ILDS 2.0 Initiative

PROGRESS UPDATE

Illinois Longitudinal Data System

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Vision

Illinois educational and workforce practice and policy decisions are driven by a culture of data use and actionable information that supports strong, equitable outcomes and engages stakeholders.

Mission

In Illinois, we will ensure that high-quality, appropriate, and timely data about learners and best practices from birth from career will be readily available, easy to use and secure.

Purpose

The ILDS will enable a wide range of stakeholders to create, advocate, and benefit from research, policies, and practices that lead to improved learning and academic and career success. Empowering people with actionable information will support strong, equitable outcomes and engaged communities.

Governing Board

- **Illinois Board of Higher Education**
- **Illinois Community College Board**
- **Illinois Department of Children and Family Services**
- **Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity**
- **Illinois Department of Employment Security**
- **Illinois Department of Human Services**
- **Illinois State Board of Education**
- **Illinois Student Assistance Commission**

Partners

- **Northern Illinois University**
- **Illinois Department of Innovation & Technology**
- **Health and Human Services Innovation Incubator**
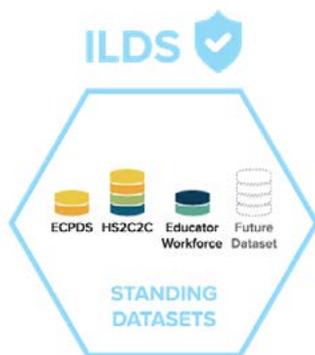- **Illinois Head Start Association**

Project Overview

Context

Agencies and the Illinois Longitudinal Data System (ILDS) team understand that many requests for agency data require the same data elements. Among ILDS' goals is the overall reduction of the elapsed time needed to fulfill each data request, which includes reducing the effort and resources (time, staff, and systems) needed by each agency to fulfill their steps within the data request process.

One of the ways to achieve this goal is to work with each ILDS agency to preselect their data elements and then join them into pre-cleansed and pre-organized datasets that can be accessed through the ILDS.
This will not only assist the ILDS agencies but will also provide pre-vetted actionable data from which users can complete a variety of **data-driven products and projects**, which aligns with the ILDS vision.
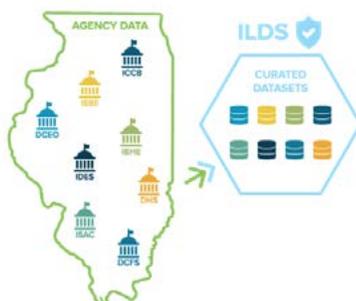
Current State

Upon considering the types of data being requested, the ILDS team and state agencies prioritized the following three initial combined datasets:
- Early Childhood Participation Dataset (ECPDS)
- High School to College to Career Dataset (HS2C2C)
- Educator Workforce Dataset

Each dataset is pre-populated with data from two or more agencies that are connected via a CDDA ID, which is a unique ID given by Northern Illinois' Centralized Demographic Dataset Administrator (CDDA) Team. Used to join data from disparate data systems, the CDDA ID assists in securely and more easily providing aggregate data for reporting, research, and/or analysis.

Currently, the ECPDS and the HS2C2C datasets have been approved by the ILDS Executive Committee, while the Educator Workforce dataset is in the process of being defined. Because these datasets will always be available in the ILDS to those making data inquiries, they have been classified as **standing datasets**.
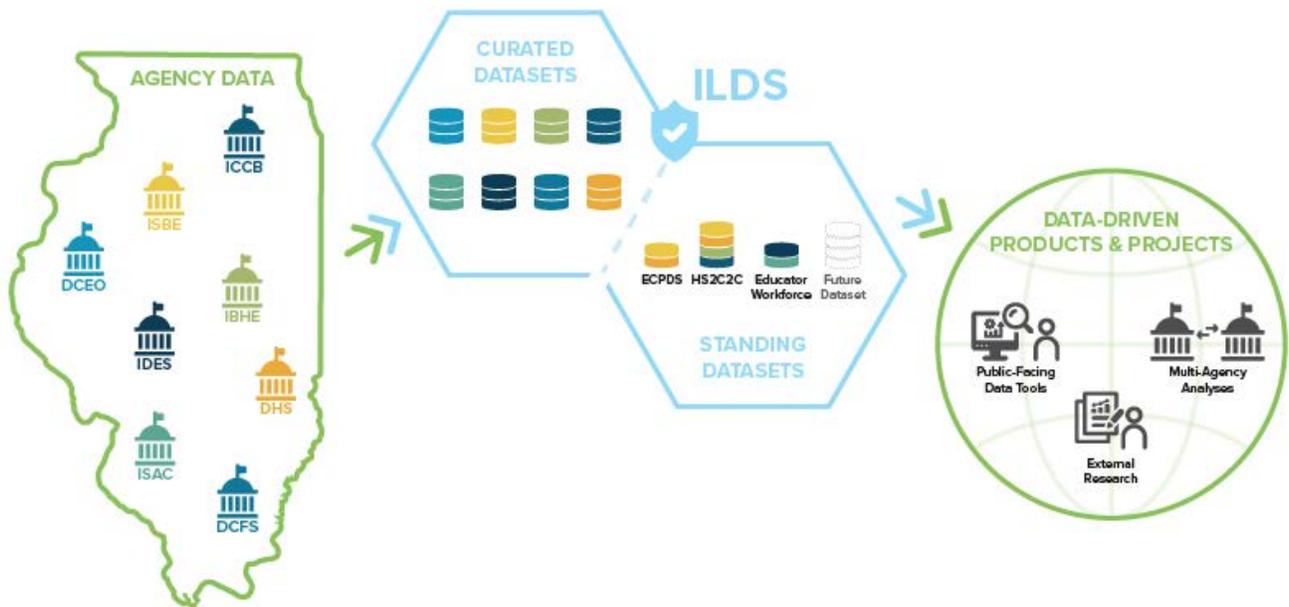
Future State

While developing the standing datasets, it became imperative that clean, high-quality data from each ILDS agency were needed to optimize their usefulness for research, analysis, and reporting. These agency-centric datasets are being termed **curated datasets**.

Having a curated dataset is key for each agency to link their data to the ILDS. Since building a curated dataset is a multi-step process, the ILDS plans to work with each agency to assist them in safely and securely executing this process to incorporate their data into the ILDS.

Once in the ILDS, these curated datasets can be used to create standing datasets. Before agency data within a curated dataset can be accessed to create a standing dataset, the ILDS Team needs to complete separate and distinct Data Access and Use Agreements (DAUA) for each standing dataset with those agencies sharing data from their curated dataset.

Process to Request and Use Data in the ILDS

It is expected that the ILDS will house curated datasets for each of the eight ILDS agencies, multiple standing datasets, and other publicly available datasets (school, provider, institution, and census data).

Once a curated dataset is connected to the ILDS, its data is ready for sharing. However, data from either or both curated and standing datasets can only be shared after completing the ILDS Data Request process. The first step includes drafting and submitting a **data project request** to the ILDS for approval by each agency whose data are being requested. Once approved, a DAUA for the request is completed and sent out for signature by all involved agencies, further ensuring the safety and security of each agency's data while data requestors are completing their research and analysis.

The resulting **data products** can only be published and disseminated once the same agencies have reviewed each product for adherence to the DAUA.

Early Childhood Participation Dataset (ECPDS)

The initial standing dataset is ready for use. The standing dataset currently includes early childhood data from Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) and Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). The ILDS team is awaiting execution of DAUAs before any data project requests can be initiated.

Work is currently underway to transfer additional early childhood data into the ECPDS, including:

- Cleaning and organizing over 40 Illinois Head Start grantees' data.

- Loading Home Visiting data.

- Developing and transferring the unique CDDA IDs for the Head Start and Home Visiting data records so they can be joined to data already in the ECPDS.

Also in process is the securing of contracts with Head Start grantees' two key MIS vendors, COPA/Nulinx and ChildPlus. While only one-year non-renewable contracts were offered in SFY23, IDHS is now able to offer both vendors three-year contracts with fixed pricing. Execution of these contracts will ensure the ongoing sharing of the 40+ Head Start grantees' most recent data, as well as historical and ongoing data of additional Illinois Head Start grantees who've agreed to share their data with the state.

Collaborative Communications, a vendor contracting with EdSystems, completed its design of User Interface mockups for the Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map (IECAM). Input they received from stakeholder interviews, focus groups and informal questionnaires also informed its drafting of a deliverables' road map for the ECPDS. IECAM used Collaborative Communications' roadmap to determine the staging of its development efforts. The first round of user interface deliverables to be included in the refreshed IECAM are anticipated to be ready for use in June 2024.

High School to College to Career (HS2C2C)

The overall project is currently on hold. Once work resumes, ILDS has developed a proposal for linking workforce and educational data that will require further discussion with those agencies providing data to this standing dataset.

Educator Workforce

Initial work on this standing dataset is focused on developing the early childhood portion of the educator workforce dataset using both INCCRRA's Gateway Registry Data and ISBE's Early Educator Workforce data.
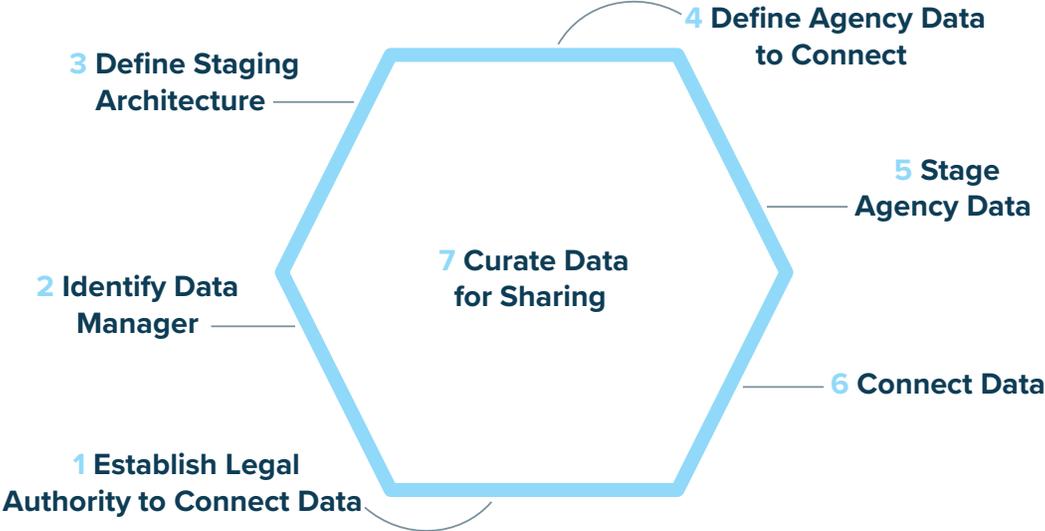
A charter for this work is currently being drafted; it will lay the groundwork for the required DAUA with the involved agencies. Once the Early Childhood Educator Workforce Dataset is complete, work will resume on collecting the kindergarten to postsecondary educator workforce data to populate the overall Educator Workforce standing dataset.

Curated Datasets

The seven-step process for building a curated dataset has been defined and is listed (see diagram).

ISBE and IDHS beta tested this process when creating and connecting their curated datasets to the ILDS as part of the overall process for creating the initial version of the ECPDS standing dataset.

The ILDS team is currently scheduling meetings with the other ILDS agencies to begin their data curation conversations.

3 Define Staging Architecture

4 Define Agency Data to Connect

5 Stage Agency Data

7 Curate Data for Sharing

2 Identify Data Manager

6 Connect Data

1 Establish Legal Authority to Connect Data

Data Products & Requests

Pending Data Requests*

- DCFS request to research early childhood experiences of children in care.

- Illinois Workforce and Education Research Collaborative at the University of Illinois request to study early childhood pathways.

- Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map at the University of Illinois request to use ECPDS to power a refreshed IECAM.

* Requests can only be made for data that is already part of the ILDS.

Data Inquiries

- Dr. Xiodan Hu (NIU): A study of dual credit.

- Drs. Ben Creed and Ginger Reynolds (NIU): A study of transitional math being requested by ICCB.

- Dr. Matt Giani (Univ. of Texas): A study of the role of industry-recognized certifications in shaping students' postsecondary education and employment outcomes in Illinois.

- UIC: A study of the certification of early childhood teachers in Illinois.

- National College Attainment Network: Examining Illinois' universal FAFSA policy.

Governance Updates

Communications Strategy and Road Map

EdSystems funded an intern this past summer to develop an initial ILDS communications road map. As part of the process, other states' LDS leaders were benchmarked to better understand their communications strategies and lessons learned. The intern presented a summary of her findings at the October 13 ILDS Managing Committee (MC) Meeting.

The ILDS team is currently ideating with EdSystems' director of communications on an ILDS messaging board. These deliverables will serve as inputs for developing a draft ILDS communications strategy and communications material delivery road map that will be shared during a 2024 MC Meeting.

2024 Meeting Schedule

ILDS Executive Committee Meetings

- June 21

- December 13

ILDS Managing Committee Meetings

- February 23

- April 26

- August 23

- October 18