Forum Guide to Data Governance

Data governance refers to a formal and comprehensive set of policies and practices designed to ensure the effective management of data within an organization–encouraging robust data security, definition, collection, access, quality, and disposal. A clearly defined data governance program allows education agencies to communicate and make decisions about the information that is housed within and shared across their systems.

The National Forum on Education Statistics (Forum) developed the *Forum Guide to Data Governance* to highlight how data governance programs benefit education agencies and provide timely and useful best practices, examples, and resources for agencies implementing or updating their data governance programs. It addresses the management, collection, use, and communication of education data; the development of effective and clearly defined data systems and policies to handle the complexity and necessary protection of data; and the continuous monitoring and decisionmaking needed in a regularly shifting data landscape. The guide also features 12 case studies from state and local education agencies (SEAs and LEAs) that have implemented effective data governance programs. It is intended for education agency leadership and staff who work with, manage, and communicate data at all levels.

The guide is organized into the following chapters:

- **Chapter 1: Introduction to Data Governance** explains the purpose of the document and provides foundational information about data governance.
- **Chapter 2: Effective Practices for Designing and Implementing a Data Governance Program** discusses the practices, data structures, and essential elements needed in an effective data governance program.
- **Chapter 3: Effective Data Sharing, Data Security, and Privacy** discusses how data governance programs can be designed to meet privacy and security requirements while also meeting the need for data accessibility and sharing.
- **Chapter 4: How Data Governance Needs Change Over Time** discusses how agencies recognize and respond to changing data governance needs.
- **Chapter 5: Case Studies from SEAs and LEAs** provides case studies from states and districts that highlight the challenges, successes, and lessons learned by these education agencies in their data governance efforts.
- Additional resources include a glossary of essential terms, information from SEAs, related resources, and a list of relevant Forum guides.

The *Forum Guide to Data Governance* is a product of the National Forum on Education Statistics and is available on the Forum website at https://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=NFES2020083. The information and opinions published in the guide are the product of the National Forum on Education Statistics and do not necessarily represent the policies or views of the U.S. Department of Education, the Institute of Education Sciences, or the National Center for Education Statistics.