

Background

The use of data enhances the district's ability to create a culture of accountability, focus, coherence, and clear and intentional expectations of learning among all stakeholders. In order to accomplish this, we must exploit data in a way that challenges assumptions, beliefs, and, ultimately, behaviors and practices that lead to student success. Strategic use of data to influence behavior and practice requires specific organization and narration of the data that is digestible, specific, and intentional.

Staff will present achievement and climate data to the board and community four times this year (labeled Quarter 1, Quarter 2, Quarter 3, and Quarter 4). Staff will also distinguish the data to be presented as Lag or Lead metrics. Lag metrics are indicators of an outcome – a measure of what *has happened*. Lead metrics are levers that indicate *how* the outcome will be achieved. They are oriented in the present and are predictive and can be influenced. Note that this will be the pilot year of organizing data in this manner, and we hope to learn and get better in subsequent years as we strive to create the desired shared culture of accountability, focus, coherence, and clear and intentional expectations of learning.

Tonight's presentation will focus on the lead data from Quarter 2, all of which has been collected since the beginning of the 2017-18 school year. The data include measures of student academic achievement, such as the district's FASTbridge universal literacy screening assessments for elementary grades and the rates of non-passing grades (Ds, Fs) among students in secondary math courses. It will also include participation rates in the district's interim assessments for English Language Arts/English Language Development and Math in all grades. Measures of student engagement include the student attendance data and suspension rates since the beginning of the school year.

The presentation will identify why these lead data metrics were chosen; how they are aligned with the state's dashboard and lag indicators; how the data measured is used to influence changes in classrooms and schools; and what outcomes the board and other stakeholders should expect. The data is disaggregated by the significant student groups of reported race, socioeconomic status, English Learners, and students with disabilities.

Additional Details

To further expand on each of the lead indicators, the Ed Services team has decided to use [Simon Sinek's "Golden Circle" model](#) – starting with the why behind each lead indicator. With so many potential data points to consider, the why – Why did we select this as a lead indicator? – is of critical importance. After answering this question, we will move to the "how." How do teachers, principals, SLTs and district administration use this indicator to improve student outcomes? Finally, we will address the "what." What are these lead indicators, what do they measure and what are we observing?

Of primary importance in selecting a lead indicator is that it has the power to influence and inform decisions. Much like the ways in which day-to-day formative assessment of student learning by teachers drives instruction or the evidence of student learning identified by each school's Site Leadership Team affects school-level change, there is also a need to gather

information about many things that are relevant to the teaching and learning process at the district level. These include collective student growth; the effectiveness of teaching practices, programs, and initiatives; and the prediction of whether students are on track to meet established proficiency levels on state tests or to be college and career ready upon graduating. To that end, the lead indicators are all formative by definition -- allowing district to make changes based on the data that is presented.

The first lead indicators are the results of the district's universal screeners, FASTbridge earlyReading (K-1) and aReading (2-5). Originally known as FAST -- Formative Assessment System for Teachers -- these formative assessments provide teachers, literacy support staff and administrators with a snapshot of a student's literacy skills and assess the potential risk for a student falling behind grade level in reading -- a situation that impacts a student's trajectory long before they get to high school. The results of these assessments drive individual interventions at each of our elementary schools and help administrators allocate additional resources. These assessments are already administered three times annually, and they provide school, district and national benchmarks that provide an excellent way to measure the effect of interventions in the aggregate. The aReading assessment received the highest possible rating for validity, reliability, and diagnostic accuracy from the National Center for Response to Intervention. It is an adaptive, online assessment that only takes about 20 minutes to administer, and it is very predictive of performance on state tests.

As noted, teachers and support staff are already using this data to provide intervention to individual students at the schools. The ability to look at the results in the aggregate and to see growth over time, make these indicators particularly powerful at the district level. Among the questions that the district must ask: How are all of our students doing in meeting grade level expectations for reading? How are our subgroups performing as compared to students overall? How are students performing as compared to national averages? In response to the answers, the district can make adjustments in allocating resources, delivering curriculum and evaluating specific interventions.

The earlyReading tool is administered one-on-one by teachers in Kindergarten and First Grade. It is a measure of foundational reading skills. There are multiple sub-tests that give teachers vital information about specific components of foundational reading. Four sub-tests are administered in each window, and the results are used to provide a composite score and risk level rating. For the purposes of the lead indicator, staff is reporting the percentage of students at each risk level. Students who score below the 40th percentile of the national norm are considered to be at "some risk." Students below the 15th percentile nationally are considered to be at high risk of learning difficulties. The aReading assessment is a computer-adaptive assessment of reading comprehension that is administered to a whole class, online. The results of this lead indicator will also be reported by percentage of students at each risk level. Both assessments are given three times per year and provide feedback on student's literacy based on distinct fall, winter and spring nationally-normed benchmarks.

The second lead indicator of student performance is the percentage of students at risk of failing their secondary math courses as measured by Ds and Fs on the progress reports issued during the second grading period of the fall semester. This lead indicator is quite predictive of future success in school, with significant research pointing toward Ds and Fs in math as red flags in measuring the likelihood of graduating from high school and other measures of

college-and-career readiness, such as completing the UC/CSU a-g requirements and enrolling in AP courses. Success in middle school math is the gateway to higher level math, and of particular importance for success beyond school in a world in which work requires more and more quantitative ability. Because these are progress report grades, they provide a clear opportunity to adjust and influence response at the classroom, school and district level.

Considerations of student performance in secondary math include: What is percentage of students who have earned Ds and Fs for a given report period? What is the percentage of students who are “on track” to meet graduation requirements? How does the percentage of “on track” students vary by subgroup? What patterns do we see in student performance? The answers to these questions can impact not just instructional shifts and the assignment of interventions but also lead to a critical conversation about grading practices, which has already begun.

The D/F rate reflects the percentage of students who were receiving either a D or F in their secondary math course as of the end of Grading Period 2, which is the 16-week mark of the fall semester. These grades appeared on the students’ progress reports.

The third lead indicator for Q2 is the participation rates on the district wide interim assessments for English Language Arts/English Language Development and Mathematics. The purpose of the interim assessments and the process for developing them through a collaborative effort of teachers and district support staff is to measure student proficiency on the California standards in the sequence that is outlined in the district’s curriculum guides. In time, and through ongoing feedback from teachers and analysis of results, these assessments are expected to provide teachers and schools a meaningful measure of students’ understanding of the guaranteed and viable curriculum, which is vital to ensuring equity across all classrooms.

For Quarter 2, only student participation will be reported. The process of building meaningful assessments is difficult and requires analysis of initial results to ensure that the assessments measure what they purport to measure. Within a system of shared accountability, teachers need to believe that the results of the assessment are representative of student learning, and these initial interim assessments require revision to meet that need. In lieu of student performance results, the participation rate will be provided as a measure of progress toward this system of shared accountability.

For the fall, the interim assessments used items that are included in our Inspect Itembank, which is part of our Illuminate Data & Assessment contract. These are proprietary items developed by Key Data Systems, and are based on the Item Specifications guidelines of the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium -- the same guidelines used to develop items for the Smarter Balanced Assessment, the annual summative assessments for ELA and math. These districtwide interim assessments were administered this fall in grades 1 through 8 for both ELA/ELD and Math. They were also administered in Algebra, Geometry and Algebra II classes at the high schools. The next round of interim assessments in February will be taken by students in grades K through 11. Details of those assessments are being ironed out by teachers on the curriculum teams now.

The fourth lead indicator for Q2 is student attendance, and, more specifically, absence rates. Of critical concern are those students who fall into the “Chronic” absentee category by missing ten percent or more of school days. This lead indicator was selected because attendance at school

is a measure of student engagement and, for some students, can be a predictor of academic challenges. One of the factors in school success is regular attendance. Absent students miss critical learning experiences that could help them master academic material. Consistent attendance also allows students to develop strong relationships with their peers and school staff. Students simply cannot benefit from their education if they are not in school.

Considerations of student attendance include: What trends or patterns are apparent in student absences? How are absences affecting achievement? What differences appear between student subgroups? In response to these answers, site and district leaders will consider such things as communication and outreach to parents; outreach to students; and district policies.

School absence rates are determined by dividing the total number of days absent, both excused and unexcused, by the total number of days enrolled

The final lead indicator is the rate of student suspensions. Similar to attendance, suspensions can be a reflection of student engagement and school climate, and they can also be a red flag for student learning and performance. As with chronic absences, missing school for suspensions means that students miss critical learning experiences. The suspension rate is unique in that it likely to only increase throughout the year, as the number of students suspended is likely to grow faster than new enrollment.

Considerations of student suspension rates include: What trends or patterns are apparent in student suspension? What differences appear between student subgroups? What are the types of offenses for which students are being suspended? In response to these answers, site and district leaders must consider how the nature of suspensions can be addressed. For example, can increased communication and outreach to parents; outreach to students; and district policies.

The rate of suspensions is determined by dividing the number of suspended students (a student with multiple suspensions is counted only once) by the total number of enrolled students.

Summary

Although this is the initial reporting of the district's lead indicators, there are several accomplishments as well as areas for growth that can be noted. The district's elementary schools have already established a multi-tiered system of support with the consistent administration of FASTbridge literacy assessments, regular analysis of student data, and an established structure of interventions. At the secondary level, teachers and School Leadership Teams (SLTs) have begun looking at grading practices and reevaluating how they measure student success to ensure that grades are a better reflection of student learning and that teachers proactively address students learning needs. Also notable in the preliminary lead data is a reduction in the absentee rate to date, which is consistent with a three-year trend.

There are obvious areas of growth revealed in the data also. It is clear from the disaggregation of the data by student subgroup that we must provide additional support for English Learners. Among the ways in which the district hopes to accomplish this is through embedding resources and strategies for English Learners in the grade-level curriculum guides. The initial round of interim assessments revealed the critical need for an improved process to engage more

teachers in the work of the curriculum guides and the accompanying assessments. Without increased ownership of this work among teachers, the district will continue to struggle to provide a guaranteed, viable curriculum consistently across all classrooms. Finally, the district, with the help of the community and parents, must evaluate and address some of the forces that are driving suspensions in our schools, some of which reflect the changing culture around us.