "Education and workforce data" means data related to student and workforce development program participant performance, including, but not limited to: state and national assessments, course enrollment and completion, grades, remediation, retention, credential attainment, and demographic data.
- b. "Employment data" means data related to employment status, wages, geographic location of employment, employer information, and data about industry and occupation.
- c. "Workforce development program" shall include, but need not be limited to programs authorized under Public Law 113-128 or any successor legislation, apprenticeship programs, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Employment and Training, and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training.
- d. The Board means the state longitudinal data system board.

SEC. 3) ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BOARD

i. The State Longitudinal Data System Board is hereby established as a state agency. Board members shall consist of the following ex officio members: chief state school officer, director of the department of higher education, director of the community college system

(if separate from the department of higher education), director of the workforce administrative agency, director of the department of social services, and state chief information officer. [Actual agency names will vary by state.] To represent additional stakeholder groups, which may include employers, parents, and an expert in data and/or technology, the governor shall appoint four additional members, one of whom shall be appointed by the governor as chair of the Board. The members appointed by the governor shall serve terms of four years. The Board shall meet at least guarterly and at other times upon the call of the chair. Board meetings shall be open to the public, publicized on the [Insert agency's name]'s website in a timely manner. Board meeting minutes shall also be posted on [Insert agency system's name]'s website in a timely manner.

- a. The Board shall be considered an authorized representative of the Department of Education for the purposes of accessing and compiling student record data.
- b. The Board shall appoint an executive director, and shall employ other staff as necessary to fulfill the duties of the Board. The executive director shall be the executive officer of the board and shall administer the provisions of this act.
- c. The Board shall develop and implement the state longitudinal data system, with duties including but not limited to:
 - i. Linking education, workforce development, and employment data from multiple sources;
 - Ensuring adherence to data security and privacy principles, and all applicable state and federal privacy laws;
 - Evaluating public education and workforce development programs;
 - iv. Periodically convening stakeholders to develop a list of priority research questions;
 - v. Conducting and supporting research designed to improve education, workforce development, and economic development in the state;
 - vi. Approving and responding to research requests;
 - vii. Entering into contracts or other agreements with appropriate entities;
 - viii.Providing outreach, training, and information on which data is available in the system to data users, including educators and program managers;
 - ix. Pursuing federal and private funding for the state

longitudinal data system; and

- x. Reporting annually to the governor and appropriate committees of the legislature on the accomplishments of the Board.
- d. The state longitudinal data system shall include education and workforce data required to evaluate the effectiveness of early childhood education, K-12 education, postsecondary education, and workforce development programs in achieving education and employment outcomes and reducing social-welfare costs, including return on investments.

SEC. 4) DATA SUBMISSION

To the extent permitted by law, the early childhood education agency, department of education, department of higher education, department of community colleges (if separate), public colleges and universities, the workforce agency, and department of social services, shall provide education and workforce data the Board requires to evaluate program effectiveness. The Board may request data from other entities as the Board requires to evaluate the outcomes of education and workforce development programs.

SEC. 5) EMPLOYMENT DATA

The Board and the department of employment shall develop a system for linking education and workforce data with employment data in a manner that maintains individual and employer confidentiality and as permitted by law.

SEC. 6) OUT-OF-STATE DATA

The state longitudinal data system shall link education and workforce data and employment data with such data from other states to the extent permitted by law and in a manner that maintains individual and employer confidentiality.

SEC. 7) PRIVACY AND SECURITY

The Board shall create a data governance policy regarding the use, privacy, and security of data, consistent with state and federal law. The Board shall annually review the policy, and make any necessary revisions. The Governance Policies must be published online and made available to the public. The governance policy shall include:

- a. Procedures for data collection, use, storage, retention, and destruction of data;
- Security plan with administrative, physical, and technical safeguards; internal accountability processes; periodic audits, reviews and risk assessments; and security clearance and training requirements for individuals to access individually identifiable information;
- c. Plans for responding to security breaches, including notifications, remediation, and related procedures;
- d. Penalties for the violation of governance policies;
- e. Third party vendor and contractor access and use requirements, including a requirement that contractors comply with the data governance policies applicable to the state longitudinal data system;
- f. Rules regarding levels of access to data, based upon role, authentication, and training; and
- g. Policies for the approval of data requests from state and local agencies, the legislature, the Governor, and the public.

SEC. 8) FUNDING

For the period _____ to _____, \$_____ in state general funds are appropriated to the Board for duties under this Act. The Board may receive additional funding from federal grants; user fees; and any other grants or contributions from public agencies or other entities.



SECTION 5 Creating Data Tools: **Policy Guide**

SCORECARDS FOR STUDENTS AND WORKERS

States should publicize information about the education and employment outcomes of schools and training programs. Scorecard tools can help students and workers make good choices about programs, careers, and debt.

A growing number of states have scorecards that show selected outcomes for former students of education and training programs. Typical metrics include completion rates, as well as data gleaned from matching education records to state UI records. When linked, this information enables scorecards to show reliable measures of the portion of students employed in the state, and short-term and long-term median earnings for employed students. Some newer scorecards, such as Launch My Career Colorado, include results from student surveys on job satisfaction.

State scorecards are a useful complement to the federal College Scorecard, which provides basic information on schools eligible for Title IV federal financial aid (i.e. Pell grants and student loans). Data points include annual cost, graduation rate, and median salary 10 years after enrollment for students receiving financial aid. This is useful data, but the College Scorecard does not provide information on specific programs (only institutions) and is missing some training providers that do not qualify for Title IV.

Ideally, state scorecard tools should include comparable information on programs at all types of institutions and training providers. This includes both public and private non-profit colleges, for-profit career schools, and non-Title IV workforce training programs. Most existing state scorecards have information on public colleges. Some also have information on training providers who are eligible to receive WIOA funds intended for training services, though it is often displayed through a separate tool.



Source: Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development. To view outcomes for other degree programs and degree types, visit https://mn.gov/deed/data/data-tools/graduate-employment-outcomes/ (Snapshot taken September 19, 2016).

In order to have comparable data on employment outcomes across all postsecondary programs, states should manage data linkages between student records and UI wage records. This is preferable to asking education and training providers to calculate outcomes themselves, as they may use varying methodologies and have limited access to reliable employment data. This may be challenging for states that do not have a centralized data collection process for community colleges, for-profit career schools, or community-based training programs. However, especially given the expanded reporting requirements under WIOA, states should work to develop this data matching capacity.

EXAMPLE

Minnesota SF 1236, Article 2 Section 136A.121 is one of several states with legislation mandating a public report about education and training provider outcomes. The Minnesota law requires postsecondary institutions receiving state financial aid, including private institutions, to annually report undergraduate student data to the Minnesota Office of Higher Education.¹⁹

Data is subsequently provided to students to help them make important decisions about their education and training. The Minnesota Office of Employment and Economic Development, in collaboration with the Minnesota Office of Higher Education, links the student records provided under that statute with UI wage records to populate the Graduate Employment Outcomes Tool. The tool allows users to sort employment and wage outcomes by region, institution type, major, field of study, and degree awarded.²⁰ Unlike many other state scorecards, the Graduate Employment Outcomes Tool includes information about private four-year colleges and private career schools. Minnesota is able to include this data because its legislation compels private institutions to submit data, whereas most other states can only ask private institutions to submit their data voluntarily.²¹

DASHBOARDS FOR POLICYMAKERS

State leaders need dashboards to see the results of an array of education and workforce programs on major performance metrics. Dashboards help policymakers get beyond individual program results. They can see how the state's human capital development system is serving citizens and preparing skilled workers.

Dashboards use a small number of critical metrics to answer basic questions about program effectiveness. They show whether program participants are earning credentials, getting jobs, and earning good wages. In addition to these outcomes, some dashboards include information about program "inputs," like how many people are served and their demographic characteristics.

The programs included on dashboards can vary, depending on the policy focus. Some concentrate on programs funded by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and listed as WIOA partners, while others contain a mix of the largest federal and state-funded programs across education and workforce.²²

Policymakers can use dashboards to get a quick, comprehensive view of human capital development or compare programs using common metrics. Program comparisons can help policymakers expand effective service models and seek improvements for programs with poor results.



Source: Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board. To view results for other programs visit wtb.wa.gov/WorkforceTrainingResults.asp (Snapshot taken September 19, 2016).

EXAMPLE

Two Washington state laws are aimed at providing data about workforce training and education programs to the legislature. In 1991, the legislature passed Wash. Rev. Code 28C.18.030, creating the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board to "provide planning, coordination, evaluation, monitoring, and policy analysis for the state training system as a whole, and advice to the governor and legislature concerning the state training system, in cooperation with the state training system and the student achievement council."²³ Under those duties, the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board created standards for evaluating the performance of nearly 20 workforce development programs, developed a dashboard and reports to report key outcomes, and regularly presented that information to legislators. Legislators used the information to expand successful programs and change programs with weaker results.²⁴

Additionally, in 2014, the Washington legislature passed a budget proviso, requesting that the Education Research and Data Center (ERDC) prepare "an economic success metrics report of employment and earnings outcomes for degrees, apprenticeships, and certificates earned at institutions of higher education."²⁵ The report was to be delivered to the Governor and the state legislature.

As a result of this legislation, the ERDC created an Earnings for Graduates Report and Dashboard.²⁶ The reports contain the earnings information about students who completed certificates or degrees from Washington's public institutions, as well as those who complete apprenticeship programs in the state. Data on the dashboard shows earnings broken down by award type, award year, and program of study.

FEEDBACK REPORTS FOR EDUCATORS AND PROGRAM MANAGERS

States should provide information to schools, training providers, and workforce program administrators that they can use to assist with continuous program improvement.

Educators and program managers may have slightly different questions about inputs and outcomes than other audiences, such as policymakers and students. Some of these questions can only be answered by data linked through P-20W longitudinal data systems.

States should provide reports and dynamic tools specifically aimed at teachers and workforce program managers. Data can help them identify effective program models, as well as services that could be improved. In addition, schools and other service providers will be more motivated to provide high-quality data to P-20W systems if they are getting back useful information.

Feedback reports contain data aggregated by program, cohort, target population, or other categories of interest. Aggregate data protects individual privacy, but may still be useful for program management. In some cases, online tools may provide varying levels of access to individual-level data for program administrators and staff, depending on their needs and state/federal confidentiality laws.

EXAMPLE

In 2003, **Texas** passed Texas Labor Code § 302.081-086, requiring the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to maintain an automated workforce development evaluation system that utilizes UI wage records and student information. The law also requires TWC to issue outcomes analysis of each workforce development program to providers, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, local workforce development boards, and the TWC Division of Workforce Development.

In response to this legislation, TWC's Labor Market and Career Information department created easyto-read Workforce and Education Reports to help program managers continually improve their programs.²⁷ The website has data on nine of the state's workforce programs, in addition to adult education programs, public education and GED programs, and higher education. These reports link student data with UI records to show employment and earnings metrics. TWC also shows these reports and dashboards to the Texas legislature, which uses that information to make decisions about the state's budget.²⁸



Source: Workforce Program Exit Cohort, 2012-13: First Year Report, Texas, http://www.lmci.state.tx.us/researchers/dashboard/Workforce/WF1_1213/WF1_1213_Dash.asp (Snapshot taken June 9, 2016.)

SKILLS GAP ANALYSES

States should produce labor supply/demand reports, also known as skills gap analyses, to assess the alignment between education and workforce programs and labor market demand. These reports help ensure that individuals are prepared for industries that need skilled workers.²⁹

Supply/demand reports compare data on credential attainment (using credentials to represent sets of skills) with labor market demand for corresponding occupations. These comparisons are particularly effective for middle-skill jobs, which require some postsecondary education but not a bachelor's degree, because career-oriented credentials correspond well with particular occupations.

On the labor supply side, states should have information on how many people are getting a variety of postsecondary credentials. These may include two-year degrees, short-term certificates, apprenticeship certificates, and certifications awarded by industry. It can also be helpful to assess enrollment trends in CTE programs to get a sense of future labor supply.

On the demand side, states should turn to data from the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics and their state's labor market information agency. These research agencies regularly forecast job openings for more than 800 occupations, based on historical survey data, demographic trends, economic modeling, and other statistics.³⁰ It can also be helpful for states to look at "real-time labor market information," which is compiled from current online job ads. Direct employer input through sector partnerships offers a way to corroborate data on projected demand.

EXAMPLE

In 2016, both Indiana and Louisiana passed supply/demand legislation.

Indiana passed IN S 301, which will require the Department of Workforce Development to produce an occupational demand report. The report will show Indiana's expected workforce needs over the next decade, as well as the education and training necessary to meet those needs.

The occupational demand report will categorize workforce needs and training requirements by job classification, for both the state as a whole and designated regions. Once released, the report will be used to align secondary and postsecondary CTE programs with workforce needs.³¹

Louisiana passed a similar bill that is more focused on improving education than on economic development. Louisiana SB 466 mandates a comprehensive review of the state's postsecondary needs as well as an evaluation of the state's postsecondary assets. Introduced by Senator Sharon Hewitt, the legislation requires the Board of Regents, in collaboration with the Department of Economic Development and the Louisiana Workforce Commission, to produce a report assessing if postsecondary education systems are fulfilling the state's workforce and economic development needs.³²

The board will be required to submit a report with its findings and recommendations to the Senate and House Committees on Education. The report will include a comprehensive description of current educational assets, current and forecasted education demands – taking into account occupational demand for current, emerging, and targeted cluster industries – and recommendations on how to efficiently and effectively close any gaps. The report will also include a discussion of any barriers found to developing an integrated postsecondary system.³³

Creating Data Tools: Legislative Template

SECTION 6



States may establish data tools either as part of legislation establishing the state's longitudinal data system, or as separate legislation adding to the duties of existing state boards or agencies.

SEC. 1) INTENT

The legislature finds that the state should provide students, families, program administrators, and policymakers with the information they need to make informed decisions regarding education and workforce development programs. Students, potential students, and their families should have information on local education and training programs that enables them to choose among programs. Program administrators should have information on program results so they may continuously improve performance. Policymakers should also have information on program results so they may adopt policies to improve performance and invest resources in programs that are performing well. Data tools can provide the required information in a manner that is easily accessible and actionable by students, families, program administrators, and policymakers.

Part I. Scorecards

SEC. 2) ESTABLISHING SCORECARDS

The state longitudinal data system board [or other appropriate state agency] shall establish the state postsecondary education and training scorecard website, to assist students and their families in the selection of postsecondary education and training programs. The website shall include information on public and private colleges and universities, private career schools, apprenticeship programs, and other eligible training providers under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, and shall include:

- a. Information useful for selecting a career, including, but not limited to:
 - i. Projected employment needs over the next decade;
 - ii. Occupational earnings; and
 - iii. Required education and training for each occupation.
- b. Information on state postsecondary education and training programs, including, but not limited to:
 - i. Program tuition, fees, and other costs;
 - ii. Types of credential(s) awarded;

- iii. Program length; and
- iv. Number and demographic characteristics of students.
- c. Student outcomes information, by institution, program of study, and award level, including, but not limited to:
 - i. Student completion rate;
 - ii. Percentage of completers who continue in a higher level of postsecondary education or training;
 - Employment rate of completers who do not continue in a higher level of postsecondary education or training;
 - iv. Median earnings of completers who do not continue in a higher level of postsecondary education or training two calendar quarters, four quarters, three years, and five years after completion;
 - v. Average student debt load of completers;
 - vi. Average student loan default rate of completers.

SEC. 3) INSTITUTION AND PROVIDER INFORMATION

The Board shall establish the process by which education and training program information is made available as part of the state postsecondary education and training scorecard website. The process shall include the identification of program data that institutions and programs shall submit to the Board, including administrative records of students and program participants. The Board shall link student and participant administrative records with employment wage records in order to determine employment and earnings outcomes to be reported on the scorecard website.

SEC. 4) DISSEMINATION

The Board shall promote the state postsecondary education and training scorecard website to students and their families, schools, colleges, and workforce development programs including school and college counselors, and workforce development program case managers.

SEC. 5) DATA SUBMISSION BY HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

The state higher education financial aid act is amended to require:

To be eligible to enroll students receiving state financial aid, an institution must provide the state longitudinal data system board with the data the board requires for the institution's programs of study to be part of the state postsecondary education and training scorecard website.





SEC. 6) DATA SUBMISSION BY PRIVATE CAREER SCHOOLS

The state private career school act is amended to require:

To be eligible to maintain a state license to operate, a private career school must provide the state longitudinal data system board with the data the board requires for the institution's programs of study to be part of the state postsecondary education and training scorecard website.

SEC. 7) DATA SUBMISSION BY APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS

The state apprenticeship act is amended to require:

To be eligible to train apprentices under this act, an apprenticeship program must provide the state longitudinal data system board with the data the board requires for the institution's programs of study to be part of the state postsecondary education and training scorecard website.

SEC. 8) RULES

The state longitudinal data system board shall adopt rules as necessary for the implementation of sections 2 and 3 of this Act.

Part II. Feedback Reports

SEC. 9) FEEDBACK REPORTS

The [insert appropriate state board(s) or agencies] shall use information from the state longitudinal data system to provide secondary and higher education institutions with annual feedback reports in order to help the institutions assess and improve their offerings.

Part III. Dashboard

SEC. 10) ESTABLISHING THE DASHBOARD

The [insert appropriate state board or agency] shall develop and maintain the state workforce training dashboard for policymakers in the executive and legislative branches. The dashboard shall display the outcomes of statewide postsecondary training programs using a small set of common metrics. The programs shall include, but need not be limited to: community college career and technical education, state and federally-funded adult basic education, P.L. 113-128 Title I Program for Youth, P.L. 113-128 Title I Program for Adults, P.L. 113-128 Title I Program for Dislocated Workers, P.L. 113-128 Title III, P.L. 113-128 Title IV, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Employment and Training, and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training.

SEC. 11) DASHBOARD METRICS

The state workforce training dashboard metrics shall include the primary indicators of performance identified in P.L. 113-128 Section 116, the number of credentials attained by program completers, and other metrics as determined by the [insert appropriate state board or agency] in consultation with the programs included as part of the dashboard. When feasible, the dashboard information shall be based on data from the state longitudinal data system. The dashboard shall be updated annually.

SEC. 12) DASHBOARD DISSEMINATION

The [insert appropriate state board or agency] shall include the workforce training dashboard on its website and report annually to the governor and appropriate committees of the legislature on key findings shown by the dashboard, including changes over time.

Part IV. Supply and Demand Reports

SEC. 13) ESTABLISHING SUPPLY AND DEMAND REPORTS

The [insert appropriate state agency] shall prepare an annual workforce education and training supply and demand report. The report shall include, but need not be limited to:

a. The number of projected net job openings in the state due to growth or replacement of workers separating from the labor force broken down by major occupations or occupational clusters and the level of education and training required for the occupations;

- b. The annual number of individuals completing in-state postsecondary education and training programs that prepare workers to fill job openings, broken down by field of study and by the level of education or training;
- c. The identification of levels and fields of study for which there is a substantial gap between the supply of workers that the state is preparing and the number of projected net job openings requiring that education or training; and
- d. To the extent feasible, the report shall include information on supply and demand for each workforce development area in the state identified under P.L. 113-128.

SEC. 14) REPORT DISSEMINATION

The [state agency] shall publish the annual workforce education and training supply and demand report on its website and provide the report to the governor, the appropriate committees of the state legislature, institutions and agencies of postsecondary education, and state agencies and local offices administering workforce development programs.

Part V. Funding

SEC. 15) APPROPRIATIONS

For FY ____, \$____ in state general funds is appropriated to [state longitudinal data system board or other agency] for sections 2, 3, and 4 of this Act; \$_____ is appropriated to [name of board or agency] for section 9 of this Act; \$_____ is appropriated to [name of board or agency] for sections 10, 11, and 12 of this Act; and \$_____ is appropriated to [name of board or agency] for sections 13 and 14 of this Act.

Endnotes

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