DOINGWHATWORKS

SAMPLE MATERIAL

Data-Informed Decision-Making: A School-Level Blueprint

Tri-Community Elementary School, Pennsylvania

Topic: Response to Intervention in Primary Grade Reading

Practice: Progress Monitoring and Differentiation

Tri-Community Elementary School leadership uses this Pennsylvania Department of Education-developed document to identify critical skills to develop as they encourage staff use of data to inform instruction. A data-driven decision-making system allows easy access to relevant information, as well as opportunities for staff collaboration. School leadership needs to facilitate focused, purposeful staff discussions that lead to action plans that are linked to evidence of students' needs. Action plans should provide clear, measurable goals and allow for adjustments in practices as needed.

The blueprint addresses three key planning processes: annual planning, grade-level planning, and student-level planning. While this document identifies examples of data to use during these planning processes, it is important to recognize the need for a standard Data – Analysis/Discover – Solutions protocol in each process.

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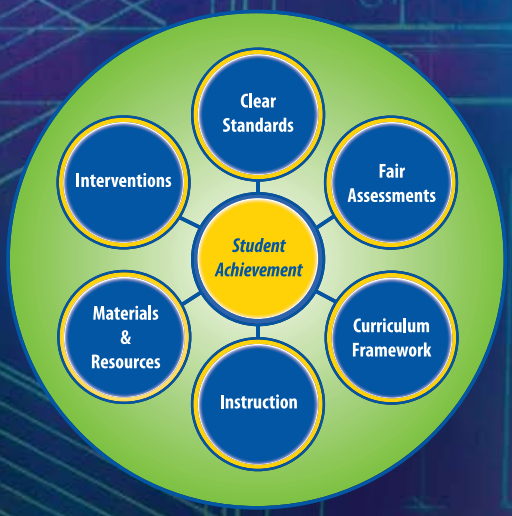
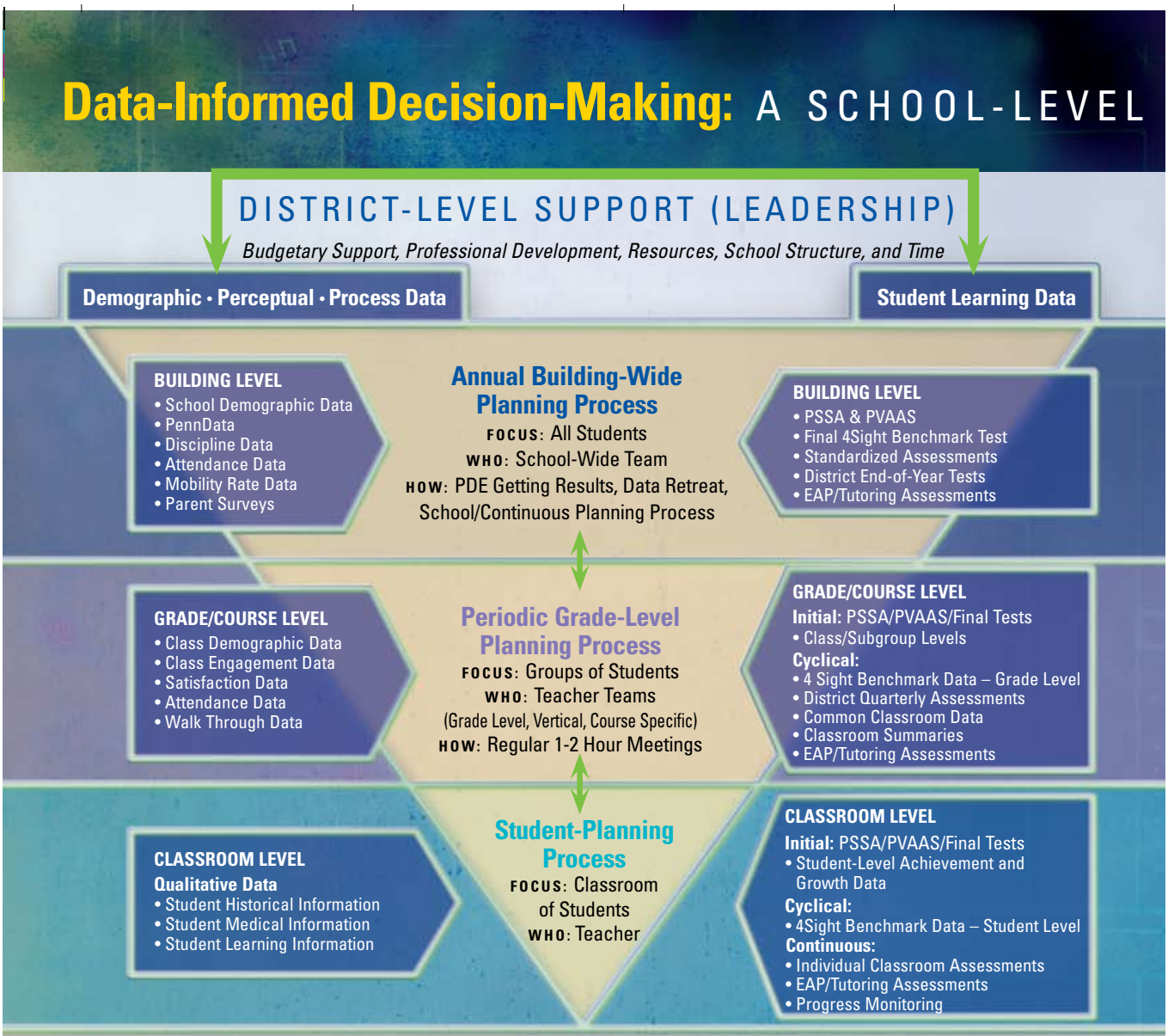
Data-Informed Decision-Making

A SCHOOL-LEVEL BLUEPRINT IN A STANDARDS-ALIGNED SYSTEM





Purpose

Schools are facing increasing challenges to improve student performance and growth. In response to these demands, many educators are looking to their assessments to provide information on how well they are meeting their students' instructional needs. Research has shown that high-performing schools have clear academic goals for students that are based on standards, developed from data, and used to guide instructional practices. However, without a comprehensive and connected system for analyzing their data, administrators and teachers can become overwhelmed by the amount of information available to them. At the same time, school staff may miss critical opportunities to use data to inform teachers on the effectiveness of their practices.

This blueprint addresses three key planning processes in schools: annual planning, grade-level planning, and student-level planning. While this document identifies examples of data to use during these planning processes, it is important to recognize the need for a common protocol in each process. This protocol is Data ➔ Analysis/Discovery ➔ Solutions. For each process:

(1) Data is gathered from the PSSA, 4Sight, and local sources;

(2) PVAAS is used for an analysis of growth;

(3) Discovery for root cause is done through asking key questions about standards, curriculum, assessments, resources, interventions, and professional development; and lastly,

(4) Solutions are identified to address the root causes. Solutions can be found from resources such as the Center for Data Driven Reform in Education (CDDRE), ACCESS Center, and the What Works Clearinghouse.

BLUEPRINT IN A STANDARDS-ALIGNED SYSTEM

A Three-Phase Data-Informed Inquiry Cycle

What data do we have regarding achievement, growth, and positive results for students?

What do the data tell us about the areas of strength and areas of concern? And, why do the data look that way? What are the "root causes?"

What are we going to do about it all? Which evidence-based strategies must we consider in our improvement plan?

Data-Informed Decision-Making: A School-Level Blueprint in a Standards-Aligned System offers a framework for administrators and teachers to use when deciding how to maximize the impact of data in their classrooms. The framework provides suggestions for schools to conceptualize their system of data use and analysis, while emphasizing collaboration among teachers, the identification of specific learning objectives at a classroom, grade/content and/or whole school level, and the development of action plans to achieve selected objectives. The framework also encourages frequent monitoring of student performance to target movement toward the determined learning objectives and to intervene and adjust instruction based on student learning needs.

Annual Building-Wide Planning Process

Using data-informed decision-making, teams of teachers and building administrators focus on a school-wide approach to identify evidence of student achievement and growth and to target key areas of need. Both whole school and disaggregated data are considered. The team then sets specific learning objectives and develops action plans to achieve these objectives. Meetings generally are held once a year, preferably at the beginning of the school year. Data to be considered may include:

Demographic, Perceptual, Process Data

- School Demographic Data
- PennData
- Discipline Data
- Attendance Data
- Mobility Rate Data
- Parent Surveys

Student Learning Data

- PSSA & PVAAS
- Final 4Sight Benchmark Test
- Standardized Assessments
- District End-of-Year Tests
- EAP/Tutoring Assessments

Periodic Grade-Level Planning Process

Teams of teachers meet monthly or quarterly to review data on student performance and evaluate progress toward the objectives and action plans chosen by the school-wide team at the Annual Planning Meeting. Teams may consist of teachers by grade levels, across grade levels, content areas, etc. Teachers evaluate the effectiveness of the recent instruction based on the data of students' learning gains and determine modifications for future instruction. Data to be considered may include:

Demographic, Perceptual, Process Data

- Class Demographic Data
- Class Engagement Data
- Satisfaction Data
- Attendance Data
- Walk Through Data

Student Learning Data

Initial: PSSA/PVAAS/Final Tests

- Class/Subgroup Levels

Cyclical:

- 4Sight Benchmark Data – Grade Level
- District Quarterly Assessments
- Common Classroom Data
- Classroom Summaries
- EAP/Tutoring Assessments

Student-Planning Process

Teachers use evidence of student learning in the classroom to plan, differentiate, and adjust instruction. Assessments of learning gains are frequent and ongoing. Data to be considered may include:

Demographic, Perceptual, Process Data

Qualitative Data

- Student Historical Information
- Student Medical Information
- Student Learning Information

Student Learning Data

Initial: PSSA/PVAAS/Final Tests

- Student-Level Achievement and Growth Data

Cyclical:

- 4Sight Benchmark Data – Student Level

Continuous:

- Individual Classroom Assessments
- EAP/Tutoring Assessments
- Progress Monitoring

Interaction Among Planning Levels

Each planning level interacts and informs the levels adjacent to them. *The Annual Building-Wide Planning Process* produces the year-long objectives and action plans that the *Periodic Grade-Level Planning Process* relies on for direction and focus. The impressions of the individual teacher as the instruction plan evolves in a specific classroom provide critical information that should be shared at the *Periodic Grade-Level Planning Process*. In addition, the decisions at the *Student-Planning Process* provide focus and direction for classroom instruction. A truly data-informed decision-making culture includes not only each of the three levels of planning, but also the interaction of the levels.

What other skills are needed to encourage data-informed decision-making?

In addition to a framework for using data in schools, *Data-Informed Decision-Making: A School-Level Blueprint in a Standards-Aligned System* identifies critical skills for school leaders to develop as they encourage the use of data by their staff. Administrators and teacher leaders must strive to provide teachers with a system that allows for easy access to relevant information, as well as opportunities and structures for collaboration among staff. Individuals in leadership positions need to be able to facilitate discussion among staff that is focused and purposeful. This discussion should lead to action plans that are linked to evidence of students' needs, provide clear, measurable goals that are monitored consistently, and allow for adjustments in practices as needed.

The *Data-Informed Decision-Making: A School-Level Blueprint in a Standards-Aligned System* framework is designed to support educators as they work toward developing the outlined best practices. As schools begin to utilize data and assessments to reflect on the effectiveness of their teaching, teachers and administrators can move closer to their ultimate goal: improving the performance and growth of all students.

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