



## The Principals' Partnership

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### Research Brief

## Keeping Track of Student Progress

**Question:** What should be in place in order to appropriately collect and use generated data?

### Summary of Findings:

As of this writing, there appeared to be a lack of information on how schools were going to keep track of student cohort groups' progress. Given that the guidelines to meet the expectations of No Child Left Behind will be implemented in the 2005-2006 school year, this information should be more forthcoming within the next one to two years.

Although the government will be requiring information on the results of state tests in the areas of math and reading/language arts and high school graduation rates, the bottom line is that educators need information in order to support and improve the instructional program for the students who had completed a specific exam and/or assessment. A word of caution recommended not to waste valuable resources by collecting data that will not be utilized. In order to support this, districts should check the data for its appropriateness, correctness, and usefulness. The literature suggested that teachers need information on every student, schools should look at high performing schools because most likely they will be the ones with the best practices, and to establish goals early on for the students' success post high school.

Some high schools use a Personalized Education Plan to help students keep track of important information, goals, courses taken, and actions they need to take in order to be successful. In Rhode Island high schools, students are teamed with one advisor who is with them through their entire high school experience, the instructional program is set up to do interdisciplinary types of work, seniors present a final project, and those students with low reading and writing skills are given additional support.

### Major Findings and Conclusions:

Types of data to be collected, that can most easily be done by computer and with a strong statewide student identifier system in place:

- Fall and spring course program information. What courses were offered, how many students took them, into what subgroups they fall, and the earned grades.
- Fall and spring information on participation in specific programs (i.e. Special Education, Gifted, Title I, ELL, etc.)
- Test data on how many took the tests, the subgroup(s) to which each student belonged, those who were excused and unexcused from the test, and how many took SAT, ACT, and AP exams
- Course completion. How many students actually finished the course, transferred to another course, and the earned grades.
- Graduation numbers
- Drop-out numbers
- The number of transfers in and out of the school
- Ethnicity, gender, and SES for each student



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#### Online Resources:

- **Adequate Yearly Progress**  
A detailed description about the necessary components to meet Adequate Yearly Progress is provided in this article.  
<http://www.edweek.org/context/topics/issuespage.cfm?id=125>
- **America's High School Crisis: Policy Reforms That will Make a Difference**  
This article provides brief descriptions of small learning communities and why they appear to work. Reasons why rigorous and reasonable curriculum, as well as academic standards and assessments need to be in place in order to provide a substantive learning environment are explained.  
<http://www.edweek.org/ew/ewstory.cfm?slug=29vanderark.h22>
- **Getting Smart about Data**  
Information on types of data that are required for Federal reporting are cited in chart form and compared to data collection practices as well as how the data helps meet the needs of students, teachers, and districts.  
[http://nc4ea.org/index.cfm?pg=data\\_collection](http://nc4ea.org/index.cfm?pg=data_collection)
- **Mid-Prarie High School-Personalized Education Plan**  
This is the school's home site. A copy of their Personalized Education Plan can be downloaded.  
<http://www.pms.ccsd.k12.co.us/>
- **New American Schools. How We Can Help**  
This is a list of available programs for purchase to assist schools in the data collection process.  
<http://www.naschools.org/contentViewer.asp?highlightID=57&catID=42>
- **Secondary School Change**  
According to this piece, in order for high schools to effectively meet the needs of high school students, a rethinking of moving away from Carnegie units to rigor, relevance, and relationships in the school environment are critical.  
<http://www.edweek.org/ew/ewstory.cfm?slug=13wagner.h22>
- **States Must Improve Data for Adequate Yearly Progress**  
A succinct article on the specific components that need to be in place in order to meet the goal of Adequate Yearly Progress per No Child Left Behind.  
[http://nc4ea.org/index.cfm?pg=data\\_collection](http://nc4ea.org/index.cfm?pg=data_collection)
- **States Need Updates for Managing Data, Analysis Concludes**  
This article provides a brief overview of elements that should be in place for data collection.  
<http://www.edweek.org/ew/ewstory.cfm?slug=08Data.h23>



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