

What is the Issue and Why Does It Matter?



As states tackle complex policy issues spanning the preschool through workforce (P20W) spectrum, the importance of utilizing data to inform education policy continues to increase. Longitudinal data plays a vital role in addressing complex policy issues. As such, state leaders incorporate statewide longitudinal data systems (SLDS) into their education policy decisions. Education Commission of the States defines SLDS as a system with formal connections between at least two of the following four core agencies: early learning, kindergarten through 12th grade (K-12), postsecondary and workforce.

Currently, 37 states plus the District of Columbia (D.C.) connect data between at least two educational systems and only 16 states plus D.C. have full P20W systems.¹ As most states still lack full P20W systems, introduced legislation seeking to expand existing systems or to establish full systems is increasingly prevalent.

Several states use their systems to assess their educational performance, including student success for various demographic groups, employment outcomes, educator effectiveness and more. State leaders are introducing legislation aimed at shaping the use of longitudinal data systems based on what they have learned from such assessments. Additionally, state leaders are introducing more legislation to create linkages between postsecondary systems and the workforce.

States develop and grow their longitudinal data systems through a variety of means, including legislation, executive orders, memorandums of understanding and grants. The following sections of this Policy Snapshot provide summary information on 2016 and 2017 legislative action related to SLDS, including the establishment, expansion or use of such systems.

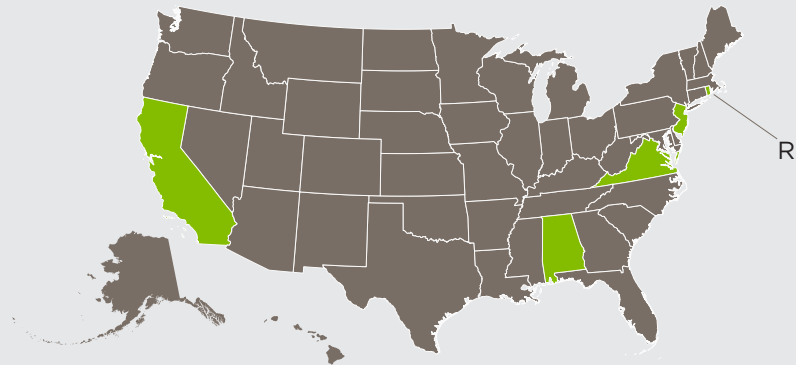


How Many States Considered Legislation in 2016?

Based on a review of 2016 legislative activity:

- Five states considered legislation related to SLDS.
- Six bills were introduced.
- One bill was enacted, four bills failed and one bill is pending.

Which States Considered Legislation in 2016?



State	Legislation	Status
Alabama	H.B. 125	Failed
California	S.B. 66	Enacted
New Jersey	A.B. 3096	Pending
Rhode Island	H.B. 7221	Failed
Virginia	H.B. 1036 S.B. 636	Failed

Examples of 2016 State Legislation



California: Enacted [S.B. 66](#) authorizes the department of consumer affairs to make specified licensure information available to the California Community Colleges to monitor employment outcomes of students who participated in career technical education programs.



New Jersey: New Jersey's pending [A.B. 3096](#) requires the development of a longitudinal data system that maintains student data spanning the P20W spectrum. The legislation establishes the P-20 Longitudinal Data System Working Group, consisting of the secretary of higher education, the commissioner of education, and the commissioner of labor and workforce development. The three entities are required to enter a memorandum of understanding following the bill's effective date.



Virginia: A pair of failed companion bills, [H.B. 1036](#) and [S.B. 636](#), would have required data connections between the postsecondary system and the workforce. The State Council of Higher Education for Virginia was tasked with developing and maintaining a longitudinal data system with access to educational, health, social service and employment outcome data.

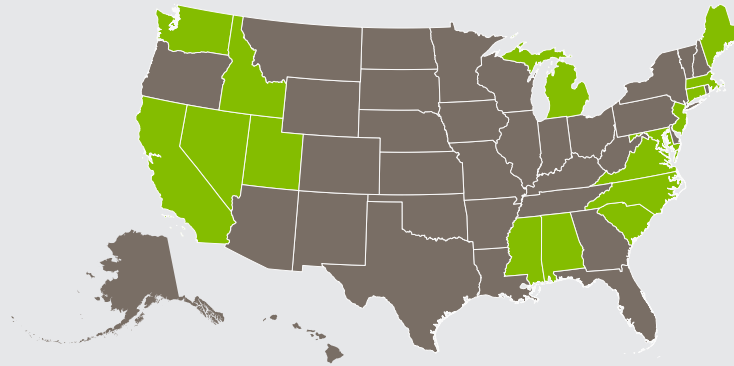


How Many States Have Considered Legislation in 2017?

Based on a review of 2017 legislative activity:

- Sixteen states considered legislation related to SLDS.
- Twenty bills were introduced.
- Six bills were enacted, seven bills failed and seven bills are pending.

Which States Have Considered Legislation in 2017?





State	Legislation	Status
Alabama	H.B. 97	Failed
	S.B. 153	Failed
California	A.B. 1336	Pending
Connecticut	H.B. 5266	Failed
Idaho	S.B. 1033	Failed
Maine	L.D. 43	Failed
Maryland	S.B. 317	Enacted
	S.B. 1165	Enacted
Massachusetts	S.B. 674	Pending
Michigan	H.B. 4229	Pending


State	Legislation	Status
Mississippi	S.B. 2168	Failed
Nevada	S.B. 458	Enacted
	S.B. 516	Enacted
New Jersey	A.B. 3096	Pending
North Carolina	H.B. 849	Pending
South Carolina	H.B. 3969	Enacted
	S.B. 534	Pending
Utah	H.B. 449	Failed
Virginia	H.B. 1664	Enacted
Washington	H.B. 1600	Pending


Note: New Jersey A.B. 3096 was introduced in 2016 and carried over to the 2017 legislative session.

Examples of 2017 State Legislation

 **Alabama:** Failed companion bills, [H.B. 97](#) and [S.B. 153](#), would have established the Alabama Network of Statewide Workforce and Education-Related Statistics to assess the state's educational outcomes and workforce needs.

 **Maryland:** Enacted [S.B. 1165](#) extends the amount of time the Maryland Longitudinal Data System can link and use student and workforce data from five to 20 years beyond a student's latest attendance in any state educational institution. Additionally, the bill prohibits the Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center from selling certain private information.

 **Mississippi:** Failed [S.B. 2168](#) would have prohibited the state board of education, the state department of education or any school districts from expending any funds on the implementation of a longitudinal data system that would track students beyond K-12. The bill also would have allowed parents or guardians to opt their student out of the SLDS.

 **Nevada:** Enacted [S.B. 458](#) requires the development and oversight of a SLDS that links early childhood education and K-12 public education data with postsecondary education and workforce data. The legislation establishes the P-20W Research Data System Advisory Committee to assist in the coordination and management of the system.

Resources

- Zeke Perez, *Examining SLDS Development and Utility* (Denver: Education Commission of the States, 2017), <http://www.ecs.org/examining-slds-development-and-utility/>
- Data Quality Campaign, 2017, <http://www.dataqualitycampaign.org> (accessed June 15, 2017)
- Workforce Data Quality Campaign, 2017, <http://www.workforcedqc.org> (accessed June 15, 2017)
- “Mapping the Data Landscape,” Institute for Higher Education Policy, 2017, <http://www.ihep.org/postsecdata/mapping-data-landscape> (accessed June 15, 2017)
- John Armstrong and Christina Whitfield, *Strong Foundations 2016* (Boulder: State Higher Education Executive Officers Association, 2016), <http://www.sheeo.org/resources/publications/strong-foundations-2016> (accessed June 15, 2017)

Endnotes

1. Zeke Perez, *50-State Comparison: Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems* (Denver: Education Commission of the States, 2016), <http://www.ecs.org/state-longitudinal-data-systems/> (accessed June 1, 2017).

AUTHOR

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About Postsecondary Legislative Tracking

The Postsecondary and Workforce Development Institute at Education Commission of the States tracks legislation on multiple issues related to college readiness and higher education. The team follows the bill's status from introduction through its final action, summarizes key provisions and assigns topics. The policy tracking helps keep an eye on trends, innovative policy approaches and the overall landscape of higher education legislative activity. This information is leveraged for several purposes, including policy snapshots that offer a brief background on a topic, a visual take on recent bills and summaries of selected state legislation.

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