

Editor's Note

Valerie Norville
Editorial Director

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Two images of the power of education data emerge from Kris Amundson's interview with the head of the Data Quality Campaign, Aimee Guidera. Everyone can agree that data collection is a tool that serves states' students, educators, and policymakers. But depending on where they sit, some see student data as a hammer and others as a flashlight.

Given that many teachers have criticized the use of some types of student data as an input into accountability systems, a teacher with a "flashlight" point of view kicks off the issue. Kerry Gallagher paints a picture of a classroom in which real-time data ignites personalized learning and allows her and her peers to teach more effectively.

Brenda Shum also shines a light on the power of data—in this case its ability to illuminate inequities in education that line up with subgroup differences. She details how ESSA and a new federal rule call on states to shoulder prime responsibility for addressing inequality in schools, and she argues that you can't craft interventions if you can't see the problems.

Risks to the privacy of student data present a different sense of data as hammer. The dangers to students are real, and parents are right to be concerned. But the main theme of this issue is that fears of misused data or breaches of school computers should not inspire hasty rulemaking that makes it impossible to harness the benefits of student data.

Kobie Pruitt and Elana Zeide provide two views on key principles that can help state policymakers arrive at a balance that addresses parents' fears while empowering educators to combine education technology and student data to help children learn. Pruitt explains why policies that let parents opt out of data collections are a

nonstarter, and Zeide urges states to go beyond the compliance that federal law requires and craft proactive, transparent policies that include teacher training and student voices.

Dana Rickman and Amelia Vance write about states that have led the way on student data privacy. In different ways, Georgia, Oklahoma, and California have all attempted to achieve a balance between protecting data and ensuring educators can use those data for students' benefit. And while the federal government has not caught up with the flurry of state legislature and rulemaking, they have a key role to play. Paige Kowalski and Khaliah Barnes offer two perspectives on what that federal role should be. ■

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