STATEWIDE FORUM ON NEW JERSEY’S EDUCATION TO EARNINGS DATA SYSTEM

On December 1 and 2, 2016, a wide range of national and state experts and policymakers as well as New Jersey K-12 educators, postsecondary educators, workforce development and labor representatives, civic and nonprofit organizations, legislators, business leaders, members of the philanthropic community, and researchers convened to take part in a forum that marked the public launch of New Jersey’s P20W State Longitudinal Data System. All materials presented at the forum can be found here.

The forum provided an opportunity for panelists from seven states and multiple national organizations to share experiences about their P20W data systems, and offered key insights and suggestions as New Jersey implements its own system. In addition to the presentations of panelists from across the nation, the audience heard from New Jersey officials on how the data system was developed, and from legislators and school administrators on how the system will be useful to their work.

Rachel Zinn, Director of the Workforce Data Quality Campaign, provided a keynote address in which she spoke about the critical return on investment for social programs the data provides, allowing states to make more effective and efficient decisions. She also spoke about the progress and perils of state longitudinal data systems. In her discussion, Ms. Zinn provided the chart on page 2, which maps some of the information gaps in state data systems, as well as some of the challenges to filling these gaps. Ultimately, her presentation highlighted the many benefits of state longitudinal data systems while discussing the areas for growth.
POSTSECONDARY DATA
Records that measure student access, progress, success, and affordability through higher education.

WORKFORCE PROGRAM DATA
Data on participants (demographics, services received, credentials attained) in programs designed to help workers build skills and find employment.

EMPLOYMENT DATA
Information about the employee, the employer, and wages.

CHALLENGES TO FILLING GAPS

LEGAL
- Multiple state and federal laws and regulations restrict access to and usage of education and employment data.

TECHNICAL
- Some data sets lack common identifiers, and some states may lack sufficient technological infrastructure to match records over time and across programs efficiently.

LOGISTICAL AND CULTURAL
- States may have difficulty securing funds to establish and maintain data systems.
- State agencies must cooperate and trust each other to handle data and analytics.
Mississippi urged states to provide data that are actionable; data must be presented in a way that provides immediate, ready-to-share facts. Mississippi develops many tools that are “powered by” its SLDS to present information. One main tool is the Lifetracks system displaying aggregate data at each stage from early childhood to the workforce. Another powerful resource utilizing the SLDS is the My MDES system, which allows businesses to research the workforce in specific regions when contemplating a move. This site is particularly helpful when officials are negotiating with employers to move to the state, showing them that they have the labor force necessary for that business.
Although their coordinating board was eliminated and they do not have a formal SLDS system, organizations throughout California continue to share data. They combine data from four siloed educational data sources (CDE, CCC, CSU, and UC) with wage data to show workforce outcomes for higher education. California utilizes many online tools to display outcome data for graduates, including CCC Salary Surfer, CCC College Wage Tracker, and CTE Launchboard. The system classified certain CTE course takers who did not complete a program as “skills builders.” In doing so, they are able to determine the real earnings value of completing one or two courses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disciplines with the highest enrollment</th>
<th>Median % Change</th>
<th>Total N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administration of Justice</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td>9,299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Development/Early Care and Education</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
<td>7,027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounting</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
<td>6,788</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police Academy</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
<td>6,258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Technology/Office Computer Applications</td>
<td>16.6%</td>
<td>3,399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire Technology</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>3,307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business and Commerce, General</td>
<td>25.4%</td>
<td>2,951</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Medical Services</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
<td>2,871</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Management</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>2,812</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology, General</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
<td>2,264</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tiffany Smith provided the audience with important background information on the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and how it relates to data integration. The vision of the new system is that the needs of business and workers drive workforce solutions, One-Stop Career Centers provide services to job seekers and employers and focus on continuous improvement, and the workforce system supports strong regional economies and plays an active role in workforce development. Across the system, continuous improvement is supported through evaluation and data-driven decision making. The new Workforce Integrated Performance System (WIPS) launched on October 1, and allows states to submit an individual record file while automatically generating uniform quarterly/annual reports and performing common edit checks and validation rules to ensure accurate and consistent information.

The U.S. Department of Labor provides regular webinars covering WIOA topics in its WIOA Wednesday series at www.workforcegps.org/events.
KCEWS started in 2012 to expand the work of the Kentucky P-20 Data Collaborative. Through legislation, it has the authority to collect and link data to provide reports and statistical data about education and workforce efforts in the state to policymakers, agencies, and the general public. KCEWS developed strong working relationships with its legislature by scheduling regular meetings with legislators during which it provides reports of longitudinal data split by legislative district. In addition to regular reports to the legislature and government agencies, KCEWS produces annual reports for each school district, the Kentucky High School Feedback Report. It produces two versions, one for college-going rates, and one for college success statistics of those students.
Minnesota is currently working to educate more organizations on how to use its data system through a train-the-trainer model called the SLEDS Network. Working with a range of stakeholders throughout the region, SLEDS staff are promoting the value of the system while teaching others how to use it for their own work. The system combines education and earnings data to also include health care licensures from the Minnesota Department of Health. Using National Student Clearhouse data, SLEDS also incorporates information for out-of-state higher education enrollments and completions. With these data, SLEDS provides an online dashboard displaying a range of data points from student demographics to teacher qualifications.
Since 1995, North Carolina has been using a Common Follow-Up System (CFS) through statute where agencies are able to share information. In 2012, legislation passed to strengthen the CFS through greater reporting and evaluation efforts. At this time, the system was moved to the Government Data Analytics Center whose mission is to transform existing data assets into an information utility for the state’s policy leaders. Contributors of the CFS now include the North Carolina Department of Commerce, the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, North Carolina Community College System, University of North Carolina, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, and North Carolina Department of Public Safety. Containing over 219 million program records since the mid-1990s, the CFS system is able to analyze extensive longitudinal data through reports to the legislature and contributing agencies, and the development of online dashboards (North Carolina Tower).
Day 2, Panel 1

Establishing Useful and Effective Integrated Data Systems and Partnerships at the State Level: More Lessons from Leading States

Moderator: Dr. Peter Woolley, Fairleigh Dickinson University

Joshua Hawley
Ohio Education Research Center
Ohio State University

The Ohio Education Research Center, a collaboration between multiple schools at Ohio State University, has seen many successes since it began in 2011 with Race to the Top funding. Following partnership agreements with a range of other universities, the center has created a series of dashboards for the government, a research data center (Ohio Longitudinal Data Archive), completed a series of reports for different agencies, and developed a K-12 Student Dashboard. The center sets its agenda each year with each agency that is available for the whole system, and recommends others ask agencies what they want to know and organize around those requests. In a large study, the center examined students outcomes on reading and kindergarten readiness using data from a large set of student records in Cleveland, matching with health and social service data.
Since its creation in 2010, the MLDS Center has worked to quickly provide valuable data to state agencies and the public. The center underwent an independent IT security audit to test the rigor of its security practices for the data it held, gaining credibility with the public on its ability to securely maintain the system. By 2013, the center was funded in the state budget and statutorily required to provide an annual report to the governor and general assembly about the number of students who are fully enrolled in high school and in colleges. Gaining a line item budget through the state allowed the center to become more sustainable and expand to become fully operational by 2016.

**Data Snapshot: Dual Enrollment Report**

- **5,453**
  The number of dually enrolled public school 12th graders in 2013-2014.

- **9%**
  The total percent of 12th graders who are dually enrolled in 2013-2014.

- **2%**
  The total increase in dual enrollment from 2012-2013.
The Center for Regional Economic Competitiveness is working to make the case for data sharing between states in a way that provides better data, access, analysis, decision making, and ultimately better outcomes. For this reason, the center started the State Data Sharing (SDS) Initiative to raise awareness of the value of administrative records and foster collaboration to improve access to data. In one study of administrative data, SDS researched federal and state corporate tax and unemployment insurance confidentiality laws and regulations to increase state knowledge of how to best protect sensitive information and allow for data sharing to support analysis. To advance data sharing, SDS suggests better educating state leaders on the value of administrative records and data sharing, revisiting antiquated state data confidentiality laws and regulations, providing more information on database security safeguards, and helping to streamline data sharing.
Day 2, Panel 2

Using P20W Longitudinal Data and Research to Improve Public Policy, Practice, and Services in New Jersey: A Vision and Investment

Moderator: Elizabeth Garlatti, New Jersey Office of the Secretary of Higher Education

Margaret M. McMenamin, Union County College

Assemblyman Troy Singleton, Seventh Legislative District

Dennis Bone, State Employment and Training Commission

Jeffrey Swartz, Camden County Workforce Investment Board

Scott Moffitt, Morris County Vocational School District

In the final session of the data forum, Betsy Garlatti moderated a panel of five New Jersey stakeholders who discussed how the P20W SLDS will be helpful to their work. The group discussed the importance of this system in advancing their work, and responded to concerns about data security. Those familiar with the higher education system in the state discussed how we owe it to students to make outcome data accessible as they begin to research what the return on investment is from college, certain majors, and particular colleges before they apply. Assemblyman Troy Singleton discussed the importance the legislature places on the security of students’ data, and how they have worked to safeguard this information in our increasingly data-driven environment. Others detailed the importance of the data in allowing them to provide better-tailored services to program participants and students. With the new data system, panelists agreed, we will be able to make outcome data more accessible to the public, and better inform decision making to better serve all residents of the state.