



EAB

# The Data Governance Imperative

How Colleges Can Address Seven Urgent Challenges Through a Shared Source of Truth





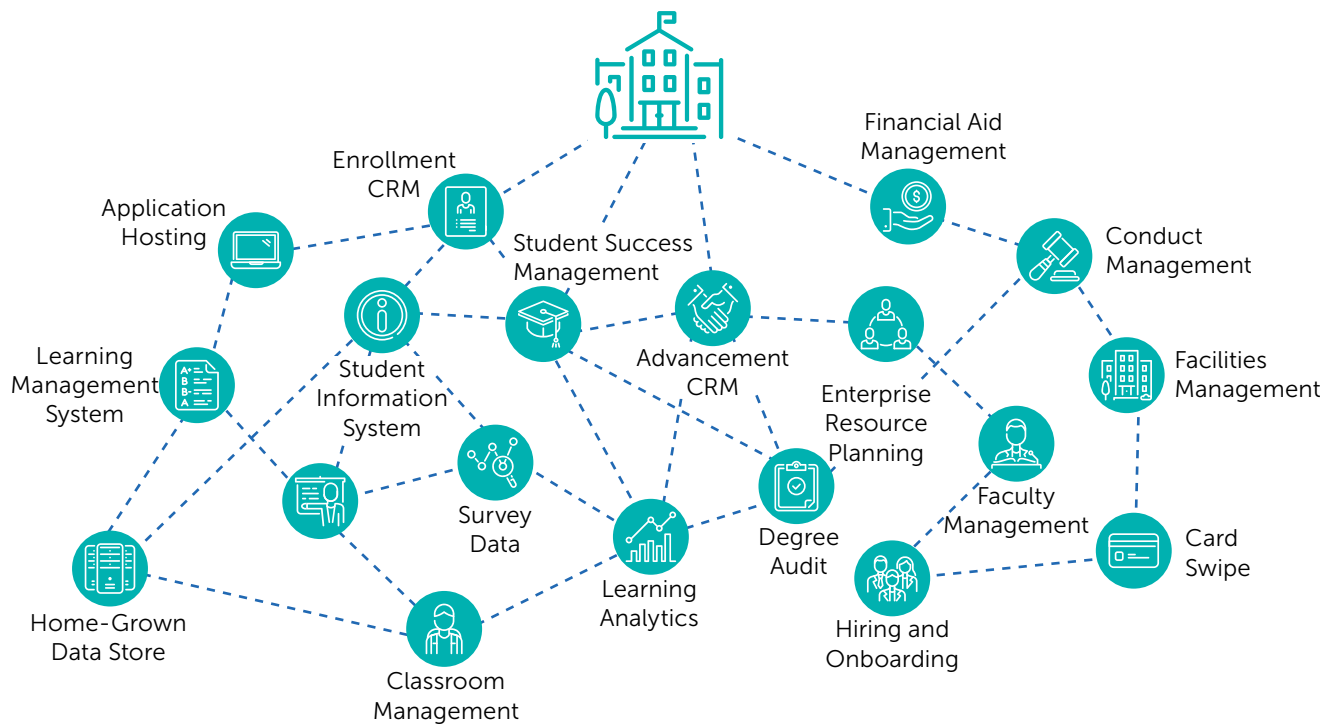
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# There's Always Next Year: The Data Governance Problem No One Owns

Most higher education leaders agree that data should play a central role in institutional decision-making. But the work required to make data reliable, consistent, and usable often gets pushed aside in favor of more visible priorities, with the assumption that there's always next year to fix it. Nearly half of colleges and universities report persistent challenges with siloed or inconsistent data, but there is still little agreement on who should fix it or how.<sup>1</sup>

Much of the problem with inconsistent data and datasets that do not “talk” to each other stems from colleges using multiple technology systems, such as CRMs, learning management systems, student information systems, and accounting tools, that operate independently. As a result, instead of having a single source of information built on common definitions, colleges end up with disconnected data islands.



The result is a familiar frustration: Institutions have plenty of data but little confidence in it and few clear ways to understand what it says about how their colleges are operating. **Leaders debate whose data is correct instead of deciding what comes next, while data teams are swamped with requests rather than positioned as partners in innovation and improvement.** In an EAB survey of data and technology leaders:

**29%**  
say they have cleaned and standardized their data

**1/3**  
have developed a functioning data dictionary

**20%**  
of schools with a data dictionary say they are satisfied with its level of usage at the institution

A lack of confidence in campus data makes it harder to respond quickly to issues that directly affect institutional stability. From the rapid expansion of artificial intelligence and ongoing enrollment pressures to heightened federal scrutiny, campus safety concerns, and growing expectations around employment and wage outcomes, today's challenges demand timely, high-stakes decisions. Institutions are being asked to move faster in an environment with little margin for error, while external pressures leave them little choice but to stop postponing data governance.

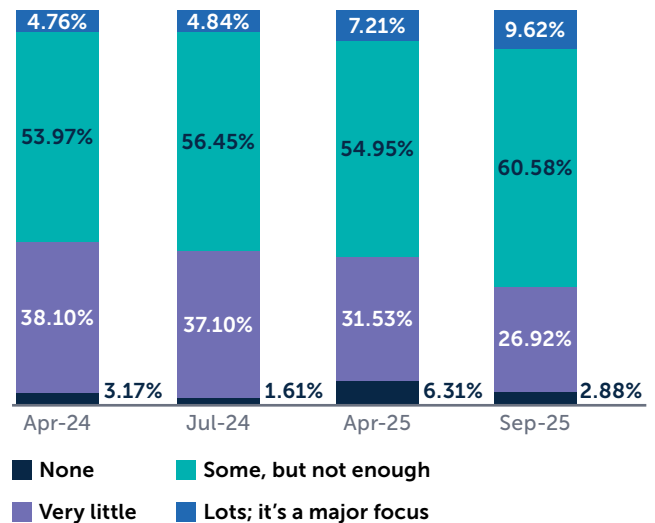
“ Not having data is one problem, but having tons of incoherent data is almost equally as bad because you still don't know where to go.”

—Matt Nickodemus,  
Utah Tech University

**A strong data governance strategy is one of the most effective tools institutions have for responding to both headwinds and urgent demands.** But it's also one of the hardest to execute. Too often, governance feels impossibly sprawling and never-ending. Or it is delegated to a committee that does not have the authority to change the underlying habits and culture of data use on campus. In a decade of working with colleges and universities on using data for decision-making, the most persistent issue we hear is: ***We know we need data governance, but we just can't get it done.***

## How much attention does data governance get at your institution?

*n values: Sept. 2025 = 104; April 2025 = 111; July 2024 = 62; April 2024 = 63*



EAB periodically polls higher education data and technology leaders about how much attention data governance gets at their institutions. While the proportion of leaders saying governance gets lots of attention is growing, over 50% consistently choose “some, but not enough.”

In this paper, you will learn how strong data governance can help institutions better manage emerging threats to their stability and replace fragmented data with a shared source of truth that supports timely, confident decision-making. You will also learn practical ways to make progress and build consensus around this critical capability. The sections that follow explain:

- What data governance means as an enterprise capability and why it matters in day-to-day institutional work
- Where the absence of a shared source of truth creates risk across seven key areas: AI, recruitment, enrollment, workforce outcomes, program review, safety, and reporting
- How institutions are using smarter data strategies to advance institutional objectives
- How each leadership role on campus contributes to stronger data governance
- How institutions can reinforce their data governance strategy and how EAB can help





# What Data Governance Really Is—and Why It Shows Up Everywhere

# Why Data Governance Matters in Day-to-Day Work

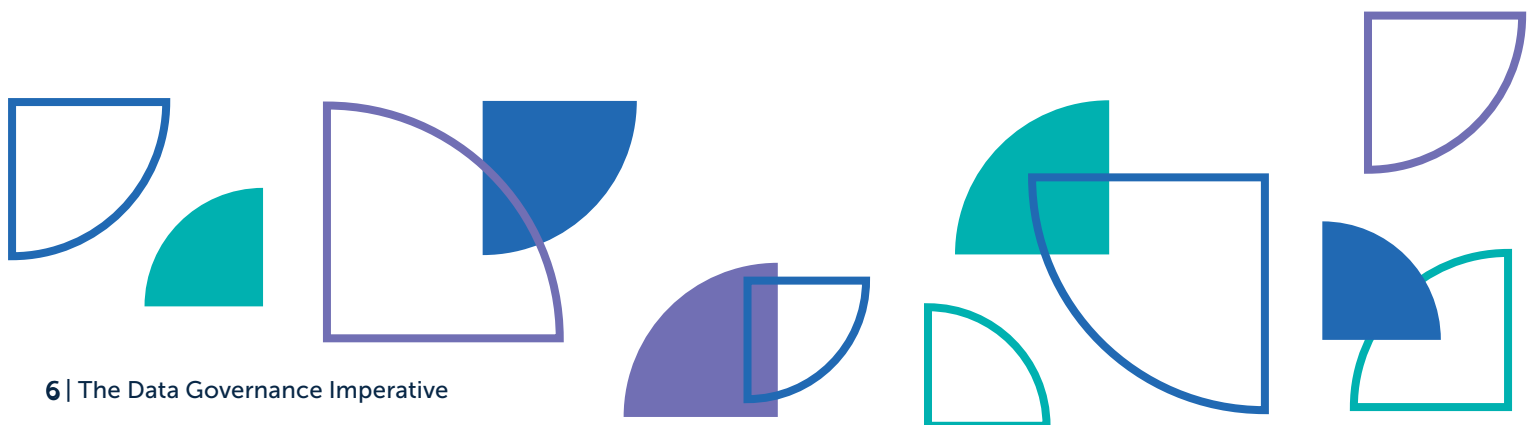
Governance matters because your teams use data all day long, whether they consider themselves “data users” or not. An advisor checks a student’s enrollment status before a meeting, a registrar runs a report to resolve a discrepancy, or a dean glances at a dashboard ahead of a cabinet discussion. In each case, the work moves forward only if the data is clear, consistent, and trusted. When it is not, staff members pause to question the numbers, reconcile multiple versions of the truth, or hedge decisions with caveats, slowly eroding confidence in both the data and the decisions built on it.

**Without clear governance, even capable teams can reach different conclusions using the same underlying data.**

For example:

1. Enrollment teams may rely on conflicting funnel numbers pulled from different systems.
2. Student success staff may interpret risk indicators in inconsistent ways.
3. Academic leaders may evaluate programs using mismatched definitions.
4. Public-facing dashboards may contradict internal reports.
5. Compliance reporting may contain errors or require last-minute corrections.

These challenges rarely reflect a lack of effort or expertise. More often, they result from the absence of shared expectations for how institutional data should be created, interpreted, and used.



## DATA GOVERNANCE EXAMPLE

# Responding to Conflicting Enrollment Projections



### The question:

What should we expect for next fall's enrollment, and how confident are we in that forecast?

### With weak data governance:

Different offices rely on different versions of the same data, leading to conflicting projections. For example:

1. **Inquiry counts** differ because Marketing includes stealth applicants and event attendees, while Enrollment counts only completed inquiry forms.
2. **Application totals** vary depending on whether incomplete or in-progress applications are included.
3. **Admitted student counts** differ because some reports include conditional admits while others do not.
4. **Yield rates** are calculated using different denominators, such as deposited students versus registered students.
5. **Census timing** varies, with Institutional Research using a prior-year census date while Finance models enrollment based on real-time registration.
6. **Historical comparisons** are unreliable because prior-year data is defined differently or manually adjusted in spreadsheets.

As a result, Enrollment Management, Finance, and Academic Affairs present different projections. Leaders spend time reconciling numbers and debating assumptions instead of planning staffing levels, course schedules, housing capacity, or budget allocations.

### With strong data governance:

The institution has agreed-upon definitions for funnel stages, enrollment status, and reporting timelines. Inquiry, application, admit, deposit, and registration metrics are consistently defined and documented. Enrollment projections are built from a shared source of truth and reviewed using common assumptions.

Leaders can clearly understand enrollment trends, assess risk scenarios, and coordinate decisions across divisions with confidence. Instead of managing uncertainty through caution, the institution plans proactively and consistently communicates expectations.



### The difference:

Weak data governance forces leaders to hedge decisions and delay action. Strong data governance enables aligned forecasting, clearer risk assessment, and more decisive institutional planning.

# How Data Governance Fits Within a Broader Data Strategy

Data governance should be a piece of your overall data management philosophy—not a stand-alone project without a home. Your overall *data strategy* clarifies how and why you use data to support your goals and sets a shared vision for decision-making across your institution. *Data governance* is the practice of putting that strategy into action by establishing common rules, definitions, and accountability so your data is reliable, secure, and consistently understood. Data operations then handle day-to-day work, maintaining the systems and processes that enable governed data to be used as intended.

## Data Management, Strategy, Governance, Operations

Distinguishing Between Similar but Distinct and Often Confused Concepts



### Data Strategy

- Focused on how and why we use data
- Connected to business strategy
- Institution-wide view of data use and needs

### Data Governance

- Overall management of the availability, usability, integrity, and security of data
- Committees, working groups, policy creation

### Data Operations

- Processes and systems used to store, organize, and maintain data
- “Nitty-gritty” work

Together, strategy, governance, and operations form a connected system: Strategy sets the direction, governance establishes expectations, and operations carry out the work. Without data governance as the bridge between strategy and operations, the “nitty-gritty” work is set up for failure because there are no guardrails in place to ensure accuracy.

# The Core Questions Data Governance Must Answer

**Data governance is an institution-wide system of shared rules, roles, definitions, policies, and processes that ensures data is consistent, secure, meaningful, and trustworthy.** At its core, data governance exists to answer a small set of foundational questions that underpin nearly every decision you make:

- What does this metric mean?
- Who is responsible for it?
- How is it created, maintained, and validated?
- How should it be used, and how should it not be used?
- How do we keep this data safe, and who can access it?

Getting to consistency takes more than new tools or oversight structures. It requires level setting, as a team, on what you expect from your data and from the people who use it. The following expectations can act as guardrails when reviewing your governance work:

- **Data must be accurate:** Data should reliably reflect reality and support high-stakes academic, financial, and operational decisions.
- **Data must be available to authorized users and protected from unauthorized access:** Governance balances transparency with responsibility, ensuring access supports work without compromising privacy or security.
- **Data must be used ethically:** Institutions must ensure data use aligns with institutional values, legal requirements, and appropriate use standards.
- **Data must be secure:** Safeguards must be in place to protect institutional data from misuse, breaches, or unintended exposure.
- **Data must be appropriate for its intended use:** Not all data is suitable for all decisions.

Governance clarifies context, limitations, and proper application.

- **Data is an institutional asset:** Data belongs to the institution, not individual offices, and should be managed for enterprise value.
- **Data must be integrated and consistent across systems:** Governance reduces fragmentation and prevents conflicting interpretations across platforms and reports.
- **Data must be clearly defined and commonly understood:** Shared definitions ensure metrics carry the same meaning regardless of audience or use case.
- **Stakeholders must be data literate:** Governance includes building the skills and confidence needed to interpret and apply data responsibly.

**Data governance** is the framework of policies, processes, definitions, and accountability that helps create and sustain a **single source of truth** for trusted, consistent, and well-managed data.

**While these principles may feel abstract, their impact is highly practical.** Strong data governance shapes an institution's ability to address pressing challenges, including enrollment volatility, compliance requirements, AI adoption, and student success outcomes. So why do most institutions still struggle with it?

# 8 Reasons Why Governance Often Stalls and Recommendations to Reinvigorate It

Most institutions do not struggle with data governance because they lack intent or effort. **They struggle because governance requires people across campus to change how they work, how they define success, and how they relate to data.** Much of this work falls outside formal job descriptions and challenges long-standing norms around ownership, authority, and accountability.

For many staff, data governance does not feel like an enabling activity. It can feel abstract, risky, or overwhelming, especially when the benefits are diffuse and the work requires coordination across units with different priorities. These dynamics help explain why governance so often stalls, even when leaders agree it is necessary.

Governance Challenge	What It Looks Like on Campus	Why It Stalls Progress	Recommendation
People do not see themselves as “data people.”	Staff rely on data daily but view governance as a technical function owned by IT, IR, or analysts.	Key contributors disengage, leaving governance disconnected from real data use.	Make governance relevant to everyday decisions in advising, scheduling, budgeting, and reporting.
People fear that data will be weaponized.	Units hesitate to share or standardize data out of concern that it will be used for evaluation or cuts.	Distrust leads to resistance and defensive behavior rather than collaboration.	Establish and communicate clear norms for ethical use, context, and protection.
Governance is treated as a onetime project.	Committees launch timelines, then lose momentum once initial tasks have been completed.	Governance requires ongoing attention; project-based efforts fade under their own scope.	Reframe governance as a sustained institutional capability with recurring priorities and oversight.
Consensus on definitions takes too long.	Teams expect quick agreement, but disagreements reemerge across units and use cases.	Definition alignment is iterative and stalls without facilitation and patience.	Treat definition-setting as a structured process with clear ownership and escalation paths.



Governance Challenge	What It Looks Like on Campus	Why It Stalls Progress	Recommendation
The scope feels overwhelming.	Committees attempt to address all data domains at once.	Broad scope creates paralysis rather than progress.	Start with a small set of high-impact data elements tied to impending decisions or risks.
Governance is positioned as an IT responsibility.	Governance is framed solely as a technical or data-cleanup initiative.	The people closest to data creation and use disengage from the work.	Position governance as shared leadership work across academic and administrative units.
Governance is not embedded in daily work.	Documentation exists, but staff rely on spreadsheets and local workarounds.	Governance feels like extra work rather than an enabler of better work.	Embed governed data into routine reports, dashboards, and workflows.
Progress is hard to see and sustain.	Improvements feel abstract, and knowledge lives with individuals.	Buy-in erodes, and previous gains are lost during staff turnover.	Communicate early wins and document decisions to maintain progress.

Taken together, these challenges explain why data governance so often stalls, even when institutions agree it is necessary. Yet the cost of inaction is rising, as colleges face a growing set of urgent pressures that demand timely, trusted data. The following section examines seven urgent issues colleges and universities already face and illustrates how effective data governance helps leaders respond with greater speed, clarity, and confidence.

### What is your role in bringing these recommendations to life? And where should you start?

- Learn how to gain buy-in in the section titled Institutional Leadership Roles in Data Governance on page 53.
- Understand foundational steps to take in the section titled 5 Pillars of Effective Data Governance on page 52.





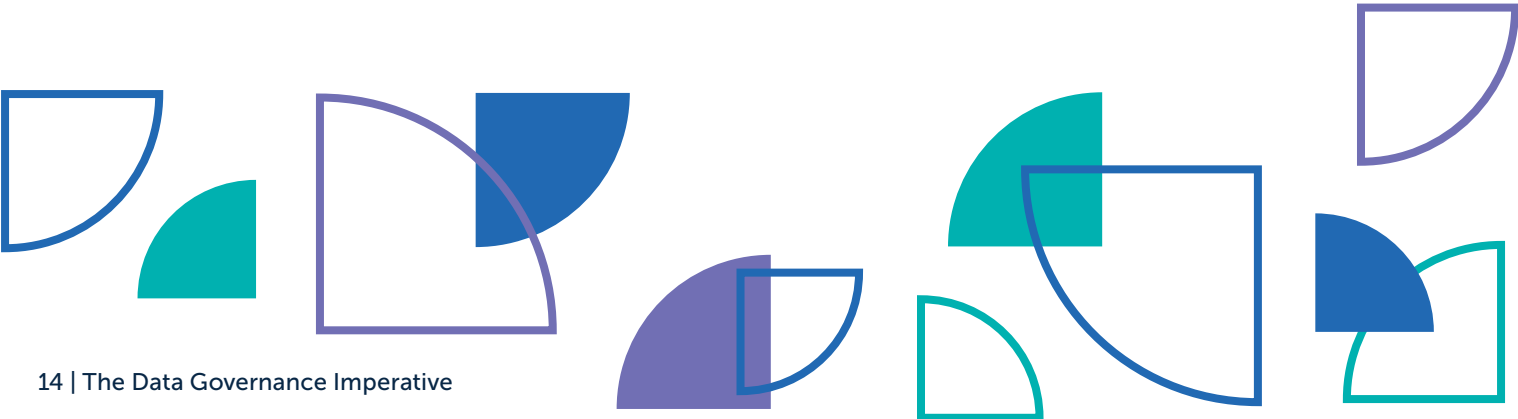
# **Seven Urgent Challenges** Data Governance Can Help Solve

# Seven Urgent Institutional Challenges

The seven challenges outlined in this section highlight where weak data foundations create the greatest institutional risk. **Addressing them requires moving data governance out of IT and into everyday decision-making across campus.** Together, these urgent imperatives for data governance provide a practical lens for you to prioritize institutional data governance efforts around the decisions and risks that matter most.

“ These imperatives are converging into a perfect storm of financial pressure. The only way CFOs, presidents, and cabinets can navigate it with confidence is by grounding decisions in trusted, institution-wide data.”

—EAB data expert



## Urgent Institutional Challenge



**AI Is Advancing Faster than Institutional Data Foundations**



**Recruitment Is Under Pressure as Confidence in College Declines**



**Retention Efforts Lack Clear Insight into Why Students Stay or Leave**



**Slow Program Review Systems Hinder Academic Agility**



**Institutions Face Growing Pressure to Demonstrate Workforce Value**



**Campus Safety Has Become a Higher-Stakes Institutional Responsibility**



**Reporting and Accountability Expectations Are Rising**

## What This Section Examines

Institutions are moving quickly to adopt AI, but inconsistent definitions, unclear ownership, and uneven data quality limit trust in outputs and increase operational risk.

As prospective students become more skeptical about the return on investment of higher education, institutions must rely on clear, credible data to demonstrate value and differentiate themselves.

Although colleges collect extensive student information, fragmented systems and misaligned metrics make it difficult to identify the drivers of retention and persistence.

Slow, data-poor program review processes delay decisions and limit institutions' ability to adapt academic offerings to evolving student interests and pathways.

Stakeholders increasingly expect clear evidence that programs lead to employment and earnings, intensifying the need for institutions to align academic outcomes with labor market data.

Heightened expectations for campus safety require timely coordination across academic, behavioral, and operational systems, yet siloed information often prevents effective responses.

Expanding federal, state, and accreditor requirements demand accurate, auditable data, while manual processes and unclear definitions increase the risk of errors and delays.

## CHALLENGE #1

# AI Is Moving Faster than Our Data Foundations

You are already experimenting with artificial intelligence on campus, and you are not alone: More than 85% of colleges are already using AI in some form, often to identify student risk earlier, improve forecasting, and automate routine processes.<sup>2</sup> But as interest accelerates, many institutions are discovering that their data foundations are not yet ready to support responsible, scalable use.

### Key risks include:

- **AI can amplify weak data rather than fix it:** Without shared definitions, clear ownership, and documented data quality practices, AI models may produce outputs that look precise but are difficult to interpret or trust. Inconsistent inputs, outdated data feeds, and unclear assumptions introduce bias and operational risk.
- **Poor data foundations limit adoption and value:** Recent EDUCAUSE analyses show that poor data quality and unclear data governance are among the biggest barriers to effective AI use in higher education,<sup>3</sup> slowing adoption and preventing institutions from using AI with confidence.

Strong data governance ensures that AI tools are built on reliable, well-understood data, allowing you to scale AI use responsibly, reduce risk, and turn experimentation into real institutional value.

“

Clean, consistent data sets the stage for future AI integration, avoiding ‘garbage in, garbage out’ scenarios.”

—Executive Director of Institutional Research, Four-year public institution



## Strategic Questions Institutions Struggle to Answer

- How confident are we that the historical data used to train models was defined consistently year to year?
- Do we have documented processes for validating data before it is used for predictions or recommendations?
- Can we clearly identify which system is the authoritative source for each critical data element?
- Do staff trust the underlying data enough to act on AI recommendations?
- Are we prepared to explain and defend AI-driven decisions to faculty, students, or regulators?



## Common Data Misalignments Across the Institution

- **Inconsistent academic calendars** and deadline dates across systems
- **Mismatched course and program information** between catalogs, SIS, and websites
- **Advising and support guidance stored outside governed systems**
- **Duplicate or conflicting student identifiers** across SIS, LMS, CRM, and advising systems
- **Inaccurate role or status data** for students and employees
- **Conflicting sources of truth** for academic policies and procedures



## What you could do with stronger data governance:

Deploy AI tools with confidence, reduce risk, and unlock meaningful gains in student success and operational efficiency.

## CHALLENGE #2

# Recruitment Is Under Pressure as Confidence in College Declines

You may be feeling the strain of an increasingly challenging enrollment environment, driven by demographic decline and waning public trust. Only 36% of U.S. adults report having a great deal or quite a lot of confidence in higher education, while concerns about affordability and return on investment increasingly shape enrollment decisions.<sup>4</sup> Even as confidence slowly increases and enrollment in some sectors—such as community colleges—rises, there's more work to be done to restore public confidence in higher education.

Without data governance, inconsistent data becomes more than an internal problem. It limits how institutions show value to prospective students and manage the enrollment funnel at a moment when both clarity and credibility matter most.

### Key risks include:

- **Missed opportunities to tell a compelling story:** Without consistent, trusted data, colleges struggle to confidently highlight student success, outcomes, and value in ways that resonate with prospective students and counter a skeptical public narrative about higher education.
- **Weaker visibility into the enrollment pipeline:** When definitions and metrics vary across systems, institutions lose a clear view of who their prospects are, where they are in the funnel, and how likely they are to enroll.

By establishing shared definitions, reporting timelines, and ownership, governance creates a single source of truth that supports accurate enrollment forecasting, clearer communication, and more defensible claims about institutional value.

“

Admissions would bring one set of enrollment numbers, and IR would bring another. We spent more time arguing about whose numbers were right than actually deciding what to do.”

—Enrollment professional,  
EAB interview



## Strategic Questions Institutions Struggle to Answer

- How many real prospective students do we currently have in the funnel?
- Where are applicants dropping out of the process, and why?
- Which recruitment channels convert students to enrollment?
- How accurate are our enrollment forecasts compared to who actually enrolls?
- Are we presenting consistent enrollment and outcomes data publicly and internally?
- How do financial aid offers influence yield across different student groups?
- How can we use our outcomes data to better tell prospective students about the value of a credential from our institution?



## Common Data Misalignments Across the Institution

- **Inquiry counts** differ based on source, interaction type, or system of record
- **Application status definitions** vary for in-progress, incomplete, withdrawn, or reopened applications
- **Admit categories** such as “conditional,” “provisional,” or “wait-listed” are applied inconsistently
- **Yield and conversion rates** are calculated using different denominators across offices
- **Deposit and enrollment indicators** are updated on different timelines across systems
- **Public-facing enrollment statistics** do not align with internal dashboards or forecasts



## What you could do with stronger data governance:

Produce more accurate forecasts across the enrollment funnel, align messaging, and compete more effectively in a shrinking market.

## CHALLENGE #3

# Retention Efforts Lack Clear Insight into Why Students Stay or Leave

Retention and completion have shifted from long-term improvement goals to immediate risks for your institution. Since 2020, colleges have lost more than 1.2 million undergraduates, and only about 62% of students who start college complete a credential within six years, with even lower rates for part-time, first-generation, and adult learners.<sup>5</sup> In an era of demographic decline and heightened scrutiny of outcomes, those losses have real implications for your institution's financial stability.

### Key risks include:

- **Failing to support students who are at risk of leaving:** As overall enrollment declines and demographic pressures intensify, every student who leaves represents not just a missed opportunity to intervene but also lost tuition, disrupted planning, and added strain on your institution's financial stability. Without a clear, shared view of retention data, preventable attrition becomes a risk you can no longer afford.
- **Losing credibility with prospective students:** Today's value-conscious college shoppers pay close attention to retention rates, time to degree, and completion outcomes. Without trusted, consistent data, it becomes harder to demonstrate progress and deliver on the promises you make to students and families.

Without a clear, shared understanding of your retention data, it becomes harder to see where students lose momentum or which interventions truly make a difference, limiting your ability to improve outcomes, protect tuition revenue, and communicate value with confidence.

“

We've been bean counters for years. I don't need to know how many; I need to know why.”

—Chief Data Officer and Associate Vice President for Institutional Research, four-year public institution



## Strategic Questions Institutions Struggle to Answer

- Where are students losing momentum along the pathway to completion?
- Which early alerts lead to meaningful interventions? Which lead to no action?
- Are certain courses or requirements acting as consistent bottlenecks?
- Which student populations are most at risk this term, not last year?
- Which interventions improve persistence at scale, not just anecdotally?
- Are completion gaps narrowing or widening over time across programs and student populations?



## Common Data Misalignments Across the Institution

- **Persistence and retention calculations** use different census dates or enrollment cutoffs
- **Early alert indicators** are defined inconsistently across faculty, advising, and vendor systems
- **Course completion and withdrawal codes** are applied inconsistently across academic units
- **Credit momentum measures are calculated using different rules** for attempted, earned, or transferred credits
- **Cohort definitions** change year to year, undermining longitudinal analysis



## What you could do with stronger data governance:

Move from lagging indicators to timely insight that helps prevent student attrition before it becomes an institutional risk.

## CHALLENGE #4

# Slow Program Review Systems Hinder Academic Agility

You are under growing pressure to understand which academic programs and courses are working, which need more attention, and how to adjust offerings as student demand and labor market needs shift in a rapidly changing economy. Program review is no longer just a periodic compliance exercise; it now influences your institution's financial health by determining where you invest and how you balance your academic portfolio.

### Key risks include:

- **Long review cycles cannot keep pace with change:** Traditional program reviews conducted every five to ten years are too slow and too siloed to respond to shifts in the economy, student interests, or workforce demand. When you rely on these cycles, declining enrollment, cost inefficiencies, or weak student outcomes often surface only after problems have become difficult or costly to address.
- **Disjointed data clouds program performance:** When enrollment, course success, instructional cost, and outcomes are defined differently across systems, it becomes difficult to see how programs are really performing or compare them fairly.

Strong data governance helps you evaluate programs more holistically and on an ongoing basis, aligning enrollment trends, student outcomes, resource allocation, and workforce relevance so you can make proactive, evidence-based decisions about your academic offerings.

“

Traditional academic program reviews almost universally end in pleas for more resources and rarely lead to significant change. More often than not, they're just check-the-box exercises.”

—Provost, EAB interview



## Strategic Questions Institutions Struggle to Answer

- Which programs are growing, stable, or declining right now?
- Which courses consistently underperform in enrollment or student success?
- How much does it actually cost to deliver each program or course?
- Where do we have unused instructional capacity? Where do we have staffing strain?
- Which programs align with workforce demand, and which do not?
- What changes should we make this year rather than five years from now?



## Common Data Misalignments Across the Institution

- **Program and major codes** that differ across academic systems, enrollment reporting, and financial records
- **Enrollment and student credit hour counts by program** pulled from different census points or time frames
- **Course success, DFW rates, and completion measures** calculated inconsistently across departments or terms
- **Instructional cost and staffing data** that cannot reliably be tied to specific programs or courses
- **Course-to-program mappings** that are outdated, incomplete, or maintained differently across units
- **Graduate outcomes and workforce alignment measures** that are sourced from disconnected datasets with inconsistent definitions



## What you could do with stronger data governance:

Make proactive adjustments to academic offerings rather than reacting after enrollment or outcomes decline.

## CHALLENGE #5

# Institutions Face Growing Pressure to Demonstrate Workforce Value

Performance-based funding models, proposed Workforce Pell eligibility, and expanding federal earnings-based accountability are raising the stakes for how you document and communicate workforce value. At the same time, students, families, and policymakers expect clear evidence that credentials translate into economic opportunity, making employment and wage outcomes central to rebuilding trust in higher education.

### Key risks include:

- **You may be held accountable for outcomes you cannot easily measure:** Only about 20% of colleges report having the ability to comprehensively collect and analyze workforce and labor market data, and just 17% have clear institutional policies for using that information.<sup>6</sup> As accountability expectations grow, many institutions are being asked to answer questions their data infrastructure cannot yet support.
- **Limited measurement restricts action and weakens trust:** When you cannot reliably link programs to employment and wage outcomes, it becomes harder to identify which programs deliver value, make informed investment decisions, or communicate credible results to students, funders, and policymakers.

Strong data governance gives you a foundation for connecting programs to outcomes, meeting accountability requirements, and making clear, defensible claims about workforce value when it matters most.



## Strategic Questions Institutions Struggle to Answer

- Which programs lead to strong employment and wage outcomes?
- How do outcomes differ by credential level or pathway?
- Are our programs aligned with regional labor market demand?
- Where should we invest, redesign, or consider sunsetting programs?
- Can we clearly communicate workforce value to students and policymakers?
- How do employment outcomes vary across student populations?



## Common Data Misalignments Across the Institution

- **Program and credential identifiers** that do not align across academic and reporting systems
- **Course-to-program mappings** that are used inconsistently over time
- **Graduation and completion dates** that differ between institutional reports
- **Employment outcome definitions** such as placement, retention, or wage thresholds don't match across systems
- **External labor market data matches** that use inconsistent keys or methodologies
- **Alumni employment records** that lack standardized update processes



## What you could do with stronger data governance:

Show students, families, and policymakers how academic programs translate into real economic opportunity.

## CHALLENGE #6

# Campus Safety Has Become a Higher-Stakes Responsibility

Increasingly, students, their families, and community stakeholders have high expectations for how colleges respond to potential threats. Keeping your campus safe depends on your ability to synthesize timely information from multiple sources, including conduct records, security systems, emergency alerts, facilities data, and student support services. When these data sources are siloed or reported inconsistently, it becomes harder to spot early warning signs or coordinate an effective response when it matters most.

### Key risks include:

- **Early indicators can be missed:** National campus safety reviews show that most individuals involved in targeted campus violence exhibited observable warning behaviors beforehand, often across academic, behavioral, and administrative contexts.<sup>7</sup> Without integrated, well-governed data, those signals are easier to overlook.
- **Fragmented information slows response:** When data cannot be easily shared or trusted across units, leaders may struggle to see patterns, account for individuals on campus, work with emergency teams, or act quickly in high-risk situations.

As expectations for preparedness and prevention continue to rise, data clarity is no longer optional. Strong data governance enables you to connect information across systems, support timely escalation, and coordinate responses so you can act decisively when safety is at risk.



## Strategic Questions Institutions Struggle to Answer

- Are there patterns of behavior that signal emerging safety risks?
- How quickly can we coordinate across security, student affairs, and facilities?
- Are incident reports and alerts being logged consistently across systems?
- Can we demonstrate compliance with safety policies and response protocols?
- In case of an incident, who is in a specific building or classroom right now? Which students or employees need to be contacted immediately?



## Common Data Misalignments Across the Institution

- **Building and room identifiers** that differ across scheduling, facilities, and security systems
- **Class rosters** that are not synchronized with real-time enrollment changes
- **Employee and student location data** that is updated on different schedules
- **Incident and conduct codes** that vary by reporting system
- **Alert status indicators** that are logged differently across platforms
- **Contact information** that is stored inconsistently across HR, SIS, and emergency systems



## What you could do with stronger data governance:

Integrate safety-related data, identify warning behaviors early, and respond quickly to emergencies before risks escalate.

## CHALLENGE #7

# Reporting and Accountability Expectations Have Risen

Federal reporting expectations continue to grow, with new requirements tied to return on investment, FAFSA reforms, financial transparency rules, and earnings-based accountability. Alongside newer requirements such as Financial Value Transparency, Gainful Employment, and expanded IPEDS admissions reporting, institutions must still meet long-standing state and federal obligations, including IPEDS reporting, which has grown increasingly complex and labor-intensive over time.

### Key risks include:

- **Errors and delays can undermine compliance and credibility:** Recent federal reviews have highlighted weaknesses in how data submissions are communicated and processed, showing how technical issues, unclear guidance, and reporting errors can disrupt your ability to submit accurate information.<sup>8</sup>
- **Growing requirements strain staff capacity:** As reporting obligations expand, staff spend more time reconciling data, correcting errors, and responding to new rules, leaving less capacity for analysis, improvement work, and other institutional priorities.

Strong data governance helps you reduce the reporting burden, meet expanding requirements with confidence, and protect institutional credibility as accountability expectations continue to rise.

“

It used to take two people weeks to piece together the IPEDS submission from scratch every year ... . We were at risk of losing almost \$1 million dollars in funding from state agencies, but because of the partnership with Edify, we were able to get those compliance reports out in time and in the right format.”

—CIO, Two-year public institution



## Strategic Questions Institutions Struggle to Answer

- Can we produce audit-ready reports without last-minute reconciliation?
- Do our reported numbers align across federal, state, and accreditor submissions?
- Who owns each reported metric and its definition?
- How confident are we in the accuracy of our most recent submission?
- Where are we exposed to compliance or funding risks?
- How quickly can we respond to new or changing reporting requirements?



## Common Data Misalignments Across the Institution

- **Student cohort definitions** for IPEDS, ROI, or accountability reporting
- **Enrollment intensity classifications** such as full-time vs. part-time status
- **Program classification codes and credential levels**
- **Completion and time-to-degree calculations**
- **Financial aid eligibility indicators** and FAFSA-related attributes
- **Census dates and reporting cutoffs** that are applied inconsistently



## What you could do with stronger data governance:

Reduce your federal reporting burden, protect staff bandwidth, keep pace with expanding requirements, and safeguard your institution's credibility.





# Case Studies

## Data Governance in Action



# Case Studies:

## Data Governance in Action

The following case studies show how colleges and universities are using data governance, supported by Edify, as a practical response to today's most pressing institutional challenges. Rather than starting with abstract frameworks, these examples show how governance helps institutions act with greater speed, confidence, and coordination.

**Edify is EAB's data management platform designed specifically for higher education.** It brings data from across institutional systems into a single, governed foundation, enabling shared definitions, clear ownership, and trusted reporting so colleges can make faster, more confident decisions.

► **Learn more on page 43**

### University of Montana

#### Project Focus

Reengaging stopped-out students and strengthening workforce alignment

#### Challenges Addressed

- Institutions face growing pressure to demonstrate workforce value
- Recruitment is under pressure as confidence in college declines

### Four-Year Institution Cohort

#### Project Focus

Making program review nimbler and market-responsive

#### Challenge Addressed

- Slow program review systems are hindering academic agility

### Des Moines Area Community College

#### Project Focus

Enabling immediate, coordinated campus safety response

#### Challenge Addressed

- Campus safety has become a higher-stakes institutional responsibility

### Northampton Community College

#### Project Focus

Reducing reporting risk and strengthening institutional resilience

#### Challenge Addressed

- Reporting and accountability expectations are rising

## CASE STUDY 1

# Reengaging Stopped-Out Students and Strengthening Workforce Alignment



### Challenges addressed:

*Institutions Face Growing Pressure to Demonstrate Workforce Value; Recruitment Is Under Pressure as Confidence in College Declines*

The University of Montana (UM) faced a growing challenge with direct implications for both workforce development and strategic enrollment management. A significant share of Montanans earned substantial academic credit but left the school before completing a credential. More than 100,000 residents fell into this “some college, no credential” category, even as statewide demand for workers with postsecondary credentials continued to grow. UM recognized that addressing this gap was essential not only for student mobility but also for strengthening the state’s workforce pipeline.

In response, UM launched an initiative to identify, reengage, and support students who had stopped out and were eligible or nearly eligible for an Associate of Arts degree. Central to this effort was the creation of a custom DegreeWorks workspace within Edify, which unified data from DegreeWorks and Banner into a governed environment. This integration allowed UM to clean complex records, standardize eligibility logic, and provide shared dashboards accessible to multiple campus teams.

### As a result, the University of Montana was able to:

- Identify stopped-out students eligible for completion at scale by using consistent definitions
- Eliminate discrepancies between DegreeWorks and Banner that previously had obscured eligibility
- Launch **targeted reengagement campaigns** through Navigate360 in partnership with advising and alumni relations
- Coordinate with the **Department of Labor** to align credential completion with workforce opportunities
- Design clear post-completion pathways for **career advancement or bachelor’s degree reenrollment**

By clarifying business rules, standardizing degree audit logic, and ensuring records could be accurately interpreted consistently across units, UM transformed fragmented data into actionable insight. The result was a sustainable, repeatable process for credential completion that strengthened both enrollment strategy and workforce outcomes.

## Identify, Engage, and Support Students Toward AA Completion and Workforce Success at the University of Montana



### Identification of Eligible Students (Fall 2024)

Develop custom DegreeWorks workspace in Edify to identify individuals who have accumulated sufficient credits to meet AA degree requirements but have not been awarded one.

### Reengagement and Outreach (Fall 2025)

Partner with Alumni Office and Department of Labor, use Navigate360 for email outreach campaigns, and send mail packets.

### Workforce Development and Reenrollment (Spring 2026)

Create two pathways for career support and reenrollment for students post-AA degree attainment.

### Evaluation and Sustainability (Fall 2026)

Prepare operational reports to measure impact and ensure sustainability of this process.

## CASE STUDY 2

# Making Program Review More Nimble and Market-Responsive

### Four-Year Institution Cohort

#### Challenge addressed:

*Slow Program Review Systems Hinder Academic Agility*

Across several four-year public and private institutions, academic leaders faced a similar challenge. Traditional program review cycles were too slow and too disconnected from day-to-day decision-making to support meaningful academic agility. **Reviews conducted every five to ten years relied on static reports and manually assembled data**, leaving leaders without a shared, timely view of enrollment trends, instructional cost, course demand, and student outcomes.

Departments often rolled forward course schedules from prior years rather than aligning offerings to current student demand. Enrollment, student credit hour production, instructional workload, and financial data lived in separate systems and were defined differently across offices. **As a result, conversations about program health were reactive and focused on reconciling numbers instead of planning improvements.**

In partnership with EAB, these institutions integrated student information, course enrollment, instructional workload, and financial data into a governed, shared environment. Early analyses aligned section offerings with historical enrollment patterns

and identified gaps between demand and instructional allocation. By standardizing definitions and clarifying ownership of metrics such as student credit hours per faculty member, course fill rates, instructional cost per student credit hour, and program-level enrollment trends, leaders created a common foundation for evaluating academic performance.

#### As a result, these institutions were able to:

- Conduct **regular program health checks** instead of relying solely on multiyear review cycles
- **Identify excess or collapsible sections** by comparing target section size to actual enrollment trends
- Reduce reliance on adjunct instruction in under-enrolled sections while protecting access in high-demand courses
- **Surface programs with declining enrollment** or weak course progression earlier
- **Compare instructional cost** per student credit hour across programs using shared definitions
- Align deans, department chairs, and finance leaders **around a single, trusted view** of program performance

In multiple cases, institutions identified dozens of under-filled sections and rebalanced instructional resources before financial strain intensified. Leaders also uncovered misalignment between staffing levels and student demand, allowing for earlier and more deliberate adjustments.

## Results at Cherry Blossom University\* after Two Terms

\*Pseudonym; blinded at institution's request

# 70

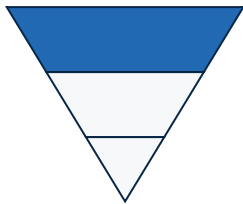
Sections with fewer than six students enrolled one week before term start were collapsed.

# \$900K

Instructional cost savings from reassigning faculty workloads away from courses with fewer than six students.

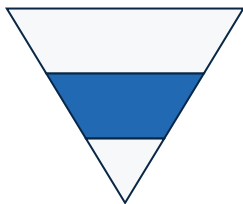
This early work, powered by EAB's Academic Performance Solutions—which later became part of Edify—revealed a consistent need across institutions for a repeatable way to connect enrollment, instructional cost, capacity, and outcomes in one place. In response, EAB expanded Edify to include a dedicated Program Review Accelerator that operationalizes these insights and supports ongoing, market-responsive academic planning.

### Inside Edify's Program Health Accelerator



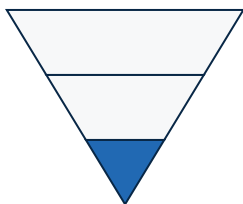
Compare program performance **institution-wide**

*Monitor enrollment and retention trends and identify programs for further analysis or review*



Measure **individual program and department** performance

*Assess students enrolled, students graduated, and whether a program uses the appropriate mix of instructional staff*



Understand **student** progress through individual programs

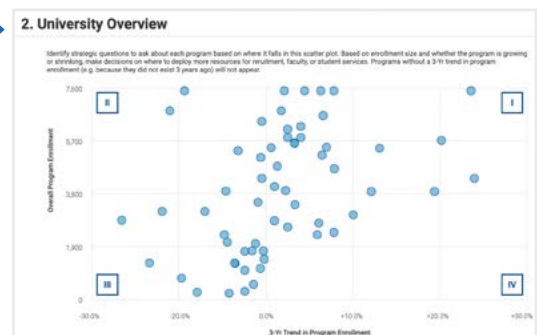
*Diagnose barriers to student enrollment and progress; understand how students migrate into and out of the program*

**College Enrollment Summary**

The college overview section provides high level KPIs around program growth, retention, and graduation rate. You can use this section to inform which colleges are experiencing the greatest enrollment shifts.

College Key Performance Indicators

	Program Enrollment	3-Yr Trend	Conferrals	3-Yr Trend	Fall-to-Fall Retention	6-Yr Conferral Rate	6-Yr Conferral Rate
College of Arts and Science	2,500	-0.8%	459	-10.3%	68.3%	74.3%	83.9%
College of Business	2,300	+15.5%	134	+5.2%	84%	86.8%	91.3%
College of Nursing	1,800	-0.3%	91	-6.0%	68.5%	64.2%	68.7%



## CASE STUDY 3

# Using Data Governance to Enable Immediate, Coordinated Campus Safety Response

## DMACC

### Challenge addressed:

*Campus Safety Has Become a Higher-Stakes Institutional Responsibility*

As a large, multi-site institution, Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) faced a familiar but high-stakes challenge: critical safety information was distributed across more than 50 systems, with no shared data dictionary or standardized structure. During a public safety incident near one of DMACC's campus buildings, staff spent more than two hours manually assembling class rosters, office assignments, and contact information. In a moment where seconds matter, the lack of aligned, trusted data created unnecessary risk and slowed response.

To address this vulnerability, DMACC partnered with EAB to build a real-time Emergency Dashboard in Edify. The goal was not simply better reporting, but a single, governed view of campus activity that could be relied on during emergencies. By unifying class schedules, office locations, event data, and employee records into a validated source of truth, DMACC transformed how safety teams access and act on information.

### As a result, DMACC was able to:

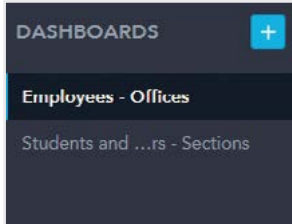
- Provide **real-time visibility** into who is in each building at any moment
- Quickly filter individuals by **location, time of day, and role**
- Access **accurate contact information** for rapid outreach and verification
- Coordinate responses across **public safety, administration, and external partners**
- **Reduce emergency response time by 97%, from over two hours to four minutes**

The Emergency Dashboard has since supported multiple high-impact scenarios, including locating an unresponsive employee, managing infectious disease containment, and notifying school districts when high school students were present during incidents. The solution has also drawn attention from the Iowa Department of Education as a model for campus safety readiness.

“

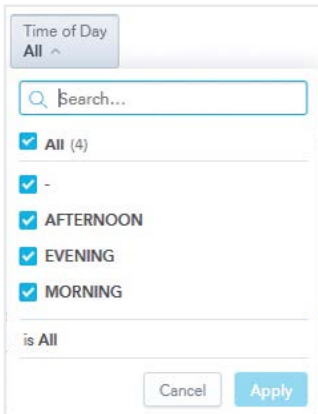
What good is enrollment if we can't keep our students safe?”

—Executive Director, Institutional Effectiveness, Des Moines Area Community College



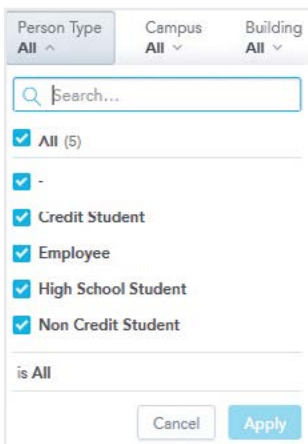
## Dashboards

Toggle between employees with offices and course locations, leveraging data from two Banner tables



## Time of Day Filter

Refine courses by time of day offered (e.g., afternoon, evening, morning) instead of by the hour



## Person Type Filter

Isolate groups of students for communication purposes (e.g., campus incident may require us to know which high school students were present to notify their schools)



## CASE STUDY 4

# Reducing Reporting Risk and Strengthening Institutional Resilience

## NORTHAMPTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE

### Challenge addressed:

*Reporting and Accountability Expectations Are Rising*

Northampton Community College (NCC) faced a common challenge in higher education: compliance reporting processes that were slow, inconsistent, and heavily manual. Prior to its transformation, NCC's Institutional Effectiveness team spent weeks reconciling data across multiple systems, validating definitions by hand, and producing PDF-based reports that were not easily audited or reused. Conflicting interpretations of IPEDS requirements further complicated reporting cycles, increasing the risk of errors, delays, and potential funding loss.

NCC partnered with EAB to streamline and automate its federal and state reporting processes. By ingesting raw data from Workday Student into Edify's governed data model, the institution aligned records with standardized federal and state definitions and replaced ad hoc spreadsheets with repeatable, auditable workflows. **What once required weeks of manual effort could now be completed in less than a day.**

### As a result, Northampton Community College was able to:

- Save **hundreds of staff hours** each reporting cycle through automation
- Apply **consistent definitions** across reporting periods, even amid staff turnover
- Quickly **identify and resolve discrepancies** using transparent raw-data views and lineage
- Respond to last-minute reporting requests within **24 hours**, avoiding a **\$950,000 funding loss**
- Reduce reliance on manual reconciliation and one-off workarounds

Data governance was the foundation that made these gains possible. Prior to Edify, NCC managed multiple interpretations of key IPEDS definitions, resulting in conflicting reports and rework. Governance established a single source of truth by standardizing definitions, mirroring federal logic, and embedding quality checks directly into reporting workflows.

“

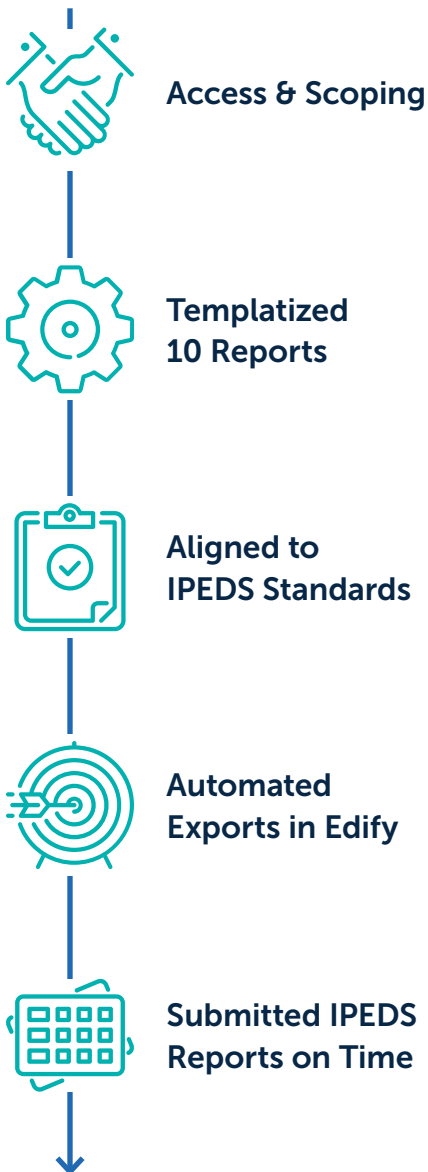
EAB has the right combination of higher ed knowledge—they get our institution, they get our vertical, they understand who we are and what we're trying to accomplish.”

—Brian Gardner, Chief Information Officer, Northampton Community College

# Breaking the Cycle of From-Scratch Report Creation at Northampton Community College

How a 10-Day Sprint Delivered a 75% Faster, Repeatable, and Reliable Process

## 10 Days to Build Automation



“

There was urgency to meet the immediate IPEDS deadline, but the real driver was eliminating a fragile, person-dependent process and replacing it with **something repeatable for every future cycle.**”

—Brian Gardner,  
Chief Information Officer

# Conclusion: Making Data Governance a Leadership Practice

The challenges described in this paper point to a shared reality for colleges and universities: Data now shapes nearly every decision that matters. From enrollment forecasting and financial planning to student support, workforce alignment, and public accountability, the seven pressures outlined earlier in this report are converging, making fragmented, ad hoc data practices increasingly unsustainable.

Put simply, strong data governance matters because it enables institutions to:

- Respond more quickly to changing conditions
- Coordinate decision-making across academic, financial, and student support functions
- Communicate clearly and credibly with internal and external stakeholders
- Maintain trust as data becomes more visible and more consequential

Across the case studies, institutions used continuous, collaborative data governance to solve distinct but related challenges, including:

- **Managing enrollment and revenue uncertainty** by aligning admissions, finance, and academic data around shared forecasts.
- **Strengthening external credibility** through consistent definitions and workflows for public reporting and compliance.
- **Reducing leadership friction** by clarifying data ownership and governance roles across the cabinet.
- **Adapting programs to workforce change** by integrating labor market data with institutional outcomes.

Cumulatively, these examples show how governance functions as an enabling capability rather than a constraint. By addressing immediate operational problems, institutions also strengthened their ability to navigate the broader structural pressures outlined earlier in this report.

For institutions ready to move from aspiration to action, the appendices provide practical guidance:

- **Appendix A** outlines governance structures that support coordination and accountability.
- **Appendix B** details concrete actions senior leaders can take to strengthen data culture and sustain momentum.

When leaders adopt these steps and model these behaviors, governance becomes more than a framework. It becomes a shared practice that strengthens institutional agility, improves decision-making, and supports better outcomes for students, faculty, and the institution. When data governance is treated as an ongoing leadership practice rather than a onetime project, institutions gain the clarity, coordination, and confidence needed to act decisively in an increasingly complex environment.



# **EAB: A Trusted Partner on Your Data Governance Journey**

Many institutions treat data governance and data infrastructure as separate efforts. Governance is expected to come first, followed later by data modernization. In practice, this approach often stalls progress. **EAB helps institutions advance both together**, ensuring shared definitions, ownership, and quality standards are established in the same environment where data is integrated, analyzed, and used for real decisions.

### **How EAB Supports the Data Governance Process**

EAB's approach recognizes that data governance is not a onetime project or an IT initiative. It is an institutional capability built through use, reinforced by leadership behavior, and sustained through shared infrastructure. By combining technology and hands-on guidance, EAB helps institutions move from fragmented data and delayed decisions to clarity, coordination, and confidence.

### **Edify: Higher Education's Leading Data Warehouse**

Edify is EAB's data management platform designed specifically for higher education. It brings data from across institutional systems into a single, governed foundation, enabling shared definitions, clear ownership, and trusted reporting. Rather than treating governance as documentation that sits outside daily workflows, Edify embeds governance directly into how data is integrated, documented, validated, and accessed.

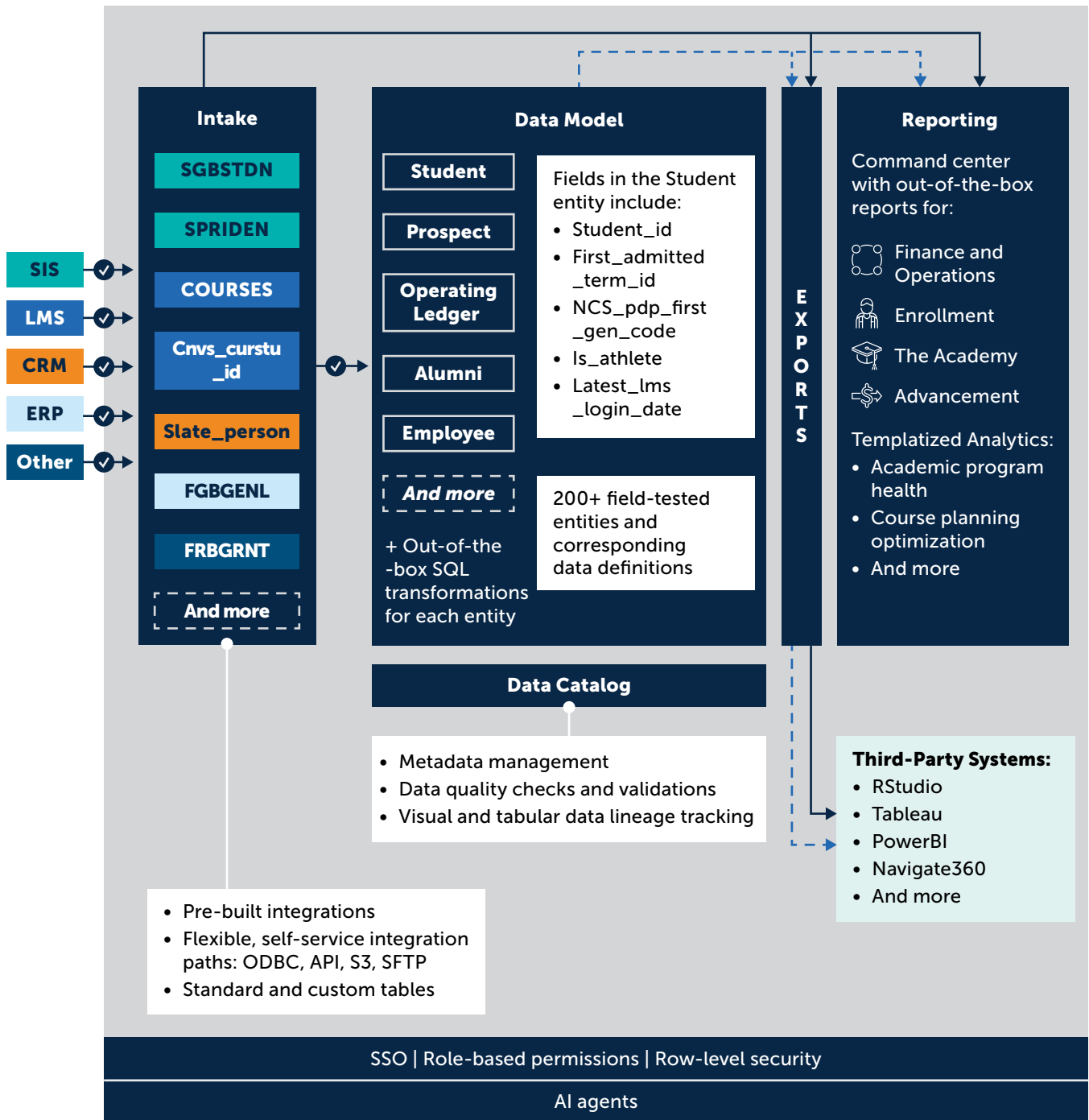
“

Being afraid to use data warehousing technology because you want to keep organizing your data is like cleaning before the house cleaners come—we are here to help colleges sort through the mess.”

—EAB data expert

Edify supports governance by centralizing data from student, academic, finance, HR, and operational systems; storing standardized definitions and business rules alongside the data itself; making lineage and calculation logic transparent; and applying validation and access controls aligned to institutional standards. In this way, governance becomes a practical, repeatable process reinforced through everyday use.

## Inside Edify: Your Data in Action



## The Edify Command Center

The Command Center translates data governance into action by delivering a curated set of operational reports aligned to the decisions leaders make most often. Instead of asking institutions to define metrics, negotiate ownership, and build dashboards from scratch, the Command Center operationalizes governance through a shared starting point: purpose-built, research-backed reports organized around core functional areas such as enrollment, student success, advancement, finance, HR, and facilities. By standardizing how common questions are defined and answered and making those answers accessible to nontechnical users, the Command Center helps institutions sustain governance beyond policy and committees, enabling shared understanding and more confident decision-making.

In practice, the Edify Command Center:

- Provides **50+ pre-built “must-run” reports** grounded in governed, documented data
- Organizes reporting into **10 core functional areas**, clarifying responsibility without centralizing control
- Reinforces **consistent definitions and metrics** across decentralized teams
- Enables **faster cross-functional decisions** by reducing debate over data validity
- Embeds **data governance standards into everyday workflows**, not just oversight structures

## Edify Accelerators

Edify Accelerators are pre-built analytic workspaces designed to help institutions act quickly on high-priority use cases while reinforcing data governance at the same time. Each Accelerator focuses on a specific institutional challenge and includes standardized data models, definitions, and logic informed by EAB’s research and partner experience.

**Accelerators allow institutions to start governance with real decisions rather than abstract standards.**

They reduce manual reconciliation, apply shared definitions consistently across stakeholders, and generate early wins that build confidence and momentum.

► **Learn more about Edify Accelerators at**

[eab.com/resources/tool/edify-accelerators-custom-dashboards/](https://eab.com/resources/tool/edify-accelerators-custom-dashboards/)

## What the Edify Delivery Team Provides

Technology alone does not create effective data governance. The Edify Delivery team partners with institutions to ensure Edify drives **lasting value, not just technical deployment**. In addition to supporting platform implementation, the team supports ongoing strategy, governance, adoption, and capacity-building so institutions can sustain progress as priorities evolve.

### Enterprise Data Management Collaborative

EAB's Enterprise Data Management Collaborative brings together campus data leaders in a guided, cohort-based workshop series to help institutions build and implement a comprehensive enterprise data strategy that goes beyond stand alone governance committees. The service provides an expert-led curriculum, peer learning, and practical workbooks to break down data silos, secure stakeholder buy-in, and develop a sustainable framework for improving data quality, accessibility, and decision-making across the institution.

#### Core services include:

##### Implementation and Integration

- Platform setup, security configuration, and single sign-on
- Integration with core systems such as SIS, LMS, ERP, CRM, and external data sources
- Data modeling, validation, and ingestion using higher ed-specific best practices

##### Data Governance Enablement

- Development of shared definitions, documentation, and lineage
- Validation rules and data quality checks to establish trusted records
- Permissioning and access design aligned to institutional roles and policies

##### Data Strategy and Prioritization

- Early data strategy assessments to identify gaps, risks, and high-value use cases
- Scoping and sequencing projects to deliver value quickly while building a durable foundation
- Ongoing roadmap support as institutional needs change

##### Analytics, Reporting, and Use Case Development

- Delivery of pre-scoped and custom analytics projects
- Configuration of operational dashboards and leadership reporting
- Support for compliance, program review, enrollment, and student success use cases

##### Change Management and Capacity Building

- Training for technical and nontechnical users
- Documentation and knowledge transfer to reduce reliance on external support
- Partnership model that augments internal teams rather than replacing them





# Get Your Campus AI-Ready with Edify

Edify Is a Data Management Platform to Support Higher Ed's Biggest Decisions

## 3x

Faster to deploy than a traditional data warehouse

## 50%

Average percentage faster to build reports with Edify data

Scan this code to watch a 1-minute video about the Edify platform.



## Access, Warehousing, and Integration

### De-Silo Your Data

Edify is a **vendor-agnostic, cloud-native data** lake and warehouse.

NAME	DESCRIPTION
<a href="#">Banner</a>	Student Information System
<a href="#">Canvas</a>	Learning Management System
<a href="#">Slate</a>	Enrollment CRM
<a href="#">Workday</a>	HR and Finance System
<a href="#">National Student Clearinghouse</a>	NSC Data

Other Common Edify Intake Sources

- PeopleSoft
- Colleague
- Salesforce
- Handshake
- Blackboard
- Qualtrics

Edify can ingest data through a library of **20+ pre-built connectors** for common higher ed technology systems or **custom integration pathways** (e.g., ODBC, API, SFTP, S3).

Edify also includes:

- Downstream data delivery
- Data transformation
- Snapshotting

## Data Governance

### Build Data Confidence

At the core of Edify is a recommended higher ed-specific data model with **200+ field-tested entities and AI-powered tools** to locate and generate data definitions.

NAME	DESCRIPTION	SCHEDULE
Prospect	The set of prospective people including suspects, prospects, inquires, and applicants. 8am and 3pm daily. Student. The set of people who have enrolled at the institution.	8pm daily
Student	The set of people who have enrolled at the institution.	8pm daily
Financial_Activity	A list of financial activity codes and their descriptions usually used to designate	Updates on the 27th of each month at 2am
Snapshot		Runs the 5th of every month at midnight

**Edit: Build Step banner\_campus\_housing\_update\_mailbox**

NAME: banner\_campus\_housing\_update\_mailbox  
ORDER: 1  
DESCRIPTION: Update housing information by student.  
BUILD PLAN NAME: student  
BUILT BY: user@edify.com  
SQL: UPDATE ...

**A student is an individual enrolled in a degree program or course. Each record represents one student, no matter how many levels, programs, or times the student has been admitted.**

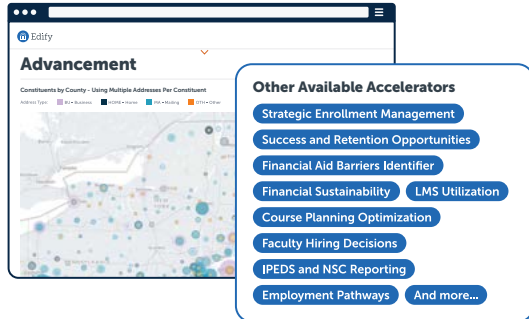
Edify's comprehensive data governance tools include:

- Data catalog
- Permissions management
- Data lineage tracking
- Entry validation
- Data processing logs and monitoring
- Data profiling and quality assessment

# Edify Is Data Management Designed for Higher Ed

## Make Confident Decisions

Edify supports no- or low-code data exploration, analysis, and operational reporting, as well as self-service predictive modeling and data visualization through your preferred business intelligence tools.



Edify's **pre-built and customizable analytic workspaces**, known as "Accelerators," provide data on strategic priorities such as course planning and financial sustainability.

**NEW:** Edify now also includes a command center of 50+ "must-run" reports and dashboards for leaders in 10 key functional areas including enrollment, HR, and financial operations.

*Embedded Agentic AI*

## Speed Up Data Access

Edify AI gives your team in-the-moment answers to their questions and empowers campus data consumers to make better decisions faster.

Find, act on, and monitor trusted data with Edify AI:

- Find the data and context you need using plain-language prompts. Ask Edify AI a question and it runs the numbers for you.
- Turn a simple prompt into data-rich reports without coding from scratch.
- Get easy-to-read explanations of SQL statements.
- Navigate the platform and get answers to Edify "how-to" questions.



Scan this code to watch a short video about **Edify's AI features**.

*Professional Services*

## Expand Your Team's Capacity

Edify's experts meet you where you are, augmenting your teams and providing tailored services to simplify your data management.

Our experienced team of higher education data scientists, data architects, integration engineers, programmers, and business process experts understand your unique environment and goals and can reduce strain on your staff while delivering results.

## Powering Data-Enabled Institutions

# 75%

Reduction in time required to submit IPEDS surveys

*Mount Saint Mary's University - Los Angeles*

# \$950K

State funding loss avoided on critical report, along with hundreds of staff hours saved

*Northampton Community College*

# \$78K

Reallocated to other priorities after sunsetting unneeded Tableau licenses

*Gateway Technical College*

“Edify is our **yes button**. I'm often in meetings, and people will say, 'It would be great if we could do this,' and Edify really allows our team to say, 'Yes, we can. That is totally possible.' ”

*Matt Nickodemus, Executive Director of Institutional Effectiveness, Utah Tech University*

## Want to learn more? Here's how:



Schedule a **customized Edify demo** for your institution.



Explore **videos of our partners** discussing their work with Edify.





# Appendix

# Five Pillars of a Data Governance Strategy

Data governance often fails not because institutions lack tools or intent but because they start in the wrong place. Too often, governance begins with committees, policies, or technical cleanup efforts before leaders have aligned on what they are trying to achieve and why data matters in the first place. Institutions that make early progress instead begin by grounding governance in a small set of strategic decisions, shared expectations, and practical boundaries. The five elements below comprise the foundational pillars of a data governance strategy your institution should have in place before standing up governance structures or launching large-scale data initiatives.

# 1

## Data Vision

This defines what “good data” looks like for the institution and why it matters. It sets a shared expectation that data should be accurate, trusted, and usable for real decisions.

# 2

## Data Scope

This clarifies which data the institution is focusing on first and which data is out of scope for now. Being explicit about scope prevents the strategy from becoming too broad or unmanageable.

# 3

## Strategy Versus Implementation

This distinguishes the long-term direction from the short-term steps. The strategy describes the full picture, while implementation plans outline what the institution will work on first.

# 4

## Governance Role

This explains how committees, stewards, and roles support the strategy rather than lead it. Governance exists to carry the strategy forward, not to define it in isolation.

# 5

## Alignment of Tools and Processes

This ensures that technology and workflows reinforce the strategy instead of dictating it. Tools should make it easier to follow agreed-upon standards and use data consistently.

Together, these elements provide a clear starting point, but having them articulated does not guarantee success. Even institutions that agree on vision, scope, and roles often struggle to translate those ideas into sustained progress. In practice, governance efforts stall when early decisions are too broad, too technical, or too disconnected from daily work. The table on pages 54-55 highlights the most common ways data governance loses momentum on campus, why these patterns persist, and how institutions can course-correct before governance becomes another stalled initiative.

# **Institutional Leadership Roles in Data Governance**

Every senior leader touches data in ways that influence institutional reporting, strategic planning, regulatory compliance, enrollment forecasting, student support, and public communication. The chart below outlines the role each cabinet member plays in governance, the types of data that flow through their office, how to build buy-in within their unit, and the first steps they can take to support a stronger data culture.

When data governance is treated as an ongoing leadership practice rather than a onetime project, institutions gain the clarity, coordination, and confidence needed to act decisively in an increasingly complex environment.



## Leadership Roles in Data Governance Continued

	<b>President</b>	<b>Provost/Chief Academic Officer</b>	<b>Vice President for Enrollment Management (VPEM)</b>
<b>Role in Governance</b>	Sets the institutional vision for data-informed decision-making and reinforces governance as a campus-wide priority.	Ensures academic units use consistent definitions and reporting; aligns program evaluation and planning with trusted data.	Clarifies enrollment metrics and ensures collaboration across admissions, financial aid, marketing, and student success.
<b>Data That Touches Their Office</b>	Institutional performance metrics, accreditation indicators, financial health data, ROI and accountability measures, campus climate data.	Program performance data, scheduling data, learning outcomes, faculty workload, accreditation evidence, course success metrics.	Inquiry and application data, funnel metrics, predictive models, aid and discount rate data, recruitment territory performance.
<b>How to Generate Buy-In</b>	Emphasize how governance improves credibility with boards, legislators, and accreditors and enables clearer, more confident strategic decision-making.	Connect governance to academic quality, accreditation readiness, and resource stewardship. Show how consistent data reduces departmental conflict and supports strategy.	Emphasize how unified definitions improve forecasting accuracy and strategic planning and reduce friction among enrollment-supporting offices.
<b>First Three Steps</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Publicly endorse governance as an institutional priority.</li> <li>2. Request unified, institution-approved definitions for key board-facing metrics.</li> <li>3. Model use of shared dashboards rather than office-specific reports.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Require academic units to use standardized definitions for program review.</li> <li>2. Identify academic metrics needing institution-wide alignment.</li> <li>3. Support training for deans and chairs on data stewardship.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lead a cross-functional effort to standardize funnel definitions.</li> <li>2. Establish a single source of truth for enrollment reporting.</li> <li>3. Review predictive model inputs to ensure governance standards.</li> </ol>

	<b>Vice President for Student Success (VPSS)</b>	<b>Chief Financial Officer (CFO)</b>	<b>Chief Information Officer (CIO)</b>	<b>Vice President of Marketing &amp; Communications</b>
<b>Role in Governance</b>	Ensures student success indicators are consistent, actionable, and aligned across advising and support units.	Ensures financial reporting and resource allocation rely on accurate, consistent data; embeds risk mitigation into governance.	Provides the technical infrastructure, integrations, and security structures that support governance across systems.	Ensures public messaging reflects accurate, institution-approved data; protects institutional reputation.
<b>Data That Touches Their Office</b>	Early alerts, advising notes, persistence indicators, case management data, engagement metrics, academic standing data.	Budget and financial data, program cost models, staffing data, capital planning, auxiliary revenue, compliance metrics.	Integration layers, data architecture, access controls, vendor platforms, storage environments, system performance metrics.	Enrollment statistics, student outcomes, market research, dashboard metrics, program highlights, campaign performance.
<b>How to Generate Buy-In</b>	Highlight how consistent data enables timely interventions, reduces duplicated outreach, and clarifies which strategies impact retention.	Connect governance to reduced financial risk, improved audit readiness, and more accurate forecasting. Show how governance minimizes time spent reconciling metrics.	Emphasize that governance reduces technical debt, improves integration success, and ensures IT's work aligns with institutional strategy.	Emphasize reputational risk from mismatched internal and external metrics and how governance strengthens institutional storytelling.
<b>First Three Steps</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Audit student success systems for duplicated or conflicting indicators.</li> <li>2. Establish common definitions for risk levels and intervention categories.</li> <li>3. Align early alert and case management processes.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Standardize cost definitions and allocation methodologies.</li> <li>2. Identify frequently disputed financial metrics.</li> <li>3. Require governance review of new financial reporting processes.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Map current data flows to identify high-risk quality gaps.</li> <li>2. Establish technical standards supporting governance policies.</li> <li>3. Identify data stewards for key systems and formalize collaboration with business units.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Align marketing dashboards with institution-approved definitions.</li> <li>2. Review public-facing data for consistency with internal reporting.</li> <li>3. Participate in governance decisions about which metrics are appropriate to share externally.</li> </ol>

# References

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