

Meeting 5 Notes and Actions
February 19, 2021

Next Meeting: March 19, 2021 (9 AM - Noon (EDT)) -- Privacy and Confidentiality Concepts, Privacy and Confidentiality Technologies, Data Ethics, and Public Comments Discussion

Meeting Agenda:

1. Federal Chief Data Officers (CDO) Perspectives and Discussion -- Richard Allen
2. Greg Fortelny, Ted Kaouk
3. External Researchers Points of View -- Len Burman, Amy O'Hara, Ken Troske
4. Future State/North Star Summary Presentation and Request for Committee Assistance -- Peter Bonner

I. Federal Chief Data Officers (CDO) Perspectives and Discussion -- (Richard Allen, Environmental Protection Agency), Greg Fortelny (Department of Education), Ted Kaouk (Department of Agriculture)

The presenters discussed the role and function of CDOs and the CDO Council in the federal government. They focused on the importance of data sharing and its challenges and solutions. They also provided case studies in data sharing and integration from the Departments of Agriculture and Education and the Environmental Protection Agency. Finally, the presenters provided guidelines and experience in creating and sustaining a data-driven culture. (See presentation at bea.gov/evidence under Meetings tab.)

Committee Feedback/Discussions:

- **Role of the Interagency Council on Statistical Policy (ICSP) in Coordinating Work Across Government:**
 - Bringing agencies together through a common application portal
 - Reaching out to agency stakeholders to uncover what the need in a common portal
 - Addressing the value proposition in making the data available
 - Reaching widely across government, including OiRA
- **Differing Agency Maturity Levels in the CDO Role/How ACDEB Could Help:** constituents/customers.
 - Need to change the culture using the value proposition for data sharing and its importance, including demonstrating internal business value that can be translated into a broader transformation effort
 - Work at the agency-enterprise level, not just the parts that work on administrative data and data gathering
 - Use dashboards and ensure data quality/validation to make data sharing and integration visible -- create confidence

- Acknowledge that “data management” is not rewarding in and of itself, but we need to demonstrate the value of data and reward effective data management
- **Department of Education Use of the Technology Modernization Fund and 18F in its Examples:**
 - Used some TMF funds to build out dashboards as well as and consolidating some data and data integration already developed -- more focused on infrastructure than the analytics
 - Engaged with GSA Centers of Excellence for data validation, customer experience insights, analytics, dashboards and focus on mission areas
 - Desire to learn more about how Education navigated and improved the Information Collection Request (ICR) process (as well as the engagement with OiRA and the statutory requirements in the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA))
 - Use the PRA and program forms to drive metadata repositories -- to operate programs, monitor them, report across programs, and for evaluation of open data and data sharing
 - Apply “fit for use” test against data sharing and data access
- **Need for Value Proposition(s) to Gain Support and Buy-In:**
 - Instead of top-down standards for data sharing; recommend driving standards from the value propositions and needs of users (e.g., LEHD standards were not mandated, but voluntary)
 - State-level engagement will also improve if based on the value and outcomes
 - To demonstrate value, start with a real product, such as a dashboard -- find a product that state/local actors will use and value; however, the work to accomplish good data visualization is not well understood by staff, leaders, and the public
 - Analogy of managing an orchestra and a chorus in integrating needs and contributions of different stakeholders
 - Commenting on coalition building and integration of stakeholders: "data governance is all about OPM and OPP---other people's money and other people's people."
 - Census issues preparing for the 2020 Census -- friction between statisticians wanting rigorous metrics and program managers wanting simple ratings

<https://coleridgeinitiative.org/workshops/workshop-2021/>

- **Distributed versus Single-Agency NSDS:** Concern about how to support the resources for NSDS if it is not housed in a single agency, but distributed across many functions/organizations

II. External Researchers' Points of View -- Len Burman (Urban Institute/Syracuse University), Amy O'Hara (Federal Statistical Research Data Center/ Georgetown University), Ken Troske (University of Kentucky)

(See presentation at bea.gov/evidence under Meetings tab.)

Presenters discussed how external researchers use administrative data using Labor Department Workforce Investment Act wage and employment data to conduct experimental and non-experimental evaluation of WIA impacts. The identified challenges, recommendations, and promising areas of inquiry for the future in external researcher use of administrative data. They also identified the use of synthetic data methods to potentially protect confidentiality and expand access.

Committee Feedback/Discussions:

→ External Researcher Administrative Data Use Reflections:

- Potential for the use of secondary data for decision making and also improve the pathways for data access and use by states through overcoming privacy/access barriers
- Implications for NSDS: role in standardizing data gathering and data access, reduce barriers to assist researchers -- multiple methods to do this; NSDS leading ways to incentivize making data available; need for federated data use and access, not unified in one large agency; NSDS as intermediary between users and data owners/controllers
- Researchers as particularly strong representatives to the states to demonstrate value, what's in it for state participants, and advocating for learning agendas
- Discussion of state-level challenges in resources, technologies, and relative maturity of systems and processes -- need resources to match the state capabilities; need to move beyond federal agency interaction with industry groups to state leaders, staff, and users
- Increase visibility of researcher projects so that the states involved know the projects are happening and could be used to help with program improvements
- National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) does work with state labor agencies. <https://coleridgeinitiative.org/workshops/workshop-2021/>
- Strong example of a model of a state working relationship and good feedback loop is the work on mortality reporting between the states and National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) -- including incentive structures, common standards and guidelines and regular sharing of common goals
- Another strong partnership model: "Researcher-Practitioner Partnership" concept that is advanced by so many education groups, including Carnegie, WT Grant, and others. It's the basis of the Regional Educational Labs program at the Department of Education (<https://ies.ed.gov/rels>); promotes value for policymakers and program managers

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→ **Use of Synthetic Data Methods Reflections:**

- Challenges in privacy versus accuracy in use of synthetic data methods
- Updating synthetic data if there is a change in policy appears to be a significant effort
- Also, privacy protections change over time
- Discussion of feasibility of synthetic data development, especially in cost and time as well as value for sub-groups

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III. Future State/North Star Summary Presentation and Request for Committee Assistance

Participants reflected on a summary of the Future State/North Star integration of feedback and input. The Committee decided to request volunteers to participate in refining the Future State/North Star summary for the rest of the Committee to use in future meetings. The volunteers include:

- Laila Alequresh
- Nick Hart
- Anna Hui
- Barry Johnson
- Julia Lane
- Amy O'Hara
- Matthew Soldner
- Ken Troske
- Christina Yancey

V. Conclusion

The Committee closed by highlighting the planned topics to cover in the next information gathering meetings.

March

Privacy & Confidentiality Concepts (Charles Cutshall and Shawn Davis)
Privacy & Confidentiality Technologies (Mayank Varia and Len Burman)
Data Ethics (Ed Kwartler)
Public Comment Discussion