

# Evidence to Action:

## Increasing the Use of Research in Higher Education Policymaking

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# Evidence to Action (2019-2021)

Led by MDRC & SHEEO; supported by Arnold Ventures

**States:** Montana, Indiana, and Virginia

**Goal:** Understand how states use research and data to support student success

## Project Activities:

- Interviewed state-level decision-makers across each state
- Shared state-specific findings in internal memos
- Facilitated a cross-state convening
- Published a public report



- **Evidence-based policymaking:** a series of organizational decisions and activities to integrate and prioritize data and research in policy decisions.
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## 5 Foundational Activities for Evidence-Based Policymaking

(Based on a synthesis of prominent frameworks for evidence-based policymaking and interview findings)

1

**Bring together** a diverse and inclusive set of stakeholders to **develop** a shared vision and goals.

2

**Collect, analyze,** and **communicate** institutional or state data.

3

**Increase** your organization's capacity to use evidence.

4

**Center** continuous improvement and data-informed revision as policies are implemented.

5

**Incentivize** further research by aligning it with relevant policy levers.



# Major Barriers to Evidence-Based Policymaking

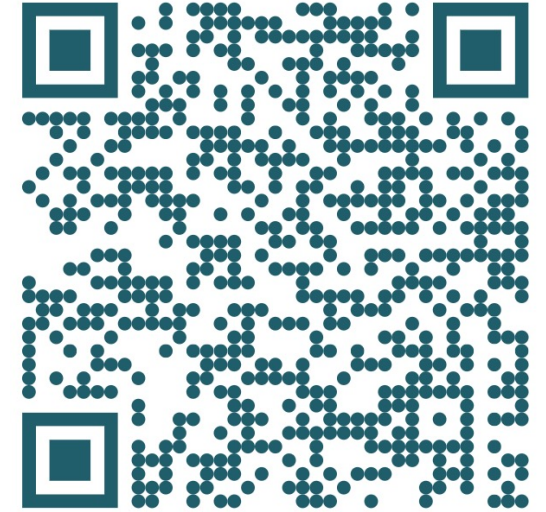
1. Not enough time or comfort with research
2. The research isn't credible or persuasive
3. Adopting or scaling evidence-based reforms is expensive
4. No guidance for implementing evidence-based reforms

# Promising Strategies for ~~Major Barriers~~ to Evidence-Based Policymaking

1. Not enough time or comfort with research
  - ✓ Develop learning agendas with priority questions
    - ✓✓ Partner with interns, graduate fellows, and researchers
2. The research isn't credible or persuasive
  - ✱ Find advocates for research within the legislature?
3. Adopting or scaling evidence-based reforms is expensive
  - Any creative solutions to incentivize innovation and building evidence?
4. No guidance for implementing evidence-based reforms
  - Professional development + support to colleges for new policies
    - Analyze early data for continuous improvement!

# Other Major Take-Aways

- Opportunities for relationship building
- Culturally responsive and strength-based approaches to partnerships
- Accessible and digestible findings tailored to your audience
- Guidance for policy implementation and adaptation



Check out the full report:  
**Evidence to Action:  
A Policy Perspective from  
Three States**

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