

NPEA DATA COUNTS SUMMARY OF FINDINGS EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2015-2016 Program Year

BACKGROUND

The National Partnership for Educational Access (NPEA) launched the NPEA Data Counts project in 2015. The project was the result of a yearlong collaborative research and implementation initiative funded by The Esther A. & Joseph Klingenstein Fund. This initiative brought a team of NPEA members, leaders, and researchers together to develop and pilot a set of ten indicators deemed to be the most important markers of progress and success for organizations serving underrepresented students. NPEA also developed a set of specific definitions for each of the data points – 23 in all – that were necessary in order to accurately report our findings in aggregate across programs. Finally, we designed a Data Collection Tool for members to report information to NPEA.

We have now conducted two years of data collection and analysis, most recently collecting information from the 2015-2016 program year. In the fall of 2016, 106 organizational and supporting institution NPEA members were invited to complete the Data Collection Tool and 67 of these eligible members (or 63.2%) submitted data. Seven members reported information on two programs, so aggregate data from 74 programs are included in this year's report. Demonstrating NPEA members' commitment to this project, of those that completed the Tool in 2015, 74% (53 programs from 50 members) returned to submit data again in 2016.

The indicators list and Data Tool were launched to identify a common set of indicators and to encourage NPEA member organizations to collect and use data that reflect them. As such, it is important for us to assess and track which indicators are more commonly used among members, and to monitor changes in reporting practices over time. Ideally, organizations will increase and strengthen their data collection efforts on these indicators each year. The complete 2015-2016 Summary of Findings provides the findings for all of the data elements that comprise each of the ten indicators.

FINDINGS IN AGGREGATE: TEN INDICATORS

Demographic Indicators – Who NPEA Members Serve: 1) Number of participants served; 2) Background characteristics (e.g., gender, race); 3) Descriptions of educational access challenges (e.g., first generation)

Key Findings:

- **Students Served:** 74 programs reported serving 201,370 students over a 12-month period last year.
- **Gender:** Programs reporting served more female than male students, 56% compared to 44%.
- **Race:** 49% of students served were Black or African American (non-Hispanic), 29% were Hispanic or Latino, 10% were Asian, 6% reported two or more races, 5% were White (non-Hispanic), and 1% were American Indian or Alaska Native.
- **Educational Access Challenges:** The majority of students are from low income families (75%) and would be first generation college students (81%). A little under half speak a language other than English at home (49%), and 41% are from a single-adult household.

Progress Indicators: Before High School: 4) Staying on track in middle school; 5) Gaining access to competitive/independent school placement

Key Findings:

- “On Track in Middle School: More than nine out of 10 students for whom data are reported are said to be “on track” for three of the middle school indicators: school attendance over 90 percent (98%), no suspensions (93%), and receiving no failing grades (99%).
- Algebra by End of 8th Grade: 54% of the 8th graders had completed algebra. Of those who reported data on completion of algebra in both years of data collection, the data show an increase from 50% to 58%.
- Access to Competitive Schools: Twenty-five programs (representing 3,403 students) both provided data and included a “placement” component, meaning they work with students to gain admissions into an independent school and/or a competitive/exam school. Among those, 45% of students were accepted into an independent or competitive exam school. Most accepted students (90.3%) subsequently enrolled, while 3.1% did not enroll due to a lack of financial aid, and the rest did not enroll for other reasons.

Progress Indicators: High School and Beyond: 6) Engaging in academically rigorous courses during high school; 7) Taking proactive steps toward college admissions; 8) Graduating from high school; 9) Enrolling in a post-secondary program immediately after high school; 10) Persisting through degree attainment

Key Findings:

- Proactive Steps toward College Admissions: Over 99% of their students completed the FAFSA, 96% took a college entry exam, and 99% applied to at least one post-secondary program.
- High School Graduation: Among reporting programs, 99.2% of their seniors graduated on time, and the “four-year” graduation rate showed that 96.3% graduated at the end of their senior year.
- Post-Secondary Acceptance: Among programs serving high school seniors, almost every student (98%) was accepted into a post-secondary program and most (93%) also enrolled right away.
- Post-Secondary Enrollment: Among the 4,187 students who were accepted, 82% enrolled in a four-year program and 11% enrolled in a two-year program during the fall semester after graduation.
- Selectiveness of Institutions: 55% of students who enrolled in a four-year program did so at selective schools, defined by Barron’s List as “Most Competitive,” “Highly Competitive,” or “Very Competitive.”
- Financial Aid Gap: 85% of students had a financial aid gap of under \$10,000, and 15% had a larger gap.
- Persisting through Degree Attainment: Of students who graduated high school six years ago, 74% had earned a 4-year degree within four (51%) or six (23%) years, and another 7% were currently enrolled in school. Six percent (6%) had earned a two-year degree in two or four years, and the remaining 13% had not earned any degree, nor were they enrolled in a post-secondary program.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

During this second year of data collection for NPEA Data Counts, we found a high degree of consistency from the previous year, with trends in the 2015-2016 data mirroring those identified in the 2014-2015 data. We also found that programs completing two years of data show only slight changes from one year to the next. The level of consistency in findings over two years and commitment of member organizations and schools in providing data to NPEA bodes well for continuing this initiative.

It will be important to keep observing trends going forward as we identify areas where data shows promising results and where further, more detailed study is suggested. Another area for deeper exploration involves putting the NPEA Data Counts findings in a broader context, which we could do by assembling other national data in order to present our collective progress relative to trends nationwide in areas such as independent school placement, progress during high school, and college enrollment and post-secondary persistence toward degree attainment. Finally, with two years of data and more to come, we can begin to confidentially provide individual programs with their data as it relates to the aggregate dataset, which will help organizations and schools identify areas where they are strong and where more attention is needed. This in turn could further inform their programming decisions and development outreach. NPEA is in a position to help make connections among members that will be beneficial to each other and to the field overall.

We recognize that completing the NPEA Data Collection Tool is a demanding task, and we are grateful to the members who participated—especially to those who provided data two years in a row. The relatively high response rate overall (63%) suggests that programs and schools are invested in this initiative, and the rate of returning members reporting two years of data (74%) shows a high level of commitment among a substantial group. We received feedback about the Data Collection Tool from about one-third of those who completed it, a group representing 13 cities in 10 different states. A solid majority (74%) of this group indicated that they found the Data Collection Tool to be “valuable” or “very valuable.” Further, more than half described specific ways they have changed or altered their practice as a result of participating in NPEA Data Counts. Their suggestive responses cluster into three categories: NPEA Data Counts... (1) encourages organizations to assess and alter the data they collect to align with the Data Counts Indicators, (2) highlights the importance of creating and investing in data systems that allow organizations to more easily access and retrieve key data, and (3) motivates organizations to take the time to be more reflective.

For more information about NPEA Data Counts and to learn how to get involved, please contact Karin Elliott, Executive Director, at kelliott@tsf.org or (617) 423-6300 x284 or Carrie Tate, Associate Director, at ctate@tsf.org or x228.

*Visit us online at www.educational-access.org, on Twitter at @NPEdAccess (#NPEAdata),
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NPEA Mission

We connect the people, practices, and innovations essential for eliminating barriers to educational access and college and career success for underserved students.