Technical Assistance to Nevada

RTI International – 2020–2021
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In 2020–21, the Nevada Department of Education (NVDE) received support from RTI International through the National Perkins Reporting System: Technical Assistance to States Program.

As part of this support, RTI conducted the following activities:

- Held meetings and workshops with NVDE staff to understand their needs, determine a path for support, and review findings
- Facilitated discussion between NVDE staff and local career and technical education (CTE) staff
- Conducted interviews with Infinite Campus (IC) employees and state CTE staff in four states
KEY TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE QUESTIONS

How do local education agencies (LEAs) collect and store student contact information?

How do LEAs effectively reach students via surveys and other methods?

What can the state do to support follow-up data collection?
ROAD MAP

Explore
• Understand Nevada’s needs and concerns
• Examine practices in other states
• Select comparable states

Activity: Share and read example materials from other states

Learn
• Understand promising state strategies
• Identify options for improvement
• Determine the capabilities of existing student information system software

Activity: Speak with state leaders about effective practices and reflect on best strategies

Create
• Generate a list of innovative strategies
• Create a guide for LEA staff with follow-up strategies

Activity: Review materials and discuss implications
Recommendations for Nevada

• Pursue integration of an online follow-up survey with the student information system to streamline distribution.
  ▪ Staff at IC can customize the platform to survey previous students.
  ▪ Nevada LEA staff also expressed interest in leveraging existing systems to decrease burden on educators and administrators.

• Focus state support on LEAs with the lowest response rates on the follow-up survey.
  ▪ Support may include professional development, webinars for teachers collecting follow-up data, tailored technical assistance to LEAs to problem solve ways to reach their students, or guidance on validating follow-up data.

• Consider setting guidelines for follow-up data collection, such as a target response rate or minimum number of outreach attempts.
  ▪ Quality indicators can help set standards for LEAs on what the data collection process could or should look like.
  ▪ Quality indicators may also encourage LEAs to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of their approach as well as their support needs.
In March 2021, Nevada state staff met with IC representatives to discuss software capabilities

- **IC attendees:**
  - Stephanie Sondrol, Client Manager
  - Jon Berry, Product Manager
  - Matt Capra, Data Manager
  - Eric Kleppen, Product Analyst

- **NVDE attendees**
  - Gabriel Hill
  - Glenn Meyer
• IC is currently building survey capabilities into the portal to reach students with active accounts.

• IC offers a custom build that sends students a link to a survey hosted on an external platform and automatically uploads their responses to their IC student records.

• Student accounts can be reactivated after students leave high school using a manual process or a script if the business rules for identifying students remain the same each year.

• Student contact information can be stored but IC staff are unsure whether updated or alternative contact information can be stored.

• Unclear how Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act regulations play into contacting students who are still minors.
Most states collect post-program employment, education, and training data through surveys.
Common State Approaches to Support LEAs’ Follow-Up Survey Data Collection

- Provide guidance on how to collect student contact information:
  - Encourage LEAs to have seniors complete voluntary contact forms with information for themselves and an alternative contact to create a postgraduation contact record for each student
  - Create templates for survey or outreach text
- Set a bar for minimum effort (e.g., response rate, number of outreach attempts) or parameters for where data may come from (e.g., family members, friends, social media).
- Collect data on the source of LEAs’ follow-up information for each student, such as phone or email, and on types of nonresponses, such as invalid contact information or refusal to participate.
- Require LEAs to maintain information records for a set amount of time, typically the length of time between program renewals or risk monitoring processes.
## State Strategies to Streamline and Validate Follow-Up Data

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<th>Strategy</th>
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| **Collect data through a survey hosted on existing student information systems** | - Reopen CTE concentrator student records to use the system for follow-up data collection (North Carolina)  
- Add an “N/A” option or more specific nonresponse options for students who are not reached during data collection (Kentucky, North Carolina) |
| **Offer professional development on follow-up data collection to local staff** | - Train local staff on reliable data sources, data validation processes, and data collection best practices (Michigan, North Carolina)  
- Provide technical assistance to LEAs with low responses rates (Michigan, North Carolina) |
| **Develop a state-level data validation process** | - Record response rates by LEA to identify nonresponse patterns (Michigan)  
- Spot check a sample of responses through a manual process (Kentucky, Michigan) |
| **Build long-term data partnerships** | - Leverage a state longitudinal data system to gather and/or validate post-graduation data (Florida, Kentucky)  
- Contract with third-party organization to support LEAs and/or assist with validation of post-graduation data (Michigan) |
• **Approach**
  - LEAs collect permanent student contact information in senior year and submit it as part of the CTE student record.
  - The state agency stores the contact information and sends it back to LEAs in the fall with a list of CTE concentrators.
  - LEAs conduct the follow-up survey and enter data directly into their CTE data system.

• **Promising practices**
  - LEAs add contact information as a field in their spring CTE data submission; the state securely stores this data and shares it directly back with LEAs for the follow-up survey the following school year.
• **Approach**
  - Kentucky accesses data on CTE concentrators’ post–high school status using the state longitudinal data system.
    - 70–80% of follow-up data comes from this data system.
    - Previously, lag time in postsecondary reporting was a barrier to leveraging the data system for the follow up. The state education agencies developed a timeline to coordinate reporting.
  - The state supplements the records using data from the statewide LEA Senior Transition Survey and a follow-up survey after senior year.
    - Some LEAs collect data using a Google Form survey.
    - LEA staff enter data into IC that is later exported into the state CTE data system.
    - State staff found incorrect data in up to 35% of self-reported records. In some categories of post-college outcomes (e.g., enrollment), the records are only 15–20% incorrect.
  - Follow-up survey records are audited by state staff as part of the CTE program monitoring process.
    - 10% of LEAs are selected for in-person monitoring each year.
Kentucky (slide 2)

• **Promising practices**
  - Data sharing agreements with state-level agencies and using state longitudinal data systems can increase data accuracy and avoid the issue of low response rates.
  - Explore ways to customize IC for data collection and reporting among LEAs.
    - For example, visualizations using student record data
• **Approach**
  - Michigan contracts a third party to provide training and technical assistance for the follow-up survey. The third party also conducts accountability reporting, calculates response rates, and conducts manual audits.
  - LEAs collect follow-up data using a survey and are expected to reach at least an 80% response rate to remain in good standing.

• **Promising practices**
  - To ease burden and improve response rates, consider contracting with a third party to manage technical support, reporting, and data validation.
  - Tailored training and technical assistance improves response rates and data validity.
• **Approach**
  - North Carolina requires local staff involved in follow-up data collection to complete trainings on data entry, collection, and best practices.
  - LEAs collect follow-up data via surveys and enter the data into PowerSchool.
    - PowerSchool created a customized tab for direct data entry.
  - State staff conduct audits of follow-up data.

• **Promising practices**
  - Leverage the existing student information system for data entry and collection to link data collection processes with student records.
Follow-Up
Data Collection: Guidance for LEAs

Before

• Inform exiting students that they will be contacted in the following winter.
• Ask exiting CTE concentrators and/or seniors to submit contact information for themselves and an alternative contact to create a post-graduation record for each student.
• Send documentation explaining the purpose of data collection ahead of or with outreach for data collection to increase perceived legitimacy.
• Create survey templates and/or outreach scripts for all staff to follow.
• Train staff on best practices to achieve consistent data collection and accurate data entry.

During

• Leverage social media to track down students through alumni groups and other networking pages.
• Conduct outreach at different times of day or days of the week to accommodate different work schedules for students.
• Personalize voice messages and emails to reduce the likelihood that the message is perceived as spam.

After

• Conduct spot checks across schools or teachers to confirm the validity of information collected and the reliability of data collection methods.
• Explore public state licensure and certificate databases as alternative data sources to confirm or supplement student information (e.g., Cosmetology Board, Collision Repair Board, Board of Nursing).