Best Practices for Postsecondary Outcomes Data Use:
Develop Data Resources & Tools

States can help districts and schools use postsecondary outcomes data effectively to develop and improve programs that positively affect students' transitions to higher education and the workforce.

QIP interviewed states that are in different stages of using postsecondary outcomes data, including making these data available to districts. These conversations provided information on five best practices to support the use of postsecondary outcomes data at all levels. To learn more about states' best practices on using postsecondary outcomes data, please see Best Practices on Using Postsecondary Outcomes Data and an infographic that expands on best practices for using postsecondary outcomes data.

This resource focuses on the best practice of developing data resources and tools, including real-world examples from states.

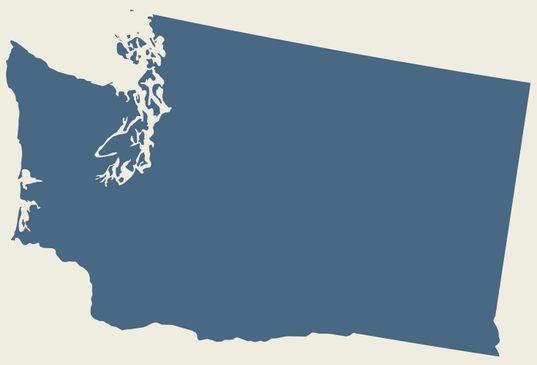
Why Should You Create Postsecondary Outcomes Resources and Tools?

User-friendly data dashboards and stakeholder-driven reports support program evaluation and decision-making by offering online access to postsecondary outcomes data and presenting customizable data visualizations suitable for a range of needs.

For example, at the **school level**, principals, teachers, and counselors can show students data in an easy-to-understand format that the students can use to inform their postsecondary education choices.

At the **district and state levels**, postsecondary outcomes data reports can provide critical information on how education programs are impacting students, particularly underserved populations, and which schools and districts may need additional resources.

Data Resources and Tools in Action



The state of **Washington's** Education Research and Data Center (ERDC)'s High School Graduate Outcomes dashboard provides districts, high schools, and other stakeholders with information about the postsecondary education and workforce outcomes of their high school graduates. The tool offers data visualizations on enrollment, progress and completion, hours worked, and earnings. Users can view results at the high school, district, or at the state level. They can also view postsecondary enrollment for specific institutions of higher education. The datasets are available to download for further analysis. In addition, ERDC uses the P-20W (early learning through workforce) data to carry out research and analysis to understand transitions from high school to postsecondary, such as looking at the relationship between high school mathematics and postsecondary math success.

Minnesota's Statewide Longitudinal Education Data System (SLEDS) Tracing Pathways Dashboard allows users to explore the educational pathways that students take, as well as whether those educational pathways lead Minnesota students to earn a Family Sustaining Hourly Wage (FSHW) ten years after entering ninth grade. FSHW is an indicator used by Minnesota to evaluate whether an individual has earned a wage that is needed to cover the cost of living of a typical Minnesota family.

Users can
- explore the interactive space to compare demographic subgroups;
- see the role of high school and postsecondary milestones in student pathways;
- view the resulting employment outcomes; and
- create custom tables.

In addition to the public website which provides suppressed data, the state education agency shares unsuppressed data directly with schools and districts. The data is also available to researchers for program evaluation and other research projects.

Connecticut provides postsecondary outcomes data to high schools through EdSight, the state's interactive data portal for public districts, schools, and programs. EdSight includes reports for postsecondary outcomes and postsecondary readiness. The Postsecondary Readiness report can be filtered by district and school, school year, student group, and college-and-career-readiness (CCR) indicators. The postsecondary outcomes report section of EdSight includes the College Enrollment, Persistence, and Graduation Dashboard. It can be filtered by district, school, and student group. The dashboard also shows a postsecondary progress report of high school graduates and a map that displays first-year college enrollment by districts. Users can also export aggregated data to a spreadsheet by clicking a "view data" button.

Want to learn more? Check out some of North Carolina's and Michigan's data resources and tools in the Case Studies section of Using Postsecondary Outcomes Data.

Does your state have a best practice that promotes a responsible data-sharing culture? Join the K12 Community of Practice: Using Postsecondary Data (www.k12usingpsdata.com) to discuss strategies and resources with other data professionals around using postsecondary outcomes data to improve student outcomes.