Potential & Promise:
An introduction to educational data sharing

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Overview

• Discuss the challenges and benefits of institutional data sharing.
  – Highlight the utility/potential that institutional data sharing can bring to organizations
  – Provide background on the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) governing the sharing of educational data.
Why share data in educational settings?

• Improves understanding and avoids common traps
  – Increases meaningfulness and accuracy of outcome measures
  – Increases precision
    • i.e., ability to detect and understand impact of intervention
  – Helps identify/minimize/correct for selection bias
  – Able to understand more complex effects
Why share data in educational settings?

• **Scarcity of resources**
  - Avoids/minimizes effort duplication
    - Data collection and tracking
      - For organization and students being served
    - Better coordination of effort
  - Allows targeting/tailoring of interventions
  - Potential for identification/selection of best practices, high value opportunities optimizing ROI
    - Oakland A’s, Dallas Mavericks, NHL
  - Competitiveness for federal, state, and NGO funding
How much could having more information about participants really matter?
Examples from Promise Pathways: Multiple Measures in Assessment

- **No data sharing:**
  - Assessment and placement into developmental skills courses by use of standardized test
  - 90-95% of first-time students place into one or more developmental skills sequence

- **Data sharing**
  - Use of broad, multiple measures of student achievement and capability based on evidence
    - Standardized test AND
    - HS Grades in discipline
    - Overall GPA
    - Rigor of high school courses taken
Alternative placement
Transfer-level Placement Rates

- Transfer Level English
  - 2011 First time students: 11%
  - 2011 LBUSD: 13%
  - Promise Pathways: 59.7%

- Transfer Level Math
  - 2011 First time students: 7%
  - 2011 LBUSD: 9%
  - Promise Pathways: 30%
F2012 Promise Pathways First Year vs. F2006 6-year rates of achievement

- Successfully Completed Transfer Math:
  - F2011 LBUSD (N=1660): 5.1%
  - F2012 Promise Pathways (N=976): 15.0%
  - F2006 LBUSD 6 Year Rate: 31.2%

- Successfully Completed Transfer English:
  - F2011 LBUSD (N=1660): 9.9%
  - F2012 Promise Pathways (N=976): 27.3%
  - F2006 LBUSD 6 Year Rate: 35.9%

- Behavioral Intent to Transfer:
  - F2011 LBUSD (N=1660): 12.9%
  - F2012 Promise Pathways (N=976): 41.4%
  - F2006 LBUSD 6 Year Rate: 8%
F2011 Baseline Equity Gaps in Completion of Transfer Level Courses

Successfully Completed Transfer Math
- F2011 Hispanic: 4%
- F2011 White: 10%

Successfully Completed Transfer English
- F2011 Hispanic: 11%
- F2011 White: 22%
Equity Impact: F2012 Hispanic Students Compared to F2011 White Baseline

- Successfully Completed Transfer Math: 13% (F2012 Hispanic) vs. 10% (F2011 White)
- Successfully Completed Transfer English: 40% (F2012 Hispanic) vs. 22% (F2011 White)
How might this change how we understand college readiness?

College Readiness – S2012 Graduates, Unduplicated

- English: 38% (18% EAP college-ready, 20% Multiple measures applied to all students)
- Math: 33% (6% EAP college-ready, 27% Multiple measures applied to all students)
Understanding the effectiveness of interventions

- **Student success courses**
  - Problem of selection bias

- **Developmental education**
  - Problem of underplacement, overdelivery

- **Achievement coaches**
  - Problem of limited resources
CHALLENGES OF DATA SHARING
Key challenges

• Time/resource demands on partners
  – Help them help you
  – Data availability/delivery
    • Be selective, strategic, organized, patient
• Time/resource demands on organization
  – Development and maintenance of local expertise/knowledge
• Data transmission, storage, security, and maintenance

• THE LAW
The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

- Also known as the Buckley Amendment.
- It affords certain rights to parents or students.

- Enacted to prevent perceived abuses to student privacy and to assure parental or student access to student education records.
Who is subject to FERPA?

- FERPA applies to any educational agency or institution which receives funds under any program administered by the Secretary of Education.

- In essence, this is all public elementary and secondary schools and all postsecondary institutions.

Why does this matter to me?
Enforcement and Penalties

• Family Policy Compliance Office within the Department of Education

• **Withdrawal of Department of Education Funds**
Essence of the Act

- FERPA deals with education records of students.
- Right to inspect and review records.
- Right to request amendment of records.
- Right to have control over the disclosure of personally identifiable information from these records.
What is an Education Record?

“Education Records” are all records which:

1. contain information directly related to a student; and
2. are maintained by an educational agency or institution or by a party acting for the agency or institution.

- A record is any information maintained in any way.

- Includes, but is not limited to: handwriting, computer media, print, video or audio tape, film, microfilm, e-mail, microfiche.
“Personally Identifiable Information” includes ANY of:

- The student’s name;
- The parents' names;
- Address of the student or student's family;
- A personal identifier, such as a social security number or student number;
- A list of personal characteristics or other information that would make student's identity easily traceable.
To whom do the rights belong?

- To the parent if the student is under the age of 18 and is not enrolled at a postsecondary institution.
- At age 18, all rights transfer from the parent to the student.
- If a student attends a postsecondary institution prior to age 18, FERPA rights belong to the student for those records maintained by the postsecondary institution.
Exceptions: “Directory information”

- Information not generally considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed.
- Information that may be disclosed without prior written consent of parent or eligible student.

- May include
  - name, address, telephone listing
  - field of study
  - weight & height of athletes
  - most recent previous school attended
  - photographs
  - date and place of birth
  - participation in officially recognized activities and sports
  - dates of attendance
  - degrees earned
  - awards received
Under what conditions is prior consent required to disclose information?

• An eligible student shall provide a signed and dated consent before a school may disclose information from records. The consent must:
  – Specify records that may be disclosed;
  – State purpose of disclosure;
  – Identify party or class of parties to whom disclosure may be made.

• Role of MOU/Data Sharing Agreements and Participant Waiver
Summary

• Students are accorded rights of privacy under FERPA.
• In most cases, written consent from the student (and parent if under 18) is required to release information from the student’s education record.
• Everyone in the institution and partners with which data are shared must comply with FERPA.
• Non-compliance could result in the loss of federal funds.
Where to get more information

Technical assistance and advice for school officials:
Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-4605
Phone: (202) 260-3887
Fax: (202) 260-9001

For informal requests for technical assistance:
FERPA@ed.gov

Family Policy Compliance Office Homepage
http://www.ed.gov/offices/OM/fpco.html
Questions/Discussion