

# National Forum on Education Statistics (Forum)

## An Introduction for New Members



# Welcome to the Forum!

As a member of the Forum, you will contribute to the work of an organization committed to improving the quality of education data throughout the nation while also minimizing data burdens on state and local education agencies (SEAs and LEAs) and schools.



# Mission of the Forum

To plan, recommend, and develop education data resources that support local, state, and national efforts to improve pre-kindergarten through secondary education throughout the United States.



# Background

- The National Cooperative Education Statistics System (Cooperative System) was established by the Hawkins-Stafford Education Improvement Amendments of 1988 (Public Law 100-297) to “produce and maintain, with the cooperation of the States, comparable and uniform educational information and data.”
- It retains this responsibility under the mandate of Public Law 107-279, the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) established the Forum to assist the Cooperative System in achieving its congressional mandate throughout the United States.

# First Forum Meeting

- First meeting held in 1989
- Goals, objectives, functions, organizational structure, and operations formalized with the adoption of the first Policies and Procedures Manual in 1990
- Policies and Procedures Manual has since been revised several times



# Membership

Members and associates include representatives from

- federal offices involved with education data, including the U.S. Department of Education;
- SEAs and LEAs in each of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, who are appointed by the chief state school officer;
- education agencies in the extra-state jurisdictions; and
- national organizations with an interest in elementary and secondary education data.

# Forum Member Expertise

- Experience with and knowledge of education data
- A firm understanding of data issues, standards, privacy, and research
- A willingness to learn about changes and innovations in education data
- The ability to use data to support continuous improvement of education systems
- The ability to share Forum materials and knowledge on data-related issues with colleagues



# Organization

- The Forum meets to discuss specific topics related to education data in the U.S. Department of Education, SEAs, LEAs, and schools.
- Objectives are achieved primarily through the work of the Forum Steering Committee and three standing committees.
- Working groups are appointed for a specified time to develop products useful to K-12 education.





# Standing Committees

- National Education Statistics Agenda Committee (NESAC)
- Policies, Programs, and Implementation Committee (PPI)
- Technology Committee (TECH)



# National Education Statistics Agenda Committee (NESAC)

- NESAC addresses ways to fulfill the Cooperative System's legislative mandate to improve the quality of data at federal, state, and local levels.
- NESAC identifies issues and solutions that influence the development of common, comparable, and effective nationwide data collection, reporting, and use in elementary and secondary education.



# Policies, Programs, and Implementation Committee (PPI)

- PPI focuses on strategies to help SEAs and LEAs improve their collection and reporting of comparable, accurate, and timely data.
- PPI considers ways to enhance coordination among federal agencies, between federal and state agencies, and between state agencies and local districts.
- PPI also addresses issues of implementation, including the impact of privacy policy innovations on data exchanges; methods of reducing burdens at federal, state, and local levels; and emerging issues such as data sharing and education record confidentiality.



# Technology Committee (TECH)

- TECH is concerned with technology strategies to address the collection, management, use, and exchange of student and staff information and the supporting technical infrastructure.
- TECH examines the impact of new technologies on information exchange and use and considers strategies to help SEAs and LEAs make decisions about infrastructure and process improvement.
- TECH also addresses issues such as data security, data quality, data use, sustainability, and the integration of information systems.



# Working Groups

- Working groups are convened to address specific issues related to education data.
- Working groups are formed by Standing Committee suggestion or by collaboration among the three standing committees to identify a need for new resources on a topic of joint interest.
- Working groups may consist of Forum members, associate members, and non-Forum invited experts.



# Working Groups (cont.)

Forum Working Groups develop resources across key categories, including:

- Best practices
- Education data standards and codes
- Education facilities
- Forum outreach
- Privacy
- Safety/security
- Technology



# Leadership

- Forum Chair
- Forum Vice Chair
- Standing Committee Chairs
- Standing Committee Vice Chairs
- Subcommittee and Working Group Chairs



# Meetings

- The Forum holds meetings throughout the year, including an annual summer meeting.
- During the summer Forum meeting, time is set aside for meetings of the Steering Committee and the three standing committees.
- The Steering Committee and standing committees also have meetings, in person or virtually, when deemed necessary by their chairs and NCES.
- Subcommittee and working group meeting schedules—in person or virtual—are determined by NCES and each group's chair.





# Member Communications

Forum members have several avenues they can use to communicate with one another and with the Forum's leadership and staff:

- In-person and virtual meetings
- The Forum website
- Email addresses and telephone numbers for current Forum members
- Closed email lists for the Steering Committee, standing committees, and working groups



# Getting Involved as a Forum Member

- Attend and participate in in-person and virtual meetings
- Serve as a member of one of the Forum's three standing committees
- Volunteer to serve on Forum subcommittees and/or working groups
- Review and provide comments on draft Forum products
- Regularly review the Forum website
- Promote and disseminate Forum products through relevant agency activities and meetings

The Forum maintains an [outreach toolkit](#) with downloadable presentations and publication summaries for members who wish to promote the Forum and its resources.



# Resources

The Forum develops free resources on a variety of issues that affect education agencies at the federal, state, and local levels, including the following:

- [Best practice publications](#)
- [Online courses](#)
- [Videos](#)
- [The Forum Voice](#) (an online newsletter on Forum activities and accomplishments)
- [Outreach materials](#)

