Implementing a Data and Assessment Management System

2013 Nebraska Data Conference

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About the Ralston Public Schools

• Approximately 3,100 students
• Technology plan: Twelve long-term projects over the next five years
• The role of data in the district
  – Teacher induction and employee evaluation based on evidence of data-based decision making
  – Student achievement part of the principals’ compensation package
  – Emphasis on 21st Century thinking skills

Initial Concerns

• Insufficient use of data
  – Limited access by teachers
  – Primarily focused on standardized assessments
  – Minimal use of local data
  – No visual representations; difficult to translate data into information that easily understood
  – Absence of longitudinal data
• Uneven knowledge base about data
• Poor implementation of prior system
About DataDirector

- Managed by Riverside Publishing
- Combination of two systems
  - Data warehousing and analysis capabilities
  - Assessment management system
- Online assessment options
- Assessment item banks available
- Affordable: $5.25 per student
- Extremely flexible

About DataDirector

- Data warehouse
  - Individual student profiles with longitudinal data (assessment, demographic, behavioral... etc.)
  - Custom and pre-built reports for warehoused data
  - Assessment data disaggregated on multiple levels (district, building, teacher, or student)
  - Teacher analysis by cluster, standard, or item
  - Student search feature allows reporting by multiple student characteristics
About DataDirector

- Assessment management system
  - Designed to encourage collaboration and use of common assessments
  - District, personal, and shared assessments
  - Multiple ways to capture data (traditional scanning, image capture, online assessments or manual input)
  - Assessment item banks linked to standards
  - Program feature allows grouping of students with similar characteristics
### Sample Assessment Answer Sheet

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample Nebraska Standard</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Category</td>
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<td>Language Arts &amp; ELA</td>
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<td>Communication Skills</td>
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Before you begin...

- Assess your organization:
  - Is the district ready to change? By how much?
  - Are your principals ready to lead?
- Understand the district-wide implications
  - Technology (hardware and data management)
  - Curriculum, instruction, and assessment
  - Staff development
  - Parents and students

Primary Obstacles - District

- Fear among staff members
  - How will the data be used?
  - Changing expectations for teachers and administrators
- Apathy: “This too shall pass…”
- Training and support
  - Initial training
  - Ongoing support with multiple resources
  - Introducing the system to new staff members

Primary Obstacles - Riverside

- DataDirector is relatively new to Nebraska
  - What the heck is NeSA?
  - You haven’t adopted the common core??
- Uploading standardized, NRT data is time consuming and cumbersome – at least for now
- Ongoing system upgrades (version 4.21.2)
- Alignment with other Riverside systems
- You are blazing a trail… you will need patience
Implications for Technology

- Is the hardware in place?
  - Bandwidth and Internet access
  - How will the data be entered?
  - Sufficient laptops / iPads for online assessments?
- Managing the system
  - Role of the data steward and/or system manager?
  - Who can access what? (Instructional Coaches?)
  - Duplication of existing systems (e.g., report cards)

Implications for C.I.A.

- Adopt the Common Core? (Item bank)
- Standards based curriculum
  - Does it match classroom instruction?
  - Does it match what’s being assessed?
  - Does it match our students’ needs?
- Differentiated instruction as the new norm
- Easier to implement common assessments
- Less time on grading, more time thinking

Implications for Staff Development

- Sole focus for the next two years - minimum
- Current knowledge base
  - Legal and ethical use of data (FERPA)
  - Basic statistical concepts and analysis skills
- Data as one piece of the puzzle
- Differentiated staff development options
- Staff development on differentiating instruction
- Data driven PLC groups
Implications for Parents & Students

- Rich, detailed conversations about student achievement and growth
- Longitudinal data to target areas of concern
- Data to guide course selection and potential career choices (student advisement)
- Expectations to differentiate instruction
- Student ownership of data: students are now a part of the instructional process

Lessons Learned

- Lay the foundation 6-12 months in advance
  - Discuss your current reality: Is the district ready to change? Are your principals ready to lead?
  - Discuss expectations and how you will monitor the implementation process
  - Begin pre-teaching (FERPA, basic data concepts...)
  - Establish a timeline with milestones and objectives
    - Classroom: First assessment & first student conversation
    - Building: First PLC meeting with a common assessment
    - District: First admin meeting focusing on local data

Lessons Learned

- Allow time to implement the initial set-up
- This is the only project for the next two years
- Clear communication with all departments
- Don’t skimp on the technology your teachers will use to upload their data
- Overwhelm your staff with support
  - DataDirector consultants to assist principals
  - Online videos, FAQs, and resource guides
  - Emphasize utilizing Riverside support
  - DataDirector certification for your system manager