

Support Your Funding Efforts with Relevant Data

Data: Why It's Important and How to Manage It

Before writing your proposal or starting your search for funds, gather your data. Whether it is a foundation, a government entity, a local source, or your school board, all funding sources require metrics pointing to program goals and success. Data also helps make your request compelling—numbers speak volumes.

Data Required for Establishing New Career Choices Courses

You probably already have ideas about the student outcomes you want to improve. Do you want to boost the 9th to 10th grade promotion rate? Do you want to improve attendance, raise GPAs and test scores, or reduce suspension rates? Do you want to impact high school and college completion rates over the long term?

Whatever your goals, gathering current measurements of key indicators provides baseline data. Getting the information you need shouldn't be hard given the reporting requirements of No Child Left Behind. The online data tool noted on the following page can help you compile and store this information, and can build a simple-to-read report that can be submitted to your governing or funding bodies.

Data Required to Sustain an Existing Course or Program

Since you introduced your *Career Choices* course, have you seen improvements in dropout rates, test scores, attendance, and suspension rates? By comparing the baseline data and data collected after your program has been in place for at least a year, you'll know if your program is succeeding in targeted areas. If your program is achieving significant positive results, you'll want to be sure to share that information with stakeholders and community partners to ensure that support for your course continues. On the flip side, if your program isn't meeting expectations, you can determine what isn't working and make adjustments to improve results.