

Student Futures Project



Student Futures Project Update

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Outline



Greetings

Student Futures Project Overview

Data Access

Data Comparison

Conclusion

Student Futures Project Overview



- The Student Futures Project is a *research partnership* that follows the progress of Central Texas seniors as they make the critical transition from high school to postsecondary education and the workforce.
- Guiding research questions:
 1. Which students are participating in postsecondary education and why?
 2. Which students are going to work and why?
 3. Which students are both working and participating in postsecondary education?
- PII required to link across data sources

Student Futures Project Data



- Senior Exit Survey (Directory)

Many of the reasons why students choose postsecondary education and/or employment are not obtained by school districts through administrative records.

- Administrative Data (PEIMS ID)

Uniquely valuable individual-level information related to postsecondary outcomes is recorded and maintained by ISDs.

- Outcomes Data (Directory and SSN)

*RMC utilizes the data provided by the district to obtain **postsecondary enrollment** (NSC) and **employment** (TWC) information for high school graduates.*

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PII Data Access



- Initially obtained by working with officials at each school district to develop district-specific FERPA compliant MOUs and DSAs for transfer of individual identifiable data to the Ray Marshall Center
- These agreements clearly delineate responsibilities for the data
- Agreements are for specified cohorts of high school graduates
- Review required prior to adding further cohorts of high school graduates

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Data Access



- The study exception provision in FERPA is particularly important to school districts
 - Many ISDs in Texas are relatively small
 - Scarce resources mean that many ISDs have data required for research, but
 - Lack the time, staff and resources to engage in the research themselves
- However, developing research approval processes, reviewing proposals, collecting data for researchers and ensuring accurate and secure transfer of data also use district resources.

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Data Access



- Is the ERC a reasonable substitute for this district process? In other words, how reasonable is it for districts to refer researchers to the ERC.
- On the District side:
 - Depends on the research question
 - Districts still need processes to determine whether ERC is appropriate
- On the ERC side:
 - Supplemental data issues
 - ERCs also have limited resources
 - Requires review of applications by JAB
- On the researcher side:
 - District data can be much richer than ERC data

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District Data



Advantages of obtaining administrative data directly from School Districts:

- Ability to link identifiable data to other sources
- Some information collected by school districts is not available in ERC environment
 - Class Rank
 - Grades from coursework
 - High school credits in middle school
 - Algebra I
 - Foreign languages
- Using data provided by school districts
 - Increases interest in the research and
 - Provides ready opportunity for district feedback

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District Data



Disadvantages of obtaining administrative data directly from School Districts

- Cannot capture mobile populations longitudinally
- Some interesting longitudinal information collected by school districts is not readily accessible
 - Home language, free and reduced lunch status, Special program participation over time
- Some pre-High School information is usually unavailable
 - TAKS scores in 8th grade
 - Retained in 3rd or 5th grade

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District vs. ERC Data Access



Items for discussion:

Districts and researchers would likely benefit from a common research application, at least at a regional level.

Processes to determine whether researcher access is appropriate would also benefit from common structures.

Differences between ERC and ISD data mean that researchers should consider carefully which data sources more clearly answer their research question.

Remember that ERC access is clear on paper, but...

For More Information



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