



# Developing a School-wide Database

## Why go this route?

Because with a school-wide database, you can...

- Create a focused direction for change accompanied by realistic goals.
- Compare how different groups of students are achieving.
- Reflect on which instructional strategies are working best.

Your database provides a current baseline against which to measure and monitor the effectiveness of changes you think will help.

## You'll know you've arrived when...

- Teachers review instructional strategies in comparison with the results they are getting and make data-based decisions about which to keep or change.
- A member of your leadership team is able to help teachers understand and incorporate the use of assessment data in planning instruction.
- You can use data to align and maximize resources to impact student achievement.
- You have a school-wide system of complete, easily retrievable and organized student-based achievement information that is accessible electronically and easily manipulated.

## Construction Zone

### It's about TIME

- 1-2 decision-making meetings
- 1-3 meetings to enlist broad support (*See MI-Map Packet 4:1 "Whetting Your School's Appetite for Data"*).
- 2-6 months to collect and organize data
- 1-2 data-review meetings to sketch out responses
- 1 parent review meeting
- 1-2 reflection/wrap-up meetings to explore implications.

### Potential COSTS

- \$50 - \$200 for supplies (software, printer cartridges etc.) to support a simple electronic database from which reports can be generated
- Optional professional facilitation to increase staff understanding and use of data (\$400-\$2000 per day depending on presenter)
- Resources to pay for data entry, analysis and display will vary. Schools have managed with volunteers who work with data in lieu of committee assignments. Others earmarked \$5000 for a part-time data entry person. Still others have made data a full-time responsibility.



## The Process

*A step-by-step guide to developing a school-wide database.*

**NOTE:** Steps marked with a  are accompanied by one or more inserts, included in this packet.

- 1** Make decisions about the framework for your school-wide database. This is probably the work of the school improvement team or the building's leadership team. Decision-making should be shared widely and the following questions should be considered.
    - a. What data do you want to collect? (See *INSERT A and B for Step 1*)
    - b. When should each kind of data be collected? Who should collect it? (See *INSERT C for Step 1*)
    - c. Who should organize the data and maintain the database? (See *INSERT D for Step 1*)
    - d. What do we need to purchase to support data collection/organization? How will we pay? (See *INSERT E for Step 1*)
  - 2** Enlist employees to participate in the data collection process:
    - a. Check their interest/willingness. (*INSERT for Step 2 offers an optional survey*) and work to increase it if necessary. (See *MI-Map Packet 4:1 "Whetting Your School's Appetite for Data"*)
    - b. Distribute the draft data-collection design developed in *INSERT C for Step 1* and take feedback seriously.
    - c. Establish clear calendar deadlines for when people are to complete steps, reconvene to review and discuss results and make decisions about interventions.
  - 3** Support key people while they carry out tasks.
    - a. Ensure that they have the resources they need (time, space, equipment and materials). (See *INSERT A for Step 3 for thinking about space*). *INSERT B for Step 3* is a classroom log for recording student achievement data.
    - b. Monitor timelines and nudge cheerfully when necessary.
    - c. Preview data to ensure accuracy.
  - 4** Meet to review assessment data, discuss the results, and make decisions about probable interventions.
    - a. Use a disciplined protocol for discussing observations. (See *INSERT A for Step 4*)
    - b. Write up conclusions. (See *INSERT B for Step 4 for poster format*)
    - c. Agree on responses to any data reviewed. (*INSERT C for Step 4 offers a planning tool*)
  - 5** Plan for parental review of student achievement data. *INSERT for Step 5* shows a format one Michigan school uses for parent teacher conference discussion.
  - 6** Integrate conclusions into future school improvement planning. Use *INSERT for step 6* for an overview of a collaborative approach for creating and using a school-wide database.
  - 7** Establish a data collection schedule (for the beginning, middle and end of each school year) to monitor student achievement and whatever you choose as important contributing factors (attitude, demographic, process).
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## Getting more mileage from developing a school-wide database

How setting up a building-wide database benefits your school in regard to the following initiatives:

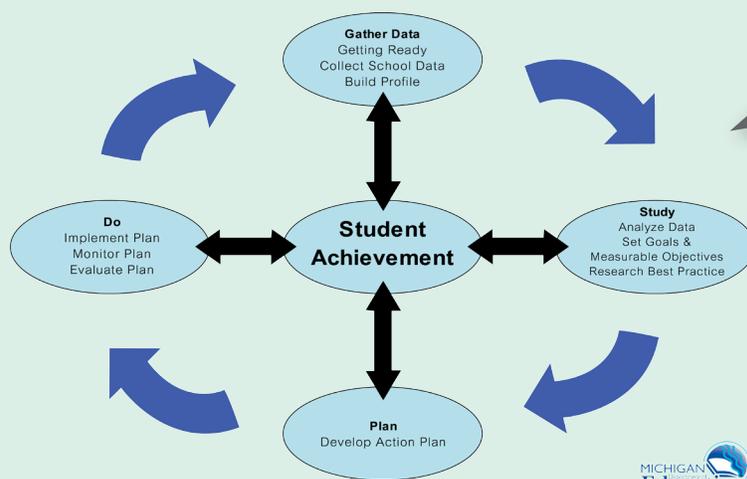
### Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)

- School-wide databases help to meet ESEA's requirement for broad collection of information on individual student performance.
- Databases that link students' test scores, the length of time they have been enrolled in a given school, and graduation records over a number of years are endorsed by ESEA.

### State Accreditation System

- In brief, Michigan's accreditation system measures student achievement with multiple indicators and multiple years of data. School-wide databases help to document student progress.

### Michigan Continuous School Improvement Process (Mi-CSI) Michigan School Improvement Framework



This packet will help as as you review and analyze many types of data collected throughout the continuous school improvement planning process.



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## Resources

### Books, Articles, Websites

#### **Designing and Using Databases for School Improvement**

Bernhardt, V. *Eye on Education*. New York: Larchmont, 2000.

#### **The Results Fieldbook and Results: Key to Continuous School Improvement.**

Schmoker, M. Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 1999.

#### **Education Commission of the States**

Snow-Renner, R. & Torrence, M., 2001.  
No Child Left Behind Policy Brief.  
<http://www.ecs.org/>

#### **Using Data to Improve Student Achievement**

Wahlstrom, D. Chesapeake, VA: Successline Publications, 1999.

Wahlstrom's thinking is invaluable in explaining how to collect, organize, analyze and use data for practical decision-making.

#### **Align the Design: A Blueprint for School Improvement**

Mooney, Nancy J., Mausbach, Ann T. Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2008.

#### **"Part Digital Training, Part Human Touch"**

Barkley, S. *Journal of Staff Development* 23.1 (Winter 2002): 42-45.

#### **"Student Achievement Data: Holding Teachers Accountable"**

Dubrovich, M, *Principal* 81.4: 30-33.

#### **"Self-graphing to Success: Computerized Data Management"**

Gunter, P.; Miller, K, *Teaching Exceptional Children* 35.2 (Nov/Dec 2002): 30-34.

#### **"Digging for Data"**

McIntire, T. *Technology & Learning* 23.8, (Mar 2003): 42-46.

#### **Data4SS Data for Student Success**

<http://data4ss.org/>

This site contains a wealth of information and resources for helping schools build a culture of using data.

#### **MI School Data**

<http://www.mischooldata.org/>

MI School Data is your window to a wealth of data on Michigan's public school education system.

### People

Intermediate School Districts/RESAs can serve as a resource.

#### **For more information, contact**

Michigan Department of Education

Office of Education Improvement and Innovation  
517-241-3147

School Improvement Unit  
517-373-8480

Curriculum and Instruction Unit  
517-241-4285

Office of Assessment and Accountability  
517-373-0048

Office of Early Childhood and Family Services  
517-241-3592

Office of Field Services  
517-373-3921

Office of Professional Preparation and Teacher Certification  
517-373-6505

Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services  
517-373-9433

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