P-20W Data Governance Challenge

College and Career Readiness

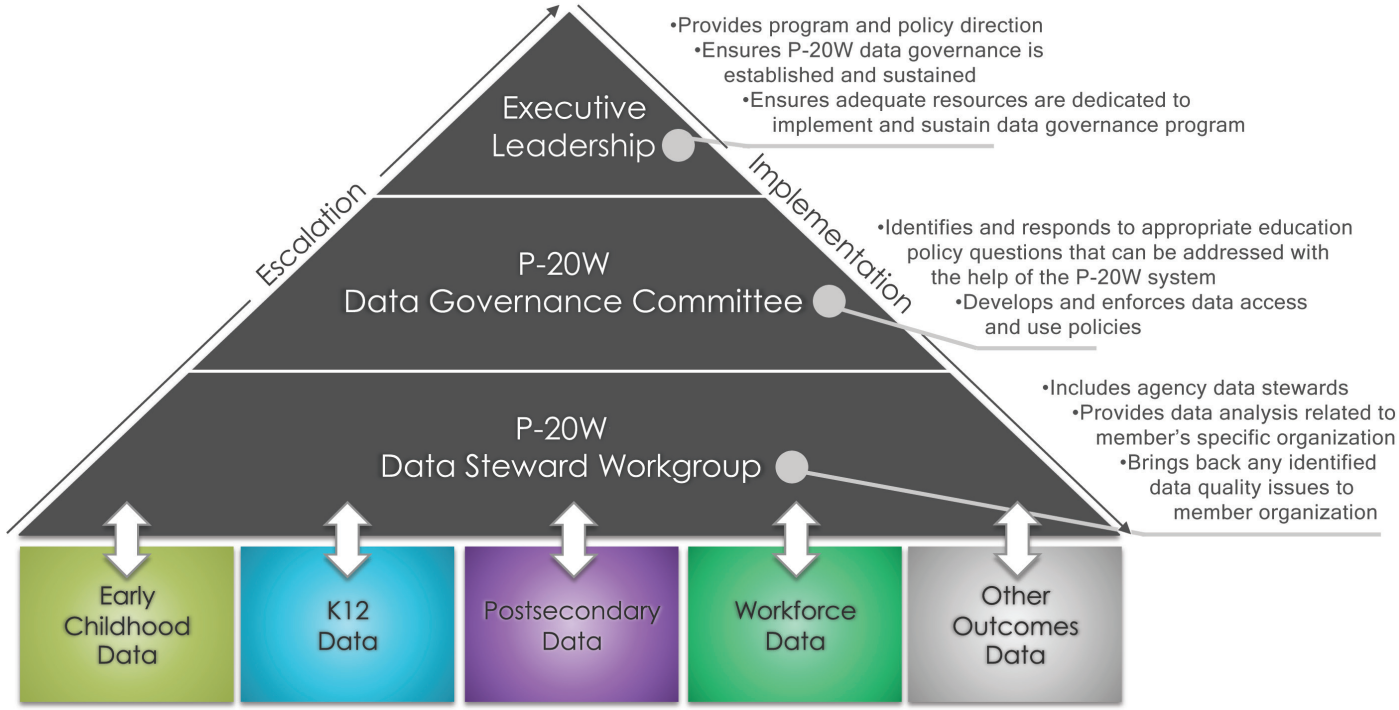
Overview: P-20W Data Governance

In general, data governance refers to the overall management of the availability, usability, integrity, quality, and security of data. It is both an organizational process and a structure. Data governance establishes responsibility for data, organizing program area/agency staff to collaboratively and continuously improve data quality through the systematic creation and enforcement of policies, roles, responsibilities, and procedures. Data governance is necessary for creating clear roles and responsibilities for each member of the project team.

A sound data governance program includes a governing body or council, a definition and allocation of authority, a defined set of procedures, and a plan to execute those procedures. While data governance should be established within individual agencies, in a P-20W (preschool through workforce) environment, there should also be an interagency data governance structure and process to deal with issues around the ownership, sharing, access, use, and security of data as they are integrated and used across agencies.[1] Through each sector's existing data governance structures, data and policy are delivered within the parameters of the P-20W data governance framework. The P-20W governance bodies exercise no authority over the participating agencies; they oversee the integration of data across agencies, based on agreed upon business rules.

A data governance structure can be represented as a three-level pyramid as depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1. The three-level data governance pyramid, with key roles and responsibilities at each level. All levels include representatives from each participating agency.



[1] See the SLDS Grant Program's Best Practices Brief on P-20W data governance for more on this topic: *http://nces.ed.gov/programs/slds/pdf/brief4_P_20W_DG.pdf.*

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To illustrate these P-20W data governance concepts, the following example outlines a project that many states are currently or will soon be working on: determining the readiness of students who complete high school to enter into postsecondary education and the workforce. This policy question is broken down and applied to each level of the P-20W data governance pyramid to show each group's role in determining how to respond to this key policy question.

Executive Leadership:

- Create policy:
  Example: "Every student graduating with a standard high school diploma (or its equivalent) will be college and career ready."
- Provide priority and direction to the Data Governance Committee (DGC)
- Allocate the required resources

Data Governance Committee:

- Define "college and career ready"
  Examples:
  - *Assessment scores on SAT, ACT, or a postsecondary placement test are the basis for this determination*
  - *Data are needed by subtest: Reading, Writing, and Math*
  - *Cut off scores determine readiness: ACT - ___ SAT - ___ Placement Test - ___*
- Determine which diplomas are considered equivalent to a standard high school diploma
  Example: GED
- Establish how long a student will be given to continue into postsecondary
  Example: "Students included in this policy must continue into postsecondary the following fall semester after graduating from high school."
- Decide what other data are needed
  Example: Race, gender, school district, high school, institution of higher education, assessment, etc.
- Determine how the data will be displayed/reported and accessed
  Examples:
  - *Data will be displayed down to the institution and subtest levels*
  - *Cell sizes less than 10 will be suppressed*
  - *Aggregate reports will be made available to the general public*
  - *Detailed reports will be made available to local education agencies (LEAs) via secure access*

Data Steward Workgroup:

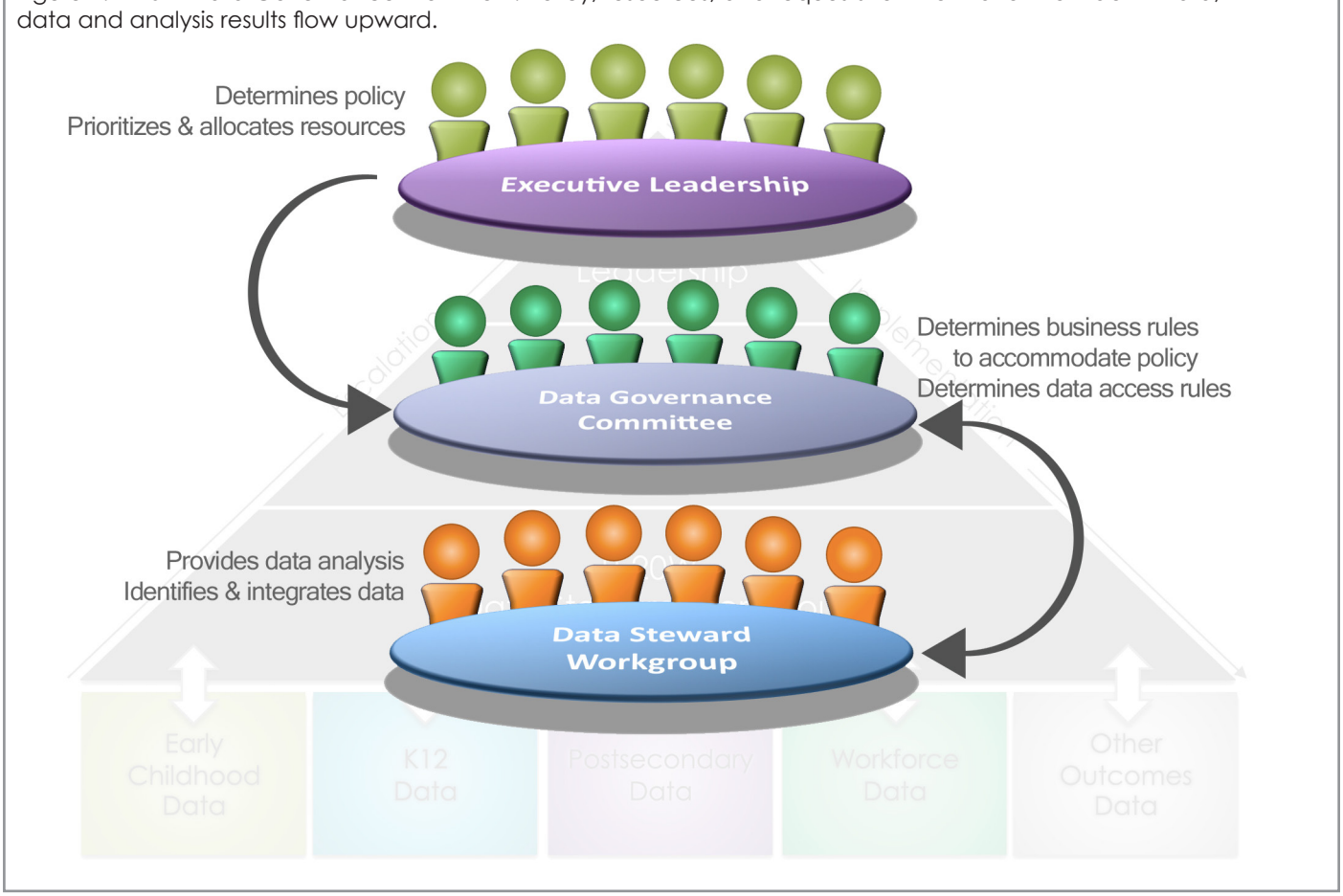
- Determine where SAT, ACT, and placement scores are collected
- Determine whether collections include all three subtests
- Identify the source system of record for GED and standard high school diploma data
- Identify the source system of record for postsecondary enrollment data (both from within and outside of the state)
- Identify the source system of record for student demographic data (from both secondary and postsecondary education and the workforce) and determine how to reconcile differences
- Design and produce aggregate reports for the public
  - Meet the reporting requirements as laid out by the DGC
  - Get approval from the DGC before publishing reports
- Design and produce detailed reports for LEAs
  - Confirm that appropriate authentication is implemented
  - Get approval from the DGC before publishing reports

Source Data: The Base of the Pyramid

P-20W data governance is a multi-agency approach, which offers a statewide perspective of education policy and how other state-level information can help inform educational decisions and improve the effectiveness of the state's education system. There should be a statewide approach to data collection, integration, reporting, and use—however, information is owned at the agency/program area level.

Keep in mind that, as similar data are coming from multiple source data systems, a risk exists that the data may not be consistent across these various sources. A determination must be made on how to handle, and business rules implemented to systematically address, these discrepancies. Such determinations will be part of the overall P-20W data governance work flow (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. P-20W Data Governance Work Flow: Policy, resources, and requests for information flow downward; data and analysis results flow upward.



For more information on the IES SLDS Grant Program or for support with system development, please visit http://nces.ed.gov/programs/SLDS.