


2019

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# Invest in What Works State Standard of Excellence Analyses



October 2019

 **RESULTS**  
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**FOR AMERICA**

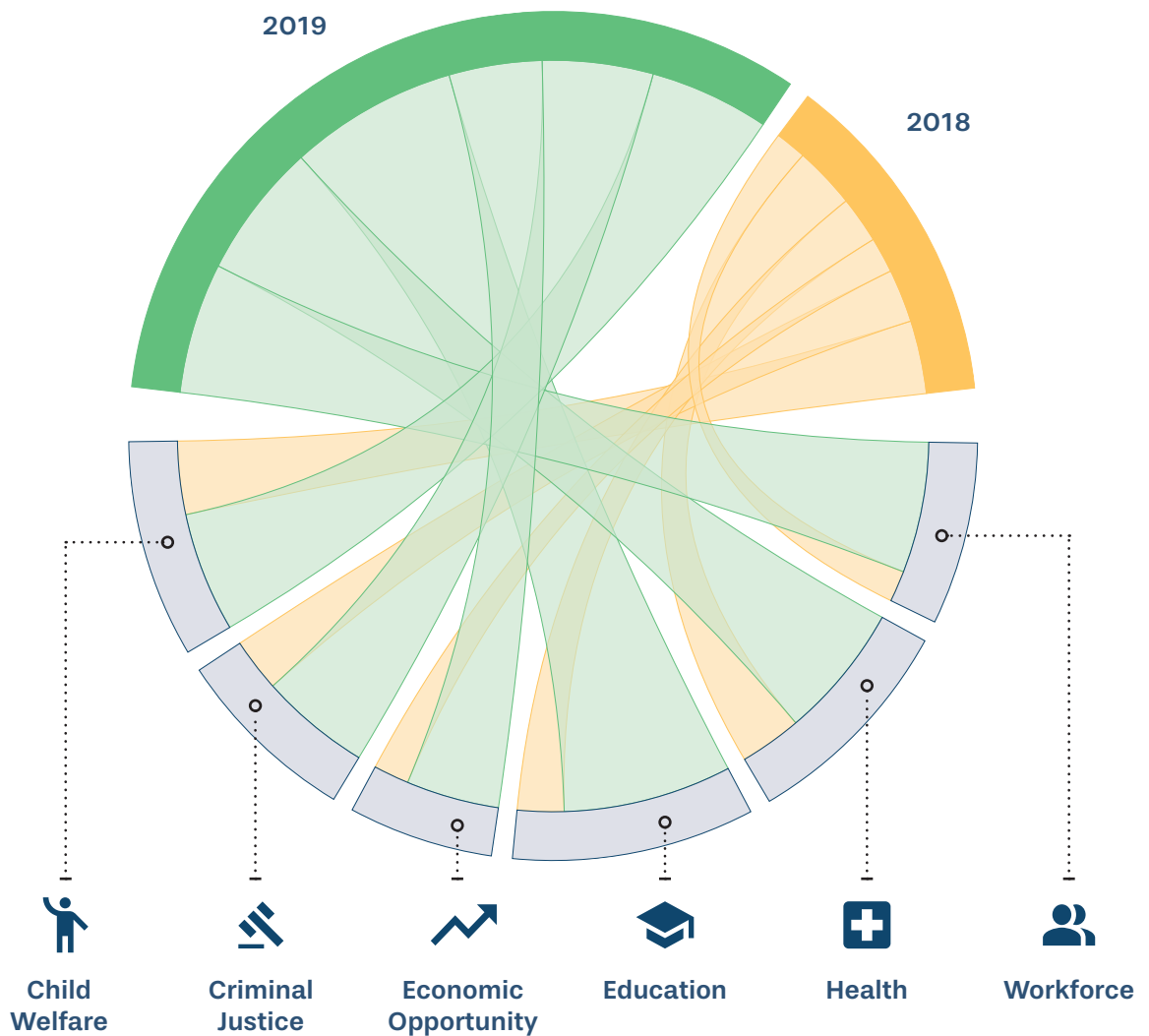
# State Governments Progress in Policy Areas

In the 2019 State Standard of Excellence, Results for America identified state government examples of data-driven and evidence-based practices, policies, programs, and systems in the areas of child welfare, criminal justice, economic opportunity, education, health, and workforce. Between 2018 and 2019, state governments made significant progress in the number and breadth of their evidence-based examples across these policy areas.

**Figure 1: State examples by issue area, 2018-2019 comparison.**

**88**  
Examples  
in 2018

**125**  
Examples  
in 2019



|                  |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Examples in 2018 | 33 | 24 | 16 | 21 | 28 | 14 |
| Examples in 2019 | 54 | 50 | 42 | 76 | 61 | 59 |



## Education

The number of leading and promising state government data-driven and evidence-based practices, policies, programs, and systems in education increased by 300% between 2018 and 2019. This growth can be attributed to state education agencies increased attention to, and investments in, building and using evidence to improve results for students; these efforts have been particularly spurred by the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which has [strong evidence provisions](#).

A growing number of state education agencies (five in 2019, four more than in 2018) have begun prioritizing evidence of effectiveness in their grantmaking (criteria #12 Use of Evidence in Grant Programs), which can ultimately lead to improved student performance and better education outcomes. For example, the Nevada Department of Education now prioritizes evidence in nine different grant programs. State education agencies are also leading the way in building data and evidence capacity with strong evaluation leadership (criteria #6 Evaluation Leadership, four education examples in 2019) and robust evaluation policies (criteria #7 Evaluation Policies, eight education examples in 2019).

**76**  
Examples in 2019



**21**  
Examples in 2018



## Workforce

The number of leading and promising state government data-driven and evidence-based practices, policies, programs, and systems in workforce increased by 400% between 2018 and 2019. Key to this growth is state governments' increasing integration of workforce, education, and other economic mobility data (criteria #4 Data Sharing, 16 workforce examples in 2019) to track employment outcomes and inform policy decisions (criteria #5 Data Use, eight workforce examples in 2019). In the area of results-driven contracting (criteria #14 Contracting for Outcomes, three workforce examples in 2019), state workforce agencies are at the forefront of efforts to tie payments to outcomes, frequently leveraging the authority granted by the federal [Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act](#).

**59**  
Examples in 2019



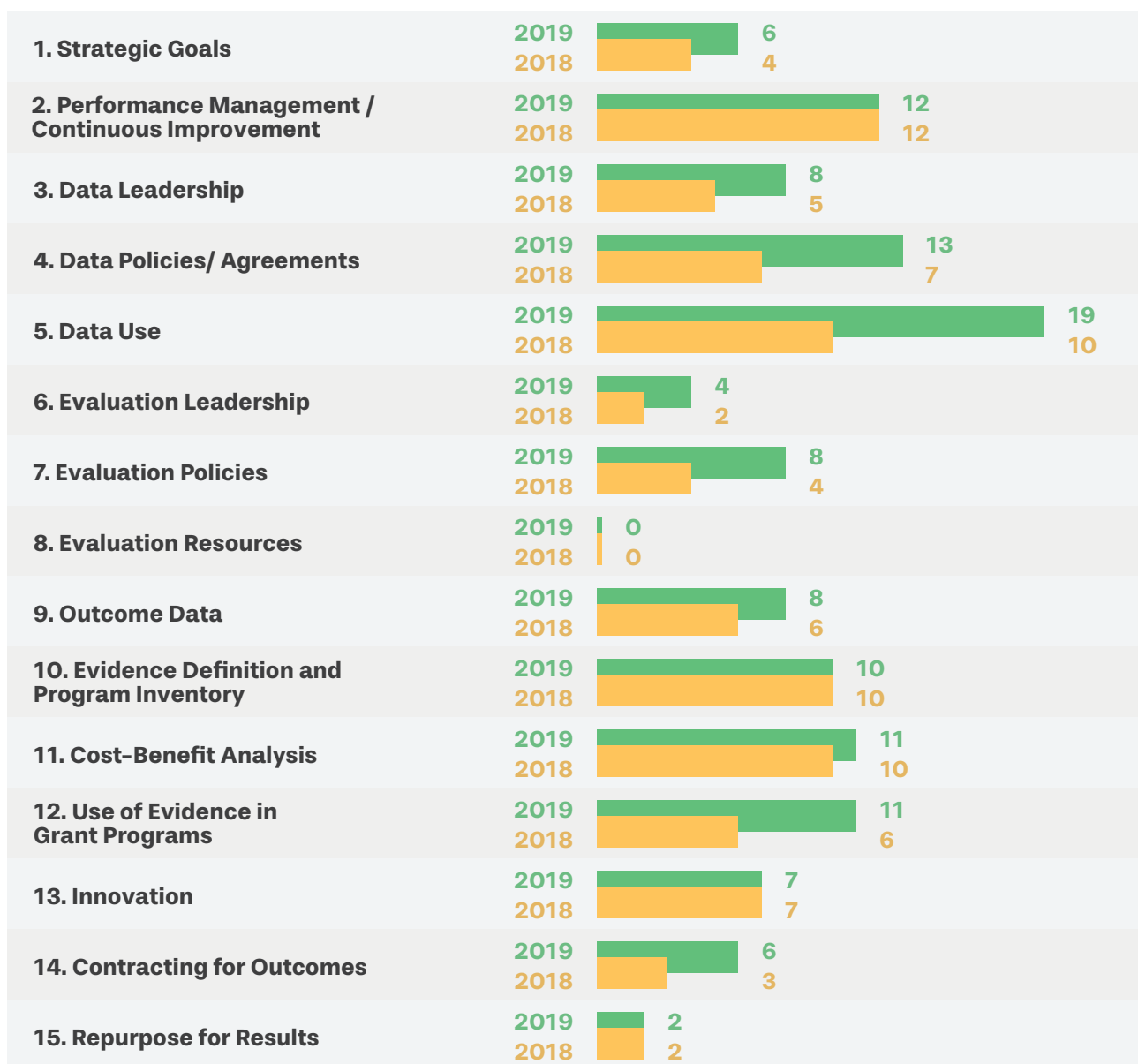
**14**  
Examples in 2018

Overall, the 2019 State Standard of Excellence illustrates the growing bipartisan momentum in state governments, particularly in the areas of education and workforce, to use evidence and data to improve results and increase economic mobility.

# State Governments Progress in Criteria Areas

In the 2019 State Standard of Excellence, Results for America identified state government examples of data-driven and evidence-based practices, policies, programs, and systems across 15 criteria areas. In virtually all criteria areas there was considerable growth in the number of state government examples from 2018 to 2019.

**Figure 2: Growth in examples by criteria area from 2018 to 2019.**



# Use of Evidence

## Criteria 12. Use of Evidence in Grant Programs

Did the state or any of its agencies (1) invest at least 50% of program funds in evidence-based solutions or (2) use evidence of effectiveness when allocating funds to eligible grantees (including local governments) from its five largest competitive and noncompetitive grant programs?

### Analysis

The number of states prioritizing evidence of effectiveness in their grant programs doubled from 2018 to 2019. The Maryland Governor's Office of Children is using this approach in child welfare by setting aside points for grant applicants with strong past performance. The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services is requiring the use of specific evidence-based models in its Caregiving and Parenting Skills program.

**12**  
Examples in 2019



**6**  
Examples in 2018

## Criteria 9. Outcome Data

Did the state or any of its agencies report or require outcome data for its state-funded programs during their budget process?

### Analysis

State governments are also increasingly using evidence to make budget allocation decisions. In 2019, four states (Colorado, Minnesota, Mississippi, and North Carolina) issued new statewide budget instructions that requested state agencies provide information about the evidence base for their proposed programs as part of their funding requests. In Minnesota, this led to \$87 million in new or expanded evidence-based programming in the state's FY 2020-2021 budget.

**9**  
Examples in 2019



**6**  
Examples in 2018

# Building of Evidence

## Criteria 3. Data Leadership

Did the governor's office or any state agency have a senior staff member(s) with the authority, staff, and budget to collect, analyze, share, and use high-quality administrative and survey data—consistent with strong privacy protections—to improve (or help other entities including, but not limited to, local governments and nonprofit organizations improve) federal, state, and local programs? (Example: chief data officer)

### Analysis

An increasing number of state governments continue to make progress in sharing and using data more effectively, with strong privacy protections, to get better results. States have adopted different strategies for data sharing. For example, Arizona, Illinois, Kentucky, and Michigan have used an enterprise memorandum of understanding (eMOU) to allow their state agencies to share data more efficiently while ensuring privacy. Other states, including Ohio and Arizona, have adopted data sharing policies that create a presumption of data sharing among state agencies, notwithstanding any specific legal prohibitions to the contrary. Whereas another approach, employed by states including California and Connecticut, has led to the creation of open data policies that allow for even broader sharing of privacy-protected data with the public. Colorado, New Jersey, and Washington have also engaged external research partners in expanding and advancing their data-sharing practices. Overall, the growth in open data policies, data sharing templates, eMOU agreements, and other tools demonstrates that state governments continue to see the value in sharing privacy-protected data to improve outcomes.

**9**  
Examples in 2019



**5**  
Examples in 2018



### Criteria 4. Data Policies/Agreements

Did the state or any of its agencies have data sharing policies and data sharing agreements—consistent with strong privacy protections—with any nonprofit organizations, academic institutions, local government agencies, and/or federal government agencies which were designed to improve outcomes for publicly funded programs, and did it make those policies and agreements publicly available? (Example: data sharing policy, open data policy)

13  
Examples in 2019



7  
Examples in 2018

#### Analysis

Since the 2018 State Standard of Excellence, three states enacted legislation requiring the appointment of a Chief Data Officer (Connecticut, Virginia, and Oregon) and two other states proactively appointed new statewide Chief Data Officers (Kentucky and Utah). The presence of senior data leaders has facilitated improvements in data sharing and data use. For example, in Connecticut and Kentucky, Chief Data Officers have encouraged governors and agency leaders to create transparent mechanisms to use data as a tool to improve program performance, inform decision-making, and promote transparency.

### Criteria 5. Data Use

Did the state or any of its agencies have data systems consistent with strong privacy protections that linked multiple administrative data sets across state agencies, and did it use those systems to improve federal, state, or local programs?

18  
Examples in 2019



10  
Examples in 2018

#### Analysis

Chief Data Officers and data sharing initiatives have increased the use of data, which has led to improved outcomes in many states. In Indiana, the Management Performance Hub has created an [estimated](#) \$40 million return on investment. Washington has used data gathered from 10 state agencies to improve the efficiency and outcomes of its health programs, leading to [millions of dollars](#) of additional funds for the state.

