



Audio

FULL DETAILS AND TRANSCRIPT

District Supports for Data Use

Aldine Independent School District, Texas • December 2009

Topic: Using Student Achievement Data to Support Instructional Decision Making
Practice: Districtwide Data System

Highlights

- Aldine Independent School District provides a range of supports to its staff for using data to make instructional decisions.
- Each school has a minimum of one skills specialist. The skills specialist helps teachers learn how to use data, models lessons, and supports instructional planning. Schools tailor the role of the skills specialist to meet their needs.
- The district provides content area program directors who support curriculum development, the design and implementation of professional development, and the use of assessments for that content area.

About the Sites

MacArthur Ninth Grade School

Houston, TX

Demographics

83% Hispanic

12% Black

4% White

79% Free or Reduced-Price Lunch

MacArthur Ninth Grade School uses student achievement data to support instructional decision making through such activities as:

- Engaging in three-week and six-week assessment cycles
- Embedding data use into the school's mission and vision
- Using data to develop curriculum and key areas of focus for instruction
- Implementing tools for students that provide clear expectations and grading criteria for all core classes
- Accessing and analyzing data from the districtwide data warehouse system

Shotwell Middle School

Houston, TX

Demographics

91% White

61% Hispanic

32% Black

4% Asian

2% White

78% Free or Reduced-Price Lunch

At Shotwell Middle School, the entire school staff uses data regularly for collaboration and instruction. Additionally, students learn to monitor their progress and set learning goals accordingly. A coordinated set of actions guides the use of data:

- Establishing a clear vision for using data to support instructional decision making
- Providing support through skills specialists, professional development, and a testing coordinator
- Using common planning time to analyze data
- Assessing the progress of each subgroup through the subgroup master system

Thompson Elementary School

Houston, TX

Demographics

89% Hispanic

9% Black

2% White

88% Free or Reduced-Price Lunch

Thompson Elementary School integrates student achievement data into the instructional decision-making process by implementing the following practices:

- Incorporating the results of multiple assessments into a cycle of instructional improvement
- Maintaining and fostering a culture of trust, solidarity, and support among staff members
- Using school-level data to determine appropriate professional development and support for teachers
- Accessing and analyzing data from the districtwide data warehouse system

Full Transcript

I am Sara Ptomey, executive director of curriculum and instruction in Aldine Independent School District.

The district expects teachers and campuses to use data on a daily basis to drive the instructional program. So it's important for the district to provide a framework within which to work so that the campuses are able to take the information and move forward with it in an efficient manner.

The district provides supports to schools in a variety of ways, one that's been in place the longest and the most effective is the use of a skill specialist. On each campus there is a skill specialist who works with teachers during collaborative planning meetings, and the expectation is the collaborative planning meetings occur on a minimal once a week. The data from a previous week's assessment or a six-weeks assessment is analyzed for individual teachers; they analyze their individual students. And really decisions are made on how to tweak or revise the instructional program for the upcoming week, how to fill those gaps.

Now, different campuses do this in different ways. Some campuses have one skill specialist who works with all grade levels, all subject areas, the core content areas, and works with all the teachers. That's more typical on an elementary campus. But also elementary campuses may choose to have a language arts skill specialist and also a math skill specialist who will work with different teachers on the same information looking at the data and making decisions on who needs interventions, who needs additional support, who needs to be enriched and provided enhanced instruction. And they make those decisions on each campus.

Skill specialists can also provide a variety of services and support for teachers, including doing model lessons, doing classroom observations, working with individual teachers just to help them better their teaching skills. In addition, we have program directors who work with the campuses. Each of the core content areas have several program directors, and all of the ancillary content areas also have program directors that provide the support for each of the programs. And by this, I mean that they write the curriculum, they do the scope and sequence, they write the assessments, they provide the professional development. It all comes out of one office because that way we have complete alignment and the district really looks at alignment of what is written is what is taught is what is tested.

A program director in the district is, for example, someone who would be a program director for elementary mathematics. They are responsible for the math program for pre-kindergarten through fourth grade, and they work in writing curriculum; they write the assessments that are aligned to the curriculum, they provide professional development to all the elementary teachers who are math teachers in the district. And they work with individual campuses on individual campus needs based on what the data tell us.

The district has worked long and hard trying to really refine our processes to make sure that everyone is able to do their job with the tools necessary, and part of that is really understanding the data and what to do with that data.