

# Massachusetts Education-to-Career Research and Data Hub Research Advisory Committee

September 24, 2024

RAC members in attendance	Agency members in attendance
Dan Goldhaber Mark Melnik Abbie Anderson Alex Mayer Anne McKenzie Caroline Connolly Christopher Cleveland Hannah Hermanson Jeremiah Johnson Monnica Chan Penny Hasseli Pingui Wu Shaun Dougherty Yoonsook Katie Ha <b>New members:</b> Kate Giapponi Schneider Amaris Kinne	Symantha Clough Sam Ribnick Danielle Kane Amy Checkoway Ashley White Ellen Song David Bogojevich Mario Delci Melanie Rucinski Elena McDermott

## I. Member transitions

- a. Welcome new members in early education
  - i. Kate Giapponi Schneider, research scientist at the Institute for Child, Youth and Family Policy at Brandeis
  - ii. Amaris Kinne, director of research at Neighborhood Villages
- b. New roles for members
  - i. Chris Cleveland is now a faculty member at Brown
  - ii. Abbie Anderson moved to Needham Public Schools
- c. Member ending term
  - i. Cheryl Chang is out of the country and unable to continue on RAC

## II. Updates

- a. Implemented the RAC's recommendation to establish a Student and Family Voice Committee, and subsequently implemented the SFVC's recommendation to add language translation to the E2C Hub

- b. DHE Data Center updated with new dashboards, further disaggregations, and links to data to download
- c. EEC preparing to publish C3 and KPI dashboards and data
- d. AI Chatbot for E2C data in early development
- e. The E2C Hub awarded \$2.8 million in funding for FY25 through IT's state capital funding grant. Part of a multi-year capital grant; future awards anticipated.

### III. SLDS State Reporting

- a. Exemplars: Washington State (ERDC), Kentucky's KYSTATS
  - i. Watching California (Cradle to Career) start their journey
  - ii. Suggestions from RAC: Tennessee, Georgia

### IV. Recap of FY24 work and discussion of FY25 plans

- a. Sam reviewed the FY24 evaluation framework for the E2C Hub for agency leadership and the RAC to review
  - i. Recurring challenges:
    - 1. Lack of relationships with EOLWD with transitions in leadership
    - 2. E2C Hub turnover slowed progress on research agendas/portal
  - ii. Discussion:
    - 1. Evaluation measures are good but don't quantify well.  
Massachusetts should get credit for working with researchers.  
Suggestion to add a performance metric for how much research uses SLDS data? Ask that researchers use specific language to acknowledge the data source.
    - 2. How can we facilitate engagement with the EOLWD?
      - a. Sam: They are open to working with us, but we need to figure out how to build the bridge into a strong relationship.
      - b. RAC members with existing relationships with EOLWD offered to facilitate relationship
    - 3. The categories of the evaluation framework seem generally aligned with a project/program that is in relatively early phases of development. Consider adding additional categories to capture work in progress. For example, "Utility," "Product Quality," and "Impact" might be considered in the future.
    - 4. Do you want to be measuring how the resource and research translate into outcomes for students? Doesn't seem the point of the evaluation framework.
      - a. Sam: The evaluation is currently focused on how well our team is working, not the impact of our work on students. That's a potential discussion with leadership or future RAC meeting: what should we be measuring?

5. Projects RAC were interested in hearing more about:
  - a. Early College
    - i. We had to merge data in two systems to create the dashboard and data on Early College participation and credits. A related data story was also published.
  - b. Workforce data
    - i. Previously mentioned, working on solutions to increase matches of postsecondary outcomes and wage data
  - c. Early literacy and B-5 services
    - i. Privacy concerns have not allowed researchers to use the dataset yet (data sharing agreement issue)
  - d. Internal capacity on new systems
    - i. EOE has done a massive modernization process to the cloud and allows analysts to more closely work with the data
  - e. Data stories
    - i. Chronic absenteeism has had a lot of great feedback and a lot of eyes at DESE on it. Stories take a lot of time and ensuring analysis is correct because they typically gain more traction than just a dataset.

## **V. Big picture goals for FY25-27**

- a. Proposed research enclave
  - i. One member in attendance has worked in research enclave-type environment
  - ii. Advantages are it provides a secure space for accessing confidential data for defined period of time without transferring files. Could quicken researcher approval and access.
  - iii. Disadvantages include limitations to do analysis with large datasets or to combine state data with external data
  - iv. Members suggest Sam connect with states that already use a data enclave
  - v. Some members asked if there would be a cost for researchers to use the enclave and if that might be a barrier for some, equity implications
  - vi. More info gathering to be done

## **VI. Improvements to research processes**

- a. Research Request Portal
  - i. Will roll this out to a handful of researchers for beta testing

- ii. We think this will be helpful for first time researchers to submit successful proposals because it has all the fields that EEC/DESE/DHE need to release the data
    - iii. Also includes data request status lookup
  - b. Agency research agendas
    - i. DESE: currently published
      - 1. EWIS indicators lag due to districts reporting to DESE. Is there a real time mechanism?
        - a. Sam will connect Kate Sandal at DESE
    - ii. DHE: draft
      - 1. Timeframe for how long these priorities apply?
        - a. Mario: Board will endorse in January 2025. This is part of a 5-year plan. We are trying to be more of a proactive voice within DHE policy.
    - iii. EEC: draft
      - 1. Agency-wide goal to spread awareness of the research projects that are happening like building out/publicizing website
      - 2. Is there a plan to connect some of these questions to researchers?
        - a. Ashley W: We want full and intentional partnerships with researchers, but most research projects require RFP

## VII. Whiteboard feedback

- a. EEC
  - i. What excites you?
    - 1. The breadth of topics covered and specifically questions related to workforce support
    - 2. There seems so much growth/improvement in policies and opportunities for evaluating changes
    - 3. The potential to share the research questions with PhD students interested in early childhood education research for their dissertations
  - ii. Suggestions or questions
    - 1. Similar to DESE data shown in this meeting, it might be helpful to have standardized data descriptions regarding how some definitions or data elements or a collection have changed over time
    - 2. I appreciate that there is a key to signify questions already under way/tacked. It would be helpful if there were some indication of prioritization.
    - 3. Piggy-backing off the note above, it would be helpful to have an ongoing list of research questions currently being studied so that there isn't any duplication of work.

b. DESE

i. What excites you?

1. I think it would be good to know the extent to which the indicator system is being used (and how).
2. The context on SLDS vs. original data collection being necessary is helpful.

ii. Suggestions or questions

1. There are some questions that maybe should be taken off the agenda because they are pretty normative and/or not well connected to policy.
2. Offer snacks at RAC meetings. ;)
3. Would like to know about Edwin data for preschool experience and how it can be used in conjunction with EEC.
4. I appreciate the extent to which there has already been internal evaluation of progress toward meeting project-specific goals. I am also excited about the possibility of more dynamically accessing/reporting public data hosted by the state.
5. There is an opportunity to ask important questions about time in class, and why or how much students are being held out of class, particularly students with disabilities.
6. Is DESE collecting IEP data now?
7. I think there is an opportunity to increase attention/focus on the importance of attendance, particularly in the wake of pandemic, and in acknowledgement of the importance of this issue for schools and families.
8. I was surprised not to see any questions about dual enrollment, or direct college admission policies.
9. "What are the impacts of the new educator eval rubric?" is pretty general. I'd try to get concrete about this and also ask whether/how the distribution of evaluations has changed.
10. Which offices are not reflected in the research agenda? If so, why?

c. DHE

i. What excites you?

1. The thoughtfulness of the research questions raised and the breadth of them.
2. Methodological breadth is nice as well.
3. The topics that connect college to labor market performance measures (but do we have data to answer these questions?).

ii. Suggestions or questions

1. Look for more areas where disaggregating findings by race/ethnicity/income/gender, etc. could be helpful

2. Add some context about why it's an important question and how the findings might be used
3. With the number of questions raised, what are the priority areas for DHE this year?
4. Is there a timeframe (or guesstimate) for how long this agenda will apply?
5. Is there more opportunity to look at how colleges are allocating resources to provide insight into the findings?
6. +1 to the priority areas. It seems the areas/questions also might apply to different stakeholder groups (e.g. being institution facing vs. researcher facing). Perhaps sharing key stakeholders DHE has in mind for each priority/question could help readers.