Talk School Talk: Using Data to Build PTA-School Connections

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Outcomes - Participants will...

✓ Understand “school speak”
✓ Learn about school data
✓ Enhance data use to support family and community engagement

You Can Play a Significant Role

• Concerned, energetic group
• Vested interest, yet non-biased
• Varying skills, abilities, and knowledge
• Large numbers
• Well regarded
• Diversity among group
Without data, you are just another person with an opinion
The Education Trust, 2004

Data: Diagnostic and Prescriptive

GOALS

Predictor of the future
Indicator of the present
Picture of the past

Imagine a data system that:

• tells us if students are on track to succeed in college and career.
• identifies troubled students to help them before they drop out.
• allows policymakers to know which programs and policies are most effective to dramatically improve student achievement.
What role do families and communities play in creating that data system?

Why Use Data?
- Track progress
- Get timely information
- Have everyone on the same page
- Determine needs

Why Use Data?
- Explain the "whys"
- Plan
- Find solutions
- Make decisions
- Support difficult and bold decisions
Why Use Data?

- Continuously improve
- Communicate academic expectations
- Reinforce shared responsibility
- Create organizational culture of learning

Alphabet Soup of School Data Speak

- Title I
- LEA & SEA
- ADM & ADA
- Accountability
- Aggregate/Disaggregate
- ELL & ESL
- AYP
- RCT
- Minimum Competency Test
- NAEP
- Benchmark
- FERPA
- Outcomes
- Proficient
- Validity and Reliability

What Data Can Tell Us About Student Achievement

- How students are doing now and for their future
- If all students have the resources to achieve
- What achievement trends have occurred
- What achievement gaps exist
- What “best practices” are being used
What Data Can Tell Us About School Policies and Procedures

- Who gets what classes
- If special needs are truly "special needs"
- How discipline is handled
- How the school is funded
- How decisions are made and who makes them

What Data Can Tell Us About the Learning Environment

- What are the class sizes
- Do students attend regularly
- Are teachers well qualified
- Are teachers staying or leaving
- Are teachers and principals making a difference

Data Process

- Mining data
- Analyzing data
- Communicating data
- Using data
Simple Rules for Getting Data

- Know exactly what you want
- Have a common understanding
- Set goals
- Know what data are available
- Collect multiple forms

Simple Rules for Getting Data

- Get public data first
- Find the right resource
- Be polite, but persistent
- Submit a written request
- Use your connections

What To Do With Data

Analyze
- Percent
- Ratio
- Rate
- Ranking
- Growth
- Gain
What To Do With Data

Compare to successful schools with similar resources and demographics

What Not To Do With Data

*The scores for our latest standardized tests are disappointing. We have to articulate a coherent policy of infatuation.*

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What Not To Do With Data

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Three Important Data Features

• Accessible
• Understandable
• Actionable

Using Data to Move Forward

• Spread the word
• Start conversations
• Assist families to understand
• Ask questions
• Get involved

Using Data to Move Forward

• Change attitudes
• Change policies
• Change practices
• Get support
• Show importance of family and community engagement
Questions and Answers

Thank you for participating!

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