Building Trust is Critical to an Evidenced-Based Culture: Lessons from the Education Sector

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DQC DATA QUALITY CAMPAIGN
People won’t use data unless it is both valuable and trustworthy.
Data Answer Key Questions

Parents
Is my child on track to graduate ready for opportunities?

Teachers
How do I know if my students are learning the material? How can I improve my teaching?

School leaders
Are more of our students prepared for college and careers than last year?

Policy makers
Are colleges, universities producing enough graduates with right degrees or skills to meet the employer’s needs?

Public
How are the schools in my community performing?
THE BIG IDEA

What does it mean to use data in service of student learning?
Data is one of the most powerful tools to inform good decisions and create opportunities for students along their education journey—and it’s much more than test scores. Data helps us make connections that lead to insights and improvements. Everyone has an important role to play in helping all students succeed in their own individualized ways. Here’s what it will look like when data is working for all students.

TEACHERS
“I know where my students are succeeding and struggling right now. I can help them grow.”

STUDENTS
“I know my strengths and where I need to grow. I can shape my own education journey.”

PARENTS
“I know what actions to take to help my child on her path to success. I can be a better champion for her.”

SCHOOL LEADERS
“I know what’s working and what isn’t in my school. I can make timely decisions and make sure resources support great teaching and improve student learning.”

AFTERSCHOOL PARTNERS
“I know what’s happening with these kids before 3:00 p.m. I can help families and communities create more opportunities for students to succeed.”

Piece by piece, this ideal is becoming a reality for students. But how can we complete the picture for all students? See DQC’s Time to Act: Making Data Work for Students for a roadmap to how states can foster this change.
What is student data and who uses it?
What is student data?

There are many types of data that support student learning—and they’re so much more than test scores. But individual data points don’t give the full picture needed to support the incredibly important education goals of parents, students, educators, and policymakers. See the types of data that can come together—under requirements like privacy and security—to form a full picture of student learning. When used effectively, data empowers everyone.

TYPES OF DATA

- **ACADEMIC INFORMATION**
  - GROWTH
  - COURSES
  - ENROLLMENT
  - GRADES
  - COMPLETION
  - GRADUATION

- **QUIZZES**
- **TESTS**
- **INTERIM ASSESSMENTS**
- **ANNUAL ASSESSMENTS**

- **TESTING**

- **DEMOGRAPHICS**
  - AGE
  - RACE
  - GENDER
  - ECONOMIC STATUS
  - SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

- **ATTENDANCE**
- **BEHAVIOR**
- **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**
- **PROGRAM PARTICIPATION**

- **ACTIONS**

**BY TEACHERS**

- **OBSERVATION**
- **ENGAGEMENT**

**REQUIREMENTS**

To get the full, clear picture, important requirements must be met for information to be truly useful and to empower people:

- **AVAILABLE**
  - Data must be there when you need it.
- **COMPLETE**
  - It must provide a whole picture of student learning.
- **RELEVANT**
  - Data must be relevant to your needs.

- **SECURE**
  - It has to be safeguarded and trustworthy.

- **EFFECTIVE**
  - Educators and policymakers must have the skills to use data effectively.

- **COMMUNICATE**
  - Data must be used to communicate how students and schools are doing.

- **SUPPORT**
  - It should be used to support teachers and educators.

- **IMPROVE**
  - Raw data should be used to improve learning.

**SUCCESS**

The right data, in the right format, used the right way, empowers everyone with the information they need to make decisions and take actions that lead to student achievement.

Student success depends on parents who support their kids’ academic growth at home.

Student success also depends on teachers to design effective instruction and individualized lessons.

Every student’s success depends on all of us coming together. And that’s the real power of data.

When students, parents, educators, and policymakers have the right information to guide their decisions, students achieve their best.
Who Uses Student Data?

1. Data are used in classrooms and schools to make changes in instruction and decide what students need to increase learning.

2. Districts use the data they collect from schools to make decisions about what resources each school needs to support its students. They send a small amount of the data that they collect to the state department of education.

3. States use the data to measure how districts are meeting goals for students, provide tools back to districts to inform instruction, assess how state funds are improving education, and provide aggregate information to the public.

4. The US dept receives the least data of all. States send it a small amount of aggregate data, and it uses them to provide information to the public about how all districts are performing. It also uses them to measure how federal funds are helping to improve education.

Parents have access to information about their own children, using it to help them learn.

Teachers have access to information about the individual students in their classroom. They use it to understand how their students are learning and help each student be successful.

Schools and districts rely on service providers to manage instructional tools and some critical functions, like transportation. These third parties sometimes need PII, but only get access to the data directly relevant to their work.

With a clear plan, researchers can get access to de-identified and aggregate data to study what is helping students learn in a district or state.

Members of the public, including neighbors, future employers and elected officials, only get to see aggregate reports—never information about individual students. They use the information to understand how districts and schools in their community are performing.

Parents, teachers, principals, service providers, researchers, and the public all use student data for different purposes. What are the types of data used in education?
Effective Data Use: State Progress

10 Actions to Ensure Effective Data Use: 2005 → 2011
Effective Data Use: State Progress

10 Actions to Ensure Effective Data Use: 2011 → 2014
As more education data becomes accessible and is being used, new questions about privacy arise.
A Journey Through Time

1974: 1st round of SLDS grants
1998: New FERPA regulations
2005: New FERPA regulations
2008: 47 states, DC, & PR have SLDS grants
2011: New federal privacy legislation introduced
2012: Privacy Makes Headlines
2013: Privacy Makes Headlines
2015: New federal privacy legislation introduced
2014 State Legislative Activity

110 bills related to student data privacy in 36 states.

27 laws passed in 20 states.
2015 State Legislative Activity

188 bills related to student data privacy in 47 states.

28 laws passed in 15 states.
112 bills related to student data privacy in 34 states.

17 laws passed in 14 states.
Summary of State Legislative Activity

410 bills related to student data privacy in 49 states.

72 laws passed in 36 states.
Student Data Privacy: State Legislative Trends

2014: regulating government collection of student data

2015: regulating student data collection by education technology providers

2016: continuing to govern service providers and revisiting existing privacy laws
Recommendations for Federal Policymakers
Four Policy Priorities to Make Data Work for Students

**MEASURE WHAT MATTERS**
Be clear about what students must achieve and have the data to ensure that all students are on track to succeed.

**MAKE DATA USE POSSIBLE**
Provide teachers and leaders the flexibility, training, and support they need to answer their questions and take action.

**BE TRANSPARENT AND EARN TRUST**
Ensure that every community understands how its schools and students are doing, why data is valuable, and how it is protected and used.

**GUARANTEE ACCESS AND PROTECT PRIVACY**
Provide teachers and parents timely information on their students and make sure it is kept safe.

**DATA IN SERVICE OF LEARNING**
People—like parents and teachers—need tailored information that they can trust to ensure all students’ individual needs are met. A culture of effective data use means putting students at the center.
Measure What Matters:

Be clear about what you want to achieve for students and have the data to ensure it gets done.

What Federal Policymakers Should Do

- Conduct a review of federal data collections and sunset all unnecessary or duplicative collections.
Make Data Use Possible:

*Provide teachers and leaders the flexibility, training, and support they need to answer their questions and take action.*

**What Federal Policymakers Should Do**

- Get your data house in order and better align regulations, laws, communications, and messaging across agencies.
- Break down federal data silos.
Be Transparent and Earn Trust:
Ensure that every community understands how its schools and students are doing, why data is valuable, and how it is protected and used.

What Federal Policymakers Should Do

- Produce timely public indicators based on stakeholders’ questions.
- Promote greater federal transparency to help families understand how the federal government collects, uses, and protects data.
Guarantee Access and Protect Privacy:

Provide teachers and parents timely information on their students and make sure it is kept safe.

What Federal Policymakers Should Do

- Build capacity at the federal level to use data effectively while safeguarding privacy.
  - Expand the ability of the Department of Education to provide expert guidance and help to the field (support the Privacy Technical Assistance Center)
- Provide incentives for states and districts to build capacity for effective data use.