

U.S. Department of Education

Policy Priority: The Department of Education is focused on ensuring that parents, students, and policymakers are able to use its publicly available data to take meaningful action to improve outcomes.

1. Supporting Decision-Making for Student Sub-populations and their Families

Problem: Certain mobile or disconnected student populations entering or reentering the community could greatly benefit from data and resources to support their wellbeing and success. Such students and families often lack information that is necessary to distinguish between their school options, access services, and identify affordable housing near high-quality school and in safe neighborhoods that have access to transit and employment.

Use Cases:

- Students reentering after incarceration – would benefit from connections to education, skills development, and employment
- Foster youth – would benefit from information regarding educational, financial, health, housing, and transportation services
- Recently-arrived immigrants (particularly non-English speakers) – would benefit from information on their rights, child care, transportation, employment, higher education, financial aid opportunities, adult education, and career and technical education

In collaboration with HUD, supporting mobility and decision making about schools and housing for families with housing choice vouchers:

- Families with housing choice vouchers – would benefit from information regarding where they can use vouchers to find housing in safe, high-resourced neighborhoods with access to high-quality schools.

2. Identifying Equity Scores and Gaps

Problem: Within and across school districts and communities there are significant disparities in outcomes (e.g. achievement, graduation rate) between different student groups, in whole or in part due to inequitable access to resources (e.g. per-pupil expenditures, rigorous coursework, effective teachers). Decision-makers (e.g. superintendents, principals, school board members, state departments of education), municipal leaders (e.g. mayors, city council members), and parents would benefit from information that could help them understand these inequities and/or identify where gaps between groups of students may exist.

Use Cases:

- A local superintendent sees that students in a certain part of his district do not have the same access to rigorous coursework as those in another part and adjusts course offerings by making different decisions around human capital and budgeting.
- A principal sees that her school has far fewer actual resources than a school with a similar demographic of students and uses the data to make their case to the school board and superintendent for additional resources.
- A parent sees gaps between groups (e.g. English learners and non-English learners) of students citywide in access to experienced teachers, investigates and discovers that is because there is not enough support given to teachers of ELs so they turnover more frequently, and works with the school district and school board to address those gaps.