

K–12 Needs Feedback about Students' Postsecondary Success

→ Increasing Demand for Information about Students' Postsecondary Success:

- > Educators, systems leaders, and policymakers are recalibrating the education system to the new goal of preparing all students for college and careers.
- > Stakeholders need timely, specific feedback about student postsecondary outcomes to inform and improve their efforts.
- > Postsecondary outcomes are becoming a critical indicator used by districts, states, and federal policies for measuring school progress, alignment, and accountability and for informing school improvement decisions.

→ Providing High School Feedback Requires State Data Capacity

- > The best indicator of whether students are graduating from high school ready for college and careers is actual information about their postsecondary experience, such as enrollment, remediation, and degree completion. When this information is provided to schools and districts, it is often referred to as *high school feedback*. This feedback is provided through a variety of mechanisms, including in web-based formats, comprehensive school profiles, or stand-alone high school feedback reports.
- > States, more than local entities, are best positioned to leverage their investments in statewide longitudinal data systems to secure this information, analyze it, and provide it to stakeholders in usable forms.
- > States use a variety of strategies to do this work, which requires state leadership, collaboration among multiple agencies and entities, and increasingly information from across state lines.

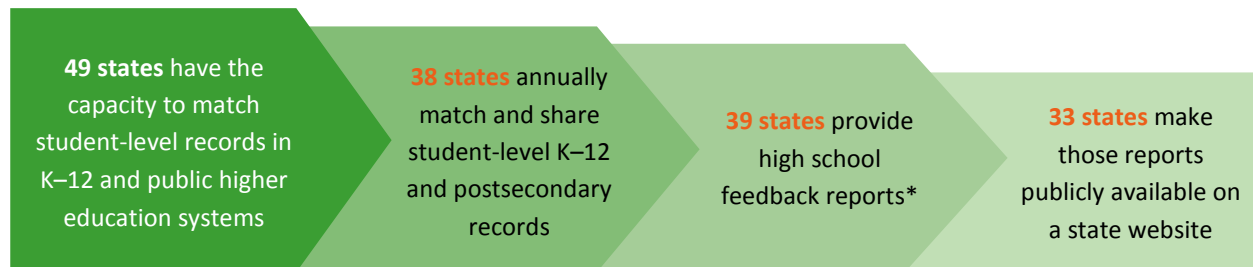
→ Federal Policies Are Accelerating State and Local Efforts: As a condition of receiving various federal funds, states have committed to report postsecondary progress and success indicators by high school, as in the following cases:

- > For State Fiscal Stabilization Funds (SFSF), every state must report, by January 2012, college-going and credit-accumulations rates by high school.
- > For Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) waivers, states must annually report college enrollment and credit accumulation rates by high school. Eleven states (CO, FL, GA, IN, KY, MA, MN, NJ, NM, OK, and TN) made this commitment when they submitted requests through the first round of waivers in November 2011.

Data for Action 2011: Just the Facts

Q: How many states are leveraging their data systems to provide high schools with feedback about students' postsecondary success?

A:



*West Virginia produces a report despite reporting that it does not annually match and share K–12 and postsecondary data.

Q: What kind of information is included in these feedback reports?

A: Of the 33 states that have made their high school feedback reports publicly available:

- 33 states include college enrollment information
- 28 states include remediation information
- 14 states include degree completion information
- 12 states include information about students who attended postsecondary in other states

THE BOTTOM LINE

- Nearly every state (49 states) has the capacity to match student-level K–12 records with the same students' records in all of the state's public colleges and universities. This means that nearly every state has the capacity to provide its K–12 system with at least some postsecondary feedback to inform their improvement efforts.
- Seventy-five percent of states produce some kind of high school feedback information. This means that stakeholders in most states can access some information about how their high schools' students fare in postsecondary education—critical information that can be used to inform and improve their college-readiness efforts.
- It's time to learn about promising practices from leading states (see below) to improve the quality and utility of high school feedback reports. Providing valuable feedback information tailored to stakeholder needs is becoming recognized as a policy priority. Some states, such as KY, are beginning to see the benefits of such feedback in increased college enrollment and improved preparation. Now that a majority of states are doing this work, they can identify and share promising practices to improve efforts nationally. Some of the questions we can learn from include: What strategies are being successfully used to broadly disseminate these reports? What formats and characteristics (web based, searchable, etc.) improve utility for users? How are the 28 states that include remediation information obtaining this information?
- The high school feedback available to schools and districts does not paint a comprehensive picture of students' postsecondary success. States need multi-state solutions to addressing some of the political, policy, and technical barriers to providing comprehensive information about students' postsecondary success.
 - > **Private or out-of-state institutions.** In many states, the state entity producing the reports—most often the state education agency or the state university system or coordinating body—has access to data from a subset of higher education institutions, typically the public, in-state institutions. A range of technical, policy, and political factors contribute to this issue. However, if districts and schools only receive feedback about students who enroll in public, in-state institutions, they are receiving an incomplete picture. For example, nationally, 19 percent of all first-time college freshmen graduated from high school in a different state; in some states this statistic is far higher (ED, 2009).
 - > **College indicators beyond enrollment.** More work needs to be done to include useful feedback information about students' postsecondary progress (remediation, credit accumulation) and success (degree completion). Many states rely on an external vendor to provide postsecondary information, which is limited to enrollment and degree completion information; course information is more difficult to obtain.
 - > **Career success.** States are only just beginning to define the career and work indicators that would provide useful feedback and identify mechanisms to collect, analyze, and share that information.
- States must ensure stakeholders know about, have access to, and use postsecondary feedback to improve college readiness. Even as states continue to improve the quality and comprehensiveness of feedback information, they must work to get the information into the hands of stakeholders who can use it to improve students' college readiness. This requires working with stakeholders to refine the content, design, and dissemination of feedback information and monitor and improve access and use.

States to Watch

- **Kentucky**, a longtime leader among states in the production and dissemination of high school feedback reports, has recently updated its reports and is beginning to see a positive impact on students. See DQC's [Profile from the Field](#) for a synopsis of their efforts and links to more information.
- [Hawaii](#), [Indiana](#), and [Washington](#) are among the states with easier-to-access and understand high school feedback reports.

Detailed information about each state's high school feedback report, including links to publicly available information, can be found in DQC's table, [High School Feedback Information: An Analysis of States' Current Efforts](#).

Related and Cited Resources

- Data Quality Campaign, [Hot Topic: Supporting Early Warning Systems](#), 2011.
- Data Quality Campaign, [High School Feedback Information: An Analysis of States' Current Efforts](#), 2011.
- Data Quality Campaign, [Using Data to Increase College and Career Readiness: A Primer for State Policymakers](#), 2011.
- C. Doherty, [Creating Reports Using Longitudinal Data](#), Data Quality Campaign, 2010.
- ED, National Center for Education Statistics, [2008 Integrated Postsecondary Data System \(IPEDS\)](#), 2009.
- A. Hyslop, [Education Data That Matters: Giving High Schools Useful Feedback on Grads' Outcomes](#), Education Sector, 2011.
- J.B. Schramm and E. K. Zalesne, [Seizing the Measurement Moment: Why Now is the Time for States to Help High Schools Get the Postsecondary Data They Need and Want](#), College Summit, 2011.

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. For more information, and to view Data for Action 2011: DQC's State Analysis, please visit www.DataQualityCampaign.org/stateanalysis/about.