



# A MODEL CODE on Education and Dignity

## CHAPTER 5: DATA, MONITORING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

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#### Background

Students, parents or guardians, educators and all stakeholders in the educational process have a right to know what is happening in the educational system in order to hold schools and governments accountable. Regular access to critical information and the ability to bring about systemic changes when necessary are essential elements of the human right to a quality education. Schools and districts must allow for relevant information to be reviewed in each of the areas described in the previous chapters of the Model Code. Substantive and detailed information must be collected for all critical indicators—from special education referrals and educational outcomes to disciplinary incidents and interactions with police officers in schools. In order for the data to be analyzed in an efficient but thorough manner, definitions of basic categories must be consistent across school districts and states, and data collection methods must be standardized. To be useful in assessing educational equity, the information collected needs to be disaggregated and broken down by disproportionately impacted groups. Reporting must be conducted with sufficient detail and accessibility to allow for in-depth review by all stakeholders.

Once data is collected, it must be put to work. It is critical for institutional actors at the federal, state, local and school levels to use data in making decisions to guide instructional practices, monitor disciplinary practices, provide data on student performance to determine the current level of learning, measure and report progress toward school goals, and conduct ongoing reevaluation to determine if additional support is needed after initial assessments and findings. This means establishing an infrastructure to analyze the data that is collected and draw true comparisons across states, districts and schools allowing parents or guardians and students to know what is expected and what is needed to improve school climate. Teachers must have organized records of student and school performance for schools to know what is working or not working with instruction and disciplinary practices, and school and district-level teams need to have comprehensive data on student performance for decision-making.

Achieving this goal requires more than simply making the data publicly available in a readable and consistent way; it means creating intentional structures that allow institutional actors and stakeholders to see where they stand and take steps to improve the educational circumstances of students. Thus, states, districts and schools must also put in place meaningful and comprehensive internal and external analysis structures.

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#### A Guide to Chapter 5

**Section 5.1 on the Right to Information and Data Collection** focuses on access for policymakers and stakeholders to all relevant information on educational programs and services, funding sources and budget allocations, policies and procedures, as well as data on educational outcomes disaggregated by demographic characteristics described in the chapter. It requires that information and data be easily accessible and understandable for all stakeholders. The policy requires that all data be collected and broken down by a list of demographic groups, including by age, race and ethnicity, gender, income level, disability, English Language Learners, court involved youth, homeless youth and youth in foster care. It also requires that common definitions be used for education indicators like graduation rate, attendance rate, dropout, voluntary transfer, involuntary transfer, expulsion, suspension, disparate impact and disparity. The recommendations include the types of information that states, districts and schools should collect and make available on education programs, policies and funding, and the categories of data that they should collect, including graduation rates, test scores, enrollment, attendance, dropouts, discharges, transfers to alternative schools, disciplinary incidents and responses, interactions with police, reenrollment information and student, parent and teacher surveys on school climate.

**Section 5.2 on Monitoring and Community Analysis** focuses on processes for states, districts and schools to use data to frequently and effectively measure, monitor and analyze progress towards learning goals and improve educational programs and services. It requires meaningful participation of students and parents or guardians in those processes and training for teachers, administrators, staff, students and parents to use data collection and analysis as part of their school-level planning and decision-making. Finally, it provides guidelines for creating community monitoring structures

that are independent of the school system to analyze data, work with the school system to make improvements, and hear and address concerns from students, parents and community members.