New England Data Project Summary

In 2013, the New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE) requested that Hezel Associates research the region's state longitudinal data systems (SLDSs). The purpose of the research was threefold:

- To gain a better understanding of New England states' capacity to use data effectively towards improving educational and workforce outcomes in the region.
- Identify challenges for developing and sustaining SLDs.
- Examine the possible development of a New England regional longitudinal data system strategy articulating how regional data-driven decision-making and collaboration can boost the region's educational, economic and social well-being.

In developing the report the Hezel Associates research team reviewed relevant literature and interviewed prominent national longitudinal data system leaders. This information was used to identify three SLDS Informative Practice States—Arkansas, Kentucky and Washington. Analyses of data from the research and interviews became a springboard for the development of a framework of 12 essential factors that contribute to the long-term success of SLDSs.

12 Essential Factors Contributing to SDLS Success

Research
1. A clear research agenda
2. A focus on answering key research questions
3. Evidence of stakeholder feedback reports, particularly reports that link data from multiple agencies

Engaging Stakeholders
5. Incentives for agencies to participate
6. Provisions for "bringing the data to stakeholders"
7. Training in using data to inform decisions
8. Investment in developing and maintaining inter-agency relationships
9. Support from state government leaders

Management
10. Funding from the state legislature
11. Operations and/or governance through an external agency
12. Planning for interstate data partnerships