Using Data to Meet ESSA Goals

APPENDIX AND METHODOLOGY

This appendix is a supplement and companion to the full report, *Time to Act 2018: Using Data to Meet ESSA Goals,* which details the Data Quality Campaign's (DQC) research findings about where states are today on each of the Four Policy Priorities to Make Data Work for Students. In this appendix, you will find additional information supporting the full report, including the following:

Four Policy Priorities to Make Data Work for Students

▸ What State Policymakers Should Do: original recommendations first introduced in *Time to Act: Making Data Work for Students*

▸ Citations: information about DQC's research supporting the findings in each section of the full report

Methodology

▸ Detailed information about the multiple methods DQC used to collect, analyze, and connect evidence to tell the story of how and how well states are making data work for students

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.

☑ What State Policymakers Should Do

▸ Develop a set of policy and practice questions that will set the priorities for state action and determine the information needed to answer those questions.

▸ Link and govern data across all agencies critical to student success, from early childhood and K–12 to postsecondary and the workforce, including other state agencies that support students (e.g., child welfare).

▸ Develop, calculate, and share indicators based on longitudinal data, in addition to measures based on annual statewide assessments, that demonstrate progress toward stated goals.

🗎 Citations

▸ Parents and teachers want data that reflects a broader picture of student achievement.

• DQC's 2018 Parent Poll Results, DQC and Harris Poll

• DQC's 2018 Teacher Poll Results, DQC and Harris Poll

▸ While some states have taken steps to give parents and teachers the information that they want, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires every state to take action to ensure that all families have a more complete picture of student outcomes.

• *Show Me the Data 2017: States Can Improve Report Cards* This Year

• ESSA State Plan Review and Analysis

▶ To ensure that all families have a more complete picture of student outcomes, states must commit to a sustainable vision for how data comes together across sectors to give parents answers to their questions.

- *The Art of the Possible: Data Governance Lessons Learned from Kentucky, Maryland, and Washington*
- *Education Data Legislation Review: 2018 State Activity*

Make Data Use Possible

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

☑ What State Policymakers Should Do

▶ Use the bully pulpit and allocate resources (people, time, money, and technology) to prioritize using data to inform decisionmaking at the state level.

▶ Ensure that leaders responsible for student outcomes have the feedback data they need from other systems to effectively serve students.

▶ Support local education agencies (based on their unique capacity and needs) by providing the flexibility to use people, time, money, and technology to prioritize data use to inform action and improve outcomes.

▶ Enact the necessary policies, practices, and conditions to ensure that every educator can use data effectively.

▤ Citations

▶ Teachers want data—but barriers persist.
- DQC's 2018 Teacher Poll Results, DQC and Harris Poll

▶ Teachers expect school and district leaders to take action, so helping build local capacity is critical for states.
- DQC's 2018 Teacher Poll Results, DQC and Harris Poll

▶ States are stepping up to support data use by those closest to students.
- ESSA State Plan Review and Analysis
- *Education Data Legislation Review: 2018 State Activity*

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 State Policymakers Should Do

▶ Provide the public timely, high-quality, relevant, and easy-to-find data.

▶ Communicate the value of data to support student learning.

▶ Communicate the types of data the state collects and how the data is protected.

▤ Citations

▶ While many parents already use information about school quality, some parents have difficulty locating it—or are not aware that such information exists.
- DQC's 2018 Parent Poll Results, DQC and Harris Poll

▶ When parents can find the information, it is often difficult to understand.
- *Show Me the Data 2017: States Can Improve Report Cards This Year*

▶ States can and must do better. ESSA has pushed states toward this goal, and many are using the opportunity to improve how and what they share.
- ESSA State Plan Review and Analysis
- *Education Data Legislation Review: 2018 State Activity*

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

☑ What State Policymakers Should Do

▸ Ensure that those closest to students have access to student-level data that is tailored to their needs and presented in context.

▸ Intentionally design and implement policies and practices to protect the privacy and confidentiality of student and teacher data and ensure that systems are secure.

📄 Citations

▸ Teachers want and need student-level data but do not yet have the data that is most valuable.

  • DQC's 2018 Teacher Poll Results, DQC and Harris Poll

  • Speak Up Research Project for Digital Learning 2017, Project Tomorrow in partnership with DQC

▸ To make data work for students, parents must also have access to their child's data.

  • DQC's 2018 Parent Poll Results, DQC and Harris Poll

  • DQC's 2018 Teacher Poll Results, DQC and Harris Poll

Methodology

Over the past year, DQC has systematically gathered and summarized information from diverse sources to understand the progress states are making on the Four Policy Priorities to Make Data Work for Students. We used multiple methods to collect, analyze, and connect evidence from various sources to tell the story of how and how well states are making data work for students.

This resource is meant to serve as a summary of the evidence DQC found over the last year, understanding that states are continuously updating their websites, resources, and activities. Following is a description of DQC's research activities, with hyperlinks for all resources that are publicly available. Some of DQC's research was not published and is therefore not available publicly.

Research Activity Descriptions

The Art of the Possible: Data Governance Lessons Learned from Kentucky, Maryland, and Washington: DQC staff attended in-person meetings of the Kentucky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics (April 2015), the Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center (March, June, September 2015), and Washington's Education Research & Data Center (March 2015). DQC also conducted phone and

in-person interviews with staff from each data governance body in May through July 2015 and July 2016. Finally, a website review was conducted in October 2016 and again in October 2017 to further inform the research and writing processes.

DQC's 2018 Parent Poll Results, DQC and Harris Poll: These online surveys were conducted within the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of DQC on May 17–21, 2018, among 914 parents of children ages 5–17, 842 of whom had children attending school.

DQC's 2018 Teacher Poll Results, DQC and Harris Poll: These online surveys were conducted within the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of DQC on May 23–26, 2018, among 762 full-time K–12 grade teachers.

Education Data Legislation Review: 2018 State Activity: Since 2014, DQC has tracked the introduction and passage of student data privacy legislation in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, annually publishing an analysis of the year's legislative activity. DQC subscribes to an online state legislative tracking service and has developed a keyword search process to accurately find and track state legislation related to education data (including

topics such as data privacy, data governance, teacher evaluations, etc.) as the bills move through the legislative process in each state. DQC logs and categorizes each bill in a matrix that describes the characteristics of the bill (e.g., accountability, transparency, governance). In 2018, DQC's legislative tracking included both privacy- and nonprivacy-related education data bills.

ESSA State Plan Review and Analysis (unpublished): In December 2017, DQC reviewed the state ESSA plans for all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Plans were reviewed for evidence of commitments to data use across a variety of different indicators.

Show Me the Data 2017: States Can Improve Report Cards **This Year:** In September 2017, a team of DQC staff reviewed school report cards for all 50 states and the District of Columbia using categories such as ease of access, format, data elements, and subgroups. The indicators we looked for reflect both what is federally required and the information we know is valuable to families and communities. We also contacted each state to give them the opportunity to provide a link to their

school report cards for analysis. One reviewer looked at an elementary school report card for each state while another reviewer looked at a high school report card for each state. Once the data collection was complete, the results were reviewed to ensure consistency and accuracy. The data included does not reflect any updates to report cards made by states after DQC's review.

Speak Up Research Project for Digital Learning 2017: Each year, the Speak Up Research Project for Digital Learning polls K–12 students, parents, and educators about the role of technology for learning in and out of school. DQC partnered with Project Tomorrow to include questions on its 2017 Speak Up survey, which reached more than 300,000 teachers, administrators, parents, students, and community members. The survey questions focused on respondents' opinions about and experience with education technology and data use in schools. The data is collected from a convenience sample; schools and districts self-select to participate in and facilitate the survey-taking process for their students, educators, and parents. The Speak Up 2017 survey was available online between October 2017 and February 2018.