TITLE:

**Washington State Report Card Redesign Project
Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction**

CATEGORY:

Data Management, Analytics & Visualization

STATE:

Washington

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PROJECT INITIATION DATE:
March 2018

PROJECT END DATE:
December 21, 2018

Executive Summary

The Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) Report Card provides a wealth of data to many different audiences. The data presented is compiled from 295 K-12 school districts, including charter and institutional schools. The purpose, design, functionality, and technology of OSPI's publicly facing Report Card had not been substantively changed since 2003. New data tables and graphs had been added over time to meet expanding state and federal requirements making the Report Card a very large repository of data primarily focused on school and student outcomes.

With the new federal requirements from the Every Student Succeeds Act and the key requirement that Report Cards be "presented in an understandable and uniform format that is developed in consultation with parents and, to the extent practical, in a language parents can understand" caused OSPI to reimagine how the data and information was presented.

OSPI recognizes parent engagement is vital to student and schools success. Parents need to have information about their schools in a way that allows them to engage in meaningful conversations regarding school performance, including the successes and challenges.

To redesign the Report Card, OSPI initially convened a Report Card workgroup that consisted of education stakeholders from around the state. Using the guiding principle of User Centric Design, the workgroup was extremely varied and included parents, educators, school administrators, researchers, and the public.

The Report Card redesign had to use a solution that allowed the visualization of aggregated student and school information publically, yet allow school districts to view specific student information in a secure portal providing data security in accordance with federal student privacy laws prior to publishing the public aggregated visualizations. The Report Card redesign project also knew that whatever approach and technology was used had to be extensible to meet the changing state and federal requirements as well as the growing culture of data use across the agency and school districts.

OSPI chose the Tableau application to serve up the Report Card visualizations. The Report Card Redesign Project went live on December 21, 2018, and has transitioned to operations and maintenance with monthly releases providing increased functionality and additional content each time based on a user feedback link on each Report Card page.

Project Narrative

Concept

The Washington State School Report Card, housed on the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction's (OSPI) public website, provides parents, educators, policymakers, researchers and other members of the public information about public K-12 schools, districts, and the state-education system. The basic Report Card structure was created in 2003 and has undergone numerous requirement changes, including adding new data displays to meet different state and federal public-reporting requirements. Although the Report Card was one of the most frequently visited sites on the OSPI website and continued to serve multiple audiences with different needs, it needed to be reimagined to meet the changing federal requirements under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and to support

OSPIs ongoing work to address equity and the achievement gaps between student groups in Washington's K-12 system.

One of the key requirements under the ESSA was that State Report Cards be "presented in an understandable and uniform format that is developed in consultation with parents and, to the extent practical, in a language parents can understand." ESSA also required student, educator, and per-pupil expenditure data to be presented for every school and district in the State. In addition, the Superintendent of OSPI had a vision of Report Card that empowers parents and the community to dive into the education data about local schools, districts and state so they have the knowledge to engage with their local schools about their challenges and successes. OSPI understood that the Report Card was used by multiple audiences and that designing something for parents would mean that the other users of Report Card, such as school districts and researchers, might not get their specific data needs met through the Report Card as they were accustomed to. To address this, OSPI committed to a parent-centric design for its redesigned Report Card, but also simultaneously designed a technical solution that would make data more accessible for districts for use in things like school improvement activities.

Significance

The purpose, design, functionality, and technology of OSPI's publicly facing Report Card had not been substantively changed since 2003. New data tables and graphs had been added over time to meet expanding state and federal requirements making the Report Card a very large repository of data primarily focused on school and student outcomes. The Report Card redesign project presented an opportunity to redesign our Report Card using user centric design fundamentals, and to rethink how we present and provide access to data to multiple customers with different needs and expectations.

Parent engagement is vital to student and schools success. Parents need to have information about their schools in a way that allows them to engage in meaningful conversations about school performance, including the successes and challenges. Regardless of where someone lives in Washington state, what language they speak or how much education they have completed, they should have the opportunity to access clear, meaningful, and actionable information about their local school. The primary goal of this project was to redesign the Washington State Report Card to provide parents with clear, concise information about their schools and the education system in order to support local conversations about school performance and improvement.

To meet this goal, OSPI convened a Report Card workgroup that consisted of various education stakeholders from around the state. This group identified some user centric design principles, content, and types of data displays that would be important to include. This information, as well as the requirements under ESSA, were compiled and used to develop mockups of potential user interfaces, navigation, and content for inclusion on the Report Card. This information was presented to parents for feedback as well as to school staff who often field questions from parents about their schools performance. The feedback OSPI received was used to build the first iteration of the redesigned Report Card, which was released in December 2018. From the beginning of the project, OSPI planned to take an iterative approach to the project to allow for multiple opportunities to solicit and integrate user feedback. On the Report Card site, we have both a "contact us" button as well as a short survey users can complete to provide feedback. Since December 2018, OSPI has had four additional releases, which have integrated new content such as a measure of kindergarten readiness; enhancements such

as FAQs and a Glossary, and new functionality like the ability to find or chose a school or district more easily.

The second goal of this project was to develop a technical environment that would support our Report Card work and school districts in accessing their data in a secure environment. This was a necessary part of the project for two primary reasons: 1) Prior to publishing any school or district-level data, OSPI allows districts to review their own data for accuracy and completion and also to be informed about what the state is releasing about their district; and 2) For districts to use the data for their own purposes, such as school improvement plans, system improvement work or addressing local equity issues to work towards solutions. Although all of the data on Report Card comes from school districts, it is useful for districts to be able to see exactly how OSPI used the data they sent to create a specific measure. OSPI had to create a secure environment for this work because districts are only allowed to see data on their own students in compliance with federal student information security requirements.

To create a technical environment that can support the public reporting of information as well as a secure area for school districts to view student data, OSPI chose a combination of Tableau Server as well as Desktop to support the loading of data and the creation of visualizations. This new technology and capacity allowed OSPI to create a standard business process flow of raw district reported student information to secure visualizations for school district verification to published aggregated Report Card visualizations for the public.

Impact

The impact of this project is still being understood and realized, but to date, OSPI have had mixed feedback on the first goal of producing a parent friendly Report Card. There have been both very strong positive and negative reactions including pleas to return to the "old Report Card". One of the challenges with this project is that we took away a resource that was used for 15 years by a variety of different users for different purposes. For example, a researcher might have downloaded a specific enrollment data file every year and with the new format, they needed to rewrite code to accommodate the new data file layouts. Other users appreciated the additional context we provided about the measures and the descriptive labels we are now using instead of education acronyms keeping the principles of User Centric Design in mind. For example, the use of the title "English Learner Assessment" in our [redesigned Report Card](#) instead of "ELPA21".

Overall, OSPI has produced a Report Card with student, educator, and per-pupil data in a format that wraps data in context by answering the following questions:

- What question needs answered?
- Why is the measure important?
- How can I find additional resources or get in direct contact with a person at OSPI to find out more information?

OSPI has added Google translate to the site, addressed ADA compliance requirements, as well as made it mobile-friendly, which all contribute to its overall accessibility by parents and others. OSPI has also successfully created a technical environment that supports the Report Card and allows for the secure sharing of district data. This allows OSPI to provide access to data by districts to support the work they need to do around equity, achievement gaps and school improvement.

The new Washington State Report Card:

The old Washington State Report Card: