

# Quality Public Reporting Informs Decisions, Empowers Action

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**Public reporting makes data about schools and districts—including enrollment, student performance, teacher effectiveness, and more—available to the public. These data never include information that could be used to identify individuals and are critical to meeting the information needs of parents, educators, administrators, policymakers, and others with a stake in education.**

Everyone with a stake in education has **QUESTIONS:**



Quality public reporting can provide **ANSWERS** that support action:

- ❓ What happens to students after they leave the district?
- ❓ Are they successful in college and jobs?
- ❓ Do students at my child's school have equal access to effective teachers?



- ➔ Make informed decisions about which school is the best fit for your child
- ➔ Advocate for students at your child's school and local district

- ❓ Are teachers in my school and district effective at improving student learning?
- ❓ Are students safe in my schools and en route to school?



- ➔ Effectively allocate scarce resources
- ➔ Understand student performance in context
- ➔ Advocate for the school and district
- ➔ Empower others to be informed participants

- ❓ Are my schools and districts spending money efficiently and effectively to improve student learning?
- ❓ Is every student mastering content standards at the rate necessary to prepare them for success?



- ➔ Create momentum for desired policies
- ➔ Demonstrate progress of reforms
- ➔ Empower constituents to make informed decisions
- ➔ Hold system actors accountable for performance
- ➔ Show how public dollars are spent

Currently, public reporting efforts in most states are geared toward compliance with state and federal laws, rather than being intentionally designed to meet people's needs. Consequently, most publicly reported data go unseen or unused, limiting their ability to promote and support improvements in student achievement and system performance.

# Recommendations for State Policymakers

Data are powerful tools for informing stakeholder decisions but are not likely to be used if they are not presented in actionable formats tailored to specific stakeholder needs. State policymakers must take a leadership role in promoting high-quality public reporting through the following actions:

## Ensure that the data are transparent and trustworthy.

- ▶ Protect data privacy, security, and confidentiality.
- ▶ Ensure accuracy by supporting district quality checks before data are released.

## Maintain coordination across P-20/workforce (P-20W) entities.

- ▶ Maintain a P-20W data governance body, and make being the steward of public reporting one of its roles.

## Ensure that publicly reported data meet the information needs of all stakeholders.

- ▶ Engage stakeholders to identify the questions they want answered.
- ▶ Make raw aggregate data available to the public.
- ▶ Structure the state longitudinal data system infrastructure to allow maximum flexibility.

## Ensure that information is easy for stakeholders to find, access, and understand.

- ▶ Engage stakeholders in the development and continuous improvement of all publicly reported information.
- ▶ Provide resources for stakeholders to know how to interpret the information and use the data to inform decisionmaking.
- ▶ Prioritize expertise in data analysis, visualization, and communication.

When states shift their public reporting practices to focus on meeting stakeholder needs, they will increase the effectiveness of their public reporting efforts as part of an overall strategy to improve student achievement and system performance.

To see the Data Quality Campaign's full suite of public reporting materials, including the full primer; the federal spotlight; and resources for parents, administrators, and local school board members, go to [www.dataqualitycampaign.org/PublicReporting](http://www.dataqualitycampaign.org/PublicReporting).



**POLICYMAKERS**

### TAKE ACTION

Create policies and promote practices that support quality public reporting



**Useful**



**Trustworthy**



**Timely**



**Easy to find**