SHEEO
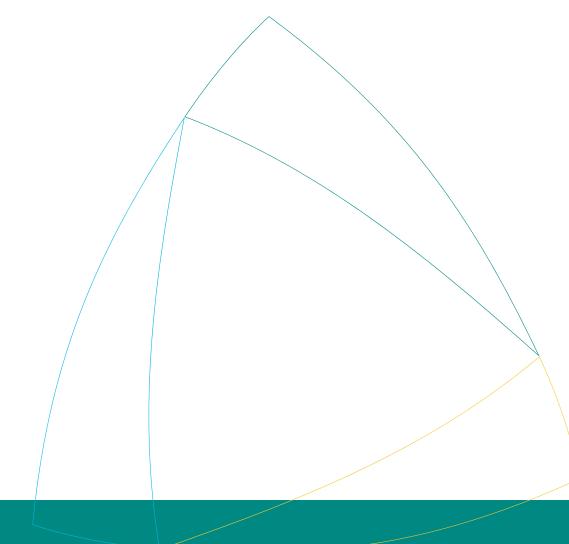
State Higher Education
Executive Officers Association

Strong Foundations 2023

SURVEY, RESPONDENT LIST, & DATA DOWNLOAD

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STRONG FOUNDATIONS 2023: SURVEY, RESPONDENT LIST, & DATA

The State Higher Education Executive Officers Association's (SHEEO) Strong Foundations survey has reported on postsecondary student unit record systems (PSURSs) evolution and value for more than a decade by illuminating the state of state[1] postsecondary data in the U.S. Through Strong Foundations, SHEEO has documented the content and capacity of PSURSs to provide insight into what state postsecondary agencies collect and store within their PSURSs and how they use, share, and link those data and systems. Accordingly, in *Strong Foundations 2023*, SHEEO asked about the numbers of PSURSs existing in states, the data elements collected, connections to other state agency data systems and state longitudinal data systems, the value of those data to inform and improve state goals and student outcomes, and the privacy standards and costs associated with these systems.

Strong Foundations 2023 was developed in the fall of 2022 in partnership with an advisory board composed of SHEEO staff, survey respondents from SHEEO member agencies, and postsecondary data experts. The survey was administered from February through March of 2023. Seventy-three SHEEO member and non-member agencies[2] from all 50 states and the District of Columbia responded to the survey. Information on the *Strong Foundations 2023* survey instrument, respondents, and advisory board are in this document. Reported data elements for 2023 can be downloaded via this link. For more information on Strong Foundations, including past survey instruments, data downloads, and reports from current and past survey administrations, go to the Strong Foundations website.

Q0
Contact Information: Please enter and confirm your contact information:

- First Name
- Last Name
- Email
- Title
- Agency Name
- Department Name
- State
- Phone Number

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1. SHEEO includes the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and all U.S. territories and freely associated states when using the term "state."

2. Referred to as 'state agencies', this term comprises state postsecondary governing boards, coordinating boards, and departments of education, and systems composed of two- and four-year and technical institutions. Respondents also included agency staff from P20W/SLDS agencies, whose responses were informed by the postsecondary data in their systems. While SHEEO received 73 total responses, because Arizona and Delaware do not have PSURSs, they provided a written responses outside the parameters of the survey that indicated how their states use available postsecondary data.

SECTION 1:

SHEEO is interested in understanding the characteristics and evolution of postsecondary student unit record (PSUR) systems.

CHARACTERISTICS OF POSTSECONDARY STUDENT UNIT RECORD SYSTEMS

Q1

How many PSUR systems does your agency manage?

- ☐ One
- ☐ Two
- ☐ More than three

Q2

Please indicate the name of the PSUR system you will be referring to in your subsequent survey responses. Note: We are interested in your PSUR system, not P20W/SLD systems.

Q3

Please identify the postsecondary institutional sector(s) from which your agency currently collects PSUR data. Select all that apply.

- ☐ 2-year Public
- ☐ 4-year Public
- ☐ Independent (private, non-profit)
- ☐ Proprietary (private, for-profit)
- ☐ Tribal Colleges and Universities
- ☐ Other institutional sector. Please specify:

Q4

Please confirm or update which elements your agency collects or can access by institutional sector. Note: If your agency does not have access to an element for all sectors, please select "No access to this element for all sectors." If access to elements differs by sector, please check the element boxes for which you have access under the appropriate sector, leaving inaccessible element boxes blank.

	2-year public	4-year public	Independent (private, non-profit)	Proprietary (private, for-profit)	Tribal Colleges and Universities	Other institutional sector	No access to this element for all sectors
Student name	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Date of birth	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Gender	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Race / Ethnicity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Age	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Military status	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Social Security number	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
K-12 unique identifier	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Institution of higher education identifier	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Postsecondary student unique identifier	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Citizenship status	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
State residency status	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Admissions scores	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Placement scores	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Prior college(s) attended	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Transfer credit(s)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Retention by term or year	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Enrollment status (first-time, transfer, continuing)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Degree-seeking status	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Full-time / Part-time status	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Term student first enrolled (fall, spring, summer)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Program / Major	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Dependency status	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	2-year public	4-year public	Independent (private, non-profit)	Proprietary (private, for-profit)	Tribal Colleges and Universities	Other institutional sector	No access to this element for all sectors
Family income	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Federal financial aid	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
State financial aid	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Institutional financial aid	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Merit-based financial aid	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Need-based financial aid	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other financial aid	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
FAFSA fields	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Pell status	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Student net cost of postsecondary education	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Course mode of instruction	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Course grade	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Student credit hours attempted	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Student credit hours earned	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Academic term	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Degree awarded	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Degree date	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cumulative credit hours earned	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cumulative GPA	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Student tuition and fees	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q5

Please indicate which additional PSUR elements your agency collects or can access by institutional sector. Note: If your agency does not have access to an element for all sectors, please select "No access to this element for all sectors." If access to elements differs by sector, please check the element boxes for which you have access under the appropriate sector, leaving inaccessible element boxes blank.

	2-year public	4-year public	Independent (private, non-profit)	Proprietary (private, for-profit)	Tribal Colleges and Universities	Other institutional sector	No access to this element for all sectors
DACA student status	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
ESL student status	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
First-generation student status	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Foster student status	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Justice-involved student status: currently incarcerated	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Justice-involved student status: formerly incarcerated	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Justice-involved student status: other	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
International student status	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Military status: active duty	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Military status: veteran	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Military status: dependent	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Parent/caregiver student status	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Student disability status	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Student tribal affiliation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Refugee student status	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Transfer student status	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Undocumented student status	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	2-year public	4-year public	Independent (private, non-profit)	Proprietary (private, for-profit)	Tribal Colleges and Universities	Other institutional sector	No access to this element for all sectors
Basic needs security (e.g., food, housing)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mental health information	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Student address	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
County residency status	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q6
Please list any other data elements by institutional sector that are regularly collected in your PSUR system not indicated in Questions 4 or 5.

Q7
SHEEO would like to know more about the level of detail captured by specific demographic elements in your PSUR system. Which of the following elements in your PSUR system include sub-categories beyond what is required by IPEDS?

- ☐ Race/ethnicity
- ☐ Gender
- ☐ Do not disaggregate beyond IPEDS requirements
- ☐ Other demographic element(s). Please list:

Q7.1
Please describe or link to your PSUR system's disaggregation categories.

Q8
Which of the following sources does your agency use to define data elements? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Internal agency staff/standards
- ☐ State standards
- ☐ IPEDS
- ☐ Common Education Data Standards (CEDS)
- ☐ U.S. Census
- ☐ Other. Please specify:

SECTION 2

LINKAGES OF POSTSECONDARY STUDENT UNIT RECORD SYSTEMS

SHEEO is interested in understanding PSUR system connections to other agencies and their data systems, and the barriers, opportunities, and strategies associated with those connections.

Q9

If your agency contributes to, participates in, or uses a P20W data system, where is it housed?

- ☐ State higher education agency
- ☐ State information technology agency
- ☐ State K-12 agency
- ☐ State workforce or economic development agency
- ☐ Freestanding/independent state agency or office
- ☐ Postsecondary institution or system
- ☐ Federated/linkages as needed
- ☐ Not applicable
- ☐ Other. Please specify:

Q10

Which state agencies' unit record systems does your agency/PSUR system currently link to? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Career and technical education
- ☐ Child protective services
- ☐ Correctional system
- ☐ Court system
- ☐ Financial aid
- ☐ Foster care
- ☐ Health services
- ☐ Human services
- ☐ Juvenile detention
- ☐ K-12 education (K-12)
- ☐ Labor/workforce
- ☐ Motor vehicle division/dept
- ☐ Pre-K/early childhood
- ☐ None/not applicable
- ☐ Other. Please specify:

Q10.1
Which K-12 data elements does your agency have access to? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Student name
- ☐ Assessment score
- ☐ Career and technical education
- ☐ Course grade
- ☐ Course title
- ☐ Course type (regular, honors, AP, IB, dual credit)
- ☐ Dates of K-12 enrollment
- ☐ District/school code
- ☐ Disability status
- ☐ Economically disadvantaged status
- ☐ Family income
- ☐ Foster youth status
- ☐ Graduation date (K-12)
- ☐ High school grade point average
- ☐ Housing status
- ☐ Language spoken at home
- ☐ Military status (dependent)
- ☐ Student birthdate
- ☐ Student gender
- ☐ Student free and reduced lunch eligibility
- ☐ Student race/ethnicity
- ☐ Other K-12 data element(s). Please specify:

Q10.2
Which labor/workforce data elements does your agency have access to? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Employer name
- ☐ Employer ID number
- ☐ Employer address
- ☐ Employer county
- ☐ Employer size; number of monthly employees
- ☐ Employment quarter code
- ☐ Employment year
- ☐ North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code
- ☐ Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) code

- ☐ Hours worked
- ☐ Wages earned
- ☐ Location of individual's employment
- ☐ Date student/employee applied for unemployment insurance benefits
- ☐ Date student/employee received first unemployment insurance check
- ☐ Total weeks of unemployment insurance claims
- ☐ Other labor/workforce data element(s). Please specify:

Q11

Which of the following prevents or inhibits your agency from linking to unit record systems, especially across agencies, sectors, or states? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Coordination with other state authorities/administrators
- ☐ Data match concerns
- ☐ Data privacy concerns
- ☐ Data quality concerns
- ☐ Incompatible systems
- ☐ Information technology infrastructure
- ☐ Lack of fiscal resources
- ☐ Lack of time for agency staff to link/analyze data
- ☐ Lack of common identifiers/crosswalks
- ☐ Lack of interest from other agencies
- ☐ Federal laws or regulations
- ☐ State laws or regulations
- ☐ Not applicable
- ☐ Other barrier(s). Please specify:

Q12

Please describe the most pressing barriers or concerns your agency faces in linking or sharing your PSUR system data and any strategies you have employed to overcome those barriers or concerns.

Q13

Are there mandates in your state for measuring postsecondary outcomes?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes. Please describe or link to that mandate:

Q14

Are there mandates in your state for measuring workforce outcomes?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes. Please describe or link to that mandate:

Q15

Please indicate any strategies your agency has adopted to increase coordination related to data linking and sharing PSUR system data with other state authorities/administrators. Select all that apply.

- ☐ Adherence to legislation or other mandates
- ☐ Collaborative cross-agency projects or consultation work
- ☐ Coordination with third-party organizations
- ☐ Creation of positions focused specifically on data sharing/linking
- ☐ Foundation or philanthropic support
- ☐ Gubernatorial support
- ☐ Identification of common storage and reporting tools
- ☐ Identification of common goals
- ☐ Identification of existing and emerging data sources/agencies
- ☐ Illustrating value of PSUR systems
- ☐ Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs)/other written agreements
- ☐ State agency-wide meeting or committee participation
- ☐ Other strategies. Please specify:

SECTION 3

USES OF POSTSECONDARY STUDENT UNIT RECORD SYSTEM DATA

SHEEO is interested in understanding the uses and impacts of PSUR system data.

Q16

For what purposes does your agency currently use PSUR system data? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Accountability
- ☐ Compliance reports
- ☐ Consumer information for prospective students
- ☐ Cross-sector collaboration (e.g., K-12 & labor)
- ☐ Data-informed decision-making
- ☐ Feedback reports
- ☐ Generating reports and statistics
- ☐ Grant reporting
- ☐ Inquiry responses (e.g., media, legislative, institutional, third-party organizations)
- ☐ Policymaking
- ☐ Predictive modeling or decision-making
- ☐ Research (e.g., with faculty or other research partners)
- ☐ Other purpose(s). Please specify:

Q17

How do you use your PSUR system to inform your state's access and attainment goals?

Q18

How do you use your PSUR system to inform state workforce/economic development alignment (supply and demand) and goals?

Q19

SHEEO is interested in any temporary or permanent changes to PSUR system data collection, use, and reporting and associated policies or practices that have emerged over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic. Did your agency make any changes related to your PSUR system or its use in response to the COVID-19 pandemic?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes. Please explain which changes and whether they were temporary or permanent:

Q20

What is the largest barrier to effective use of PSUR system data in your state to inform policy and practice?

Q21

What is the largest lever or opportunity for effective use of PSUR system data in your state to inform policy and practice?

Q22

How can your PSUR system be strengthened?

Q23

How has your PSUR system provided value to your state? Please explain and share links to any PSUR system-informed policies, reports, dashboards, or other products that have been particularly impactful or valued by your state.

SECTION 4

ENSURING DATA PRIVACY AND SECURITY IN POSTSECONDARY STUDENT UNIT RECORD SYSTEMS

SHEEO is interested in having a better understanding of your PSUR system's data privacy and security standards. Note: Responses in this block will be anonymized in SHEEO reporting.

Q24

Does your agency have an external-facing, stakeholder-focused, data privacy notice related to PSUR system data?

☐ No

☐ Yes. Please provide a link to your privacy notice:

Q25

Does your agency have internal-facing, employee-focused, data privacy policies (formal or informal) related to PSUR system data?

☐ No

☐ Yes. If you are able, please provide any available links or language related to your internal privacy policies:

Q26

Does your agency have a chief data privacy officer?

☐ No

☐ Yes

Q26.1

If you do not have a chief data privacy officer, what person or team is responsible for ensuring data privacy standards are met and what is their professional title or team title? If there is not a responsible person or team, please indicate that.

Q27

Which national or international privacy standards, protocols, regulations, or legislation does your agency use to determine privacy and security procedures? Select all that apply.

☐ Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

☐ General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

☐ Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)

☐ National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST) Cybersecurity Framework

☐ Other. Please specify:

Q28

Many states have proposed or passed legislation focused on student or consumer data privacy. In the past five years has any proposed or passed legislation in your state or other states affected how you store and analyze student unit record data?

☐ No

☐ Yes. Please describe the state(s) and legislation and how it impacted your agency:

Q29

Does your agency have a documented protocol for what to do in the event of a data breach?

☐ No

☐ Yes. Please describe or link to that protocol:

Q30

How frequently is your data system audited to ensure privacy and security standards are up to date?

☐ Never

☐ Annually

☐ Every two years

☐ Every three years

☐ Other. Please specify:

Q31

How often do employees in your agency receive formal training for ensuring privacy, security, and confidentiality of student-level data?

☐ Never

☐ Once (e.g., onboarding)

☐ Annually

☐ Every two years

☐ Every three years

☐ Other. Please specify:

SECTION 5

ESTIMATING COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH POSTSECONDARY STUDENT UNIT RECORD SYSTEMS

SHEEO is interested in having a better understanding of the costs associated with operating PSUR systems. While we recognize there is no easy or standardized way to determine cost, the following questions are designed to give us better insight into this topic. Note: Responses in this block will be anonymized in SHEEO reporting.

Q32

If asked, could you estimate the annual cost of your PSUR system?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Maybe

Q32.1

If no, please explain why you are unable to estimate the cost.

Q32.2

If yes, how would you come to that cost estimate and what factors would you include?

Q32.3

If maybe, please explain why you chose this answer.

Q33

What departments, beyond your own, are involved in the management and governance of the PSUR system?

Q34

Since 2013, has your agency received any funding specifically earmarked to build or develop your PSUR system? Select all that apply.

- ☐ State appropriations
- ☐ In-kind support
- ☐ Grants
- ☐ Other support
- ☐ No funding received

Q34.1
If you selected yes to receiving funding for building or developing your PSUR system from any of the entities listed in the prior question, please explain how much funding was received, from whom, and for what purposes.

Q35
Since 2013, has your agency received any funding specifically earmarked to maintain or improve your PSUR system? Select all that apply.

- ☐ State appropriations
- ☐ In-kind support
- ☐ Grants
- ☐ Other support
- ☐ No funding received

Q35.1
If you selected yes to receiving funding for maintaining or improving your PSUR system from any of the entities listed in the prior question, please explain how much funding was received, from whom, and for what purposes.

Q36
How has evolving technology impacted your agency's current and future PSUR system budgets?

Q37
What new or different infrastructure, platforms, software, or personnel associated with maintaining or improving your PSUR system are you considering?

APPENDIX B: LIST OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

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