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School Improvement Through Collaborative Data Inquiry

A Case Study of the Harvard Data Wise Project with the
South Bend Community School Corporation

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- What does it take to engage in a **district-wide school improvement** effort?
- How can school improvement be **successful, sustainable, and scalable**?
- What are both the **challenges and barriers** and the **conditions and criteria** for this kind of improvement?

- **Why Data Wise?**
 - Overview of the South Bend Community School Corporation (SBCSC) and their priorities and challenges
- **What is Data Wise?**
 - Overview of the Data Wise Improvement Process
- **The SBCSC Data Wise Journey**
 - Where we've been
 - Where we are now
 - Where we're going next
- **Feedback from SBCSC Educators**
 - What we're learning
 - How we're adapting
- **Reflection**

South Bend Community School Corporation

- Fifth largest public school district in Indiana
- 17,697 students
 - 73.5% receive free or reduced-price meals
- 1,039 teachers
- 34 schools
 - 18 primary centers
 - 10 intermediate centers
 - 5 high schools

Why Data Wise?

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South Bend Community School Corporation

- Our challenges and priorities
- Our journey to Data Wise

Reflecting on what you've just heard about SBCSC, **what resonates** with you and your own school or district?

What is Data Wise?

- The **mission** of the Data Wise Project is to support educators in using collaborative data inquiry to drive continuous improvement of teaching and learning for all students.
- Since 2006, thousands of teachers, coaches, principals, and administrators have engaged in our 8-step **Data Wise Improvement Process** and cultivated the **ACE Habits of Mind**

The Challenge:

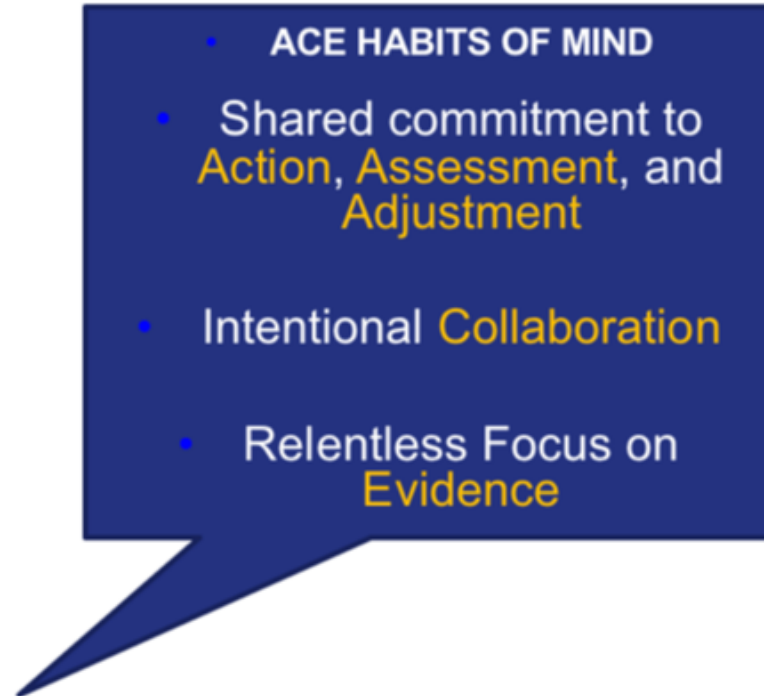
- Though they often have piles and piles of data, schools and systems struggle to use data effectively
- Often decisions are not made based on evidence, but on whoever is in charge
- Because data is often used as a weapon or reward, people feel tension and respond with “fight or flight”
- Schools often do not use collaborative time effectively or with focus

What is Data Wise?

How it works:

- Builds capacity for collaboration and effective teaming
- Empowers educators to leverage data as a way to better understand student learning, inform decisions, set goals, and assess progress (true inquiry)
- Promotes teacher-driven change and shared leadership/ownership
- Supports system-wide improvement (not just improvement in pockets)
- Leads to instructional change that produces outcomes we want for kids

What is Data Wise?



Learn more:

<https://datawise.gse.harvard.edu/process-and-habits>

What barriers do you face when trying to implement something new to help your school or district improve?

SBCSC Data Wise Journey

We have developed a sequence of learning experiences that guides educator teams through cycles of the Data Wise Improvement Process and helps them to develop the ACE Habits of Mind



Data Wise Learning Path



SBCSC Data Wise Journey

- On-site institutes in South Bend
- Phased roll-outs
 - Year 1: Primary and intermediate centers, including Title I schools
 - Year 2: High schools
- Dedicated coaching
- Coach certification
- Systems-level support



Data Wise Learning Path



Year 1:

- District leadership team and teams from 18 primary centers and 10 intermediate centers prepare for, launch, and integrate the Data Wise Improvement Process

Year 2:

- Teams from 5 high schools prepare for, launch, and integrate the Data Improvement Process
- District leadership team begins the coach certification process

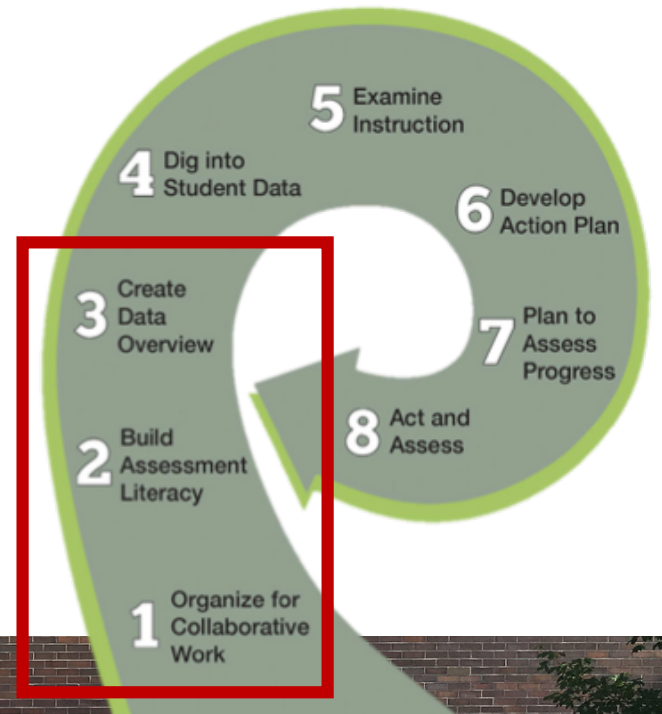
Year 3:

- District leadership team completes coach certification process
- All 34 schools have integrated DWIP into their practice

SBCSC Data Wise Journey

June 2017:

- Data Wise South Bend: prepare for successful launch
- Week-long institute for 130 educators from primary and intermediate centers and district office



SBCSC Data Wise Journey

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August-December, 2017

- **Data Wise in Action**
- Teams launch the Data Wise Improvement Process in their settings and receive virtual coaching and support as they complete their first full cycle of the 8-step process during the Fall



October 2017

- **Mid-Cycle Check-in**
- Teams share progress and challenges
- Problem-solving, cross-school sharing, consultancy protocols

Goals for the 3-Year Journey:

- School and district-level teams will demonstrate the ACE habits of mind and engage in collaborative data inquiry
- All 34 schools will and engage in continuous cycles of the Data Wise Improvement Process
- District-level leadership will have capacity to lead, deepen, and expand Data Wise practices in partnership with schools (coach certification)

Desired Outcomes:

- Continuous, incremental improvement over time = sustained and significant improvement in teaching and learning

What we're learning: data

Feedback:

Let's take a look at data from
SBCSC educators

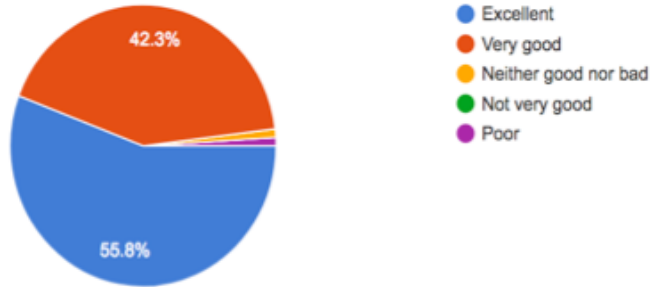


What we're learning: data

June Institute:

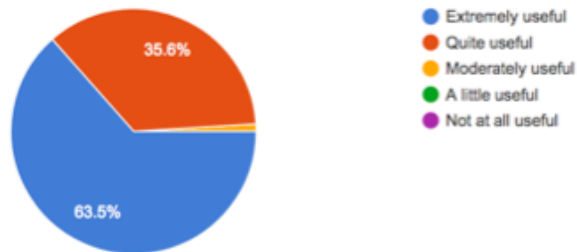
How would you rate the overall quality of the Data Wise course?

104 responses



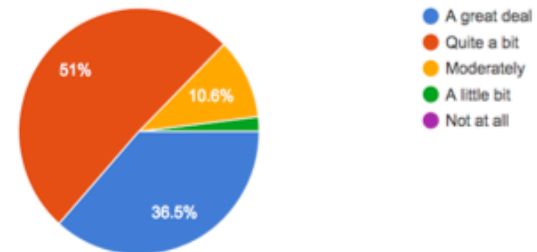
To what extent did you find the Data Wise course professionally useful?

104 responses



How much do you intend to modify your professional practice, based on your experience in the Data Wise course?

104 responses



What we're learning: data

Please provide specific examples of how the course influenced your practice:

Being able to use norms, agendas, and pacing of activities to get the work done

Data Wise has caused me to wonder what things I am doing in my classroom that affect student learning. How might I change those things to increase student performance

Helps me be aware of grounding my own observations in evidence and facts. It has made me more aware of my need to be more analytical of student data.

I personally have always been interested in the data. Now I have a framework to use it.

I am not a data person, but this has changed my opinion. I think it is valuable and worth spending the time with it.

What we're learning: data

I USED TO THINK...	NOW I THINK...
Data was just something I needed to gather to turn into administration	Gathering/ focusing on specific data can be beneficial to me and my instruction in the classroom
I used data to drive my instruction	I will do that in a way that is more purposeful and effective
My grade level teams were a waste of my time	It will help organize us, focus us, and look at data using rolling agendas
Data was something I needed to figure out on my own	It needs to be a collaborative conversation
Data was used to judge my teaching	I can use data to improve my teaching
I used data well to help individual students	My purpose for using data is more valuable to address what I need to do and it drive my instruction
Data Wise meant merely looking at data	Data wise is a guiding program of practices and protocols of professionalism amongst colleagues



What we're learning: data

October 2017

- **Mid-Cycle Check-in**
- Teams share progress and challenges
- Problem-solving, cross-school sharing, consultancy protocols

Today's session helped our team determine the focus area and the learner-centered problem. Having feedback from another team also helped us realize that we not only need buy-in from all the teachers but also from the students.

I valued the time to interact with another school implementing Data Wise. It affirmed some of my thinking, and helped bring new thoughts to mind.

I enjoyed the consultancy protocol with three school teams today. It was great hearing where other schools are in the process. Also, their input was valuable and gave us a direction in addressing our dilemma.

What we're learning: data

August-December 2017

- **Data Wise in Action**
Teams receive direct coaching for five months, attend plenary conferences
- Get support keeping records on documenting their journey

Most of the work we engaged in as a part of Data Wise in Action was already a part of my personal professional practice- however, Data Wise has provided me with the ability to streamline and share those practices with teams of teachers in a more succinct manner.

We finally have a protocol in place for looking at data and making a plan of action.

Data Wise in Action is laid out in a simple and productive way. Its a tool to help us sift through, sort, and prioritize data as opposed to working with huge chunks that can slow us down and not move quickly enough for us to make real progress.

We were able to involve all of our faculty and staff in the process through efficiently run and productive meetings in which ALL felt "heard" and informed.

What we're learning: reflection

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Reflecting on the SBCSC Journey thus far:

- What surprised us
- What challenges we've faced
- What successes we're celebrating
- What we'll change in Year 2

Applying what we're learning to our work with districts:

- Importance of buy-in and investment
- Facilitating design work in advance

Questions and reflections

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What questions or reflections
would you like to share?



Harvard Data Wise Project

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