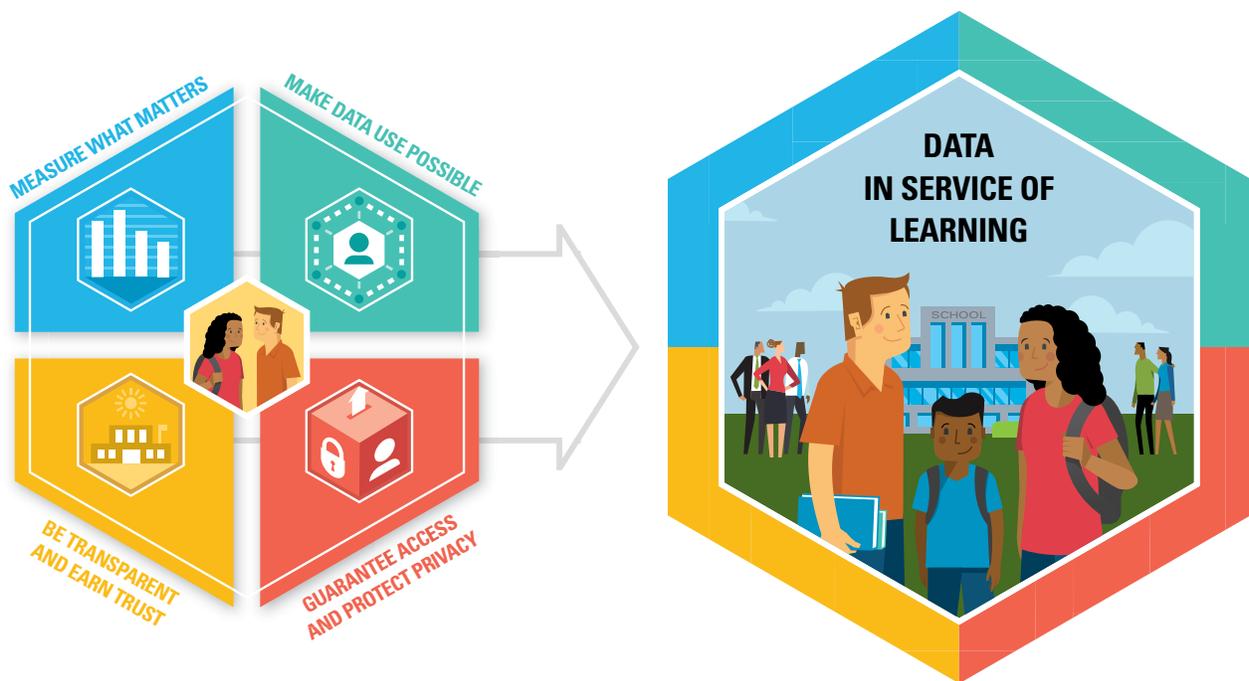


TIME TO ACT

District Actions to Make Data Work for Students

All students deserve a great education, one that affords them every opportunity to grow into knowledgeable and successful adults. To make this vision a reality, students, parents, educators, and policymakers must have access to the right information to make decisions and support student learning. The Data Quality Campaign's Four Policy Priorities to Make Data Work for Students show how policymakers at the federal, state, and district levels can take action to achieve this vision. District leaders are uniquely positioned to spearhead this work at the local level. Districts must embrace this opportunity to act now and make data work for students.

The Four Policy Priorities to Make Data Work for Students



Policy Alignment Is Essential

Policy alignment at all levels creates a universal culture that values and uses data for continuous improvement and empowers those closest to students with the high-quality information they need to make the best decisions. When all three levels of government work together, families, educators, and decisionmakers get consistent messages about what is important. To support this alignment, DQC's Four Policy Priorities provide actions for federal, state, and district leaders.

While there are discrete policy actions for each level of government, they are all built upon the same **five guiding principles**.

- 1. Students are central.** Data must be used to support student learning and to ensure that each student's individual needs are met.
- 2. Data systems are not enough.** States must shift their focus from building systems to empowering people.
- 3. Data needs to be tailored to the user.** All stakeholders in education require quality information, but the type and grain size of the data they need depend on the needs of the individual.
- 4. Data is used for different purposes,** including transparency, continuous improvement, and accountability. Not all data collected needs to be used for all three of these purposes.
- 5. Stakeholder engagement is critical.** People who need the data—including teachers, principals, and parents—must be involved in the creation of policies for access and use.

District Leaders Must Take Action

Districts have a unique responsibility to transform state and federal policies into strategies, practices, and tools that guide teaching and learning in the classroom. District leaders—superintendents and school boards—are the front-line policymakers in each community who are best positioned to directly support teachers and schools, engage families, and improve student achievement. Data quality and use begin here. Using data at the district level—in ways that are informed by local needs and accomplished through broad collaboration—ensures that all children have what they need to excel. Therefore, superintendents and school board members must take the lead to ensure that the following eight recommendations are enacted in their districts.



MEASURE WHAT MATTERS

Be clear about what students must achieve and have the data to ensure that all students are on track to succeed.

- Establish a governance body that has the authority and responsibility to make decisions about district data use and protection policies.
- Design data systems that meet the needs of your school community, improve teaching, personalize learning, and measure progress toward goals.



MAKE DATA USE POSSIBLE

Provide teachers and leaders the flexibility, training, and support they need to answer their questions and take action.

- Promote a culture that uses data to measure and achieve goals set by district leadership.
- Create the necessary policies, practices, and trainings to ensure that educators, parents, and trusted community partners who receive data know how to use it effectively.



BE TRANSPARENT AND EARN TRUST

Ensure that every community understands how its schools and students are doing, why data is valuable, and how it is protected and used.

- Provide data that meets the identified needs of your community and proactively communicate how that data is safeguarded.
- Engage families in thoughtful conversation about their children's data, welcome their questions, and involve them in planning and governance activities.



GUARANTEE ACCESS AND PROTECT PRIVACY

Provide teachers and parents timely information on their students and make sure it is kept safe.

- Establish clear and public processes to ensure that student data is kept private.
- Provide teachers, parents, trusted afterschool providers, and other school partners access to student-level data that is tailored to meet their needs.



The Data Quality Campaign is a nonprofit policy and advocacy organization leading the effort to bring every part of the education community together to empower educators, families, and policymakers with quality information to make decisions that ensure that students excel. For more information, go to www.dataqualitycampaign.org and follow us on Facebook and Twitter (@EdDataCampaign).

Find more information about Data Quality Campaign's Four Policy Priorities at www.dataqualitycampaign.org.