

**Right  
Questions**



**Right  
Data**



**Right  
Answers**

**DATA** FOR  
**ACTION**  
**2 0 1 3**



## Additional *Data for Action* Resources

Please visit [www.DataQualityCampaign.org/DFA2013](http://www.DataQualityCampaign.org/DFA2013) for additional resources:

- **National Analysis:** National trends in states' progress on building and using state longitudinal data systems to improve student achievement according to DQC's 10 State Actions
- **State-by-State Analysis:** Individual state profiles and the ability to compare states to one another
- **Action Issues:** Deeper analyses about states' data capacity to support various education policies and practices, including teacher effectiveness; college and career readiness; and privacy, security, and confidentiality

## Acknowledgments

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DQC would also like to thank its funders. Our work is made possible by philanthropic grants and contributions from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation, AT&T, the Alliance for Early Success, and Target.

# Contents

Foreword .....	3
Executive Summary .....	5
Meet People's Needs through Data .....	7
Start with the Questions	
Teachers .....	10
Parents .....	11
School and District Administrators .....	12
Policymakers .....	13
The Public .....	14
Meet People's Needs through Quality Implementation .....	17
Conclusion .....	19
Appendix A: Detailed 10 State Actions Status .....	20
Appendix B: Methodology .....	22
Appendix C: 10 Essential Elements of Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems .....	23
Appendix D: Quality Implementation Expert Group Members .....	24



# Foreword



Prior to our first survey in 2005, states had begun the important work of creating longitudinal data systems that would allow them to track student performance over time. Leaders in these states understood that they needed richer, more robust information to help them make better decisions about how education is delivered to their state's children.

But these leaders didn't stop with building systems. They have continued with the hard work of making sure these systems are continually refined to ensure that stakeholders, especially educators and parents, have actionable information at their fingertips. The work has grown because of increasing acknowledgment that empowering parents, educators, and policymakers with the right data at the right time in the right format exponentially increases the ability of these adults to ensure that our young people graduate from high school prepared for postsecondary education and careers.

We survey governor's offices each year because states have a unique leadership role to play in ensuring that all stakeholders have timely access to high-quality, relevant, and actionable information about their children, schools, and districts. It is important to pause and thank the policy leaders and the data team in each state not only for leading these efforts to build their state data infrastructure and provide rich information to the field, but also for completing the Data Quality Campaign's survey each year for nearly a decade. The insights provided through this survey allow states to learn from one another as they continue to serve the information needs of their citizens.

For the first time, two states—Arkansas and Delaware—have met the bar to have all 10 State Actions to Ensure Effective Data Use. This accomplishment is a testament to the consistent and collaborative leadership that has been a hallmark of how these states have responded to the needs of their citizens and have thus made effective data use a reality.

But as these state leaders would tell you, much more work remains to present the information in ways that empower educators, parents, and others who are working on behalf of our children to make an impact today. Data systems and the information they produce are only as valuable as their ability to answer stakeholders' questions. We need to continuously ensure that our data systems are meeting the changing and increasing information demands of the field. Not only does this make it possible to harness the power of data to improve system performance and student achievement, but it also ensures that we limit our data collection to the data points that are actually needed.

To this end, as we work to improve the quality and use of data to improve decisionmaking and outcomes in education, we also need to strengthen policies that safeguard the privacy, security, and confidentiality of education data. State policymakers must play a key leadership role in the protection of education data.

In their efforts to prioritize the safeguarding of data and build public trust in this process, three key areas of work are critical: (1) clarifying for citizens what data are collected for what purposes and who has access to which pieces of data; (2) establishing governance structures that provide clear authority and responsibility for data collection, sharing, and storage oversight; and (3) providing guidance on security and privacy protocols and policies so that educators, service providers, and researchers are not left on their own to develop them.

Safeguarding student privacy and using data effectively to improve teaching and learning are not mutually exclusive actions—in fact, this safeguarding is an essential effort as we build a culture that values, trusts, and uses data to help our children thrive.

Even as we take stronger action to safeguard privacy, we must continue our work to maximize effective use of education data. These efforts require securely linking prekindergarten through grade 12 systems with postsecondary and workforce systems so we are able to understand student pathways from early childhood to K-12 to postsecondary and careers. Currently, educators in 44 states can analyze how their students do once they graduate and go to college, but educators in only 19 states have the ability to know how those students do once they enter the workforce. This lack of feedback information from our workplaces limits our ability to prepare students for the knowledge economy.

All of states' actions to improve the quality and availability of information have an impact only if those closest to our children each day in schools—our teachers—are given opportunities to build the expertise needed to analyze and act on the data to personalize learning and tailor interventions that put struggling students back on the path to success.

With data lighting our path forward, we can provide all of our children with a world-class education that allows them to compete locally and globally.

With appreciation for your time and attention to this issue,



Aimee Rogstad Guidera  
Founder and Executive Director, Data Quality Campaign





# Executive Summary

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**The Data Quality Campaign (DQC) believes that empowering teachers, parents, school and district administrators, and state and federal policymakers with the right data at the right time will yield the right answers to the right questions and significantly increase the ability of these adults to ensure that students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers. States have built secure data systems to collect and store data, but the power of data comes from using data to make informed decisions and take action.**

To report on national and state progress on effectively using data to ensure that students graduate from high school prepared for success in college and the workplace, DQC conducts an annual survey of the states on the 10 State Actions to Ensure Effective Data Use, other key emerging data issues, and promising practices in the field.

DQC invites the governor's office in each state to participate in the survey because the governor's office is in the best position to bring all appropriate stakeholders together to respond to the survey, given its focus on developing and using data systems across the early childhood; elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education; and workforce sectors to improve student achievement. In 2013, 49 states and the District of Columbia participated in the survey.<sup>1</sup>

## Key Findings

- While states have received federal funding to jumpstart the development and implementation of their data systems, most states are providing policy and funding support for their data systems (41 states); developing data governance structures (43); and creating publicly available reports on school systems and groups of students, such as high school graduates (46).
- Most states cannot determine if their K-12 students have been adequately prepared for the workforce because only 19 have securely linked K-12 and workforce data. States are also still working to provide timely, role-based access to student data for parents, teachers, and other appropriate stakeholders (9) and implement policies and practices, such as professional development and licensing, to ensure that educators know how to use data appropriately (12).
- Four states gained three or more Actions in the past year (Kentucky, Mississippi, New York, and North Dakota).
- Fifteen states have eight or nine Actions (the District of Columbia, Kentucky, Maryland, Michigan, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Virginia, and Wisconsin join Florida, Indiana, Maine, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, and Texas). Recent policy changes put in place by states have driven the demand for data to answer policy questions and make data available for high school feedback reports, teacher evaluations, early warning systems, and other educational improvement efforts.
- Arkansas and Delaware are the first states to achieve all 10 State Actions. While these states continue to make improvements to refine policies and practices to meet stakeholders' needs, they have marshaled the leadership, policies, and resources to overcome the barriers of turf, trust, technical issues, and time that many states still face.
- The average number of Actions achieved by the states increased from 4.7 in 2011 to 6.6 in 2013.

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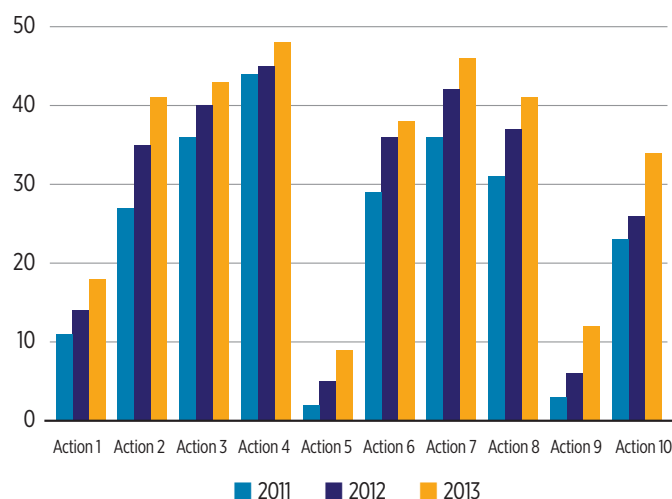
<sup>1</sup> California's governor declined to participate. Unlike in previous years, Puerto Rico was not included in the 2013 survey.



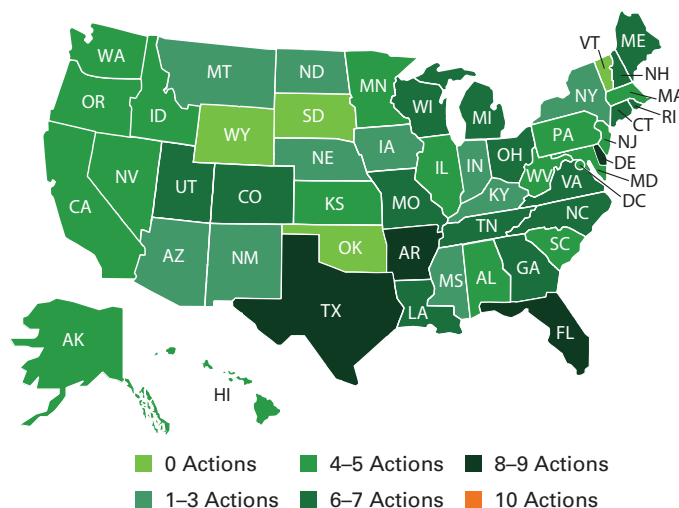
## 10 Things to Know about How States Are Supporting Effective Data Use

- States take seriously their responsibility to ensure that data are used appropriately and student data are kept private and secure. States such as Oklahoma are passing legislation to establish new procedures and safeguards for the collection and use of student data.
- Garnering the leadership, policies, and resources necessary to overcome barriers to effective data use, Arkansas and Delaware are the first states to achieve all 10 State Actions.
- Most states have established data governance structures to define the roles and responsibilities around data protection, quality, and use.
- Despite recent financial challenges, more states than ever are funding their data systems, reflecting a belief that data are critical in the decisionmaking process at all levels.
- Teachers need data on the students in their classrooms to meet the individual needs of all their students. Teachers in 35 states have access to data about the students in their classrooms, an increase from 28 states in 2011.
- Information about how the teachers they trained are performing in the classroom helps educator preparation programs improve training for future teachers. Seventeen states share information about how teachers perform with educator preparation programs, an increase from six states in 2011.
- Parents need data to help them make the best decisions about their children's education. In 14 states, parents have access to their own children's data that follow their children's progress over time.
- States are still working to link data across agencies, provide parents with access to their children's data, and share teacher performance data with teacher preparation programs. Safeguarding student and teacher data while sharing key information requires taking deliberate and thoughtful steps through collaboration and conversation. Achieving these actions takes time.
- States are moving beyond the federally mandated report card to new sophisticated, dynamic resources to provide the public with better information tailored to the needs of the state and its communities.
- As states continue to implement policies and practices to improve teacher effectiveness and graduate all students ready for college and careers, states need examples of high-quality implementation of states' work in these areas.

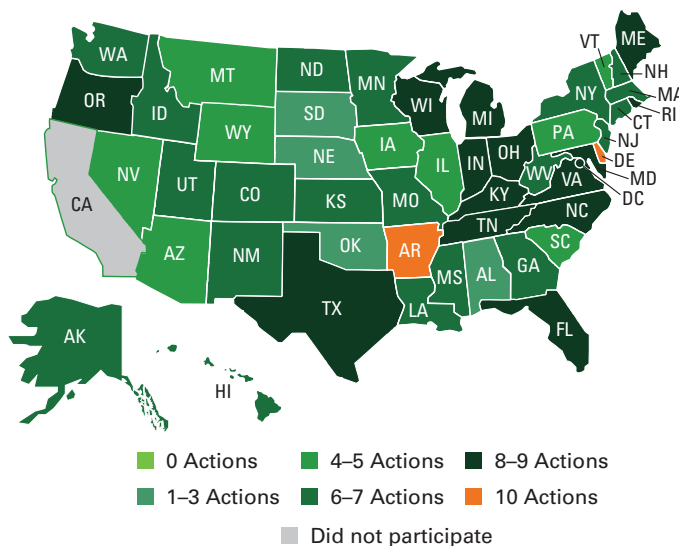
Number of States with Each State Action: 2011–13



2011



2013







# Meet People's Needs through Data

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**States and the federal government have been investing in information technology and infrastructure to ensure that secure data systems are supporting growing policy and practice demands.<sup>2</sup> However, state longitudinal data systems by themselves will not improve student achievement. The power of data will be fully realized only when they are used every day to respond to the needs of the people who require information to make critical education decisions. States are changing their vision from data collection for compliance to data collection for effective use in the state house, in the district office, in the classroom, and at the kitchen table. At the federal level, leaders can promote policies that reduce data collection burdens on states; encourage collaboration across agencies; and help build the capacity of stakeholders to use data while ensuring the privacy, security, and confidentiality of student information.**

In 2005, when the Data Quality Campaign (DQC) was formed, states did not have the information to answer questions such as “how ready are our state’s public high school graduates for college and careers?” States were collecting data points to meet reporting requirements, but they were not doing enough to connect data between sectors and over time to glean meaningful information, such as patterns that indicate whether a student is college and career ready or likely to drop out.

While compliance and accountability activities will not disappear, they can be more meaningful if states use data to inform decisionmaking and take action to realize educational goals. This transformation from being compliance focused to meeting people’s needs takes time and a continuous process of evaluation and improvement.

The people essential to making our education system work have different responsibilities and, thus, different data needs. Examples include the following:

- Teachers need data about how their students perform to tailor instruction to meet students’ individual needs.

- Parents need data to understand their child’s strengths and areas where he or she can improve and to choose the best educational environment for their child.
- School and district administrators need data to find out which educational programs are working to increase student achievement and which are not.
- State and federal policymakers need information about academic performance and workforce needs to make decisions about setting policy and allocating resources.

Meeting people’s needs takes more than providing timely and user-friendly data to answer their questions. Teachers and other users need the time, training, and skills to understand the data they have. States can support educators in building their data literacy skills and provide noneducator stakeholders training and support in how to interpret and use data. The federal government should take steps to hold states accountable for this support.

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<sup>2</sup> For more information on state data system infrastructure, see DQC’s 10 Essential Elements of Statewide Longitudinal Systems at [www.DataQualityCampaign.org/your-states-progress/10-essential-elements](http://www.DataQualityCampaign.org/your-states-progress/10-essential-elements).

## Ensuring the Privacy, Security, and Confidentiality of Education Data

*Secure, appropriate, and ethical* use of data is critical to the effective, meaningful use of data—and states' policies, practices, and communications must reflect the moral and legal responsibility to protect data. In doing so, states will ensure the privacy and confidentiality of students' personally identifiable information, mitigate risks related to the intentional and unintentional misuse of data, and ensure clarity of roles and responsibilities around data use. The state plays a critical role in developing, enforcing, and communicating the policies that enhance the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and other federal laws to protect the privacy, security, and confidentiality of student data. Also, school districts need state guidance, assistance, and support to navigate new data tools and resources and set appropriate privacy and security guidelines—and to do so continually to keep up with ever-changing technology.

Education stakeholders at every level have the responsibility to safeguard student data. Policymakers and district and school leaders should create and implement policies to minimize risk and protect student data while maximizing effective data use to improve student achievement. Parents, educators, and members of the public must ask their education leaders questions such as “what data are collected? for what purpose? and who has access?” and “what policies and practices govern how data are collected, stored, shared, accessed, retained, and used?”

State policymakers have four overarching and interconnected responsibilities to protect the privacy, confidentiality, and security of student information:

- Define and clearly communicate authority, responsibility, and accountability for decisionmaking and management and security of data.
- Document laws, policies, and decisions related to data governance and communicate these policies and procedures in ways that are accessible to stakeholders, including agency staff, students, parents, and the public.
- Ensure that the state has the capacity and resources to implement and sustain these policies and procedures, including staff and technical system infrastructure.
- Provide routine training on safeguarding privacy for all users of education data and establish clear penalties for misuse of information by staff or service providers.

Oklahoma's recent Student Data Accessibility, Transparency and Accountability Act, known as the Student DATA Act, establishes new procedures and safeguards for the collection and use of student data by the Oklahoma State Department of Education. It requires the State Board of Education to publicly set policies and establish safeguards for student data collected by the state. The Student DATA Act requires public reporting of what data are collected on students by the state, mandates the creation of a statewide student data security plan, and limits the data that can be collected on individual students and how that data can be shared. Previously, student data privacy controls were handled largely within the department, outside of any public process or public scrutiny that passing state legislation requires.

Protecting student privacy is not just an information technology issue. State policymakers need to understand their role and implement policy mechanisms to ensure that quality data are used while keeping sensitive information secure. In addition, policymakers need to communicate with parents and other members of the public about how states and districts are protecting the data they collect and the value of education data. States also need to communicate about data they are not collecting, particularly nonacademic data. For example, no state collects students' religious or political affiliation.

As our questions change, our data needs change; and as our technology advances, our policies around data collection, privacy, and security must evolve as well. The movement from data being collected on paper and stored in buildings to data being collected electronically and stored on servers to data being stored in the cloud necessitates changes in policies and the roles and responsibilities of state leaders. As states have taken on leadership and service roles, it is time for a new discussion about the role of the state in safeguarding privacy and security.

The discussion and the resulting policies should not simply be lists of prohibitions, many of which can block the important advances that districts and states are making with using data and technology to get actionable information to educators and parents faster than ever before. Instead, states can do a better job of protecting and using data through policy actions and transparent discussions about the following issues:

- why states and stakeholders need data
- how states are using and protecting data
- how decisions are made within the state about how data are collected, stored, accessed, shared, and destroyed

Learn more about ensuring data privacy, security, and confidentiality at [www.DataQualityCampaign.org/action-issues/privacy-security-confidentiality](http://www.DataQualityCampaign.org/action-issues/privacy-security-confidentiality).

### Cycle of Effective Data Use



To overcome barriers to meeting people's data needs, states can develop three state-level conditions to foster a culture of effective data use:

1. P-20/workforce leadership to garner the political will necessary to work across traditional boundaries
2. policies that support data use
3. the allocation of resources, such as time, people, technology, and funding, to use data for continuous improvement throughout the education system, including at the local level

Since education really happens in the classroom, effective local data use can directly affect instruction and increase student achievement. Without increased demand for information at the district, school, and classroom levels, state and local education agencies will remain focused on data collection rather than information access and use. Community-based organizations that support students and their families also need information to tailor their programs to meet community needs.

States take seriously their responsibility to ensure that data are used appropriately and student data are kept private and secure. It is critical that student data are safeguarded and access is provided only to those with the authority to view the information, such as teachers having access to information about their students. Policymakers can help by taking legislative and other actions to guarantee that data are protected and being used to improve system performance and academic outcomes.





# Start with the Questions

To meet people's data needs, states must know what those data needs are. States can start by finding out what questions people need to answer. In fact, teachers, parents, school and district administrators, policymakers, and others can also start with the questions—figure out what you need to know and then find the data that provide the information you require. Starting with the questions will become an ongoing process—finding data to answer one question often leads to asking more questions, leading to more answers.

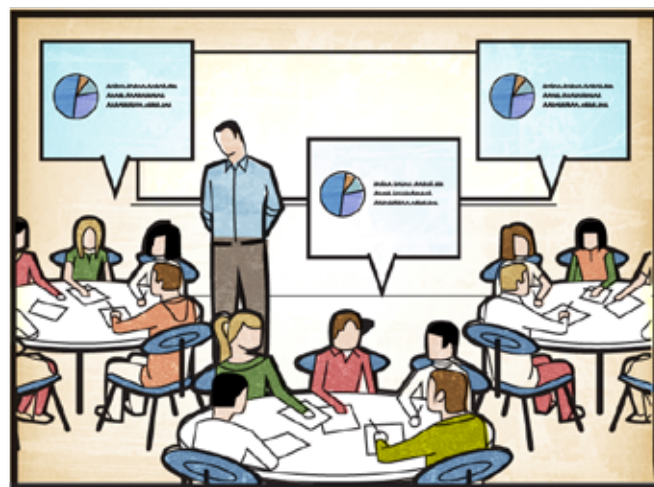
The critical people involved in education—teachers, parents, school and district administrators, and state and federal policymakers—all have questions that they need data to answer.

## Teachers

### How do I know if my students are learning the material?

States provide teachers with individual student data that teachers can use to plan for the school year, tailor instruction, and track student growth.

- Teachers in 35 states have **access**, primarily through a secure state website or portal, **to data about the students in their classrooms**, an increase from 28 states in 2011. With this access, teachers can quickly view multiple years' worth of information and analyses, such as attendance and course-taking history, instead of having to sort through piles of paperwork or create their own spreadsheets.
- **Early warning reports** are designed to identify students who are most likely to be at risk of academic failure or dropping out of school so educators can intervene before it is too late. In 2013, 31 states reported producing these reports, an increase from 18 states in 2011 and from 12 states in 2009.



## How can I improve my teaching?

Teachers use data to inform their practice and continuously improve their teaching skills. States can support teachers by providing training on how to use data and put policies in place to ensure that teachers have the skills they need to feel comfortable using data.

- Most states (43) provide training for teachers on **how to understand and use specific reports**, such as early warning reports, an increase from 39 states in 2011. Teachers need this information to know what steps to take after being alerted that a student may be off track and need additional support.
- State educator licensing and program approval policies can reflect an emphasis on **data literacy skills** to ensure that new teachers and principals

are learning the critical skills needed to effectively interpret and use data when they enter the school building. Only a quarter of the states (14) have these policies.

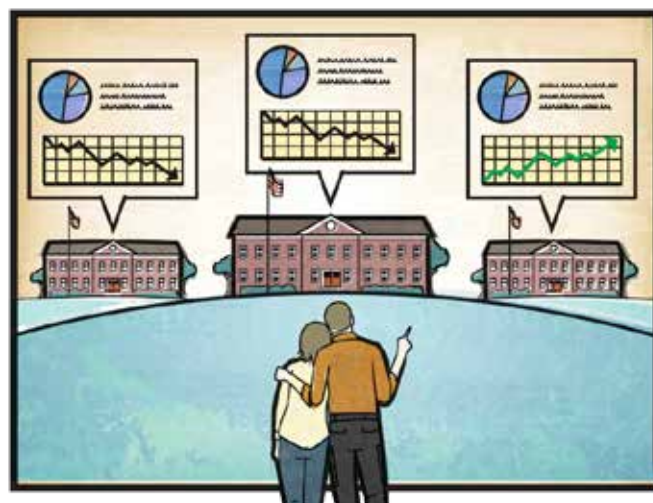
- Educator preparation programs train new teachers and their leaders and need to know how well the teachers they prepare are performing in the classroom. Seventeen states **share information about how teachers perform with educator preparation programs**, an increase from six states in 2011. This information helps preparation programs improve the training they provide to future teachers.

## Parents

### Is my child on track to graduate college and career ready?

Parents help guide their children as they move from the early education years through high school and into college and careers. Providing parents with information about their children's academic history can ensure that their children are prepared for college and careers.

- In 14 states, parents have **access to their own children's data** that follow their children's progress over time, primarily through local, secure portals or websites. While parents receive annual report cards, this once-a-year snapshot does not tell families how their children are doing over time or if they are on track for college or a job. Dashboards can provide parents with a broader array of information and give parents access to information when they need it, not just at the end of the school year.





## How does my child's school compare to other schools, including charter schools, so that I can make the best choice for my child?

In addition to needing information about the academic progress of their children, parents need information about the academic performance of schools and districts to make decisions about their children's education. States produce publicly available reports that include valuable information about the effectiveness of schools, districts, and programs.

- Most states produce publicly accessible **high school feedback reports** (42) or **cohort graduation or completion reports** (40). High

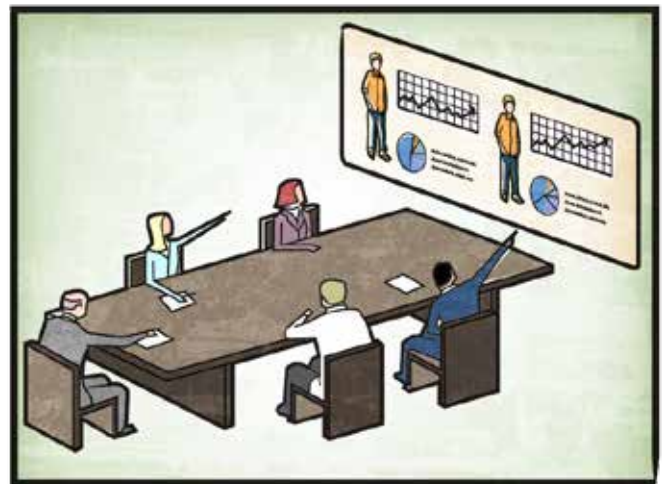
school feedback reports provide information on how a class of high school graduates fare afterward, such as the number of graduates from a given high school who enrolled in higher education. Cohort graduation or completion reports show how many students who started with a class walked across the graduation stage and how many dropped out.

## School and District Administrators

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

Principals, superintendents, and other administrators need information on how the student body as a whole is performing to measure progress and make decisions to ensure that more students graduate ready for the rigors of postsecondary education and the workforce.

- In 2013, 28 states reported producing **college and career readiness reports**. These reports provide administrators with indicators of students' college and career readiness, such as the percentage of high school students taking Advanced Placement exams or the percentage of students achieving an ACT score of 20 or greater in math. Administrators can set annual or long-term improvement goals for their schools and districts and ensure that schools and students are supported in meeting these goals.



### What happens to students after they leave our schools? Do they enroll in college or start a career?

Administrators need information about how their graduates fare in postsecondary and the workforce to identify best practices or make adjustments to the school's programs or curriculum.

- By securely **linking data from the K-12 sector, postsecondary, and the workforce**, states can evaluate whether students, schools, and districts

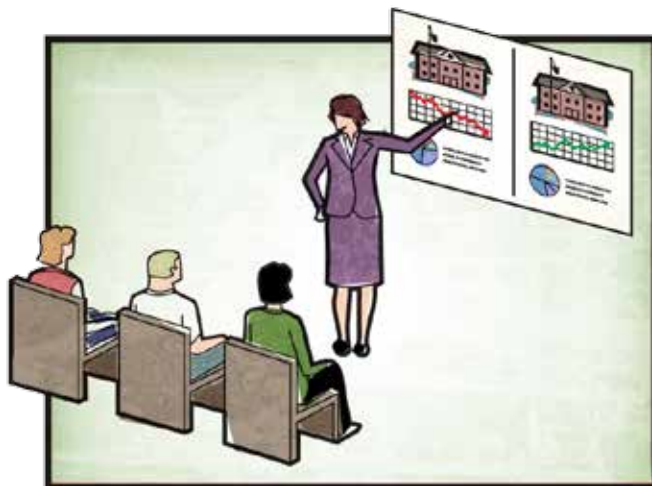
are meeting college and career readiness expectations and provide information back to administrators so they can improve student readiness. Forty-four states link K-12 data systems with postsecondary data systems, while 19 states link K-12 data systems with workforce data systems, an increase from 11 states in 2011.

# Policymakers

## How can we use local, state, and federal resources more strategically to support student improvement?

State and federal policymakers need high-quality information to make difficult policy, program, and resource allocation decisions.

- States have built longitudinal data systems to provide this information, but this work is not done. State data systems need to be maintained, updated, and refined, which requires investment. Despite the recent financial challenges in many states, 41 states are **funding their state's data system**, up from 31 states in 2011 and eight states in 2009, reflecting a belief that data are critical in the decisionmaking process at all levels.
- In addition, 45 states have **established a state policy** that requires the maintenance or use of a data system, up from 36 states in 2011.



## Are the state's colleges and universities producing enough graduates with the right degrees or skill sets to meet the workforce needs of the state's employers?

State policymakers need information about the ability of businesses to fill positions with skilled employees from a variety of educational settings, such as workforce development, adult education, career and technical education, and higher education.

- Twenty-four states securely **link postsecondary data systems with workforce data systems**.
- Twenty-six states have initiated skills gap analyses to **assess alignments between education and workforce programs and labor market demands**.
- In 30 states, **regional labor market information**, like employment and unemployment statistics, is made available to local education administrators, such as school boards, principals, and community colleges, to inform local secondary and postsecondary career and technical education priorities.

Take an in-depth look at the questions federal policymakers are asking at [www.DataQualityCampaign.org/federal-policy](http://www.DataQualityCampaign.org/federal-policy).



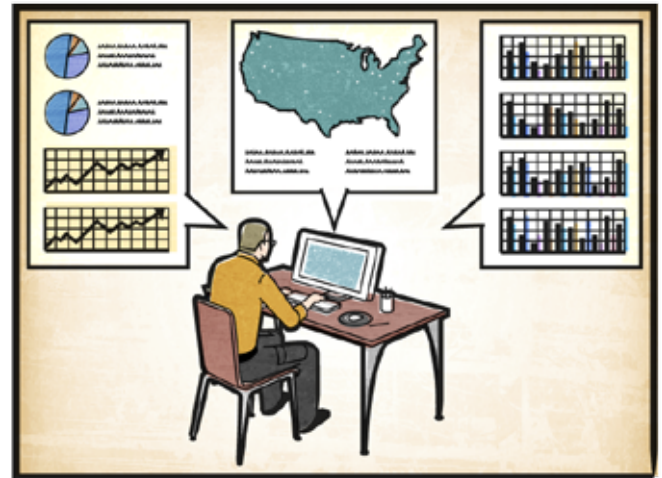


# The Public

## How are the schools in my community and my state performing?

Aggregate data on schools, districts, and states track trends across systems and over time to inform improvement efforts and highlight successes. These successes often point to best practices. Sharing aggregate data results transparently allows the public to understand how public dollars are invested in schools and the outcomes the schools achieve.

Discover how these states have put a public face on data and are sharing useful information in dynamic ways.

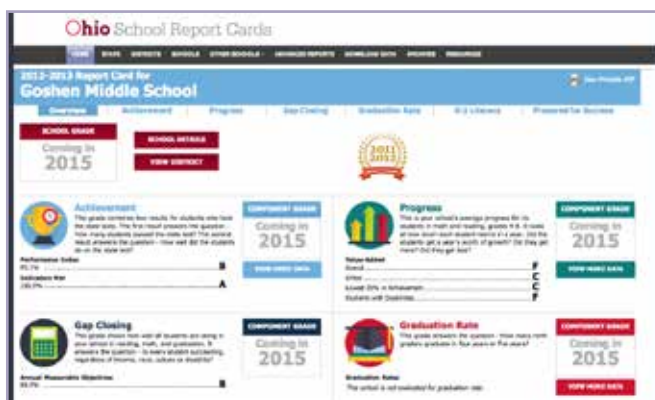


**STATE:** Ohio

**INITIATIVE:** Ohio School Report Cards

**LEARN MORE:** <http://reportcard.education.ohio.gov/Pages/default.aspx>

**WHAT IS IT?** These reports cards allow stakeholders to learn about Ohio's schools and find detailed information about district and school progress, such as student performance, enrollment, graduation rates, education funding, and more. The report cards are available for schools, districts, dropout recovery community schools, and career and technical education providers.



**WHY IS THIS GREAT?** States are moving beyond the federally mandated report card to new sophisticated, dynamic resources to provide the public with better information tailored to the needs of the state and its communities. Ohio's newly redesigned, interactive report cards use multiple measures, such as achievement, progress, and graduation rates, to give the public a full picture of the quality of schools and districts in their communities. The report cards are visually compelling, and each indicator is clearly explained in terms of a question such as "is every student succeeding, regardless of income, race, culture, or disability?" Tabs at the top of each report card allow the user to learn more about how the school or district's ratings were calculated.

**BE SURE TO TAKE A LOOK AT:** Advanced reports. These reports are available for people interested in taking a deeper look at the report card data. Users can find data for more than one Ohio school district or building or print reports and graphs.

**STATE:** Rhode Island

**INITIATIVE:** Rhode Island (RI) DataHUB

**LEARN MORE:** <http://ridatahub.org/>

**WHAT IS IT?** The RI DataHUB is a central resource for anyone interested in using data to understand the well-being of people in Rhode Island. The site allows anyone to select aggregate data and visualize



them in charts, graphs, maps, and more. Policymakers can use the DataHUB to determine where to target scarce public resources and explain the data-informed rationale behind policy decisions.

**WHY IS THIS GREAT?** The DataHUB gives users options to view different reports. Users can look at reports that have already been created and filter down to the specific school they are interested in. Or they can use the Data Catalog to search for specific indicators.

**BE SURE TO TAKE A LOOK AT:** Data stories. The guided tours feature selected data and walk users through examples of how policymakers and the public might use this powerful analytical tool. Within each data story are numerous tips for visualizing data. Users can browse stories by topic area, such as attendance or literacy, and then make their own story in the DataHUB.

**STATE:** Maryland

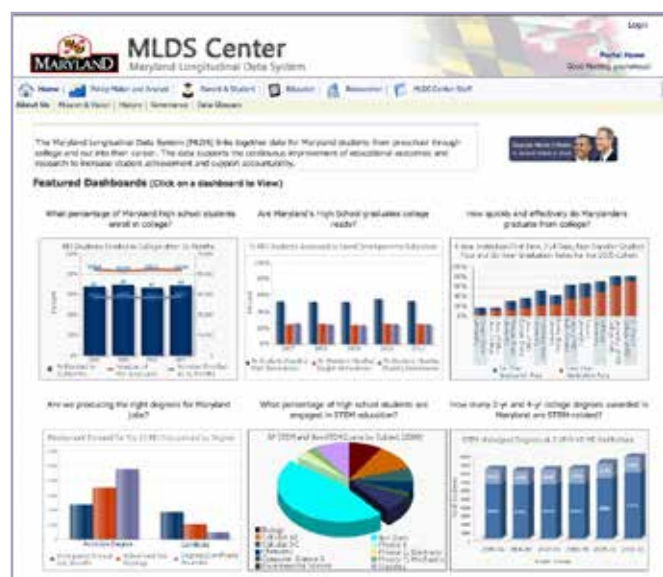
**INITIATIVE:** Maryland Longitudinal Data System (MLDS) Center

**LEARN MORE:** <http://www.mldscenter.org>

**WHAT IS IT?** The MLDS Center links data for Maryland students from preschool through college and out into their career. The portal provides a variety of resource links and data to inform all stakeholders, such as parents, educators, and policymakers, who are making education decisions every day. The data dashboards aid the continuous improvement of education services and outcomes, facilitating research to increase student achievement and support education accountability. The Web portal includes customized information for policymakers, analysts, parents, students, educators, and researchers.

**WHY IS THIS GREAT?** The data dashboards present data in a graphic format and answer critical questions such as “Are Maryland’s high school graduates college ready?” and “Are we producing the right degrees for Maryland jobs?”

**BE SURE TO TAKE A LOOK AT:** The Parent & Student tab. Information for students and their families to help them make decisions about their education is in one place, including links to resources about college planning and financial aid.



**STATE:** Arkansas

**INITIATIVE:** ADE Data Center

**LEARN MORE:** [https://adedata.arkansas.gov/#all\\_tools](https://adedata.arkansas.gov/#all_tools)

**WHAT IS IT?** The ADE Data Center is a collection of data tools and reports for educators, policymakers, teachers, parents, school districts, and anyone interested in official data from the Arkansas Department of Education.

**WHY IS THIS GREAT?** The Data Center has all available resources in one central location—no more searching more than one website for the information users need. Icons make it easy to see all the resources available, and tabs allow users to find the resources created specifically for them, such as for teachers or parents.



**BE SURE TO TAKE A LOOK AT:** Statewide Information System Reports. Through this site, users can access report statistics on topics such as bus counts, course enrollment totals, finance information, student demographics, teacher and staff counts, and much more at the state, county, district, and school levels.



# Meet People's Needs through Quality Implementation

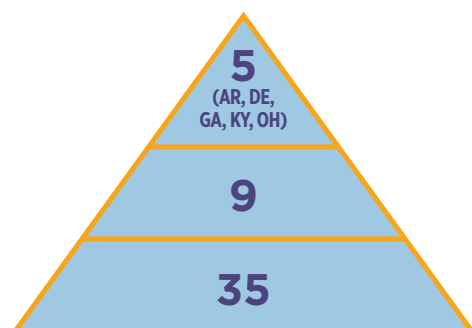
States often look to each other for examples of “what good looks like” in implementation. Moreover, as states work to implement the 10 State Actions, they need a roadmap for what to strive for to move their work forward from “good” to “great.” DQC selected areas to focus on in 2013 that are components of the 10 State Actions. DQC then convened experts representing various stakeholders (e.g., state education agencies, higher education, researchers, national advocacy groups, local educators) to determine the criteria and evidence needed to measure the quality of implementation for each area. (See Appendix D for a list of experts in each group.)

Below is an overview of each area, with pyramids that represent the levels of implementation quality. The number in each section of the pyramid is the number of states meeting the criteria for each level. The base level shows the total number of states implementing work in that area. The middle level

shows the number of these states that are examples of good implementation, and the top shows the number that are examples of great implementation. For more information and analysis, including states that are examples of quality implementation, visit [www.DataQualityCampaign.org](http://www.DataQualityCampaign.org).

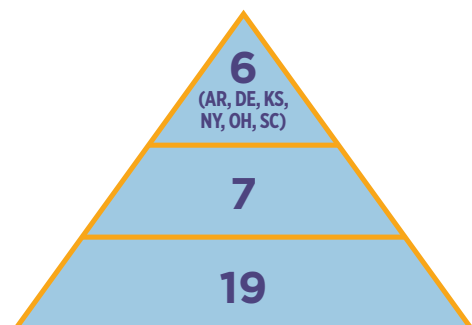
## Teacher Effectiveness

NUMBER OF STATES



### Provide and Support Teacher Access to Student Longitudinal Data

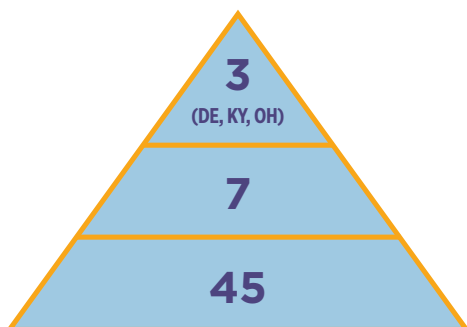
Teachers are expected to guide each individual student's learning and growth. To help support teachers' work, states can provide teachers with access to their students' data in a secure, Web-based portal that integrates state and local data and is customizable at the local level.



### Create a High-Quality Educator Licensure Policy Addressing Data Literacy

Addressing data literacy in educator licensure policy is a critical step in creating a data-literate educator workforce. Licensure policies that place an emphasis on developing educator skills to use data should ensure that educators have the skills and abilities to access, gather, analyze, and use relevant data from available sources.

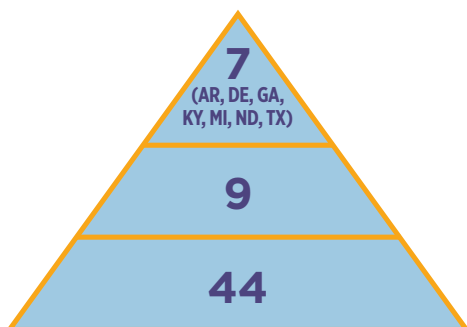




### Create a High-Quality Teacher-Student Data Link (TSDL)

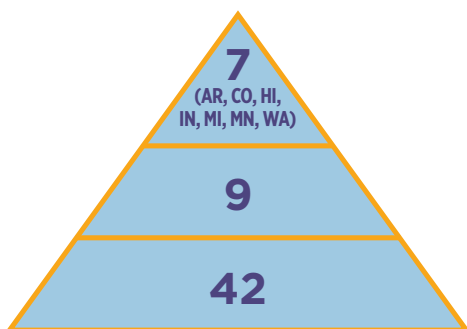
A TSDL allows teachers and students to be linked through district data records. A high-quality TSDL lies at the center of state efforts to improve the effectiveness of teachers.

## College and Career Readiness



### Create, Sustain, and Use High-Quality K-12 and Postsecondary Linkages

States rely on data from both the K-12 and postsecondary sectors to guarantee that all high school graduates are ready for postsecondary education and to identify the K-12 practices and programs that best prepare students to succeed in their postsecondary experiences.



### Produce Actionable, Timely, and Publicly Accessible High School Feedback Reports

Succinct, easy-to-read, and easy-to-interpret high school feedback reports allow school leaders, parents, school boards, and other key education stakeholders to understand how well their high schools' students perform in college and take actions to ensure that they succeed in postsecondary education.

# Conclusion

Quality data help us know where we are, show us where we need to go, and point us toward how to get there. People such as teachers, parents, school and district administrators, state and federal policymakers, and the public take the steps needed to help students achieve and be college and career ready. But to do

this, stakeholders need data to answer their critical questions. States can provide the data they need while ensuring the privacy and confidentiality of students' personally identifiable information. Ultimately, meeting stakeholders' needs, and doing so with quality data, helps them meet students' needs.



# Appendix A: Detailed 10 State Actions Status

## National Status, 2011–13

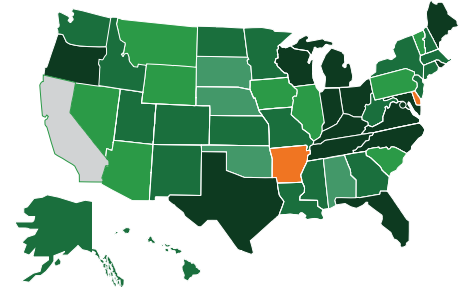
State Action	NUMBER OF STATES		
	2011	2012	2013
<b>1. Link state K–12 data systems with early learning, postsecondary, workforce, and other critical state agency data systems.</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>18</b>
K–12 and early childhood data are annually matched and shared with a known match rate.	46	46	43
K–12 and postsecondary data are annually matched and shared with a known match rate.	38	43	44
K–12 and workforce data are annually matched and shared with a known match rate.	11	14	19
<b>2. Create stable, sustainable support for longitudinal data systems.</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>41</b>
The P–20/workforce state longitudinal data system (SLDS) is mandated, or data system use is required in state policy.	36	46	45
The P–20/workforce SLDS receives state funding.	31	36	41
<b>3. Develop governance structures to guide data collection and use.</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>43</b>
A state education agency data governance committee is established.	46	46	48
A cross-agency data governance committee/council is established with authority.	39	43	44
<b>4. Build state data repositories.</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>48</b>
K–12 data repository is built and implemented.	44	45	48
<b>5. Provide timely, role-based access to data while protecting privacy.</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>
Multiple levels or types of role-based access are established.	47	43	45
Parents, teachers, and appropriate stakeholders have access to student-level longitudinal data.	8	9	14
Superintendents, state policymakers, or state education agency staff and other stakeholders have access to aggregate-level longitudinal data.	37	41	39
State policy ensures that teachers and parents have access to their students' longitudinal data.	6	7	10
The state is transparent about who is authorized to access specific data and for what purposes.	17	18	26
<b>6. Create progress reports with student-level data for educators, students, and parents.</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>38</b>
The state produces reports using student-level longitudinal data.	34	41	41
Teachers and appropriate stakeholders have tailored reports using student-level longitudinal data.	32	39	38
<b>7. Create reports with longitudinal statistics to guide system-level change.</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>46</b>
The state produces reports using aggregate-level longitudinal data.	39	47	48
State-produced reports using aggregate-level longitudinal data are available on a state-owned public website.	36	42	46
<b>8. Develop a purposeful research agenda.</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>41</b>
The state has developed a purposeful research agenda with other organizations.	36	42	43
The state has a process by which outside researchers can propose their own studies.	39	44	44
<b>9. Implement policies and promote practices to build educators' capacity to use data.</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12</b>
Teachers and principals are trained to use longitudinal data to tailor instruction and inform schoolwide policies and practices.	39	39	41
Teachers and principals are trained to use and interpret specific reports.	38	40	43
The state plays an active role in training educators to use and interpret specific reports.	37	38	42
Preservice: Data literacy is a requirement for certification/licensure, or data literacy training is a requirement for state program approval.	22	19	29
Teacher performance data are automatically shared with in-state educator preparation programs at least annually.	6	8	17
<b>10. Promote strategies to raise awareness of available data.</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>34</b>
The state communicates the availability of data to noneducator stakeholders.	49	46	48
The state trains noneducator stakeholders on how to use and interpret data.	29	31	35
The state education agency makes data privacy and security policies public.	39	41	45

The subcriteria listed for each Action are the criteria used to determine whether or not a state receives credit for that Action. A state must indicate that it has implemented all subcriteria for an Action to receive credit for that Action.



# Individual State Status: 2013

STATE	ACTIONS										TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Alabama							✓			✓	2
Alaska	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			7
Arizona		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓			5
Arkansas	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	10
California	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Colorado		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	7
Connecticut		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			6
DC	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	8
Delaware	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	10
Florida	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8
Georgia		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	7
Hawaii		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			6
Idaho		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		6
Illinois		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓			5
Indiana	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	9
Iowa		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				5
Kansas		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	7
Kentucky	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	9
Louisiana		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		7
Maine	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	9
Maryland	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	8
Massachusetts		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	6
Michigan		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8
Minnesota		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	7
Mississippi		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	6
Missouri	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	7
Montana		✓	✓	✓			✓			✓	5
Nebraska		✓	✓	✓							3
Nevada		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓			5
New Hampshire				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	6
New Jersey		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	7
New Mexico			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	6
New York		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	7
North Carolina	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8
North Dakota	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓			6
Ohio		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8
Oklahoma		✓	✓				✓				3
Oregon	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	9
Pennsylvania		✓		✓		✓	✓				4
Rhode Island	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	8
South Carolina				✓			✓	✓	✓		4
South Dakota			✓	✓			✓				3
Tennessee	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		8
Texas	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	9
Utah	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	7
Vermont				✓			✓	✓		✓	4
Virginia		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	8
Washington	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	7
West Virginia		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	7
Wisconsin		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	8
Wyoming		✓		✓		✓	✓			✓	5
TOTAL	18	41	43	48	9	38	46	41	12	34	



Visit [www.DataQualityCampaign.org/DFA2013](http://www.DataQualityCampaign.org/DFA2013) for detailed results and to compare your state's results to other states.

\* This year, California's governor declined to participate in the Data for Action survey.

# Appendix B: Methodology

***Data for Action* is a powerful tool to inform efforts in education to better use data in decisionmaking. It is a series of analyses that highlight state progress and key priorities to promote the effective use of longitudinal data to improve student achievement. *Data for Action* annually measures the progress of all 50 states and the District of Columbia toward implementing the 10 State Actions to Ensure Effective Data Use and toward addressing other key policy issues.**

## Process

The 2013 *Data for Action* survey is DQC's ninth annual survey of states and focuses on states' progress toward the 10 State Actions. DQC uses an online survey tool to collect information from each state. The survey consisted of three parts: states answer a series of questions about each of the 10 State Actions, emerging data issues and promising practices in the field, and quality implementation areas. States are also asked to provide documents or website links as evidence of having specific policies or reports. DQC determines whether or not states receive credit for each Action based on states' responses (see Appendix A). DQC sent each state a confirmation email indicating which Actions the state would receive credit for this year and worked with states to ensure that the information the states reported and the analysis of their responses were as accurate as possible.

States responded to the *Data for Action* survey in summer 2013. States' responses reflect the current status of their work at the time they responded to the survey. States may have made additional progress on the 10 State Actions since submitting the survey, which will be reflected in next year's survey.

The survey responses are self-reported by each state. While DQC works with states to help them respond to the survey, DQC does not instruct states how to respond. States can also answer questions differently from previous years to reflect recent changes in state policies or practices or a new understanding of what effective data use looks like.

While this year's survey included improvements to clarify questions and provide more information about the meaning of the 10 State Actions, the key survey questions and the criteria used to determine credit for each Action did not change from 2011, which allows for a longitudinal analysis of the 10 State Actions. Analyses of the emerging data issues and quality implementation areas can be found on DQC's website, [www.DataQualityCampaign.org](http://www.DataQualityCampaign.org).

## Respondents

Forty-nine states and the District of Columbia participated in this year's survey. DQC invites each state's governor's office to participate in the survey. DQC believes that the governor's office is in the best position to bring all appropriate stakeholders together to respond to the survey, given its focus on developing and using P-20W data systems to improve student achievement. The governor's office can appoint a designee to respond to the survey in collaboration with stakeholders. This year, California's governor declined to participate in the *Data for Action* survey. Unlike in previous years, Puerto Rico was not included in the 2013 survey.

## Questions and Comments

Questions and comments about *Data for Action* 2013, including requests for data, should be directed to [dataforaction@DataQualityCampaign.org](mailto:dataforaction@DataQualityCampaign.org).

# Appendix C: 10 Essential Elements of Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems

**In 2005, DQC identified the 10 Essential Elements of Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems. The 10 Essential Elements provided a roadmap for states as they built statewide longitudinal data systems to collect, store, and use longitudinal data to improve student achievement.**

In 2007, recognizing the importance of these elements, Congress approved the America COMPETES Act, including 12 “Required Elements of a P-16 Education Data System,” which are very closely aligned to DQC’s 10 Essential Elements. The America COMPETES Act’s 12 Elements have been applied to grants to states for statewide longitudinal data systems since 2009.

Since 2005, DQC has aimed to create a culture in which quality data are not only collected but also used to increase student achievement. With the inclusion of the 10 Essential Elements in the 12 America COMPETES Elements, DQC now focuses its annual survey on the actions states are taking to ensure the effective use of data for student achievement.

To ensure that these elements continue to be met, DQC will monitor the implementation reports states submit to the Department of Education and urge Congress to formally incorporate the required elements directly into the legislation authorizing statewide longitudinal data systems.

## **The 10 Essential Elements are the following:**

1. A unique student identifier
2. Student-level enrollment, demographic, and program participation information
3. The ability to match individual students’ test records from year to year to measure academic growth
4. Information on untested students and the reasons why they were not tested
5. A teacher identifier system with the ability to match teachers to students
6. Student-level transcript data, including information on courses completed and grades earned
7. Student-level college readiness test scores
8. Student-level graduation and dropout data
9. The ability to match student records between the P-12 and postsecondary systems
10. A state data audit system assessing data quality, validity, and reliability

Read more information about the alignment between DQC’s 10 Essential Elements and the 12 America COMPETES Elements at [www.DataQualityCampaign.org/files/851\\_America\\_COMPETES.pdf](http://www.DataQualityCampaign.org/files/851_America_COMPETES.pdf).

# Appendix D: Quality Implementation Expert Group Members

The following individuals came together to determine the criteria and evidence needed to measure the quality of states' implementation of work in the below areas. Advisory members informed the development of the criteria but were not responsible for the final criteria.

## Teacher Access to Student Longitudinal Data

- Barnett Berry, Center for Teaching Quality
- Ann Clark, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, North Carolina
- Mickey Garrison, Oregon Department of Education
- Patrick Ledesma, National Board for Professional Teaching Standards
- Rayne Martin, Stand for Children, Louisiana
- Evan Stone, Educators for Excellence
- Robert Swiggum, Georgia Department of Education
- Rich Wenning, SchoolView Foundation

## Educator Licensure Policy Addressing Data Literacy

- Seth Gerson, National Board for Professional Teaching Standards
- Sandi Jacobs, National Council on Teacher Quality
- Ellen Mandinach, WestEd
- Janice Poda, Council of Chief State School Officers
- Phil Rogers, National Association of State Departments of Teacher Education
- Nancy Sharkey, US Department of Education
- Mary Ann Snider, Rhode Island Department of Education

## Teacher-Student Data Link

- John Barker, Chicago Public Schools
- Todd Hellman, Battelle for Kids
- Sandi Jacobs, National Council on Teacher Quality
- Toby King, Colorado Department of Education
- Linda Rocks, Bossier Parish Schools, Louisiana
- Peter Tamayo, Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
- Nancy Wilson, Connecting Education, Leadership, and Technology
- Chris Woolard, Ohio Department of Education
- Eli Pristoop, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation [Advisory member]
- Nancy Sharkey, US Department of Education [Advisory member]

## K-12 and Postsecondary Linkages

- Ben Boer, Advance Illinois
- Bethann Canada, Virginia Department of Education
- Tanya Garcia, State Higher Education Executive Officers Association
- Neal Gibson, Arkansas Department of Education
- Erin O'Hara, Tennessee Department of Education
- Marie O'Hara, Achieve
- Ben Passmore, University System of Maryland
- Brad Phillips, Institute for Evidence-Based Change
- Dominique Raymond, Complete College America
- Travis Reindl, formerly of the National Governors Association
- Mark Schneider, American Institutes for Research
- Elise Miller, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation [Advisory member]
- Nancy Sharkey, US Department of Education [Advisory member]

## High School Feedback Reports

- Tammi Chun, formerly of the Hawaii Governor's Office
- Jordan Cross, College Summit
- Trevor Greene, Toppenish High School in Toppenish, Washington
- Anne Hyslop, New America Foundation
- Charles McGrew, Kentucky Department of Education
- Ryan Reyna, National Governors Association
- Angelique Simpson-Marcus, Largo High School in Largo, Maryland
- The National Student Clearinghouse
- Eli Pristoop, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation [Advisory member]
- Nancy Sharkey, US Department of Education [Advisory member]





*Using Data  
to Improve  
Student  
Achievement*

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The **Data Quality Campaign (DQC)** is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, national advocacy organization committed to realizing an education system in which all stakeholders—from parents to policymakers—are empowered with high-quality data from the early childhood, K-12, postsecondary, and workforce systems. To achieve this vision, DQC supports state policymakers and other key leaders to promote effective data use to ensure students graduate from high school prepared for success in college and the workplace.