

# DOINGWHATWORKS



Audio

FULL DETAILS AND TRANSCRIPT

## Immediate Feedback

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 uses a districtwide data system that integrates assessment data with lesson planning and curriculum.
- The Student Information System is tied into the assessment system. The system provides almost immediate feedback on the district's assessment system.
- Classroom teachers can utilize this information to make good, quality instructional decisions based on these data.

### 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

Hi, I am Richard Blair. I am the executive director for research and evaluation in Aldine Independent School District, in Houston, Texas.

Aldine Independent School District began the implementation of our data management system in the 2001-2002 school year. The selection process for this data system was initiated by the superintendent of schools, and she felt like we really needed a team approach to any type of decision making within the district. And so she brought in people in the curriculum department, people in the research department, and people in technology to come in and look at and work together to see how these pieces could fit together and how they could affect student performance in our district.

Aldine's data management system is an integrated system, and it ties into our student information system and brings student information system into the data system so that we can actually look at different parts of our assessments. Aldine's data management system has evolved over time based on our staff's use of the system; based on the input from our staff, we have looked at the types of data that we have in the system and what we are looking for out of the system. We started with the state assessments and we moved into the curriculum piece, then local assessments, and then finally lesson planning to make sure that all of those pieces are brought together in one unified package.

The data management system provides us with a number of different pieces of information that we can use. When we look at our assessments, we can look at an actual individual student and see performance over time. We can see how this child has done historically and how he is doing right now. In addition, because it gives us almost immediate feedback on our local assessments when we scan those tests into the system, we are able to actually look at and disaggregate data by classroom, by subgroup, by campus, or by district and look at the trends and things so when the classroom teachers are meeting in planning periods, they are able to utilize that information to make good, quality instructional decisions at a much earlier time than they would have been able to without this system.

When a district begins to plan for a data system, whether it's one they are going to buy or build, there are certain things that they probably should look for. The first thing that we found was that getting stakeholders involved was very important, getting buy-in from various members of the organization to know that this is something that we want to do and get that support built early in the process of it. In addition, you need to

spend the time up front developing and knowing exactly what it is you want before you actually go ahead and either purchase or develop the system that you want; know what it is you are trying to get before you just jump in and do something haphazardly.

One of the things we found that having a strong technology person who could lead the project implementation and actually phasing it in in different pieces and not trying to do it all at one time, because then we have people who understand the technology aspect of the system but can also troubleshoot when things come up because they will come up when you're developing a new system. But also we were very fortunate having a partnership and I think that's something that districts should look at in terms of what they are trying to do. Oftentimes, you buy a product, and you need to be able to get a product that you have some kind of input, or build the system yourself, so it does what you want it to do, because if it's not data that you are going to use, if it's not going to be something that you are going to get what you want, then there is no use in having it because it's just going to sit there.