



# Collecting and Analyzing High-Quality Education Data

## Center for Education Survey Research and Analysis

Effective and equitable education programs require actionable data to inform educators, families, and policy makers. For more than 30 years, RTI International has helped these stakeholders by successfully completing high-quality education surveys, research, and analyses. RTI helps answer challenging questions about education—from study design to data collection to analysis—for clients ranging from neighborhood schools to the U.S. Department of Education. Our experts understand real-world problems and are eager to collaborate to help improve educational opportunities. RTI appreciates our clients and their unique needs, and we customize our services to fit those needs.

### More Information

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### Our Approach

RTI offers state-of-the-art capabilities in all aspects of designing and conducting education research projects. We combine expertise in innovative research methods with a deep understanding of the issues that education stakeholders face. We collaborate with our clients to

- Understand their challenges
- Propose data collection and analytic methods to meet their needs.

We base our flexible approaches on our experience conducting national studies of students, parents, staff members, and administrators. Additionally, we tailor these approaches to each client's unique scope and research questions. Our unbiased, policy-focused research and data tools provide educators, policy makers, and community members with the information they need.



## RTI Capabilities

### Surveys and Data Collection



#### Surveys

RTI works with clients to understand their education interests and what they want to measure. Our survey experts provide recommendations based on a wealth of experience with innovative methods for surveys via mail, online, mobile devices (both text and telephone), and in person. We work to improve the experience of survey participants.



#### Data Collection

We cater our methods to survey participants, and we design those methods to meet unique project needs. For example, we can effectively recruit and gain cooperation from school and district leadership to conduct assessments and surveys of students. Our approaches include strategies to maintain participation over time. Our operations and call center staff members conduct telephone interviews, locate and trace sample members, and manage data collection activities—all in a secure environment that protects sensitive data.



#### Administrative Data

RTI has expertise in collecting and analyzing a wide variety of administrative data for education research—including transcripts and other school records, as well as national-level data about student enrollment and financial aid. Administrative data provide powerful insights. Our team helps clients understand and apply these valuable data.

## Research and Analysis



#### Sample Design and Statistical Power Analysis

Research requires balancing a study's objectives with available resources. RTI statisticians help design and select samples that enable clients to draw conclusions and understand what their data can tell them. We draw from a variety of sources—from probability to purposive samples—to maximize representativeness and minimize sampling error.



#### Data Analysis and Dissemination

Our experts employ a range of analytical methods that may call for descriptive analyses or multivariate methods, and our clients can always be confident in our methods and findings. We deliver more than data; we translate complex statistics into easily understandable narratives that communicate research results in various formats—including reports, presentations, dashboards, graphs, and tables—to a broad audience.

## Our Experience

**The National Postsecondary Student Aid Study** is the only comprehensive, periodic nationally representative survey that examines the ways that students and their families pay for postsecondary education, the affordability of postsecondary education, and the effectiveness of existing financial aid programs. We collect data through online and phone surveys, and we generate reports for the National Center for Education Statistics.

**The Middle Grades Longitudinal Study** is the first nationally representative study that focuses on students in grades 6–8. This study involves student assessments and surveys of students, parents, teachers, and administrators. At the beginning of the pandemic, we successfully pivoted our data collection efforts from in-school to online and phone to continue collecting data from students and parents. The National Center for Education Statistics plans to release final data from this study in 2021.



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RTI International is an independent, nonprofit research institute dedicated to improving the human condition. Clients rely on us to answer questions that demand an objective and multidisciplinary approach—one that integrates expertise across the social and laboratory sciences, engineering, and international development. We believe in the promise of science, and we are inspired every day to deliver on that promise for the good of people, communities, and businesses around the world. For more information, visit [www.rti.org](http://www.rti.org).

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