The National Forum on Education Statistics

Levette Williams
Forum Member and Past Chair of the Forum Policies, Programs, and Implementation Committee
Presentation Outline

- National Forum on Education Statistics (Forum)
- Forum Resources
- Discussion / Q&A
Challenges to Comparable and Uniform K-12 Public Education Statistics

• Differences between states
  • Laws
  • Student Information Systems (SIS)
  • Policies
  • Data collection methods
  • One versus many SIS vendors
  • Data element definitions

• Local control
National Forum on Education Statistics (Forum)

- Established in 1989
- Known as the “Forum”
- Purpose: To assist in improving the collection, reporting, and use of elementary and secondary education statistics.
- The Forum provides an arena for local, state, and national leaders in the education data community to discuss issues, address problems, develop resources, and consider new approaches to improving data collection and utility.
Forum Mission: To plan, recommend, and develop education data resources that will support local, state, and national efforts to improve public and private education throughout the United States.
Forum Membership

SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS
DATA MANAGERS
CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICERS
DATA ANALYSTS
ASSESSMENT COORDINATORS
FEDERAL PROGRAM OFFICERS
Forum Organization

- Full Forum
- Steering Committee
- National Education Statistics Agenda Committee
- Policies, Programs, and Implementation Committee
- Technology Committee
- Working Groups
Forum Resources
Forum Guide to College & Career Ready Data
Forum Guide to College & Career Ready Data

- Chapter 1: Overview of College and Career Readiness
- Chapter 2. Using Data to Support College and Career Ready Goals
- Chapter 3. Overarching Issues for the Use of College and Career Ready Data
- Chapter 4. Key Points and Emerging Needs
- Appendices
College and Career Ready Data
Use Cases

• Tools to Support Individualized Learning
• Educator Support Systems to Address Student-Specific Needs
• Metrics, Accountability, and Continuous Improvement
• Postsecondary Feedback Loops
• Maximizing Career Opportunities for All Students
College and Career Ready Data Use Case: Postsecondary Feedback Loops

- Postsecondary feedback loops provide information on student CCR outcomes.
- Feedback loops have traditionally included only postsecondary enrollment data; some states are working on including workforce outcome data as well.
- Barriers continue to exist in obtaining postsecondary outcomes or workforce data for students who leave their state to pursue college or work.

Example: Montana High School Follow Up Report
College and Career Ready Data Use Case: Maximizing Career Opportunities for Students

- Career and Technical Education (CTE) Career Pathways or Program of Studies provide a model for K-12, Postsecondary, and Workforce cooperation
- CTE plays an important role in preparing students for whom less than a bachelor’s degree is needed for future employment; CTE programs should be held to the same standard of academic rigor as general education programs
- Workforce agencies can provide data on students who are employed in-state in non-federal, non-military industries

Example: Washington State’s Education Research and Data Center
Forum Guide to Data Visualization: A Resource for Education Agencies
Forum Guide to Data Visualization: A Resource for Education Agencies

- Chapter 1: Data Visualization in Education Organizations
- Chapter 2: Data Visualization to Advance Data Analysis
- Chapter 3: Data Visualization to Improve Communications
- Chapter 4: Implementing the Data Visualization Process
- Appendices
What is Data Visualization, and Why is it Important?

The transformation of data into information through visual presentation and analysis.
Key Principles for Effective Data Visualization

1. Show the data
2. Reduce the clutter
3. Integrate text and images
4. Portray data meaning accurately and ethically

High school attendance is the most important predictor of student graduation in the Hypothetical Public Schools, 2009-2012.
Recommended Practices for Data Visualization

1. Capitalize on consistency
2. Data that should not be compared should not be presented side by side
3. Don’t limit your design choices to default graphing programs
4. Focus on the take-home message for the target audience
5. Minimize jargon, acronyms, and technical terms
6. Choose a font that is easy to read and will reproduce well
7. Recognize the importance of color and the benefits of Section 508 compliance
Six-Step Process for Data Visualization

1. QUESTION
2. RESEARCH
3. FINDINGS
4. CUSTOMIZATION
5. VISUALIZATION
6. USER FEEDBACK
Forum Guides to Supporting Data Access for Researchers
Forum Guides to Supporting Data Access for Researchers

SEA Perspective
- Chapter 1: Data Partnerships: An Opportunity to Benefit Education Agencies and the Research Community
- Chapter 2: Core Practices for Effectively Managing Data Access Requests
- Appendices

LEA Perspective
- Chapter 1: Effectively Managing Requests for Data Access
- Chapter 2: Core Practices For Effectively Managing Data Access Requests
- Appendices
Data Partnership Benefits

- Encouraging research projects that reflect an education agency’s information needs and priorities
- Supporting data-driven decisionmaking by educators and policymakers
- Providing an SEA or LEA with access to additional research, statistical, and program expertise
- Building the research skills of staff who will work with members of the research community while reviewing and servicing data requests
Challenges to Sharing Data

- **Staff Time**: reviewing and responding to data requests
- **Resource Allocation**: establishing an infrastructure, implementing core data sharing practices, and managing and monitoring requests
- **Data Limitations**: data collected are intended for specific purposes and may not meet the precise needs of researchers
- **Privacy and Security**: much of the data in SEA or LEA systems will be protected by FERPA and other federal, state, and local laws and regulations
Core Practices for Effectively Managing Data Requests

1. Help Researchers Understand Agency Data and the Data Request Process
2. Create Effective Data Request Forms for Researchers
3. Review Data Requests Strategically
4. Manage the Data Request Process Efficiently
5. Release Data Appropriately
6. Monitor Data Use
7. Use Research Findings
Core Practice 1: Action Items

Help Researchers Understand Agency Data and the Data Request Process:
Action Items

- Create, promote, and use a research agenda. Post the agenda on the reference landing page, introduce the agenda to researchers upon first point of contact, and share the agenda with local colleges of education.
- Develop policies about training topics and requirements for researchers; identify those topics that are optional and those that are mandatory.
- Identify or develop resources (e.g., training materials) to help researchers better understand, request, and access new and existing data.
- Determine when communications would be most useful to researchers during the data request/access/use timeline.
**Appendix B. Preliminary Research/Data Request Template**

**STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

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<th>Date:</th>
<th>Control Number: (TBD - Assigned by Agency)</th>
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### Section I - Transmittal Letter

- a. Brief outline of proposed research
- b. Brief outline of data to be requested
- c. Benefit to the state education system and/or alignment with state education goals
- d. Key timelines for research
- e. Summary of qualifications
School Courses for the Exchange of Data (SCED)

- SCED is a voluntary, common classification system for prior-to-secondary and secondary school courses.
- It can be used to
  - compare course information;
  - maintain longitudinal data about student coursework; and
  - efficiently exchange course taking records.
## SCED History and Working Group

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Version/Title</th>
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<tr>
<td>2007</td>
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SCED Elements

02052G1.0011
ALGEBRA I
SCED Attributes

A course is **more** than a 5-digit code

**SCED Attributes**
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<td>01</td>
<td>English Language and Literature</td>
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SCED Resources

- SCED Finder
- Forum Guide to SCED
- SCED Master List
- SCED Video Series
- SCED Frequently Asked Questions
SCED Spotlight: Iowa

- Community College Courses
- Core Courses for University Admission

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Action Items for PESC Members

- Visit the Forum website: [https://nces.ed.gov/forum/](https://nces.ed.gov/forum/)
- Use Forum publications
- Provide feedback
- Send Michael to Forum meetings with suggestions
Questions?
Thank You and Contact Information

• Ghedam Bairu, NCES: Ghedam.bairu@ed.gov
• Download free Forum resources at http://nces.ed.gov/forum/publications.asp