

DES partners with OFM to develop a centralized information center to change the face of educational data in Washington state



The Department of Enterprise Services (DES) recently completed a two-year project in partnership with the Office of Financial Management's Education Research and Data Center (OFM/ERDC) to develop an integrated system that researchers can use to analyze key student success measures or risk factors.

The new system—called the P-20 Data Warehouse—securely combines student data across numerous state and federal sources. The information spans the preschool through K-12 years, higher education and into the workforce.

Looking at statistics over time helps researchers analyze factors that affect students such as income, foster placement and school enrollment history. This, in turn, helps educators and program owners gain a better understanding of the role those factors could play in academic achievement and varying educational life outcomes. For example, data can be used to predict graduation numbers for a population of students who share the same specific risk factors, or to monitor the effectiveness of special programs. The system also supports running reports on identified questions as well as ad hoc, or spur of the moment, questions. This means that a researcher can query the database for specific statistical data that developers knew would be requested, as well as data that hadn't yet been asked before.

The collection and consolidation of information was no small task. Not only did it require the cooperation of multiple agencies initially reluctant to share their student data, but ERDC staff had to spend thousands of hours manually validating, cleaning up and matching student records where standards for doing so didn't previously exist across the many, disparate systems. Once that process was finished, all personally identifiable information was stripped from the records, and data sharing agreements protecting the security of the information were put into place. The database was then developed and, as of the end of June 2014, more than 5 million unique records were matched and loaded into the system... and it's still growing!

Washington is one state recognized as a leader for establishing longitudinal education data. The database has garnered national attention, and even won the [2014 Informatica Innovation Award](#), which is presented to data integration professionals who have demonstrated leadership in using Informatica solutions to drive innovation and business success. Informatica Corporation is the world's number one independent provider of data integration software.

You can read more at the links below about how this tool has changed the face of educational data and statistics and can serve as a model for other states wanting to do the same.

[State of Washington Education Research & Data Center](#)

[Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems Issue Brief—Building a Centralized P-20W Data Warehouse](#)

[Informatica Customer Story—Education Research & Data Center at the Office of Financial Management](#)