

**New Jersey Education to Earnings Data System  
Research Agenda  
2020-2023**

Consistent with its mission to develop and maintain a statewide longitudinal data system linking administrative records of education, employment, and workforce data to inform policymaking in New Jersey, the following vision guides this research agenda:

*NJEEDS will be the preeminent source of information to researchers and policymakers to inform the development of new and innovative policies that directly benefit the lives of New Jersey residents from high school to retirement, specifically in the development and evaluation of education, workforce, and human services programs. NJEEDS is guided by its founding commitments to evidence, accessibility, transparency, and continuous public service performance improvement.*

The research agenda for 2020 through 2023 shall focus on three priority areas.

1. **Education, Training, and Workforce Alignment**: Assess and monitor the extent to which education and training programs (such as secondary, career and technical education, postsecondary certificate and degree programs, and workforce training programs) lead to intended program outcomes, such as credential attainment, well-paying and satisfying careers, and/or the workforce needs of employers.
2. **The Impact of Services provided to Historically Disadvantaged and Economically Excluded Populations**: Assess and monitor how state programs address disparities in outcomes (such as credential attainment, career trajectories, etc.) of populations historically disadvantaged and economically excluded on the basis of characteristics such as age, race, ethnicity, gender, nationality, citizenship, residence, etc.
3. **Program Performance**: Research and evaluate the effectiveness of the education, workforce, and human services policies and programs offered by each of the public agency members. These policies and programs may include, but are not limited to adult literacy; apprenticeships; career and technical education; college access and completion; financial aid and lending; career training, placement, and retention programs, etc.
4. **Coronavirus Response**: Provide real-time information to assist policy makers in responding to and learning from the Coronavirus pandemic to inform educational, economic, and workforce policy and mitigate the impacts of a future disaster or crisis.

Due to the lack of available data, some other research priorities were unable to be realized. As such, the following enhancements to the data system are prioritized for the benefit of future research objectives. They include:

- Expanding NEEDS' financial aid data to better assess student debt burden.
- Gaining access to state income tax records, enhanced NJ wage records, as well as wage records from other states to better measure career trajectories of state residents working in and out of state.

- Acquiring education records from neighboring states to better measure postsecondary education outcomes for residents studying out of state.
- Establishing a partnership with the Department of Corrections to improve services to and opportunities for families involved with the criminal justice system.