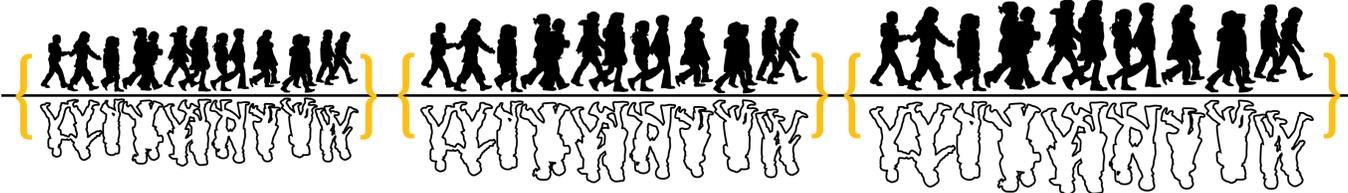


# innovation in evaluation

“As a district, **we have long known the value of our partners**, and the data from this research process makes that value even more clear.”

Manager of School & Community Partnerships at Seattle Public Schools



## RETROSPECTIVE COMPARISON GROUP ANALYSIS

A New Method to Discover Community Partner Organizations’  
Impact on Academic Results

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 What Can Retrospective Comparison Group Analysis Tell You?**
- 1.2 Flow Diagram of Proposed Evaluation System**

### **2.0 BUILDING A FOUNDATION FOR EFFECTIVE EVALUATION**

- 2.1 Theory of Change**
- 2.2 Key Questions**
- 2.3 Program Data**

### **3.0 DATA COLLABORATION WITH SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

- 3.1 Data Privacy**
- 3.2 Sharing District Data**
- 3.3 Identifiable Data and Non-identifiable Data**
- 3.4 Information Sent to the District**

### **4.0 WORKING WITH DATA**

- 4.1 Program Management**
- 4.2 Program Evaluation**
  - 4.2.1 Cohorts**
  - 4.2.2 Comparison Groups**
- 4.3 Model for Limited Data Sharing**

### **5.0 OBJECTIVE EVALUATION PERSPECTIVE**

- 5.1 What Does it All Mean?**
- 5.2 Sample Retrospective Comparison Group Analysis**
- 5.3 Moving Forward**

### **6.0 GLOSSARY**

### **7.0 RESOURCES FOR COMMUNITY PARTNER CAPACITY**

### **8.0 CONTRIBUTORS**

### **9.0 APPENDICES**

- Appendix One: Sample Data Sharing Agreement**
- Appendix Two: Sample Family Educational and Rights Privacy Act (FERPA) Agreement**
- Appendix Three: Sample Privacy Policy**
- Appendix Four: Spreadsheets and Databases**

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This guide was developed to capture the transformative potential of data tracking and sharing between school districts and community partners for program evaluation. Community partners may include community-based organizations (CBOs), consortium or collective impact efforts, public service providers, or others working to support student success in some capacity before, during, or after school hours.

This guide is intended to inspire and empower organizational leaders and decision-makers in school districts and at community partner organizations to work together more effectively with shared data.

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation funded a pilot study in 2011–2012 to investigate the challenges and benefits of sharing information and building more comprehensive data sets to assess the impact of programs delivered by six community partners working within Seattle Public Schools.

By accessing school district data to customize program evaluations for each participating community partner, the study provided compelling evidence that it is not only possible, but significantly beneficial for community partners and school districts to collaborate in data sharing. Such collaboration can improve program management, track long-term program impacts, and allow evaluation of student results with comparison groups to validate outcomes of programs designed to support students in their academic success.

Evaluation is important	Getting consistent data can be challenging
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Helps determine the best way to run a program</li> <li>b. Illustrates the impact of a program</li> <li>c. Makes reporting the impact to multiple stakeholders, including funders, more possible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Can be costly in terms of staff, financial, or other resource capacity</li> <li>b. Many programs only have access to short-term data, making it difficult to see longer-term program impacts</li> <li>c. The absence of comparison groups often makes it difficult to see whether the program made a real change</li> </ul>

The methodology developed in the pilot study is referred to as ***Retrospective Comparison Group Analysis (RCGA)***. This methodology can support and elevate the great work being done through community partners in school districts.

***This guide explains how RCGA can be used to improve program management and measure program impacts.***

“Using this method gave us confidence that **what we are doing is working** for our students’ lives and contributing to their success in school.”

*Education & Community Services Director at a participating CBO*

**Notes in this guide call out observations made during the pilot study and provide suggestions for community partners to successfully implement RCGA, with the support of school districts.**

**Note #1:** Some school districts do not yet have the capacity to share data with community partners. School districts that do share data may not always be able to respond quickly to the types of data requests suggested in the RCGA methodology.

**Suggestion:** Community partners may initiate discussions with school district personnel about implementing these ideas. There is a clear case for the benefits of RCGA and when community partners are willing to develop and support collaboration, more school districts will have incentive to share data. The results are worth the effort for all groups.

This guide is designed to support:

- Community partner leaders and staff of programs working with students, where one of the program goals is to have an impact on some aspect of student performance at school.
- School district planners and decision-makers who are looking for the best data they can gather to evaluate programs carried out by community partners working with students in their district.

RCGA is a powerful way to capture the impact a program makes over time, as students progress in school. The program's goal could be better grades, improved attendance, improved behavior, or more consistent homework completion.

The program's goal could also be multifaceted and include a combination of social or academic indicators.

RCGA is kept simple by design so even community partners with limited evaluative resources can make use of the process. Community partners with more resources may consider building on the fundamental components offered here and incorporating the principles of RCGA within their own more complex data systems.

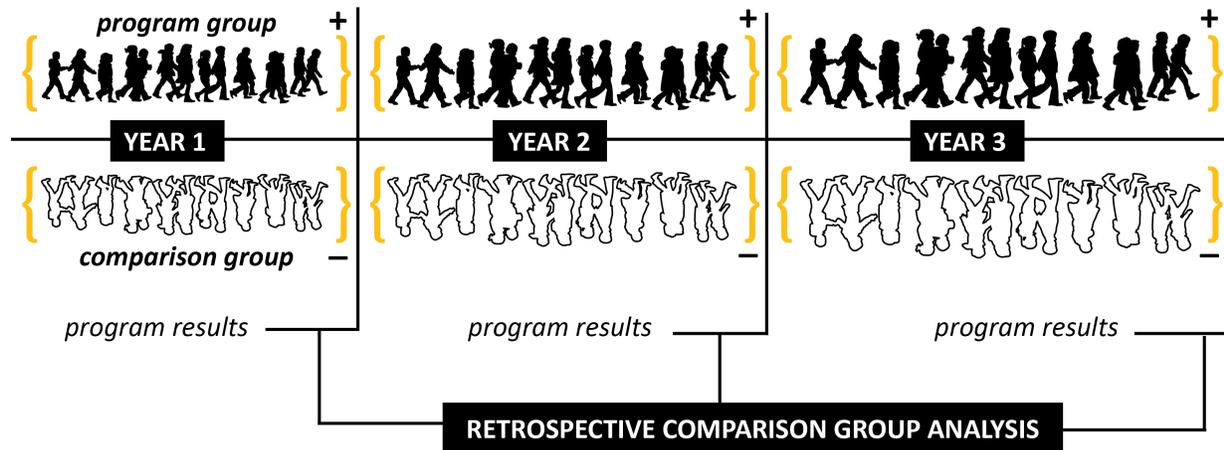
***RCGA is based on data sharing between school districts and community partners so the impact of community programs on student success can be seen.***

In addition to facilitating collaboration to expand shared data sets, RCGA supports the sharing of both *retrospective* and *ongoing* data, so that longer-term impacts can be assessed over time. RCGA also proposes the use of *comparison group* data. Data for student participant cohorts and matched comparison groups can be evaluated directly, to validate program impact more concretely. Cohorts and comparison groups are discussed in detail in sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 of this guide.

RCGA provides a new evaluation lens that:

- Widens the view school districts and community partners have on their students.
- Defines areas of progress and successful interventions that can be leveraged.
- Illuminates program impact for strategic decision-making and advocacy.
- Expedites the school district process for assessing capacity of potential community partners.
- Leverages the investment of research and assessment resources to benefit students.

## 1.1 What Can Retrospective Comparison Group Analysis Tell You



### By applying RCGA, groups in the 2011–2012 pilot study gained significant insights:

- The positive impact of programs could be tracked for several years after the initial intervention.
- When evaluated against students in comparison groups, many students participating in community partner programs had more measurable academic gains.
- In programs where participating students were not outperforming students in comparison groups, there were still often key areas where programs had improved students' educational successes over time.
- Some community partners discovered new ways to enhance program outcomes.

*One community partner found that to be most effective they had to start working with younger children.*

*Another found that the needs of English language learner students were very different from non-English language learner students and they needed to refine their program to meet those needs.*

*Another community partner found that males and females responded differently to their program.*

***All community partners in the pilot study were able to validate that they were playing a positive role in supporting some of the most marginalized students in the school district.***

**Note #2:** The complete RCGA methodology is flexible but it may not suit all community partners. For community partners who work with small groups of students (less than 10 students), it is difficult to maintain anonymous data. For community partners who serve K-3 students, there is less test-generated data from school districts, which may result in less data to work with. Community partners who do not have specific academic goals are less likely to see an academic impact that can be tracked in a meaningful way using school district data.

**Suggestion:** Community partners will benefit from developing a Theory of Change and an evaluation framework for their programs. Formalizing program goals and using key questions to link program activities with outcomes will help community partners target analysis to validate program impact. These are all considerations that community partners can think through, discuss with their stakeholders, and share with their partners in the school district. The Center for Theory of Change provides information and software tools to support this work: [www.theoryofchange.org](http://www.theoryofchange.org).

## 1.2 Flow Diagram of Proposed Evaluation System

Figure 1 is a flow diagram of the steps suggested for Retrospective Comparison Group Analysis. These steps were tested in the pilot study and will be explained in more detail in the remainder of this guide.

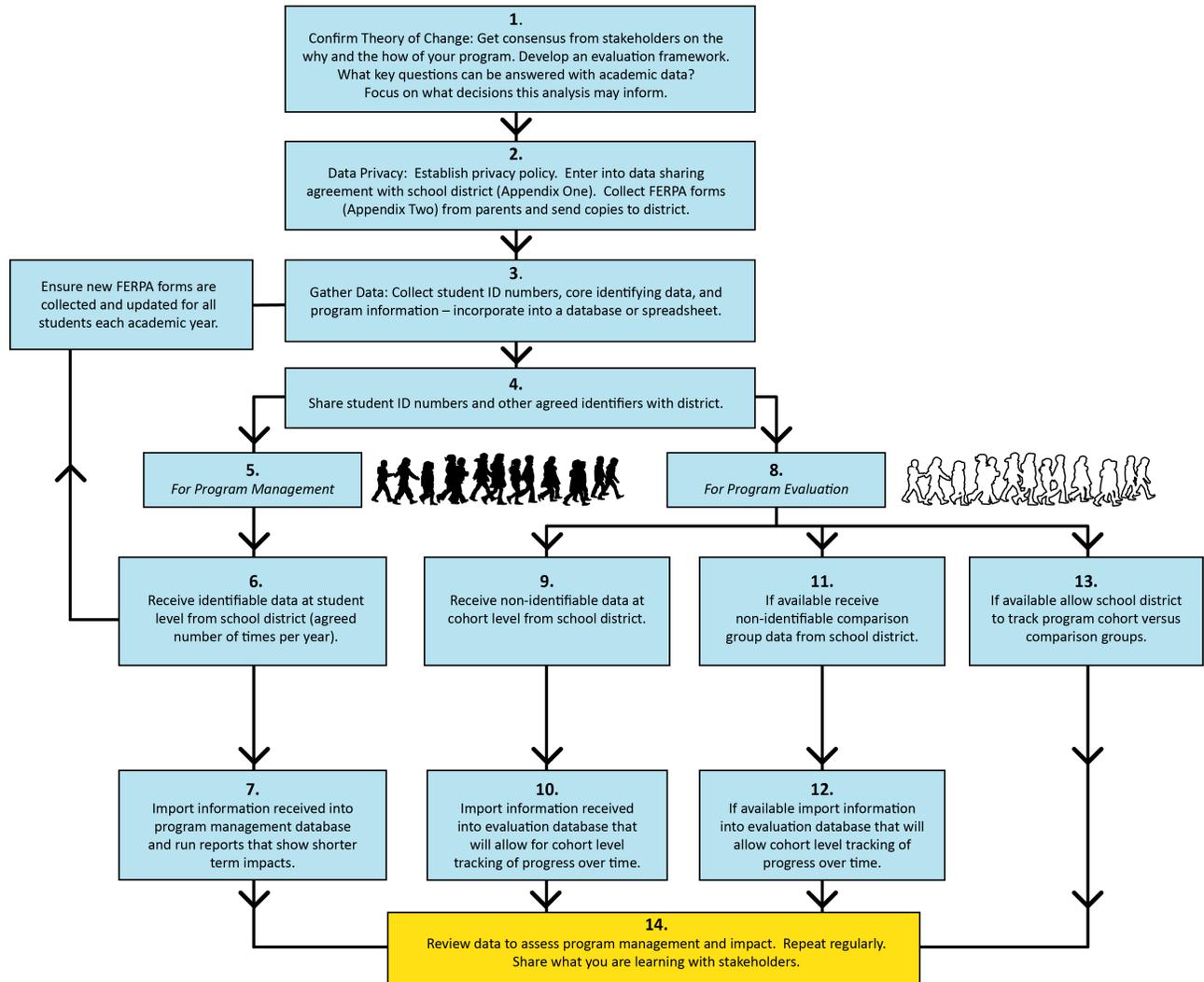


Figure 1: Flow diagram for RCGA methodology

**Note #3:** The data sharing model tested in the RCGA pilot study requires community partners to have some capacity to track and receive data sets electronically.

**Suggestion:** If your organization does not have capacity in this area yet, this is a great time to become familiar with these tools or to ask a staff member or volunteer to help you. Data sharing and tracking is discussed in Sections 2.0 and 3.0, and more details are provided on spreadsheets and databases in Appendix Four.

## 2.0 BUILDING A FOUNDATION FOR EFFECTIVE EVALUATION

### 2.1 Theory of Change

The first step in RCGA is to articulate a Theory of Change (TOC) for community partners. TOC is just one of many methodologies that can be used to link programmatic activities or output with progress toward a goal. One of the important elements of a TOC is that it clarifies the assumptions and beliefs that drive a program. In a research context, this could also be called a thesis. If community partners are able to define the rationale for a program, they are better able to develop evaluation questions relevant to the program.

***In the simplest terms, a Theory of Change is a statement about a program that captures the underlying beliefs about why change happens, what interventions will make a difference, and in what ways.***

The important thing is that the TOC sets a foundation for the logic behind what a program is trying to achieve through a particular intervention strategy. For example, the TOC that motivates the implementation of a summer reading program might be:

*Students who struggle with reading need more continuous support and more time with teachers in order to succeed. Therefore, students who are exposed to more hours of reading instruction during the summer break will have better academic results that continue into the following school year.*

### 2.2 Key Questions

Once there is agreement from stakeholders on a core TOC, community partners can then develop an evaluation framework that defines whom the program is for (*participants*), what is being done for the participants (*program*), and what the program is expected to achieve (*goals*). Figure 2 shows a sample evaluation framework for a summer reading program for middle school students. The relevant questions community partners may consider about the TOC for a summer reading program are:

1. *If the program is successful, what differences are expected when students go back to school?*
2. *If the program is successful, when will changes be seen and how long will they last?*

Phase 1. PARTICIPANTS <i>whom we worked with</i>	Phase 2. PROGRAM <i>what we did</i>	Phase 3. GOAL <i>what we hope to achieve</i>
Fifth graders who struggled with reading during the summer before middle school started.	We gave each student up to 100 hours of academic enrichment focusing on math, reading, writing, and community awareness.	We hope that our students will perform better in middle school and enter high school ready to succeed.

Figure 2: Sample evaluation framework for a summer school program for 5<sup>th</sup> graders

Most community partners have internal systems that can track and support the first two components of an evaluation framework. In phase 1 of the evaluation framework, community partners can identify and track the participants they are working with by asking to see students' transcripts as they enroll in the program. In phase 2 of the framework, they can track and validate program activities, and keep records for each student about the number of hours of math, reading, writing, and community awareness enrichment they provided.

The third phase of the framework is critical for testing the real impact of a program. However, progress toward the program goal can be hard to measure without access to school district data and a valid comparison group.

With data from the school district, community partners can see the *result* of the program intervention, even if it happens outside of the community partner program or in subsequent years. By using a comparison group for the summer school example, community partners could validate that their enrichment program helped students to improve more than their peers who spent the summer doing other things. This is where RCGA collaboration can make a dramatic difference in the quality of evaluation.

***RCGA helps capture and analyze data to quantify and validate the real difference a program is making over time, relative to its stated goals.***

### **2.3 Program Data**

Community partners must collect some core information for each student in a program so that school districts can find these students in their system. To facilitate sharing and analysis, this information should be recorded by the community partner in a spreadsheet or database.

**Community partners should collect the following core information for each student:**

- **First name**
- **Last name**
- **Any preferred names**
- **Date of birth**
- **Gender**
- **Ethnicity**
- **Preferred language**
- **Student district ID number (obtained at enrollment or through FERPA forms)**
- **School**
- **Grade at enrollment in program**
- **Address**
- **Contact numbers**
- **Parent or guardian information**
- **Any medical conditions or allergies**
- **Participation start date (with your program)**
- **End date (with your program)**

Community partners can also record activities and milestones for each student. For example: "Jamal attended 80 hours of summer school in July and August 2012. Jamal passed reading and writing and was still struggling with math." More detailed records could track a student's attendance on every day of the program. Other details that could be tracked are the material taught and test and homework results. The more information you capture that is relevant to your program strategy, the more opportunities you will have to analyze what is working and make adjustments.

It is important to record the intensity and method of programming so the TOC can be tested. If the TOC holds true for the summer reading program example, community partners would expect to see that the student who attends the program intermittently would receive less benefit than the student who attends the program every day.

## 3.0 DATA COLLABORATION WITH SCHOOL DISTRICTS

### 3.1 Data Privacy

The moment you start working with students, you must consider data privacy.

If your organization is using an electronic system to record data, it should be password protected and your organization should have rules in place to make sure that that data cannot be obtained by unauthorized personnel. Many organizations do not allow personal information to be stored on portable computers, jump drives, or other removable media because of security concerns.

If your organization does not have a data privacy policy that sets out why it collects information and how it protects that information, it should adopt one. A comprehensive policy will apply to all personnel affiliated with your organization including staff, contractors, vendors, donors, and board members.

### 3.2 Sharing District Data

To be able to obtain relevant student data from the school district(s) your organization works with, there are some additional steps that you will need to take. As shown in step 2 of the RCGA flow diagram (see Figure 1), all community partners need to have a data sharing agreement with the school district. The data sharing agreement sets very firm criteria around privacy and protection of data. It also sets out what data community partners will receive from the school district, and any additional conditions that apply to that data.

Once a data sharing agreement is in place and the Family Educational and Rights Privacy Act (FERPA) release forms have been collected for all students, the school district can usually work with community partners to release relevant data.

**Note #4:** The release of student data from a school district to a community partner is covered by FERPA.

**Suggestion:** To initiate the release of identifiable student data from the school district, community partners need to collect a FERPA release form from the parents or guardians of the students in their programs. This is also part of step 2 in the flow diagram in Section 2.0.

**Tip:** Your organization will need one FERPA release form for each student in your program. This form has to be signed by a parent or guardian. A parent or guardian has the right not to sign this form. You will need to collect a new FERPA release form each year you work with a student.

#### Resources:

##### **Appendix One: Sample Data Sharing Agreement**

This template was prepared by the Youth Development Executives of King County (YDEKC) in conjunction with the Seattle Public Schools district.

##### **Appendix Two: Sample FERPA Agreement**

This sample is one that community partners should confirm directly with school districts that they will accept before using it.

##### **Appendix Three: Sample Privacy Policy**

This is a simple sample but it can provide a foundation for developing a more detailed policy relevant to the work of individual organizations.

##### **Appendix Four: Spreadsheets and Databases**

These samples include notes and suggestions from the researchers who worked on the RCGA pilot study.

### 3.3 Identifiable and Non-identifiable Data

To prepare for RCGA, community partners should receive two types of data from the school district—*identifiable* and *non-identifiable*.

- a. **Identifiable data:** Identifiable data is information about a student that gives facts about the student's identity. This might include the student's name, date of birth, or student ID number. Identifiable data is very important for day-to-day *program management* purposes. With identifiable data, community partners can see if their programs are having an impact on a student in real time.
- b. **Non-identifiable data:** Non-identifiable data or de-identified/anonymized data is information about a student that has had key facts about the student's identity removed. The school district uses an algorithm to disguise students' ID numbers. Non-identifiable data is very important for research and evaluation purposes because it allows community partners to:
  - Track a group of students who participated in a community partner program over a long period of time.
  - Match the progress of groups of program students with groups of comparison group students.
  - Potentially share retrospective data of program students and comparison group students (i.e., data about academic indicators prior to program participation).

Working with identifiable and non-identifiable data is discussed in more detail in section 4.0 of this guide.

### 3.4 Information Sent to the District

Community partners who request data from the school district should send copies of the following information:

1. Data sharing agreement between community partner and school district.
2. FERPA release forms signed by all parties.
3. A spreadsheet with the names, student ID numbers, and other identifying data for those students who will be tracked with identifiable data (once FERPA release forms are complete).
4. A spreadsheet with the names, required identifying data, and program information for those students who will be tracked with non-identifiable data—this enables the school district to match a group of program students with a comparison group.
5. Any other information required by the specific school district a community partner is working with.

Each school district has a different system for facilitating contact with its data department. Community partners must work proactively with their district data contact person to understand the specific process and documentation required for data sharing in specific districts.

**Resource:** The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction in Washington State has a comprehensive link to all school districts, which also includes a downloadable spreadsheet of individual districts:

<http://www.k12.wa.us/Maps/SDmainmap.aspx>

**Tip:** Once a student leaves a community partner program, community partners are no longer able to receive identifiable data about that student. This is where access to non-identifiable data for longer-term program evaluation is very important.

## 4.0 WORKING WITH DATA

When staff and volunteers at community partner organizations are not familiar with the benefits of databases, change management is required to support a shift to using these tools. Most organizations have the resources to make this shift. Even small organizations can realize immense benefits from making the transition to data systems that make it easier to track and share participant information. Once program information is in a database, community partners can more easily get useful snapshots of day-to-day program efforts, and produce reports that effectively validate longer-term program impacts.

Community partners will benefit greatly from receiving real-time and **identifiable data** from school districts to support *program management*. However, when following the RCGA methodology for *program evaluation*, there is even more value in receiving **non-identifiable data**.

**Note #5:** Different school districts will send information in many different formats. Larger districts that have many partnerships may have less ability to customize data they return to community partners.

**Suggestion:** Seattle Public Schools is in discussion with a consortium of community stakeholders over what data they will share with community partners. At the time of writing, the list of data that the district is hoping to share includes:

1. Student Demographic Data
2. Student Enrollment Data
3. Student Attendance Data
4. Student Coursework Data
5. Student Assessment Data (State)
6. Student Assessment Data (MAP)
7. Student Growth (State)
8. Student Growth (MAP)
9. Student Infraction History

To effectively manage all of the data that the district will potentially share, it must be loaded into a simple database.

## 4.1 Program Management

With identifiable data from the school district, community partners can see the direct links between programmatic efforts (such as providing academic enrichment to support student reading during the summer break), and the student's results in school (i.e., attendance, infractions, test scores, grades).

## 4.2 Program Evaluation

Community partners who have not worked with non-identifiable school district data before may think that it is less useful than identifiable data because the non-identifiable data does not identify the individual students it is linked to.

However, as long as community partners can classify specific groups of program participants, the non-identifiable data allows them to track data for their students over a long period of time. Take the example of a summer school program run by a community partner organization for students between 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades. With identifiable data, it would most likely only be possible to track students through their 6<sup>th</sup> grade year. With non-identifiable data, it is possible to track the group of students who went through the program for several years prior to their involvement in the program and then right through middle and high school and even on to college.

**Note #6:** Community partners and school districts may not have the initial capacity to share all of the different kinds of data.

**Suggestion:** Even with limited data sharing it becomes possible to generate a new view into the impact of a program. As capacity for data sharing and collaboration increases and school districts develop systems to more easily share retrospective, ongoing, and comparison group data, RCGA will become a stronger tool for even richer analysis.

#### 4.2.1 Cohorts

When analyzing non-identifiable data, community partners are looking for *group trends* rather than tracking individual results. These groups of participants are called *cohorts*. Gathering data for a cohort of students can illuminate what happens to a specific cohort before program participation, during the program, and in the years after participation. If a group of students struggled with reading prior to a summer program and their reading results improved after the program and stayed improved, community partners have strong evidence that the program has made a lasting positive difference.

Non-identifiable data includes demographic data that allows community partners to address questions such as: Do boys perform as well as girls during the program? Is there a relationship between academic results and ethnicity? Do English language learners respond differently to program components? Is there something the program could be doing differently to help improve students' test results even more?

**Note #7:** Like identifiable data, non-identifiable data will generally be shared in spreadsheets. If the school district provides comparison group data, the number of spreadsheets could double—one set for the program students and one set for the comparison group students.

**Suggestion:** Investment in resources to set up a database to manage multiple spreadsheets will pay off, especially when students will be tracked for several years. The database example in Appendix Four can accommodate both identifiable and non-identifiable data.

**Tip:** It is recommended that community partners run two separate databases—one for identifiable data and a second for non-identifiable data.

#### 4.2.2 Comparison Groups

Some school districts can also provide non-identifiable comparison group data to community partners to enhance evaluation and research. Comparison group students are not enrolled in the community partner program being evaluated, but are matched with specific characteristics of the program students. These students can be matched by a number of demographic and academic criteria including age, school, grade, gender, ethnicity, language spoken at home, attendance, school assessments, and numbers of infractions.

With this comparison group data it is possible to see what might have happened to a group of students without the benefit of a specific program. To go back to the summer school example, if students in the program didn't improve their performance in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, does this mean that the program was unsuccessful? Without a comparison group, community partners can't make a truly informed decision about this, because it's possible that all students who were struggling in 5<sup>th</sup> grade continued to struggle or even do worse in 6<sup>th</sup> grade. The relevant assessment would be to see if program students struggled less than comparison group students—this would be a positive outcome even if 6<sup>th</sup> graders in general were to have worse reading results than 5<sup>th</sup> graders.

***Comparison group data gives community partners the ability to evaluate cohort outcomes and validate the difference specific programs are making.***

### 4.3 Model for Limited Data Sharing

Step 13 in the RCGA flow diagram (Figure 1) suggests that school districts track program cohort and comparison group data, rather than providing data files directly to community partners. This more limited option is useful to community partners working in school districts that do not have the capacity to share data directly.

As an alternative to providing individual student data in spreadsheets, some school districts contacted during the RCGA pilot study indicated that they could host a password-protected website that reported cohort-level results for students enrolled in specific programs. With this system, community partners wouldn't have to do analysis based on district data. They could log on to a website instead to see the results for students in their programs and also cohort comparison results for students with similar demographics. Further explanation of this option is beyond the scope of this guide.

The RCGA pilot study supported the utility of this approach, especially for community partners or school districts who do not have the resources to support the data sharing needed to implement a more independent RCGA methodology.

## 5.0 OBJECTIVE EVALUATION PERSPECTIVE

If community partners are able to implement the RCGA methodology, they can establish a database that shows several years of results for their students, ideally with data for a set of comparison group students over the same time period. With countless ways to analyze the data it can be challenging to interpret multiple findings and overarching trends. This is where some analytic rigor is important.

Referring to a TOC and a well-defined evaluation framework helps to guide the focus and scope of analysis. Generally, the goal will be to observe relevant patterns that validate progress toward program goals or bring awareness to areas where a program can be improved.

In the RCGA pilot study, researchers found that many community partners had existing data they were not sharing or analyzing yet, and/or there were assumptions and group knowledge that had not been formalized or validated with data. Organizations who articulated a TOC and applied the RCGA methodology were able to leverage their existing data sets by comparing them to multiyear cohort and comparison group data—enabling them to validate the effectiveness of their programs in a consistent and measurable way.

School districts and community partners intuitively know that the work they do matters and has a positive impact on their students' lives. Their ability to support good work with data that can be shared and compared is a critical step that can increase credibility with funders and stakeholders, validate program goals, and enhance the great work being done by school districts and community partners on behalf of students.

**Note #8:** Data findings are not always clear. Diligence is required to avoid drawing inaccurate conclusions. For example, if a difference shows up between boys and girls in a program, it is important to review the data to see if there are results that might be skewing the picture.

**Suggestion:** RCGA is an iterative process. Look at the data from lots of different directions and ask questions to test if what you see is a genuine trend or an outlier. The important thing is that RCGA gives community partners a comprehensive way to look at the impact of programming and a starting point for better evaluation.

## 5.1 What Does It All Mean?

The table in Figure 3 shows some suggestions of what community partners might look for in a multi-year data set with student cohort and comparison group information. The example provided here is a summer school reading program between 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades. To apply RCGA for this program, community partners would want to see the students' test scores and other information for the period *before* and for the period *after* the program. Community partners would also like to see *similarities or differences* between the cohort of students in the program and the comparison group students.

## 5.2 Sample Retrospective Comparison Group Analysis

The data provided in Figure 3 are fictitious but it follows the patterns seen in the RCGA pilot study. If you look at the reading scores, you can see that the students in the sample community partner program were slightly behind the comparison group prior to the summer program. After the summer program, which involved an average of 40 hours of reading instruction, the reading result improved considerably for participants. The comparison group also improved over the summer—but not quite as much. Interestingly, in the year after the program, a small but consistent slide in reading results can be seen, which might encourage the community partner to consider a 6<sup>th</sup>–7<sup>th</sup> grade summer program.

The attendance data for students in the program also outpaced the comparison group, and the number of reported school infractions was reduced. A community partner should be proud to report such clear results. More importantly, if the community partner repeats the summer program over several years and continues to see the same positive patterns, these can be taken as very clear evidence for the efficacy of the program.

Students	Data From School District	2010–11	2011–12	Our Program	2012–13	2013–14
Our Students	<i>Year-End Reading Score (Average)</i>	360	375	40 hours of reading instruction	405	400
Comparison Group	<i>Year-End Reading Score (Average)</i>	365	380	N/A	385	390
<b>Difference</b>		<b>–5</b>	<b>–5</b>		<b>20</b>	<b>10</b>
Our Students	<i>Attendance Rate (Average)</i>	90%	92%	40 hours of reading instruction	90%	85%
Comparison Group	<i>Attendance Rate (Average)</i>	90%	92%	N/A	85%	80%
<b>Difference</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>		<b>5%</b>	<b>5%</b>
Our Students	<i># of Infractions (Average)</i>	4	4	40 hours of reading instruction	2	2
Comparison Group	<i># of Infractions (Average)</i>	3	3	N/A	5	5
<b>Difference</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>–3</b>	<b>–3</b>

Figure 3: Sample RCGA for program students and comparison group data before and after a summer reading program

### 5.3 Moving Forward

The example shown in Figure 3 is just a starting point. Community partners can use shared data to look at student outcomes through a range of perspectives to find the results that are relevant to specific program goals. These outcomes may indicate positive program impacts, as well as opportunities for program improvements. RCGA is an important tool for evaluation of impact that can help:

- Inform overall community partner program design.
- Confirm program self-evaluations and impact.
- Reveal student growth in academic success areas.
- Validate community partners' contributions to school district strategies.
- Strengthen partnership relationships between community partners and school districts.
- Provide additional perspective on data for use in fundraising efforts.

Groups who do not yet have internal capacity for comprehensive analysis may consider using external resources to help establish data systems or design approaches to analysis. RCGA is designed to be flexible and scalable. Ideally, this process is owned by those directly involved with planning and administering programs. If school districts and community partners have consistent access to and ownership of relevant data, and if they work together to understand it, then they can start to see trends, successes, and opportunities in specific programs.

#### ***To move this work forward, school districts can:***

- Streamline systems of partnership with community partners to include data sharing agreements, ways to manage student privacy concerns, and consistent points of staff contact.
- Automate the sharing of student data.
- Automate the establishment of matched comparison groups.
- Establish and maintain a data dictionary that specifies definitions of all tracked indicators, and make the data dictionary available to community partners.
- Invest in an accessible online data sharing and reporting system.

#### ***To move this work forward, community partners can:***

- Develop internal systems for tracking participants' progress:
  - Collect student ID numbers
  - Collect students' start and end dates in the program
  - Track levels of program participation (as described on page 8)
  - Collect dates of any/all self-reported data from participants, volunteers, or program staff
- Ensure the ability to prove parent/guardian consent for assessment and FERPA compliance.
- Ensure the organization's contact person is aware of and monitoring the data sharing expectations/agreement with local school district(s).

By engaging in collective, data-driven conversations and processes, school districts and community partners can support more effective interventions both in and out of school time, ultimately leading to improved outcomes for students. Working together with shared data, school districts and community partners can continue to articulate their impact and promote significant academic achievement.

## 6.0 GLOSSARY

The following is a glossary of key terms used throughout this guidebook, and basic definitions within the specific context of RCGA.

**Community partner:** An independent organization with its own management and funding that provides services to students and young people in a community. Community partners may include community-based organizations, consortium or collective impact efforts, public services, or other providers working to support students in some capacity before, during, or after school hours.

**Cohorts:** Groups of individual students who participate in a community partner program together. Cohorts are a useful way to group program participants for comparison and analysis, within specific academic years and over time.

**Comparison group:** A separate group of students who match key demographic and academic characteristics of the student cohort(s) being evaluated in a community partner program. Comparison group students are not enrolled in the community partner program being evaluated.

**Database:** There are many types of databases or systems for storing, retrieving, and analyzing data. The most common type of database used in the RCGA pilot study was Microsoft Access. Community partners must have internal database capacity to use RCGA effectively.

**Evaluation:** The process of measuring against a specific target or goal. The more clear the goals of a community partner program are, the easier the process of evaluation will be. Evaluation can be data-driven (quantitative), as well as story-driven (qualitative).

**Family Educational and Rights Privacy Act (FERPA):** FERPA is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. It is important for all community partners and school districts to be familiar with current law, and to ensure that their systems and processes are in compliance before working with student data.

**FERPA release form:** A form required by federal law for school districts to release student records. Community partners must file a FERPA form for each student for each year of records requested from the school district.

**Identifiable data:** Data that is linked to individual students in an explicit way that makes clear exactly which results are tied to each student—usually by student identification number.

**Non-identifiable data:** Data that is stripped of identifying information for unique students. Non-identifiable data allows for analysis at a cohort level (for a group of students), without explicitly linking results to any specific student.

**Retrospective Comparison Group Analysis (RCGA):** RCGA is a methodology for improving evaluation of programs that are intended to support student success by leveraging data sharing between school districts and community partners. RCGA integrates multiple data sources, and uses a flexible assessment lens. This methodology takes into account results from multiple academic years, multiple student cohorts, and related comparison groups, to generate meaningful comparisons that validate program results.

**Theory of Change (TOC):** A TOC is a framework that helps organizations define their intended impact and establish priorities for when and how to evaluate that impact. The TOC grounds program evaluation for stakeholders in a shared definition of the problem, the proposed solution, and the expected outcomes.

**Spreadsheet:** A grid used to track and store multiple pieces of data in an organized way. For the RCGA pilot study, the most common tool for building and sorting spreadsheets was Microsoft Excel. If spreadsheets are set up with formulas, they also provide the option of running reports that will compile data in specific ways to facilitate analysis.

## 7.0 RESOURCES FOR COMMUNITY PARTNER CAPACITY

**Apache OpenOffice Suite:** [www.openoffice.org](http://www.openoffice.org)

Apache OpenOffice comes with a database and spreadsheet package that may meet organizational needs.

**Microsoft:** [www.microsoft.com](http://www.microsoft.com)

Software and support for the most commonly used data management tools, including Access and Excel.

**Lynda.com:** [www.lynda.com](http://www.lynda.com)

High-quality online training for software, including Access and Excel, from introductory through advanced levels.

**TechSoup:** [www.techsoup.org](http://www.techsoup.org)

Those working in the nonprofit sector can purchase software at significant discounts through programs run by TechSoup.

**The Center for Theory of Change:** [www.theoryofchange.org](http://www.theoryofchange.org)

Information and software tools to support the development of a strong Theory of Change.

**501 Commons:** [www.501commons.org/resources/tools-and-best-practices/technology-knowledge-center](http://www.501commons.org/resources/tools-and-best-practices/technology-knowledge-center)

Additional technology resources are available through local service providers or partnerships, such as 501 Commons in Washington State.

**Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act:** <http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>

More information regarding this important federal law that protects the privacy of student education records.

**State of Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction:** [www.k12.wa.us](http://www.k12.wa.us)

State agency that oversees K–12 education in Washington State.

Also provides information about school districts at: [www.k12.wa.us/Maps/SDmainmap.aspx](http://www.k12.wa.us/Maps/SDmainmap.aspx).

**You may find the following local organizations helpful resources for continually updated information to support taking action on improved evaluation through data sharing:**

**Youth Development Executives of King County:** <http://www.ydekc.wordpress.com>

**Community Center for Education Results:** [www.roadmapproject.org](http://www.roadmapproject.org)

**Eastside Pathways:** [www.eastsidepathways.org](http://www.eastsidepathways.org)

**Southeast Seattle Education Coalition:** [www.allfivesinfive.org](http://www.allfivesinfive.org)

**Seattle College Access Network:** [www.seattlecollegeaccessnetwork.org](http://www.seattlecollegeaccessnetwork.org)

## **8.0 CONTRIBUTORS**

The following organizations contributed expertise, time, and excellent partnership support for the 2011–2012 RCGA pilot study and/or the production of this guide:

*Alliance for Education*

*Barbara Grant Consulting Group*

*Bellevue School District*

*Big Brothers Big Sisters of Puget Sound*

*The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation*

*Eastside Pathways*

*Ken Gordon Consulting*

*MacCarthy Consulting*

*Neighborhood House*

*Powerful Schools*

*Rainier Scholars*

*Seattle Public Schools*

*Snow Dowd [theMAKERS]*

*Summer Search Seattle*

*TEAK Creative*

*Team Read*

*Youth Development Executives of King County*

## **9.0 APPENDICES**

**Appendix One: Sample Data Sharing Agreement**

**Appendix Two: Sample FERPA Agreement**

**Appendix Three: Sample Privacy Policy**

**Appendix Four: Spreadsheets and Databases**

## Appendix One: Sample Data Sharing Agreement

*The sample data sharing agreement that follows was prepared by the Youth Development Executives of King County. It represents a sample agreement between a community partner and a Washington state school district for expedited data sharing within an academic year, and considers state and federal student privacy guidelines. This particular sample assumes the use of an electronic student information system within the school district. This sample agreement is not intended to replace existing guidelines, policies, or legal practices used in unique community partner organizations or school districts. It is intended to serve as baseline guidance for community partners and/or school districts that may not have established policies or priorities for data sharing.*

### SAMPLE DATA ACCESS AND USE AGREEMENT

Between

\_\_\_\_\_ **SCHOOL DISTRICT**

and

**COMMUNITY PARTNER ORGANIZATION**

This DATA ACCESS AND USE AGREEMENT (the "Agreement") by and between \_\_\_\_\_ **SCHOOL DISTRICT** (the "District"), and **COMMUNITY PARTNER ORGANIZATION** (the "Organization"), is entered into effective as of **Month, Day, Year** (the "Effective Date").

### RECITALS

1. The District is a public school district organized under the laws of the State of Washington that provides educational instruction to students in grades K-12 in the **City of \_\_\_\_\_**, Washington;
2. **(SAMPLE)** The Organization is a community-based non-profit agency whose mission is to give foster children a childhood and a future. The Organization provides students in foster care with educational case management (planning, inter-agency coordination, creative problem solving), advocacy, academic skills, improvement services, and aspiration and future planning interventions. In order to assess the impact of interventions and plan for the immediate and future needs of its students, the Organization needs regular electronic reporting of school indicators that show student performance in the areas of attendance, behavior, and course completion. With this data, the Organization is able to nimbly adjust its interventions for each student and make overall program modifications when trends emerge. The Organizations is a stronger partner with schools to achieve common goals for students when it receives current and cumulative data for analysis and action.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual promises contained herein, the parties hereby agree as follows:

## AGREEMENT

1. **Purposes.** The purpose of this agreement is to: (1) Establish a working relationship between the District and the Organization, and (2) Grant the Organization access to the student information, educational records, and data (hereinafter “Education Records”) of the students it serves in order to monitor the students’ academic progress and evaluate and improve the educational programs the Organization offers.
  
2. **Period of Performance.** The period of performance of this Agreement shall commence on **Month, Day, Year**, regardless of the date of execution, and be completed on **Month, Day, Year**, unless terminated sooner as provided herein.
  
3. **Responsibilities of the District.** During the term of this Agreement, the District shall:
  - a. Prepare list of login credentials for the Student Information System.
  - b. Deliver list to the Organization by the dates noted in Attachment A.
  
4. **Responsibilities of the Organization.** During the term of this Agreement, the Organization shall:
  - a. Provide the District with a list of students served by the Organization, including Releases of Information, signed by each student’s legal guardian or the student if over 18;
  - b. Use student records appropriately and only for authorized purposes, in accordance with federal and state law and as specified in this Agreement, including the confidentiality provisions contained herein;
  - c. Destroy student records that have been provided from the District pursuant to the time limitations defined in this Agreement and, if requested, provide certification to the District that such records have been destroyed;
  - d. Understand that deliberate or accidental misuse of student records may result in one or more of the following: loss of access, disciplinary action, dismissal, or prosecution under the scope of any applicable federal and state laws.
  
5. The Organization shall not:
  - a. Share student records with any individuals or third parties other than the Organization’s staff;
  - b. Make or allow any unauthorized use of student records.
  
6. **Legal Obligations.** Both parties acknowledge separate obligations in accordance with the requirements of Public Law 93-380—Privacy Rights of Parents and Students, commonly known as the “Buckley Amendment”, the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232g and 34 CFR Part 99.

## AGREEMENT TERMINATION

The District may terminate this Agreement at any time, for its own convenience, for any reason, with written notice to the Organization. The Organization may terminate this Agreement for any reason, with 30 days written notice to the District. Otherwise, the Agreement will end on **Month, Day, Year**.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

1. The term “confidential information” as used in this Agreement means any and all student information provided by the District to the Organization which is protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. Sec. 1232g and all other similar federal and state laws. Such personal information is also exempt from mandatory disclosure by a school district under the terms of the state public disclosure laws codified at chapter 42.56 RCW.

2. To affect the transfer of data and information that is subject to federal and state confidentiality laws and to ensure that the required confidentiality of personally identifiable information shall always be maintained, the Organization agrees to the following in compliance with 34 C.F.R. Sec. 99.31 (a) (6):

- a. In all respects, the Organization will comply with the provisions of FERPA. Nothing in this Agreement may be construed to allow either party to maintain, use, disclose, or share student record information without appropriate permission or in a manner not allowed under federal or state law or regulation;
- b. For purposes of this agreement and ensuring the Organization’s compliance with the terms of this Agreement and all application of state and federal laws, the Organization designates the **Organization Primary Contact (Name/Title** or their successors) the temporary custodian of the login credentials that the District shares with the Organization. The **Organization Primary Contact** shall be responsible for transmitting all requests and maintaining a log or other record of all data requested and received pursuant to the Agreement, including confirmation of the return or destruction of data as described below. The District or its agents may, upon request, review the records the Organization is required to keep under this Agreement. The District designates **District Primary Contact (Name/Title** or an alternative designee specified in writing) as its liaison for all communications with the Organization regarding this Agreement;
- c. The Organization will use data shared under this Agreement for no purpose other than the goals outlined in this Agreement. Nothing in the Agreement shall be construed to authorize the Organization to have access to additional data from the District that is not included in the scope of this Agreement. The Organization understands that this Agreement does not convey ownership of data to the Organization;
- d. The Organization will require all employees to comply with this Agreement and all applicable provisions of FERPA and other laws and regulations with respect to the data and information shared under this Agreement. The Organization agrees to require and maintain an appropriate confidentiality agreement from each Organization employee with access to data pursuant to this Agreement. Nothing in this section authorizes the Organization to share data and information provided under this Agreement with any other individual, agency, or entity for any purpose other than completing the Organization’s work as authorized by the District, consistent with this Agreement;
- e. The Organization will not disclose data produced to it under this Agreement in any manner that could identify any individual student or teacher, except as authorized by FERPA, to any entity other than the District or employees of The Organization also working for and on behalf of the District pursuant to the terms of this Agreement;
- f. The Organization will not provide any data obtained under this Agreement to any individual, agency, or entity outside of the Organization without the prior written consent of the District, unless required to make such disclosure under an applicable law or court order;

- g. Upon termination of the Agreement, the Organization will return all data files and hard copy records to the District and purge any copies of data from its computer systems. The Organization agrees to require all employees using the District data to comply with this provision. The Organization will destroy all data obtained under the Agreement and addenda when no longer needed for the purpose for which it was released by the District. Upon request, The Organization agrees to provide certification to the District that such records have been destroyed;
- h. The Organization agrees that disclosure of confidential student information, without permission of the District, is just cause for the District to immediately terminate the Agreement.

3. Any violation of this Agreement and/or the provisions of FERPA or accompanying regulations related to the nondisclosure of protected student information may result in a determination by the Department of Education that the violating party is prohibited from accessing student education records for up to five (5) years, pursuant to 34 CFR Sec. 99.31 (a) (6) (iv).

#### **NONDISCRIMINATION**

Both the District and the Organization agree that no individual shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, subjected to discrimination under, or denied employment in the administration of or in connection with any aspect of this Agreement because of sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, honorably discharged veteran or military status, sexual orientation including gender expression or identity, the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability, or the use of trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability. The parties agree to abide by the standards of responsibility toward the disabled as specified by the Americans with Disabilities Act and Washington Law Against Discrimination. In the event that one of the parties hereto refuses to comply with the above provision, this Agreement may be canceled, terminated, or suspended in whole or in part by the other party.

#### **ASSIGNMENT**

Neither party shall assign its rights or responsibilities under this Agreement without the written authorization of all the other parties.

#### **SEVERABILITY**

If any term of this Agreement is held invalid or unenforceable, the remainder of the Agreement will not be affected, but continue in full force.

#### **INTEGRATION**

This writing contains all terms and conditions of the Agreement. It replaces all prior negotiations and agreements regarding the terms and conditions in this Agreement. Modifications to the Agreement must be in writing and be signed by each party.

**NOTICE**

Any notice required or permitted by the terms of the Agreement shall be sent to:

If to the District: \_\_\_\_\_ **SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
Attention: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone/Email: \_\_\_\_\_

If to the Organization: \_\_\_\_\_ **COMMUNITY PARTNER ORGANIZATION**  
Attention: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone/Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**AUTHORIZATION**

**ACCEPTED BY**

**THE COMMUNITY PARTNER ORGANIZATION:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Authorized Signature Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name and title (Print)

**ACCEPTED BY**

**THE SCHOOL DISTRICT:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Authorized Signature Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name and title (Print)

## Attachment A

## Data Description and Delivery Details

Data Description:	Responsible Party:	Delivery Date:	Deliver to:
<i>List of District students served by the Organization ("released students") and signed Releases of Information</i>	Organization	Initial List: <b>Sept 15<sup>th</sup></b> Additional students new to the Organization: <b>ongoing</b>	The District's Assistant Superintendent, Student Learning and District Technology
<i>List of login credentials to Student Information System for "released students"</i>	District	Initial List: <b>Oct 15<sup>th</sup></b> Additional students new to the Organization: <b>ongoing</b>	The Organization's Program Evaluation Manager

## **Appendix Two: Sample Family Educational and Rights Privacy Act (FERPA) Agreement**

*This sample consent form (that starts on the next page), for release of education records was prepared by the Youth Development Executives of King County. It is a sample form which community partner organizations are recommended to provide to and collect from parents or guardians of students participating in their programs. The form indicates consent for release of and assessment of student data. This sample form is not intended to replace existing guidelines, policies, or legal practices used in unique community partner organizations or school districts. Community partner organizations may expedite their access to student data from partner school districts by producing this consent documentation on behalf of students in their programs, each academic year.*

**SAMPLE CONSENT TO RELEASE OF EDUCATION RECORDS**  
**20XX-20XX School Year**  
**Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, consent to the release of my child's education records from

\_\_\_\_\_ **SCHOOL DISTRICT** to **COMMUNITY PARTNER ORGANIZATION**.

**I understand that education records include:**

- Name of student
- School of student
- Student identification number
- Attendance
- Assignment grades
- Upcoming assignments and missing assignments
- Test scores, including MSP/HSPS scores
- Other: **COMMUNITY PARTNER ORGANIZATION** to include any additional data points that have been established in data-sharing agreement with specified **SCHOOL DISTRICT**.

This release allows **COMMUNITY PARTNER ORGANIZATION** staff to access my child's education records online and/or directly from the school district. I understand that **COMMUNITY PARTNER ORGANIZATION** will use these education records to *[brief description of how organization will use education records—e.g., the organization will use these education records to keep staff informed of my child's academic progress and to evaluate and improve the educational programs the organization offers. The organization staff will work with the school, the family, and the student in an effort to improve my child's success at school.]*

I acknowledge I may submit a subsequent notification in writing directing the school district to no longer release information to **COMMUNITY PARTNER ORGANIZATION** staff. **COMMUNITY PARTNER ORGANIZATION** will not disclose this information to anyone outside of **COMMUNITY PARTNER ORGANIZATION** without my written permission.

This Release of Education Records to **COMMUNITY PARTNER ORGANIZATION** will be valid for the **20XX–XX** school year, or as long as the student is served by **COMMUNITY PARTNER ORGANIZATION**, whichever is the lesser time length.

---

Student's **Name** and **District ID Number** (PRINT)

---

Guardian's **NAME** (PRINT)

---

Student's **Date of Birth**

---

Guardian's **Relationship** to the Student

---

Student's **Signature** (if youth is 18 or older)/**Date**

---

Guardian's **Signature** (if student is under 18)/**Date**

---

Organization Representative **Name** (PRINT)

---

Organization Representative **Signature/Date**

---

Organization Representative **Email Address**

---

Organization Representative **Phone Number**

## Appendix Three: Sample Privacy Policy

*Community partner organizations may review the sample privacy policy below to help establish internal policies and practices regarding participant or volunteer information/data. This sample is not intended to replace existing guidelines, policies, or legal practices used in unique community partner organizations or school districts. Rather, it is intended to provide key considerations for organizations to establish internal clarity about participant and volunteer privacy matters.*

### **COMMUNITY PARTNER ORGANIZATION PRIVACY POLICY**

***Last Update xx/xx/xxxx***

#### 1.0 Personal Information Held Regarding Clients and Volunteers

***Community Partner Organization*** (the “Organization”) collects and holds personal information about Clients and Volunteers. In relation to this information the following points are noted:

- a. Clients and Volunteers will be advised when private information is being collected and held.
- b. Staff and Advisers of the Organization will have access to this information for the following purposes:
  - Purpose 1.
  - Purpose 2.
  - Purpose 3, etc.
- c. Steps have been taken to ensure that information held about Clients and Volunteers cannot be accessed for unauthorized purposes.
- d. Clients and Volunteers have the right to access personal information held about them and have the right to correct any information held.
- e. Information will not be disclosed to any other parties without the express authorization of the Client or Volunteer concerned, or of their parent or guardian if under 18.
- f. Clients’ parents or guardians will be asked to sign a FERPA release form that will allow the Organization to seek Client data from appropriate school districts. Parents or guardians are encouraged to sign these forms but this is not mandatory.
- g. If the Organization receives Client information from a school district, this information will be kept in confidence in accordance with this policy and data sharing agreements established with the school district.
- h. School district information will only be used to help assess the performance and improve the impact of the Organization’s programs.

## Appendix Four: Spreadsheets and Databases

*Effective data management is a key component of strong programming, expedited evaluation, and utilization of the RCGA methodology. Community partner organizations should be keeping accurate records about the students they are working with in a spreadsheet or database. Doing so will allow community partner organizations to track key information regarding their participants, and share that information with school districts as necessary to support more robust assessment. Many community partner organizations still keep paper records of their students' details and program activities, and may lack the staff or technology capacity to engage in fundamental database management. However, investing in basic electronic record keeping technology and basic monitoring practices will ultimately allow community partner organizations to serve their stakeholders more effectively.*

*There are many diverse resources and tools available to organizations to track their efforts. For the purposes of the RCGA pilot study, researchers worked primarily with Microsoft Excel and Access, though acknowledge the breadth and depth of other reliable resources for organizational data management. Community partner organizations are encouraged to assess their own needs and capacity to determine the technology solution that works best for them.*

**Tip:** Those working in the nonprofit sector can take advantage of their ability to purchase software at significant discounts through programs run by groups like TechSoup ([www.techsoup.org](http://www.techsoup.org)).

Additional technology resources may also be available through local service providers or partnerships, such as 501Commons in Washington State:

<http://www.501commons.org/resources/tools-and-best-practices/technology-knowledge-center>

### Working with Spreadsheets

Spreadsheets have been primarily designed for financial situations, and are a great tool for storing lists of names, addresses and other data. They also have excellent graphing capabilities that will be useful when it comes time to report results. Figure A4.1 shows an example of a simple spreadsheet page (*please note the information shown in the database and spreadsheets on the following pages has been constructed for this guidebook and is not real data associated with any particular individual*).

## Sample Spreadsheet

First Name	Last Name	Preferred Name (if any)	Date of Birth	Gender	Ethnicity	Student ID Number	City	County	State	Zip
Michael	Middlekauff	Mike	1/18/1993	M	White	4037240	Bothell	Snohomish	WA	98021
Carmen	Knight		12/11/1993	F	White	4067691	Seattle	King	WA	98118
Alex	Konior		12/12/1993	M	White	4071248	Seattle	King	WA	98178
Tiffany	Close		12/31/1993	F	Black	4129630	Seattle	King	WA	98103
Alexis	Hall-Deal	Alex	2/16/1994	F	Black	4160093	Tacoma	Pierce	WA	98408
Ayahmii	Kennebrew		2/25/1994	F	Black	4192954	Kent	King	WA	98031
Ronique	Bounds		10/2/1993	F	Black	4206502	Seattle	King	WA	98146
Matthew	Wilson	Matt	10/5/1993	M	White	4271080	Kirkland	King	WA	98034
Kyle	Kutsenko		10/12/1993	M	White	4283144	Seattle	King	WA	98106
Jason	Allison		11/13/1993	M	Multi-Race (None of the above)	4316596	Seattle	King	WA	98117
Ericka	Ivy		12/3/1993	F	White	4342153	Federal Way	King	WA	98003
Nicholas	Swigart	Nick	2/8/1993	M	Black	4380971	Auburn	King	WA	98002
Eris	Taylor		2/14/1993	F	Black	4396633	Bellevue	King	WA	98008
April	Gulley		2/16/1993	F	American Indian or Alaska Native	4404136	Seattle	King	WA	98155
Majlinda	Wetzstein		3/1/1993	F	Multi-Race (None of the above)	4419417	Seattle	King	WA	98144
Millicent	Dixon		4/2/1993	F	White	4453491	Lakewood	Pierce	WA	98499
Paul	Rabanal		3/5/1994	M	White	4482613	Seattle	King	WA	98103
Jose	Stone		3/9/1994	M	Black	4489257	Seattle	King	WA	98118
Kandra	Rice		3/29/1994	F	White	4556596	Seattle	King	WA	98126
Shakara	Vrbka		3/30/1994	F	Multi-Race (None of the above)	4564251	Seattle	King	WA	98112
Christina	Slaughter-Carroll	Chris	3/30/1994	F	Multi-Race (None of the above)	4581202	Seattle	King	WA	98118
Alyssa	Bowman		12/14/1993	F	Multi-Race (None of the above)	4601979	Seattle	King	WA	98115
Asanti (Kayla)	Foulkes		1/25/1994	F	White	4634221	Seattle	King	WA	98198
Leonardo	Guinn		1/25/1994	M	Hispanic	4677296	Arlington	Snohomish	WA	98223
Thomas	Mulholland	Tom	2/2/1994	M	White	4694983	Federal Way	King	WA	98003
Keyan	Holmes		2/20/1994	M	Multi-Race (None of the above)	4762255	Renton	King	WA	98056
T'Andre	Chapman		6/25/1993	M	Multi-Race (None of the above)	4822578	Renton	King	WA	98058
Tiffany	Thieme		6/28/1993	F	White	4854263	Tacoma	Pierce	WA	98444
Jordan	Davies		7/23/1993	M	Black	4872226	Spanaway	Pierce	WA	98387
Arthur	Chambers		7/23/1993	M	Multi-Race (None of the above)	4893708	Redmond	King	WA	98052
Tara	Northrop		8/4/1993	F	Multi-Race (None of the above)	4936381	Seattle	King	WA	98146
Christopher	Phillips		9/16/1993	M	White	4938013	Tacoma	Pierce	WA	98408
Samantha	Schmidt	Sam	4/24/1994	F	American Indian or Alaska Native	4955197	Renton	King	WA	98057
Mildred	Miller		5/8/1994	F	Multi-Race (None of the above)	4961943	Kirkland	King	WA	98034
Yators ha	Paige		5/22/1994	F	White	4976074	Port Townsend	Jefferson	WA	98368

Figure A4.1: Screenshot of a simple spreadsheet

**Note #9:** It can be difficult to link data that comes from different sources in spreadsheets.

**Tip:** This is where relational databases can play a significant role. A database allows you to align information from multiple sources based on a consistent field (or fields) that exists across all of those sources. In the case of data received from a school district, the consistent field could be the student ID number.

**Tip:** Apache OpenOffice comes with a database and spreadsheet package that may suit your requirements ([www.openoffice.org](http://www.openoffice.org)).

**Resource:** To help you get started with your database design, there are a number of resources that you can use to start to build a database that suits your needs. The screenshot shown in Figure A4.2 was taken from a database originally downloaded as a free template from the Microsoft Office website.

See: <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/templates/desktop-student-database-TC001225355.aspx>.

Or: search online for "Access Student Template."

## Working with Databases

**Student Details Form**

Michael Middlekauff

General Guardian Academic - Attendance SRI GPA MSP Core High School EOC Reading Standard Discipline

Access ID Number: 200

First Name: Michael

Last Name: Middlekauff

Web Page:

E-mail Address:

Special Circumstances:

**Phone Numbers**

Home Phone:

Mobile Phone:

**Address** [Click to Map](#)

Street:

City: Bothell

State/Province: WA

Zip/Postal Code: 98021

Country/Region: USA

**School Information**

Room: Test Room

Level: Junior

Grade Level: 11

School: Test School

Region: Bothell

Student ID: 4037240

Ministry ID: 12345678

Date of Birth: 1/18/1993

SPED: No

ESL: No

Prim. Language: English

FRL: No

Graduated: No

Gender: M

Ethnicity: White

Age: 16

Excpntly Desc:

Enroll Date: 6/1/2009

Exit Date: 9/1/2009

Dept. Reason: Graduated program

**Notes**

Student 114 of 114 Unfiltered Search

Figure A4.2: Screen shot of a database template

Figure A4.2 shows a simple database that compiles all of the information for each student in a series of tabs. As you move through the tabs you can see how the student is progressing. The database also allows you to run reports across cohorts. You could run a report, for example, that showed attendance, infractions, test scores, and grades by the number of hours of instruction that each group of students had received over the summer.