

Data Governance Best Practices for Montana



January 10, 2024



Introductions

From DQC:

Paige Kowalski

- 18 years of experience advising and supporting state policymakers, advocates, and national policy organizations on evidence-based policies and practices in support of effective data use at all levels.
- Almost 30 years in education in both program and policy positions at district, city, non-profit, national, and university levels from the west coast to the east coast and places in between.
- Over a decade advising Governors and state legislators on best practices in crafting best practice policies to ensure robust state data ecosystems while protecting individual privacy.
- Executive vice president for the Data Quality Campaign

From DISC:

Baron Rodriguez

- Over 20 years of data integration, privacy, and security expertise across for profit, government, and non-profit organizations including the Data Quality Campaign, Oregon Department of Education, Oregon State Police, & Secretary of State
- Founding expert at the U.S. Department of Education's Privacy Technical Assistance Center (PTAC)
- Founding expert of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) State Support Team for the State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) program
- Currently the Director of Technology at WestEd (Research Non-Profit) & Executive Director of the Data Integration Support Center (DISC)
- Certified Information Privacy Professional with the International Association of Privacy Professionals (CIPP/E)

Sean Cottrell

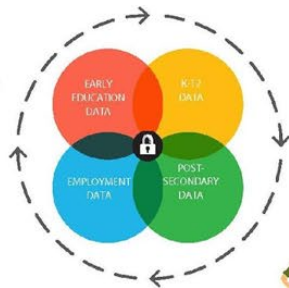
- Over 15 years of data integration, privacy, and security expertise across for profit, government, and non-profit organizations including the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
- Former expert on education privacy and integrated data systems at the U.S. Department of Education's Privacy Technical Assistance Center (PTAC)
- Former expert of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) State Support Team for the State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) program
- Currently the Director of Data Protection at WestEd (Research Non-Profit) & Director of the Data Integration Support Center (DISC)

Grace's Path to Success

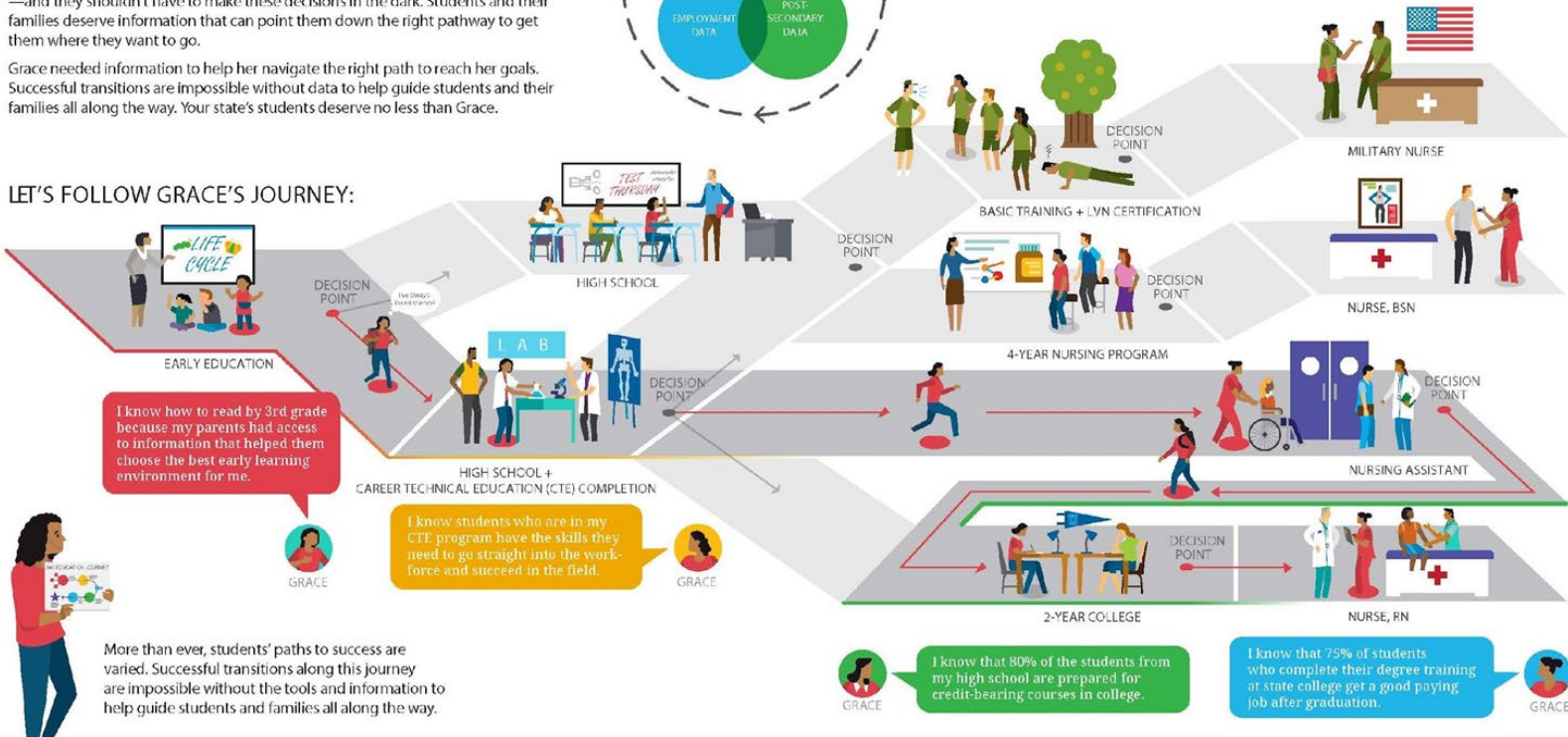
Information is critical to support student success all along the way.

Students' pathways to success are increasingly varied. But no matter the path, students must make choices that shape their future options and opportunities—and they shouldn't have to make these decisions in the dark. Students and their families deserve information that can point them down the right pathway to get them where they want to go.

Grace needed information to help her navigate the right path to reach her goals. Successful transitions are impossible without data to help guide students and their families all along the way. Your state's students deserve no less than Grace.



LET'S FOLLOW GRACE'S JOURNEY:



More than ever, students' paths to success are varied. Successful transitions along this journey are impossible without the tools and information to help guide students and families all along the way.

Access to data helps people make decisions and improves state and local investments in education and workforce pathways.

Robust, strongly governed SLDSs help answer questions like:

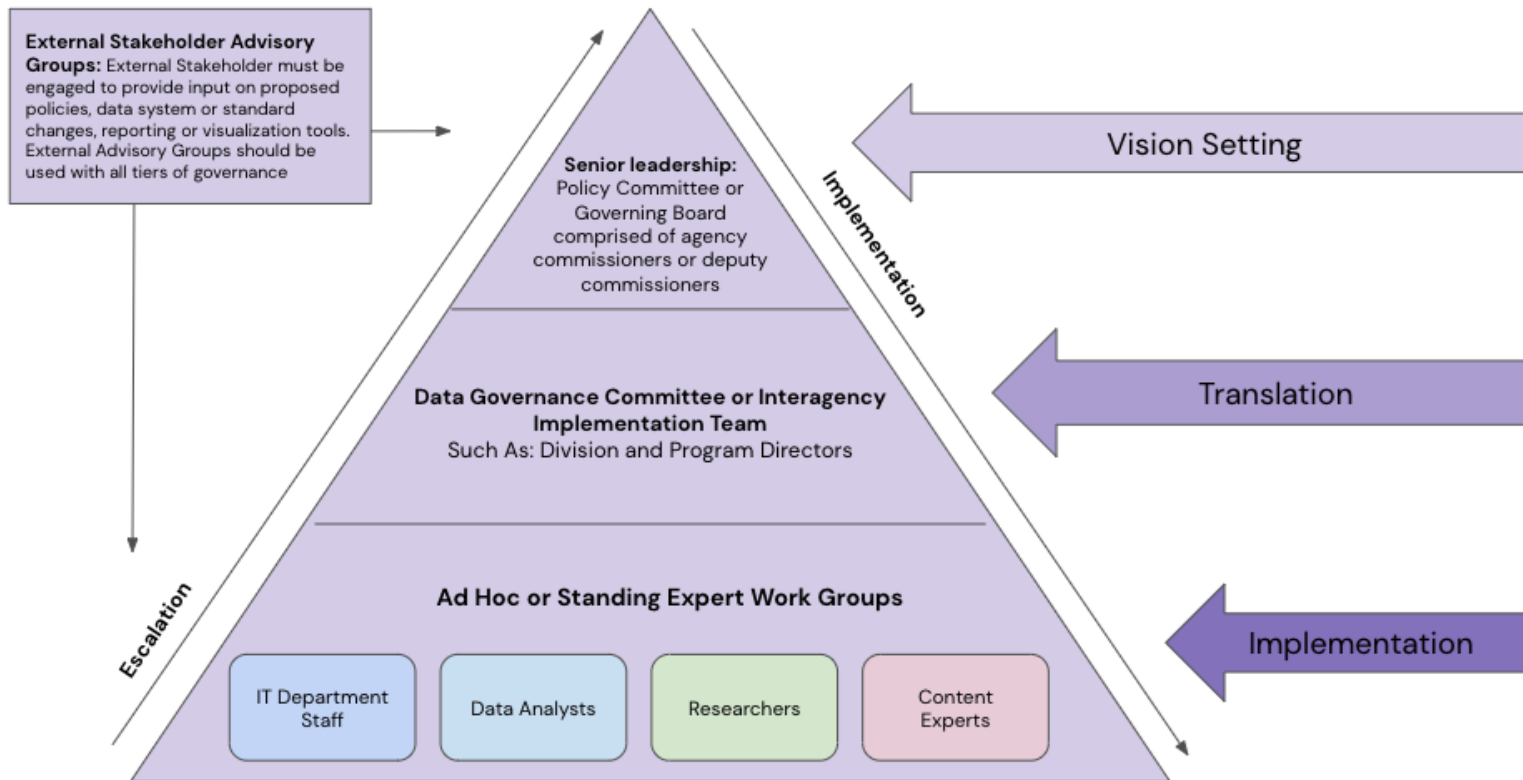
- Given the future needs of industry in our state/region/ community, to what extent do our K–12 programs prepare students for those jobs, and to what extent do we need additional programs to meet industry needs?
- What resources or supports are most effective at helping a struggling student to stay in school and complete their program of study?
- What is the existing state and local labor market landscape, and what is the marketplace forecasted to look like in coming years?
- How could working with different types of researchers help answer the questions prioritized in the state learning agenda?

What is cross-agency data governance?

Montana's HB 949

Cross-agency data governance is a **formal leadership-level body responsible and accountable for making decisions** about how data linked between state agencies is connected, secured, accessed, and used to meet state education and workforce goals.

The Decisionmaking Pyramid



*This graphic contains a sample list of the types of workgroups a state could engage

Why does it matter?

Cross-agency data governance is the best way to provide leadership and accountability for how data systems serve people across the state.




9

Effective data governance is key to ensuring that data linked between state agencies can be put to work to meet state goals.

- ✓ **Sustainability.** Data governance creates sustainability for the SLDS by ensuring that the decisions and priorities set are codified and persist through administrations and leaders.
- ✓ **Transparency and Trust.** Data governance ensures that diverse stakeholders are at the table at every level of decisionmaking. By participating in open meetings and being heard, they gain trust in the SLDS and Board.
- ✓ **Privacy and Security.** In codifying data governance, there is a clear body responsible and accountable for establishing how people's data will be protected.
- ✓ **Accountability.** Data governance ensures that leaders are accountable (by law and by the public) for data decisions and that those decisions happen in the sunshine.
- ✓ **Access.** Data governance is the best way for state leaders to agree on a shared vision for how its SLDS can best be leveraged to provide people, agencies, and policymakers with the appropriate access to data and analyses.
- ✓ **Policy Alignment.** Policymaker leadership in cross-agency data governance ensures that SLDS decisions are made through a multiagency policy lens, with an emphasis on priorities that require collaboration.

Data Governance Best Practices





Best Practices for Effective Governance (1/2)

-  **Vision/mission:** Cross-agency data governance must be guided by a clear vision with defined priorities that provide a roadmap for implementation.
-  **Legislation:** Cross-agency data governance must be codified in legislation to ensure sustainability and create decisionmaking authority.
-  **Staffing and Structure:** The SLDS should be:
 - Governed by a multi-tiered structure that incorporates policy leaders and data experts who are responsible for decisions and activities aligned to the grain size appropriate for their role.
 - Staffed to ensure that someone is attentive to implementation of key decisions and progress toward addressing priorities.



State Example: KYStats has the following mission: The Kentucky Center for Statistics (KYSTATS) collects and links data to evaluate education and workforce efforts in the Commonwealth. This includes developing reports, responding to research requests, and providing statistical data about these efforts so policymakers, practitioners, and the general public can make better informed decisions.

Best Practices for Effective Governance (2/2)

-  **Independent center:** The state should establish an independent center to house the SLDS, overseen by the cross-agency governance board.
-  **Stakeholder engagement.** The governing board process should include formal engagement with outside organizations.
-  **Secure a quick win for stakeholders.** The governing board should focus on identifying and implementing a public-facing tool (i.e. portal, dashboard, report) that leverages the SLDS data and fills a stakeholder need.
-  **Develop a communications strategy.** Communicating about data is about building trust, since people do not use data that they do not trust is safe and accurate.

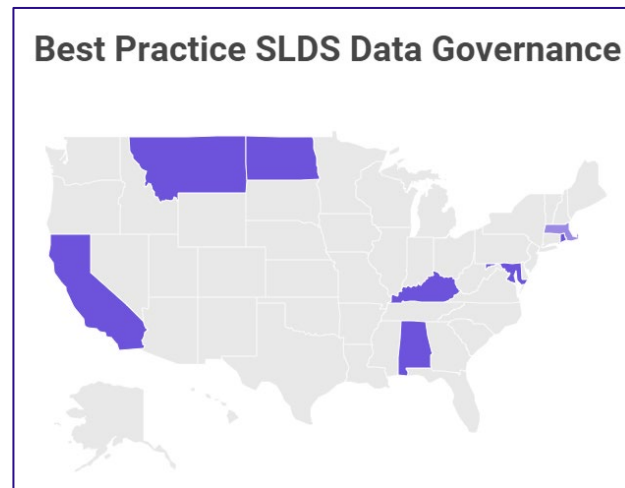


State Example: Utah's HB 249 requires the Utah State Board of Education to create a parent portal that would enable families to access important information to support their student, including a school comparison tool for families to see a side-by-side comparison of schools. In addition to the comparison tool, the parent portal will house information on school and district resources and information to make it easier to navigate.

Data Governance in Montana

Montana Governance Strengths

- Is **one of only seven states** with a best practice SLDS data governance law.
- Uses its board as a **decisionmaking body** and not just an advisory body.
- Has codified **executive level leadership** on its board representing the key agencies that contribute to its SLDS.
- Includes requirements for **data tools and outputs**.
- Law seeks to improve **data access and use**.
- Includes **specific funding** for the system.
- Addresses **individual privacy**.
- Ensures **transparency** by requiring Governing Board meetings are open to the public.



**MA has introduced but not enacted legislation*

Opportunities as a result of HB 949 (1/2)

Governance ensures data serves as a critical tool for answering Montana's policy questions and meeting Montanan's education and workforce goals.

- **Service to the public:** Members of the public need user friendly, dynamic dashboards, reports, and open data tools that display indicators they can disaggregate by population and geographic region.
- **Support in navigating pathways:** Individuals and the people who support them in navigating transitions, like students, their families, and counselors, need access to tailored, secure dashboards that allow them to draw insights and view aggregate and trend information side by side with individuals' own data pulled in from local or other sources.
- **Trust and transparency:** Ensuring that people's data is kept private and secure is an obligation, not an obstacle to data access. In codifying data governance, there is a clear body responsible and accountable for establishing how people's data will be protected.

Opportunities as a result of HB 949 (2/2)

Governance also ensures that concerns about data use and questions from the public can be addressed effectively.

Example	Role of Governing Board
Members of the public are concerned about data privacy/do not trust the SLDS	<p>The Governing Board can ensure that a fast 'win' for Montanans, in the form of a tool, report, or resource that provides value for constituents, is accomplished in its first year. This is the best way to ensure that people can see what they are getting out the investment, whether of state resources, or of their students' information.</p> <p>The Governing Board can also ensure that their open meetings are announced far in advance so that members of the public can see the work in action.</p>
Stakeholders are having difficulty accessing key pieces of data	Instead of having to seek approval from individual agency heads, the Governing Board can ensure that data from participating agencies is made available to the public, policymakers, and researchers in a way that is useful, secure, and accessible.

DQC Resources



Data 101

A Briefing Book for Policymakers on Education to Workforce Data



Start Here: A Vision to Transform State Data Systems

Four use cases in which SLDSs are necessary to support decisionmaking

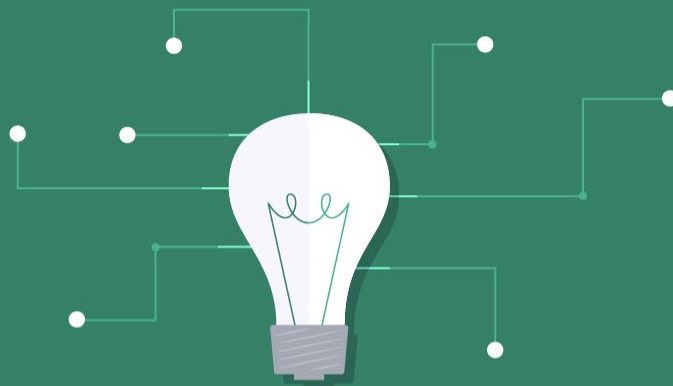


Getting the Facts Straight about SLDSs

Helps state leaders navigate legal and privacy issues that arise when updating SLDSs.

Thank you!

Paige Kowalski
Executive Vice President
pkowalski@dataqualitycampaign.org



Data Integration Support Center

at WestEd



disc

Data Integration Support Center

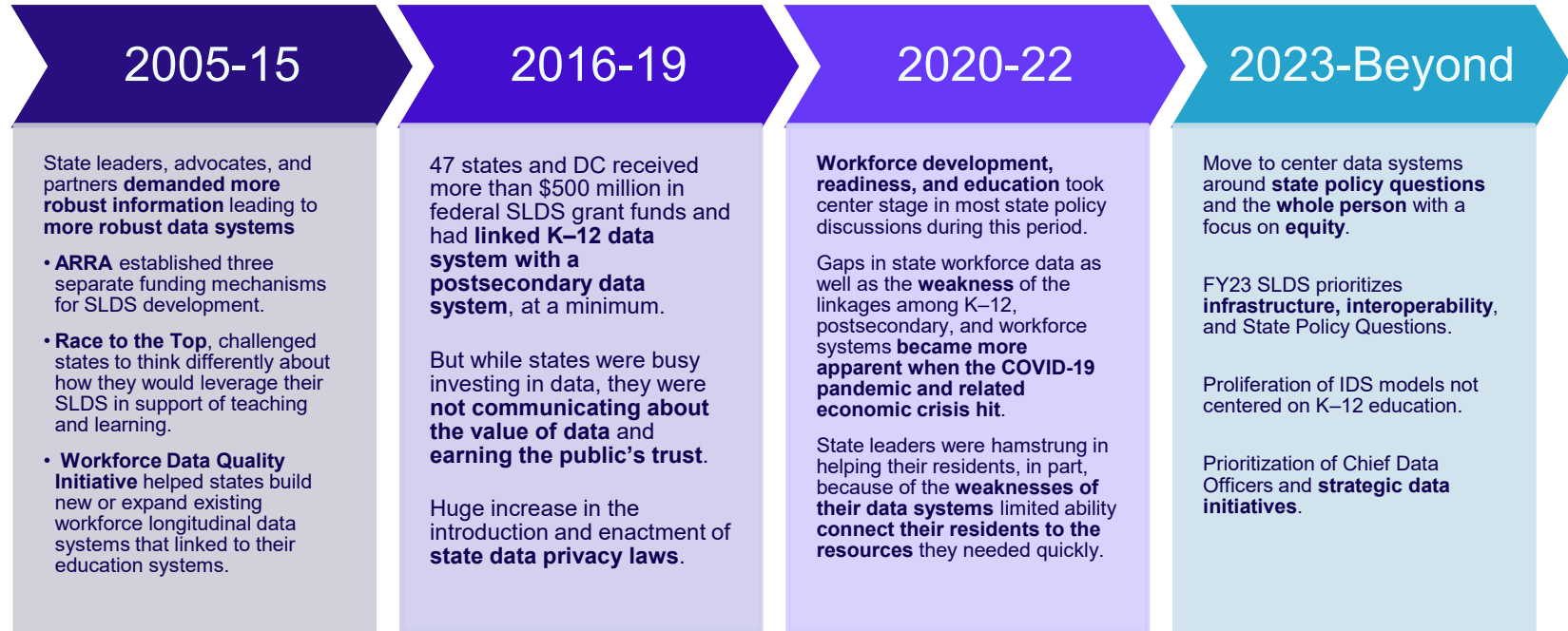
WestEd 

Montana

Modernization and Risk Analysis Committee

Baron Rodriguez & Sean Cottrell

The Modernization Journey

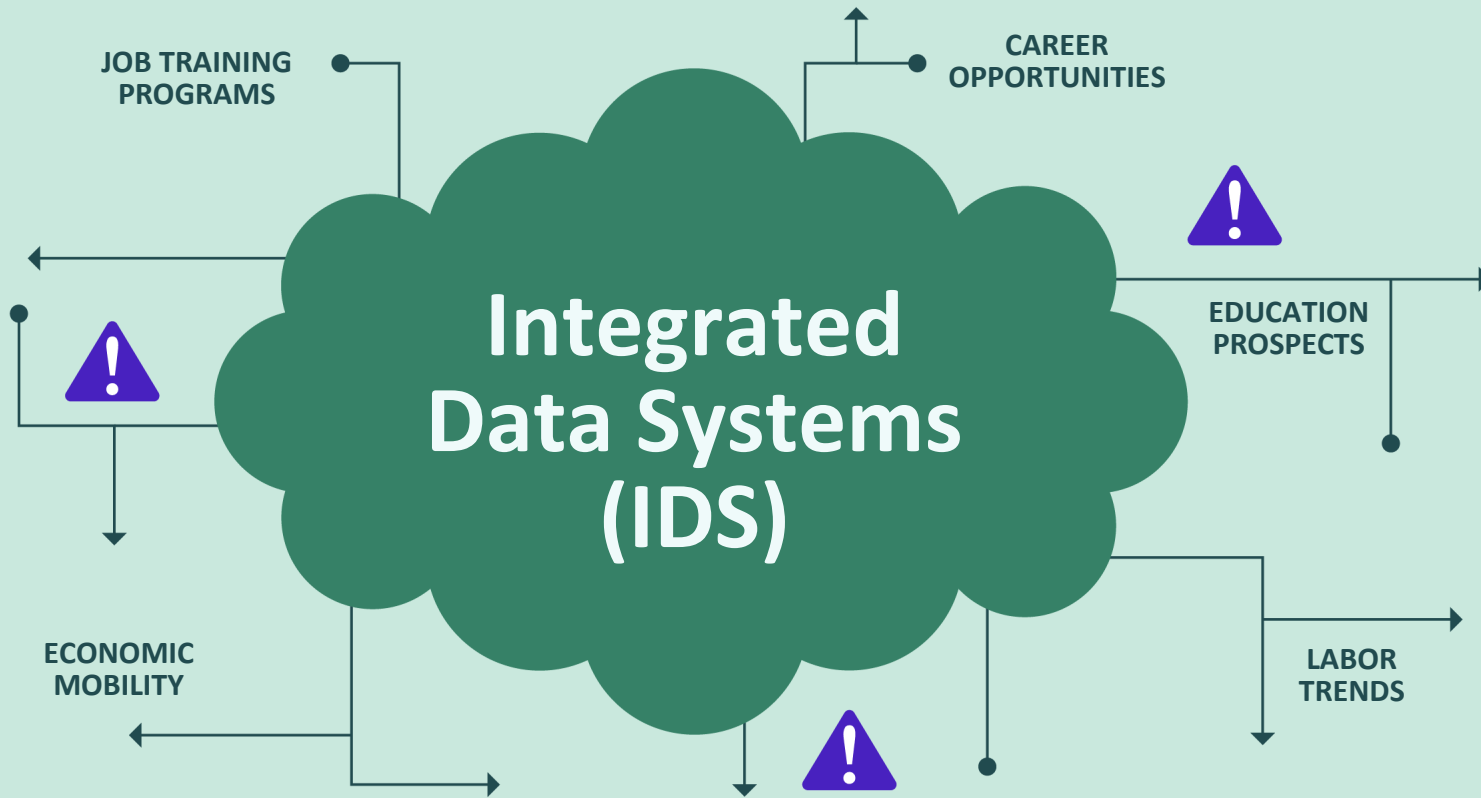


Cross-sector integrated data systems (IDS) are increasingly necessary to provide meaning and context around the needs for state policymakers and citizens.

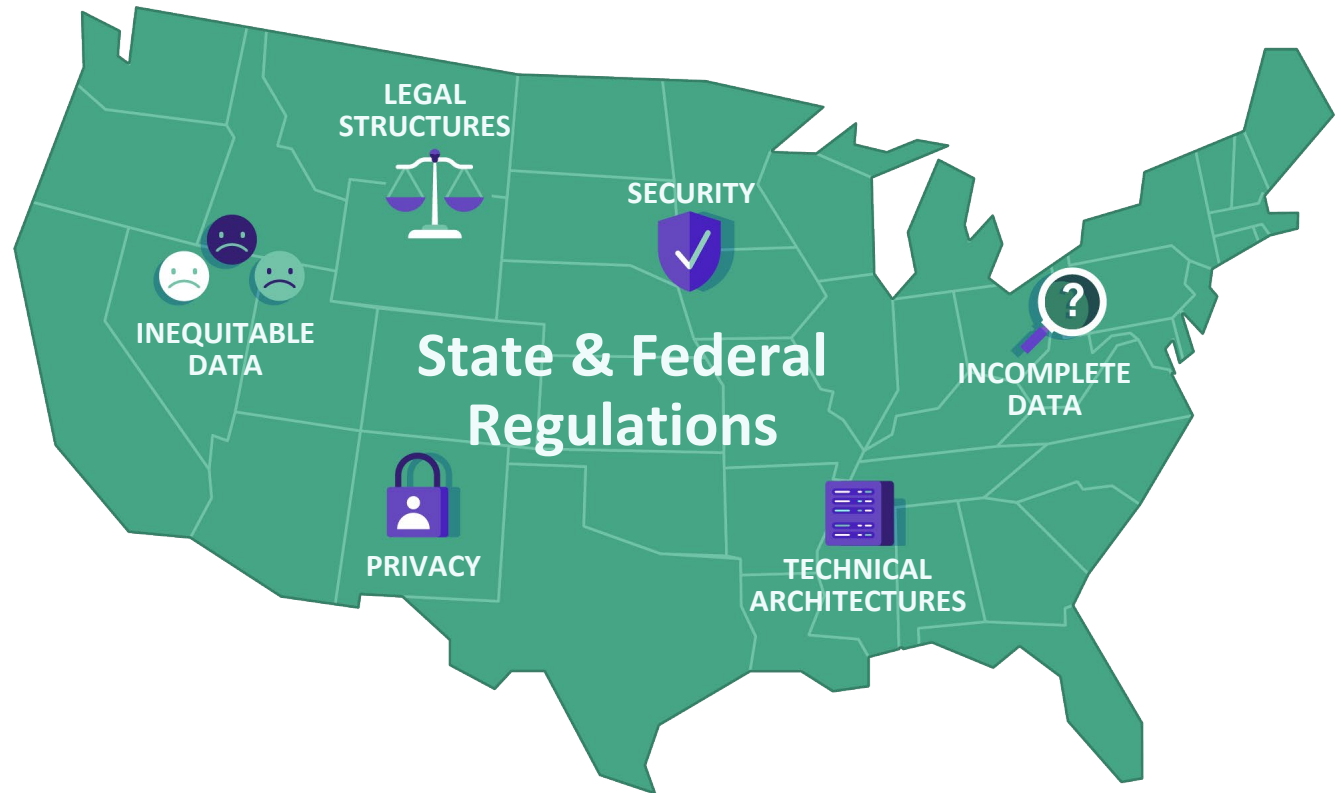


Integrated Data Systems (IDS)





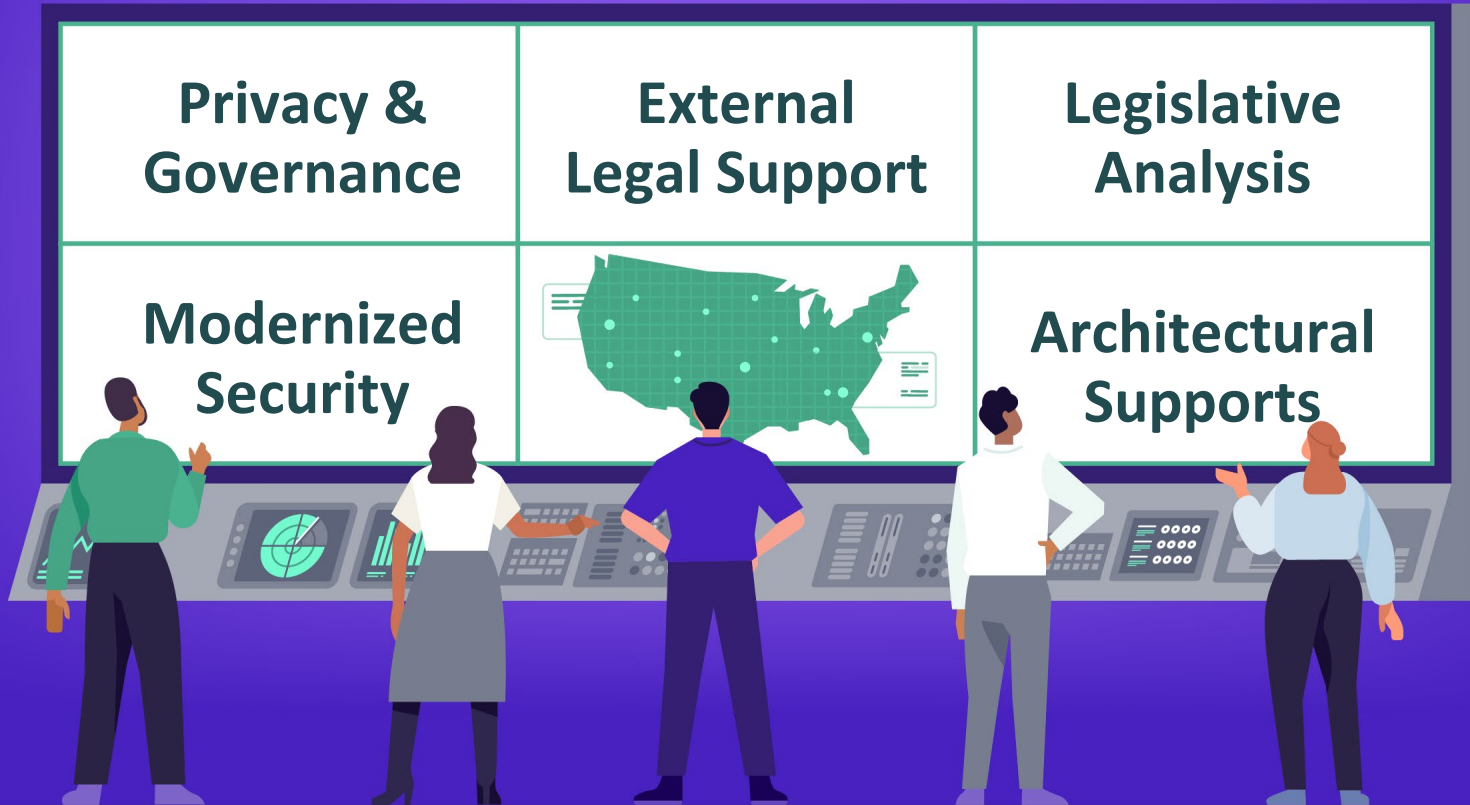
Public agencies must navigate the complexities of state and federal privacy and security regulations alongside incomplete and inequitable data, burdensome legal structures, and outdated technical architectures.



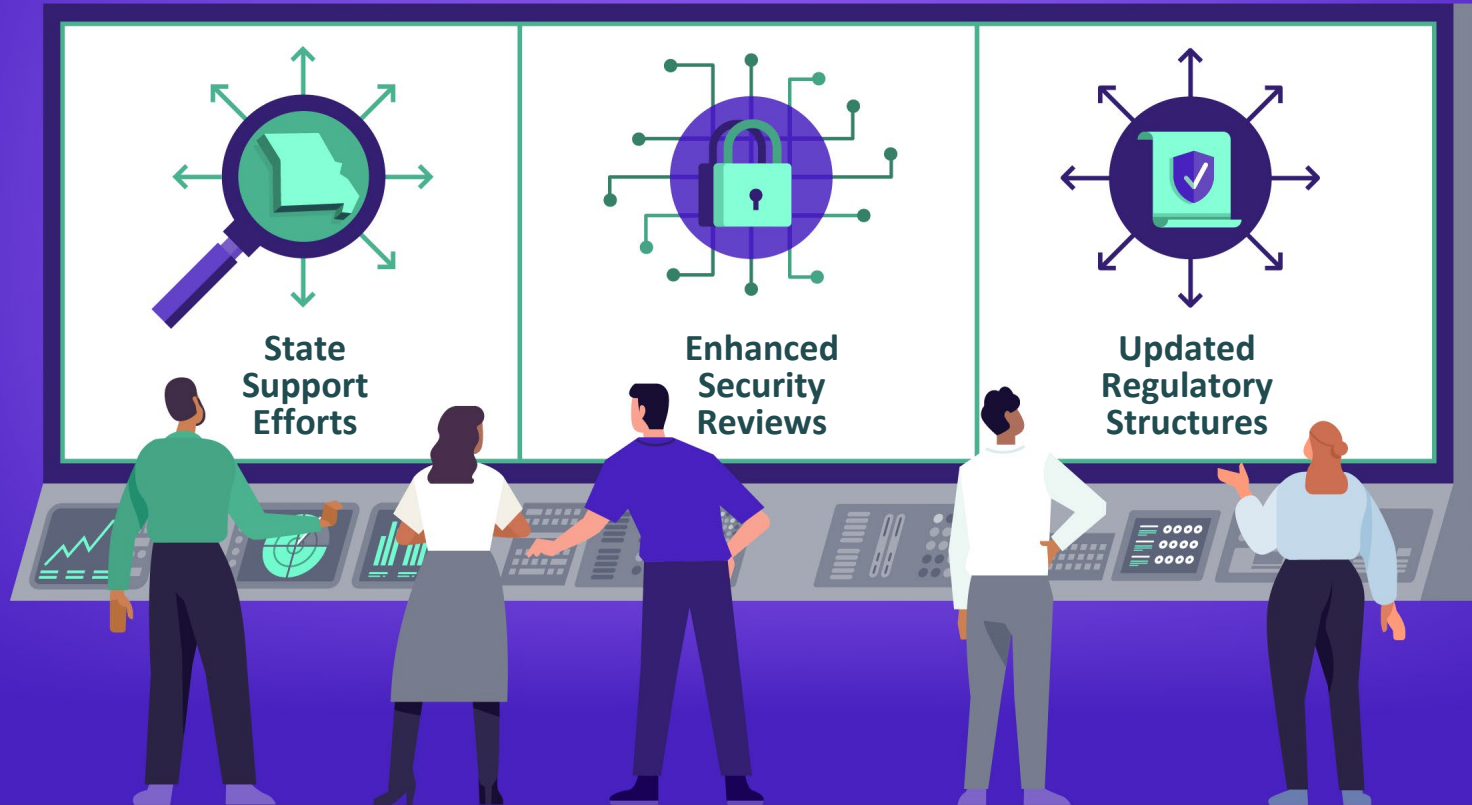
Integrating cross-sector data also requires legal expertise in cross-sector laws and understanding the nuances of individual states' needs.



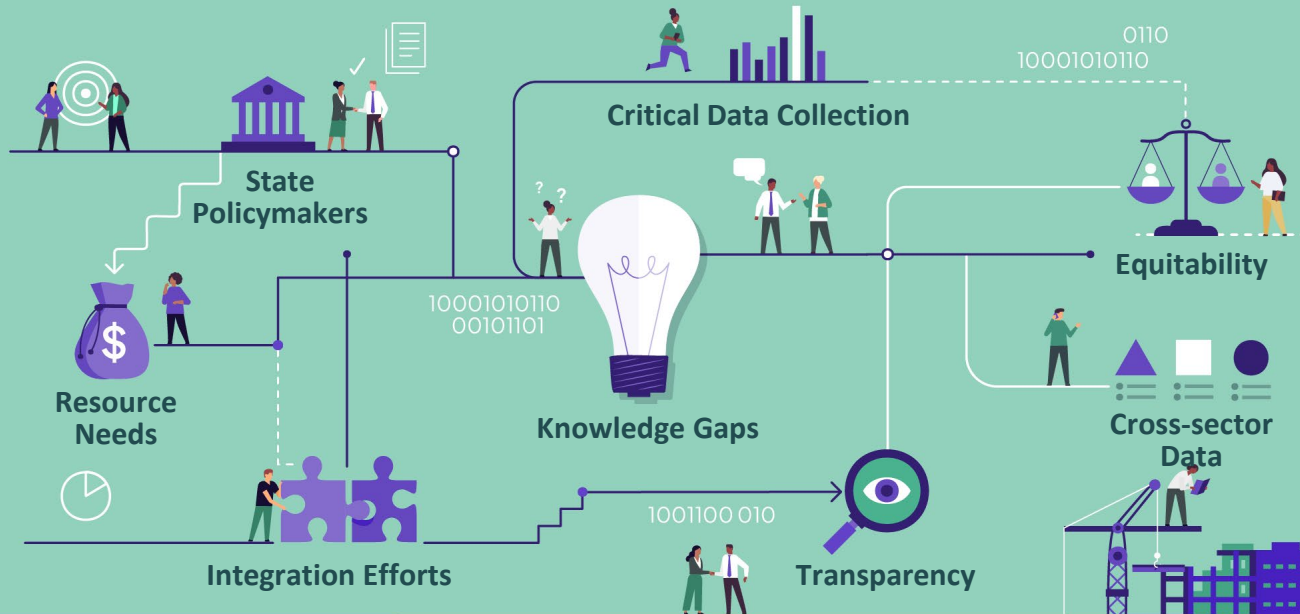
Our holistic approach focuses on privacy and governance, external, and modernized security & architectural supports.



This helps us deliver support for state efforts, enhanced security reviews, and aiding partners in updating regulatory structures to provide a clear path to IDS success.



Our thought partnership and expertise addresses knowledge gaps, resource needs, critical data collection and integration efforts, creating consistent and secure cross sector data that is transparent and equitable for all.



What are other states doing, and how are they doing it?

Kentucky Center for Statistics (KYSTATS)

<https://kystats.ky.gov/>



KENTUCKY CENTER FOR STATISTICS

Uniting our data. Informing our Commonwealth.



Collects and links data to evaluate education and workforce efforts.

- Developing reports
- Responding to research requests
- Providing statistical data about these efforts so policymakers, practitioners, and the general public can make better informed decisions.

Nebraska Statewide Workforce & Educational Reporting System (NSWERS)

<https://nswers.org>



nswers



Collects and links data to evaluate education and workforce efforts.

- Enabling seamless integration of data across educational and workforce systems,
- Providing data literacy education,
- Promoting the use of this data to further evidence-based policy and practices across the educational systems of Nebraska.

Utah Data Research Center (UDRC)

<https://udrc.ushe.edu>



Collects and links data to evaluate education and workforce efforts.

- conduct meaningful research to inform public policy initiatives;
- providing the platform for policymakers, practitioners and the general public to make data-informed decisions.

How were these 3 established?

Kentucky (2012)	Nebraska (2020)	Utah (2017)
KRS 151B.132 KRS 151B.133	From Legislative Bill 1160 (section 2, subsection 3)	2017 Senate Bill 194 , codified under UCA 53B-32
<p>developing reports and providing statistical data about these efforts so policymakers, agencies, and the general public can make better informed decisions about the Commonwealth of Kentucky's education systems and training programs</p>	<p>The Nebraska Statewide Workforce and Education[al] Reporting System is envisioned as a comprehensive, sustainable, and robust lifelong learning and workforce longitudinal data system to allow for the targeting of resources, and focus data analysis on assessing workforce development and employment success in order to enable the training of tomorrow's workforce.</p>	<p>Utah's source for reliable and trustworthy research findings of employment, education, and health. Research findings are summarized and made into visualizations for easier consumption. UDRC is the source of Utah data for employment, education, and health.</p>

Who are the data sharing partners?

Kentucky	Nebraska	Utah
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kentucky Department of Education (KDE), • Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE), • Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA), • Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB), • Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nebraska Department of Education • the six Nebraska Community Colleges • Nebraska State College System • University of Nebraska System • Nebraska Department of Labor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utah State Board of Education • Utah System of Higher Education • Utah Department of Commerce • Utah Department of Workforce Services • Utah Department of Health

What does Data Governance look like?

Kentucky	Nebraska	Utah
<p>KYSTATS is an independent state office housed within the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet that is governed by a board</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governing Board • KYSTATS Staff 	<p>NSWERS is a joint public entity under the Nebraska Interlocal Cooperation Act, created by the partners of the SLDS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Council • Management Committee • NSWERS Staff 	<p>UDRC is a program of the Workforce Research and Analysis (WRA) division of the Department of Workforce Services (DWS)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UDRC Advisory Board • UDRC Staff

What are the biggest challenges to Data Governance?

- Striking a balance between data usability and privacy
- Finding and dedicating resources
- Ensuring Consistency and Data Quality
- Coordinating between state agencies
- Overcoming a lack of common identifiers
- Compliance with Regulations and Accountability



Thank you.

Stay in touch with DISC by emailing us at info@DISC.WestEd.org or visiting us at DISC.WestEd.org

A Project of
WestEd 

WestEd is a nonpartisan, nonprofit agency that conducts and applies research, develops evidence-based solutions, and provides services and resources in the realms of education, human development, and related fields, with the end goal of improving outcomes and ensuring equity for individuals from infancy through adulthood. For more information, visit WestEd.org.