

P20 WIN Research Agenda

P20 WIN has developed a research agenda to guide cross-agency research and analysis. This research agenda is supported by the P20 WIN Participating Agencies. The agenda is designed to encourage collaboration between state agencies and external research partners to advance policy priorities and to support individuals in navigating supportive services and educational pathways into the workforce.

The P20 WIN Research Agenda is focused on five priority areas, which are summarized below.

1. Predictive Models of College and Career Success

The purpose of this research is to provide information to support course placement decisions at colleges and universities and to provide information to families in Connecticut about the probability of admission to four-year institutions. Questions for this agenda item include, but are not limited to:

- What are the pre-college indicators that correlate with the level of preparation required for a high school student to succeed in a core, credit-level course of study at a postsecondary institution?
- To what degree does high school academic history correlate with career readiness for students who do not pursue post-secondary education after high school completion?

2. Student Readiness

It is essential to provide multi-faceted supports so that all students can achieve the highest levels of academic readiness. Research will focus on three critical educational systems/transitions: early childhood to k-12; elementary/middle to high school within K-12; and high school to post-secondary. It is vital for this research to not just include mainstream education data, but also to include social services, child welfare, housing, family life, and adult education data to get a fuller picture of student experiences. Questions for this agenda item include, but are not limited to:

- What types of educational and social support services allow students to achieve at the highest levels? Which students receive supports and which receive no known supports?
- How do academic trajectories change for those who receive supports compared to those who do not, especially at the times of transition (e.g. PK to K, Grade 8 to 9, and HS graduation to postsecondary)?
- Can multiple cohorts be tracked longitudinally through the systems to see if there are patterns that repeat?

3. Financial Aid

Due to the uncertainty of sustaining the State Financial Aid Program from year to year, many higher education institutions do not provide need-based grant awards to incoming students and many are often conservative in using these funds in their aid packaging in the spring. Connecticut must have a better understanding of the dynamics of financial aid and the outcomes of state financial aid grant recipients so that we can maximize the opportunity for students with limited state resources. Questions for this agenda item include, but are not limited to:

- On average, how much additional aid (federal and institutional aid) is provided to students that receive a state grant? By sector?
- What are the demographics of CT students that receive state financial grants? Demographic categories of interest include race/ethnicity, hometown, eligibility for free and reduced-priced lunch, average EFC, etc.

4. Workforce Training

The success of the state's workforce education training system, which is critical to the state's economic development, requires using data to inform decision-making and programming. The state is working to develop standards around measuring the return on investment (ROI) for Connecticut's public workforce training programs. This study should demonstrate how the ROI differs across key demographic indicators, such as race/ethnicity, age, gender, and previous educational attainment. Questions for this agenda item include, but are not limited to:

- What is the impact of short-term training programs on earnings?
- What is the ROI of public workforce training programs, particularly those with traditionally mixed results such as WIOA Adult?
- What is the best replicable, flexible methodology for measuring the net impact of public workforce training programs on earnings and employment?
- What are the patterns of wages and employment for particular training credentials?

5. Overcoming Barriers to Success

Embedded in each of the prior topics is the need to help individuals who face barriers to success or who are at risk of falling behind due to conditions such as homelessness or engagement with the child welfare system. P20 WIN has expanded to include state agencies that address social services, homelessness, and child welfare. Establishing these connections allows us to understand the degree to which residents face additional challenges and to develop programs that support these students and move individuals and families into cycles of success.

- What is the cost benefit ratio of SNAP, TANF, Medicaid, and Childcare assistance programs? Are there patterns that suggest different program delivery models may yield greater effectiveness or cost savings?
- Where do we observe overlap in the provision of services? Where are there opportunities for more coordinated service delivery?
- How does the design of benefit programs impact access to education and workforce programs? Are benefit cliffs a disincentive to work?
- What factors in the life of a child in foster care have the greatest impact on school achievement, etc.?
- Access and Equity (for example, what is the impact of access, or lack of access, to technology on student achievement?)