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Understanding Data: Focus on CST ELA

Let’s look at some of the data available about student performance on the English Language Arts CST at a school and try to understand it together.

First, look at the handout by yourself or with a partner and try to answer the questions below. Then we’ll come together as a whole table to discuss these questions.

1) Look at the graphs and tables of information.
   a. What data are you looking at?

   b. What information is the data giving you?

2) Look for patterns or trends in the data.
   a. What do you notice?

3) Think about the questions you have about this data.
   a. What information is missing?

   b. What other information would you like to see?

4) Think about how a school can use this data to set goals as a part of their BSC.
   a. What might this school focus on for next year?
Let’s look at some of the data available about student performance on the English Language Arts CST at a school and try to understand it together.

First, look at the handout by yourself or with a partner and try to answer the questions below. Then we’ll come together as a whole table to discuss these questions.

1) Look at the graphs and tables of information.
   a. What data are you looking at?
      Student performance for 2-5th grade students at A+ Elementary on the CST ELA.
   b. What information is the data giving you?
      Table #1 -- Shows overall proficiency rates of students at the school graphed over 5 years as compared to the district. Look for overall trends.
      Table #2 -- Shows achievement change of all students tested in grades 2-5 from year to year of MATCHED STUDENTS y proficiency level (ex: number of students who moved from Far Below basic in 2011 to Below Basic in 2012). Look for changes in proficiency rates from year to year.
      Table #3 -- Shows number and percentage of students who scored proficient or advanced over 5 years BY GRADE LEVEL. Look for grade level trends.
      Table #4 -- Shows number and percentage of students who scored proficient/advanced over 5 years broken out by subgroup: EL vs. non EL. Look for Grade Level trends. Compare subgroup performance.

2) Look for patterns or trends in the data.
   a. What do you notice?
      Table #1
      Notice that student proficiency on the ELA CST has been going up consistently over time. In 67% of students were proficient in 2012 as compared to 64% in 2011. When comparing A+ Elementary with the District, we can see that over the past 3 years ELA CST proficiency has been about 5% above the District.
      Table #2
      Notice that the student proficiency in 2011 of MATCHED STUDENTS was 62% in 2011. It has gone up to 73% in 2012.
      Look at the column listing “% Positive Change”. Students who were Far Below Basic in 2011 have moved up in proficiency in 2012 by 62.5%. Advanced students have stayed at advanced 2012 at a rate of 98%.
      Look across the Basic row. Of 46 students tested in 2011, 24 have stayed at Basic in 2012, while 9 more students moved down (6 Below Basic + 3 Far Below Basic). Only 13 students moved up to proficient. These students represent the 28% change that is seen on the right. This evidence suggests that students seem to be “getting stuck” at Basic.
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ANSWER KEY

Table #3
Look at the “Total” row. Overall student proficiency has consistently moved up each year for past 5 years. Now look across rows by grade. Grade 4 has shown fairly consistent growth for the past 5 years. Nonetheless, grade 3 and 5 have gone up and down considerably.

Table #4
ELs are showing the lower proficiency rates as compared to Non-ELs. Grade 3 students in 2012 were 12% proficient or advanced as compared to 85.2% of Non-ELs. These students are the current 4th graders.

3) Think about the questions you have about this data.
   a. What information is missing?
      • Attendance information Ex: If students come late and miss ELD instruction each morning, it could impact English proficiency.
      • CELDT scores; both overall and in specific language development areas. Ex: If students need help with reading comprehension, it could explain why they are gaining proficiency to a Basic level and then getting stuck when given tasks that require higher level reading.
      • Reclassification data; Ex: are there connections with reclassification rates?
      • CST Math achievement; Ex: is this just a problem with ELA, or are we seeing similar patterns in other content areas?)
   b. What other information would you like to see?
      • How might enrollment, class size or demographic changes over past few years have affected student performance?
      • How might staffing changes or changes in the ELD program at the school impact student performance?

4) Think about how a school can use this data to set goals as a part of their BSC.
   a. What might this school focus on for next year?
      Based on our analysis, we see that students who performed at the Basic level showed the least growth from year to year (Table #2). EL students are performing far lower than Non-EL students (Table #4). 3rd grade students showed the lowest proficiency rates of any grade level (Table #3.) 3rd grade students in 2012 will be the 5th grade students during the next school year.
      For these reasons, this school might choose to take the following actions:
      • Hire additional staffing or realign current staff responsibilities to support 4/5 grade students.
      • Redesign how ELD instruction is delivered or investing in resources to support EL students in all content areas
      • Create support network for focal students (ex: each teacher creates an action plan to move Basic students to proficient)