

SPONSOR UPDATE

SEPTEMBER 2016

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Director**

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OUR MISSION

The mission of the Buckeye Community Hope Foundation is building communities and rebuilding lives.

OUR VISION

The Education Division's vision is strong communities of healthy, well-educated students, and a future in which all students have access to a high quality public education. Ohio thrives as increasing numbers of schools graduate students equipped to assume a positive role in society.

ODE rule on sponsor evaluations delayed by JCARR

When the General Assembly passes legislation to enact public policy initiatives, it sometimes requires agencies to submit implementation rules to the Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review (JCARR).

In the case of Ohio's new charter school sponsor performance assessment, the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) is required by state law to submit the rule related to the compliance component – but not the academic or quality practices components – for JCARR consideration.

Last month, stakeholders testified before JCARR, raising concerns regarding the compliance component rule which was filed with incomplete, and therefore inaccurate, information in the fiscal analysis. As required, ODE requested information from stakeholders regarding the costs associated with implementation of the compliance assessment portion of the performance review. The information was requested in February – three months before ODE released its draft document outlining the specific requirements of the process.

The deadline for sponsors to submit all the required compliance information was July 25, making the rule submitted to JCARR in August retroactive.

For these legitimate reasons, JCARR members voted – unfortunately along party lines – to block the rule, forcing ODE to refer it back to the Common Sense Initiative with complete and accurate fiscal impact information.

As president of the Ohio Association of Charter School Authorizers (OACSA), Peggy Young outlined a number of concerns regarding

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SO, WHAT IS JCARR?

The Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review (JCARR) was created in 1977 by the Ohio General Assembly. The committee consists of five members of the Ohio House (three from the majority party, and two from the minority) and five members of the Ohio Senate (with the same majority/minority representation). JCARR's primary function is to review proposed new, amended and rescinded rules from more than 110 agencies. It may recommend invalidation of a rule based on very specific criteria:

- ◆ Does the rule exceed the agency's statutory authority?
- ◆ Does the rule conflict with an existing rule of that, or another, agency?
- ◆ Does the rule conflict with the legislative intent?
- ◆ Has the rule-making agency prepared a complete and accurate rule summary and fiscal analysis of the proposed rule, amendment or rescission?
- ◆ Has the rule-making agency met the incorporation by reference standards for a text or other materials as stated in the Ohio Revised Code?
- ◆ If the rule has an adverse impact on business, has the rule-making agency demonstrated through the business impact analysis, the Common Sense Initiative Office recommendations and the agency's memorandum of response to the SCI recommendations that the rule's regulatory intent justifies its adverse impact on business?

Sponsor evaluations — continued

implementation of the compliance component of the sponsor assessment in a letter sent to Ohio's new superintendent of public education, Paolo DeMaria, mid-July.

Although the legislation (H.B. 2) requiring sponsors to be evaluated on compliance with all applicable laws and rules was approved by the General Assembly on Oct. 7, 2015, ODE did not unveil a draft of the compliance monitoring tool until May 13, 2016. The final document was not made available until June 30 – nearly nine months after the bill was approved and five months after H.B. 2 was enacted.

On July 6, ODE hosted a webinar to review the compliance monitoring tool and process. Participants were told that questions would not be



answered during the instructional session. Instead, sponsors were told to submit their questions in writing. Responses to sponsors' written requests for clarification and guidance were not provided until a week later, leaving only 13 business days to respond to over 300 compliance requirements for each sponsored school.

Sen. Bill Coley (R-Liberty Twp.), sitting in on the JCARR hearing for a vacationing colleague, asked why the process didn't begin sooner to avoid retroactive application of the rule.

"We've already established that had the department had its act together, even though it's a compressed time frame, you could have complied with all the rules of JCARR and all the statues of Section 119 (of the Ohio Revised Code) without imposing rules that have a retroactive effect," he said. "We could have done this months ago."

ODE General Counsel Diane Lease testified and responded to questions, arguing that the fiscal analysis was accurate, the rule not retroactive, and against re-referral to the Common Sense Initiative.

"If this rule was (to be re-referred) it would ... potentially jeopardize the sponsor evaluation that's a statutory requirement in October," Lease said.

Following the hearing, an ODE spokesperson said it's yet to be seen if and how JCARR's action will impact the sponsor evaluation timeline.

OAPCS to host charter school law summit

The Ohio Alliance for Public Charter Schools (OAPCS) will host a charter school law summit on October 3 in Columbus. Some of Ohio's top charter school attorneys will speak on a range of topics including: crisis communications; discipline and free speech; employment law; labor issues; and, federal/state legislation updates. Learn more and register at: <http://www.oapcs.org/charter-school-law-summit>

DEMARIA ON CHARTERS: UNITY IS KEY

New State Superintendent of Public Instruction Paolo DeMaria was among the speakers at a recent charter school summit hosted by the Ohio Auditor of State's Office. DeMaria is generally recognized as a charter school supporter having two children who graduated from a charter school, but he said he "came close to tears" reading negative stories published over the course of the last year by many media outlets across the state.

"I love the fact that every charter school administrator, teacher that I've talked to speaks with a great deal of pride about his or her own school," DeMaria said. "I want that, I respect that, I applaud that, I love that. But there are also times when we must come together ... and talk about what's important for us as a sector and how we as a sector have to hold each other and ourselves as a whole accountable for presenting ourselves in a way that says, 'We are an excellent part of the public education system in this state.'"

According to DeMaria, the first step toward improving is getting education leaders to agree that policy views may be different, but all want to provide students with the best possible learning opportunities. "The fundamentals unite us," he said.

DeMaria's pillars for ODE: Mindfulness and strategic planning

In a recent interview with Gongwer News Services, new State Superintendent of Public Instruction Paolo DeMaria discussed his approach to leading the Ohio Department of Education (ODE).

Described by Auditor of State Dave Yost as "among the worst, if not the worst-run state agency in state government" prior to DeMaria assuming his new leadership role, it's fair to say that the new superintendent faces significant challenges.

Widely liked and respected, DeMaria has a somewhat low-key style. "I'm not much for being in the spotlight. I like to do good work and let it speak for itself," he told Gongwer. "I'm not going to hold a press conference saying we're no longer the worst state agency."



"What I hope is that superintendents and teachers and legislators and the board and other opinion leaders and even non-opinion leaders say, 'Hey, I recognize that they're doing good work.' That would be what I aspire to and the reality is you won't hear it from me. I'm not going to try to create the image, I'm going to run the best operation the best way the team here and I know how and let the record speak for itself."

DeMaria brings a different perspective to the position in that he has never been a teacher or district superintendent; however, he has significant experience in education policy.

"I think there are some advantages to a person that doesn't have a very deep educational background in terms of practice because I think it forces me to ask questions to the pros to make sure I understand issues," he explained. "Sometimes, I can see connections that other people can't who are too close to the work."

DeMaria has already started to lead ODE in development of a "robust strategic plan" – consistent with the State Board of Education's expectations. The plan will "make sure we are all coming to the work with a shared vision of what to accomplish and that we infuse our policy and program decisions and actions with a common sense of what we're trying to accomplish. That then creates synergies not only within our organization but with key partners."

Early learning, teacher training key to U.S. success

Strong early education systems, a professionalized teacher workforce and a comprehensive approach to education are key strengths of the

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LET THE RACES BEGIN!

With seven of the 11 elected State Board of Education seats up for grabs in the November election, the new board may – or may not – look much the same as it does today in the coming year.

Three of the seven seats are currently held by term-limited members, and all but one incumbent seek to retain their positions.

But it will be a crowded ballet in some communities, including the seven-way race for the sixth district seat, which represents all of Delaware and Knox counties and most of Franklin County. Among the candidates is Jamie Davies O’Leary, who has worked in Ohio’s charter school sector for many years. Previously employed by a large charter school sponsor, she currently serves as a senior policy analyst for the Fordham Institute. Learn more about O’Leary online at: www.electjamieoleary.com



Key to U.S. success — continued

the world’s best academically performing countries, according to a report recently released by the National Conference of State Legislatures’ (NCSL) International Education Study Group.

The study committee, comprised of 22 lawmakers from across the country, participating in a live-streaming of the report at the recent annual NCSL conference in Chicago.

“The U.S. workforce, widely acknowledged to be the best educated in the world half a century ago, is now among the least well-educated in the world, according to recent studies,” the report says. “At this pace, we will struggle to compete economically against even developing nations, and our children will struggle to find jobs in the global economy.”



The report recommends a strong focus on early education and a professionalization of teachers as key to improving the opportunities for American students and once again placing the U.S. among the best- educated countries.

Ohio Senate Education Committee Chair, Senator Peggy Lehner (R-Kettering), participated in the NCSL study group and supports its findings.

“One of these things that our study group has discovered is that all of these countries that are doing much better than we are education-wise all have very robust early childhood programs,” she said in an interview with Gongwer News Service. “The United States is lagging tremendously behind those other countries in recognizing that early brain development is so key.”

According to Lehner, the federal rewrite of the No Child Left Behind Act and development of state plans under the new Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) provides a great opportunity to take a “fresh look” at our education system including early childhood education.

Access the full report online at: <http://www.ncsl.org/press-room/ncsl-international-education-study-group-report-released.aspx>

Yost: Online schools should receive performance-based funding

State Auditor Dave Yost believes that basing funding for Ohio’s e-schools on student milestones and performance is a better approach

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WATER TESTING FUNDS AVAILABLE

The Ohio Facilities Construction Commission will soon post application information to allow schools and districts to apply for funds available through the Lead Plumbing Fixture Replacement Assistance Grant Program created to provide \$12 million for the sampling and replacement of drinking fountains, water coolers, plumbing fixtures and limited connected piping.

Schools built before 1990 will be able to apply for reimbursement of up to \$15,000 for sampling of eligible fixtures and the material costs to replace fixtures identified as being over the federal action level for lead. The program and associated funds are not designed to reimburse for any types of whole-school plumbing assessments, post-testing or any other services that fall outside the program guidelines.

Learn more online at:
<http://ofcc.ohio.gov/ServicesPrograms/LeadFixtureReplacementGrants.aspx>.



Yost: e-school funding — continued

because students learn at different paces. He is encouraging legislators to embrace his views, and some – including Senate President Keith Fabor (R-Celina) and Senate Education Committee Chair Peggy Lehner (R-Ketterington) -- seem open to the concept.

“The genius, and the genesis, of virtual learning is a recognition that students learn at a different pace. What takes one student an hour could take another three hours; and in a different subject, vice versa,” Yost said. “This dramatic paradigm shift calls for an equal shift in the law.”



Yost’s recommendation comes against the backdrop of controversy and legal action over the Ohio Department of Education’s new policy of basing funding on the amount of time e-school students are accessing 920 hours of “learning opportunities” provided. To receive full funding, students must be logged into online instruction for a minimum of five hours per day.

In a statement made in response to Yost’s proposal, Senator Fabor said, “We’ve learned that basing our higher education funding formula on performance and course completion has resulted in improvements to both. The same philosophy should be applied to primary and secondary education as well. I look forward to continuing this discussion not only with the auditor but also with my legislative colleagues in the days ahead.”

Senator Lehner also expressed interest in and support for Yost’s proposal, which could also apply to dropout recovery schools.

“We’re looking at the possibility of when the student is learning online they can’t be guaranteed they’re actually in a seat doing work, so we can change how they fund that so they get funded as they complete the course – maybe 50 percent at the beginning, then 25 percent when a course is passed and 25 percent when the child completes the curriculum,” Lehner said in an interview with Gongwer News Services. “I’m not saying that’s the formula we would use, but we’re exploring and talking about that in the dropout recovery world and I think it is something that deserves further consideration.”

Statehouse transportation grants offered on first-come, first-served basis

Schools interested in seeking grant funding to help pay for bus transportation to the Statehouse have a limited window of opportunity to apply.

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BLOG POST PROMOTES BEST PRACTICES

The Ohio Department of Education's (ODE) blog, "Extra Credit," recently featured a guest blogger from Battelle for Kids who highlights five promising practices from high-performing schools: Limiting goals and initiatives to focus on student learning; strategically leveraging time, talent and resources; developing a balanced assessment approach; using multiple measures to inform improvement; and, empowering teachers and developing leaders. Check it out at: <http://education.ohio.gov/Media/Extra-Credit-Blog/August-2016/GUEST-BLOG-5-Promising-Practices-from-High-Perform>

SCHOOL SAFETY CONFERENCE SET FOR SEPT.

The Ohio Department of Education's Center for P-20 Safety and Security joins forces with the Anti-Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Initiative to host a one-day conference on *School and Community Partnerships: What's Working to Reduce Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying* on Sept. 19 in Columbus. The agenda will include strategic planning activities to identify critical needs, partners and processes to create local safe and violence-free schools. Learn more at: https://saferschools.ohio.gov/content/ohios_safe_violence_free_schools_conference_monday_september_19_2016.

Statehouse transportation grants — continued

The Capitol Square Review and Advisory Board (CSRAB) and Capitol Square Foundation will offer up to 75 grants ranging from \$200 to \$400 dollars. School administrators and authorized teachers can apply online starting Sept 12 at 9 a.m.

"The transportation grant program provides thousands of Ohio school children with a learning experience here at the Ohio Statehouse," CSRAB's executive director, Laura Clemens, said. "This is the place to learn about the legislative process."

Access on online application at: <http://www.ohiostatehouse.org/visit/group-tours/school-bus-transportation-grant-program>.



Employers struggle to find qualified workers

In a recent meeting between the Small Business Advisory Council and the Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation, business leaders voiced concern regarding their struggles to find qualified workers, including skilled specialists like welders, plumbers and equipment operators. Another barrier to hiring is the number of workers unable to pass drug tests.

Ohio's focus on both college and career readiness – and efforts to promote career tech education opportunities – may help address challenges business leaders face.

"We really feel like we're on the cusp of a new age in terms of artificial intelligence, machine learning, autonomous vehicles," said Ryan Burgess, who serves as director of the Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation. "Probably more than any job training, those are the macro forces that are going to affect the workforce."

According to Lorraine Walker, a member of the Small Business Advisory Council, a lack of interest and awareness of jobs in skilled trades is also a problem. There is a negative perception that people who seek these career opportunities aren't as smart as people who go to college.

"It's the parents who need to get on board," Walker said.

UPDATED GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS HANDOUT AVAILABLE

An updated overview handout about graduation requirements for students and their families is now available on ODE's website at: http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Ohio-Graduation-Requirements/Graduation-Requirements-2018-and-Beyond/Ohios-Options-for-a-High-School-Diploma/GradPath_2018beyond.pdf.aspx

A brief accompanying video that provides a general overview of graduation options for the classes of 2018 and beyond is also available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sgDVZF9DWfk&feature=youtu.be>.



Teaching teams key to improved student reading

Participants in Concept Schools' summer leadership summit in Chicago celebrated school success, including the Horizon Science Academy Dayton High School, which was recognized as the most improved school in reading based on Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) assessments.

According to Principal Hakan Bagcioglu, the effectiveness of the school's teaching teams – which work together on both instruction and student discipline – contributed to student success.

Many of the school's students enter the school unable to read at grade level. Well beyond the transition from learning to read, to reading to learn that generally occurs as students enter the fourth grade, the impact on Horizon students with poor reading skills extended into other curriculum areas.

“We knew that improving students' reading skills would have a positive impact across the board,” Bagcioglu explained. “All staff contributed to our success, but one of our reading instructors, Mrs. Jennifer Noggle, played a particularly key role.”



Mutual trust between Noggle -- a sixth- and eighth-grade reading instructor in the middle school side of the same school -- and the school's administration was key. Giving her the freedom to be innovative in her approach without fear of potential failure set the stage for student and school success.

Bagcioglu also credits the use of individual student data notebooks for the school's improved reading performance. The interactive notebooks serve not only to track student progress, but also allow students to participate in individual goal setting.

The middle school team also supported the high school's success by using the Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) model, creating a program binder to track positive and negative student behaviors and a plan to address key problems.

“I'm proud of our teaching staff – at both the middle and high school levels,” Bagcioglu. “This is the type of success we strive for throughout Concept Schools, and it's a real honor to be recognized for outstanding performance among the more than 30 mid-west schools that participated in the recent leadership summit.”

TASK FORCE TO STUDY ANTI-DRUG EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

On recommendation of Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine, the legislature has created a committee to study and provide recommendations on anti-drug education for primary and secondary school students.

Created in response to the opiate epidemic in Ohio and throughout the country, the committee is comprised of 22 diverse members including legislators, educators, law enforcement officials and medical professionals.

There seems to be general agreement that anti-drug education should be age appropriate and taught to students at all grade levels.

Lessons could be incorporated into science or health curriculum.



New leader, new building; same mission, same commitment

Students returning to the Achieve Career Preparatory Academy in Toledo for the new school year are experiencing two big changes: a new school leader and a new location.

Seasoned charter school leader Cindy Wilson joins the Leona Group team in the school's new location. Vacant in recent years, the school's new building previously served as a private school. The Catholic convent and rectory was purchased along with the school building, and will house Leona Group's Ohio corporate office.

"It's a beautiful, old brick building freshly renovated," Wilson explains. "When it comes to charter school facilities, the first thing everyone wants to know is if it has a gym ... and it does! The gym flooring has been redone, ready for use by our students on the first day of the new school year."



The new facility is also freshly painted and has a new roof, classroom white boards and a 3-D lab. Beyond providing a better learning environment for students, the building represents a cost-effective investment in the future that simply couldn't occur in the school's previously leased building.

The school is now located in a residential neighborhood, which may boost enrollment beyond the approximately 180 students served last year. To help build a sense of community, neighbors were among those invited to attend the school's recent open house.

Achieve serves students in grades eight through 12, with more than half of its students participating in its dropout recovery program. Nearly 90 percent of students are minorities, 100 percent are economically disadvantaged and 31 percent have disabilities.

Although new to the dropout recovery program, Wilson has worked in Ohio's charter school community for many years. She will receive support from the school's previous school leader, Kerry Gordon-Keese, who has transitioned into a Leona Group corporate position working out of the building next door to the school.

"I'm really looking forward to building relationships with Achieve students – earning their trust and respect is the first step," Wilson

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COMPLIANCE UPDATE

Updated guidance for fire inspections

Per the Ohio Department of Education's Center for P-20 Safety and Security, the "annual fire inspections" requirement calls for schools to have a valid fire inspection "once per year" to be compliant. To illustrate, a school that had a fire inspection any time during 2016 has until December 31, 2017 to under-go a fire inspection and remain compliant.

Expanded FY17 compliance list

Due to changes related to H.B. 2 and the Ohio Department of Education's sponsor performance assessment, sponsors will have an expanded compliance list for fiscal year 2017. Development of the expanded list is underway. Boards, school leaders and management companies will receive the list and access to FY17 SharePoint when the process is complete.



BCHF Sponsor Update – Sept. 2016

New leader, new building — continued

said. "I'm fortunate to work with a great team of staff and appreciate that Kerry will serve as a valuable resource to me in the new position."

The challenges Achieve students face go beyond academics. The school strives to provide additional support services – from serving three meals a day to providing clothing and toiletries for students who need them, including those that are homeless.



Earning an overall rating of "meets expectations" on its most recent state report card, Achieve has a track record of success, which Wilson plans to continue.

"We'll continue what's been working in terms of academics and student support services," she said. "Achieve has a new building and a new school leader, but its core mission and commitment to student success remains completely unchanged."

ODE seeks input for ESSA plan

Late July, the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) hosted the first of a series of webinars to gather input from all interested individuals and groups that will help share Ohio's plan under the new Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

In addition to the webinars – which will address a range of topics including accountability subgroup size, report card indicators, equitable student access to effective teachers, and federal funding options -- ODE will host stakeholder meetings in 10 cities across the state in the coming weeks.

Access the webinars and information on dates, locations and registration for the stakeholder meetings online at: <http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Every-Student-Succeeds-Act-ESSA>.



UPCOMING EVENTS

TRANSITION WORKSHOP

Students with identified disabilities face many personal and academic challenges when entering adult life. Vocational and career options are often misunderstood or overlooked within the context of the disability. For these students, an effective transition plan within the IEP is a critical factor, which includes extra planning and goal setting for career, vocational and independent life skills. This workshop will provide participants with an understanding of vocational assessments, guided practice in developing transition statements, and aligning goals and activities to vocational and community experiences. The 9 a.m. to 12 noon workshop will be offered in Columbus on Sept. 13 and in Dayton on Sept. 26. The registration deadline is Sept. 9, 2016. To register, please send participants' names, school affiliation, and email addresses to Anita McCarty at: amccarty@buckeyehope.org.

INTERPRETING NWEA/MAP DATA

On Sept. 14, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Buckeye Community Hope Foundation will offer a workshop on "Interpreting your NWEA Data" in Columbus. The featured presenter will be Joni Byus, dean of intervention for Stambaugh Charter Academy. Byus will walk participants through relevant reports from the NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP). More importantly, she will discuss strategies for interpreting reports to target student needs and plan intervention. Lunch will be provided. The registration deadline is Sept. 7. To register, please send names, school affiliation and email addresses to Anita McCarty at: amccarty@buckeyehope.org.

2016-2017 ALL SCHOOLS MEETING

Nationally-recognized author and educator Mychal Wynn will be the keynote speaker for BCHF's Annual All Schools Meeting on Wednesday, Sept. 21, 2016 in Gahanna (a suburb of Columbus)! All school leaders should plan to attend or send a representative. Register by contacting Anita McCarty at: amccarty@buckeyehope.org.

SPECIAL SEPTEMBER DROP OUT RECOVERY ROUNDTABLE

On Sept. 20, BCHF will hold a special 2016-2017 dropout recovery roundtable meeting in Columbus from 5 to 7 p.m. This event will be a great opportunity for school leaders and others involved in dropout recovery programs to interact with noted author Mychal Wynn about issues specific to the dropout recovery population. Mark your calendars and plan to attend! To register, emailing the names, school affiliation and e-mail addresses of participants to Anita McCarty at: amccarty@buckeyehope.org.

EFFECTIVE LESSON DELIVERY

BCHF's "Effective Lesson Delivery" workshop is especially supportive of teachers who need assistance in planning and implementing solidly-structured, effective lessons. The session will examine effective lesson elements such as anticipatory set, guided practice and independent practice. The session will encourage teachers to check for understanding and engagement. Strategies for adjusting lessons based on formative observations and guided practice results will also be emphasized. Attendees should bring a lesson plan that they have developed for critique and improvement during the workshop. The event – scheduled for 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. – will be offered in Cleveland on Sept. 28 and in Columbus on Sept. 29. To register, please send participants names, email addresses and date/location to Anita McCarty at: amccarty@buckeyehope.org.

BCHF offers professional development for its sponsored schools at no charge and can only accommodate participants who are employed by, or affiliated with, BCHF-sponsored schools. BCHF reserves the right to request lunch and meeting cost reimbursement from any school whose registrant(s) do not attend without providing a 48-hour cancellation notice.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Delivering on the power of data

By Josh Miller, Communications & Data Analysis Representative

Educators often begin improving their schools by asking two questions: “What data should we be analyzing to help our school improve?” and “What data besides the state's standardized test results can we use?”

If you have asked these questions, the good news is that your school probably already has an abundance of powerful data on the effectiveness of all parts of the school – and much of this information does not come solely from standardized tests. The bad news is that if you are not using these data, your school or management company probably has not yet organized the data for easy access and analysis.

State assessments currently tend to focus on concepts that are easy to measure. They rely mainly on multiple-choice items with fill-in or even “drag and drop” answers. They generally provide time-sensitive data and results months later, when their instructional usefulness has expired. Typically, students take a state assessment in the spring – and get the results after school is out.

In short, most of the assessment done in schools today is after the fact and designed to indicate only whether students *have* learned. Not enough is being done to assess students' thinking *as* they learn to boost and enrich learning, and track student growth. Schools may give lots of tests – often too many – but the assessments aren't always testing important knowledge and skills in state standards in a comprehensive way or providing high-quality information about student progress. Instead of fostering a classroom culture of continuous improvement, our current assessment system often leaves teachers and parents feeling frustrated and lacking information that could help them accelerate student learning.

In order for teachers to form a comprehensive understanding of their students, they need more

than just accountability data (test scores). They need diverse sources of data such as demographics, attendance, health, behavior, attitude, welfare, observations, classroom activities and even transportation. These data are in addition to all the traditional student performance and assessment data.

Consider this dilemma: Why can't Johnny read? Of course we need to know the facts about what his reading skills are, but it's more relevant to know that Johnny missed 10 of the last 16 days of school. And, most importantly, why is he not coming to school? Digging into diverse sources of data can enable us to find the answers to these questions.

Comprehensive (or multiple) measures, used together and over time, provide much richer information. Ultimately, schools need to be able to predict what we must do to meet the needs of *all* students they have, or will have, in the future. The information gleaned from the intersections of these four measures (demographics, perceptions, student learning, and school processes) helps us to define the questions we want to ask, and focuses us on what data are necessary in order to find the answers.

Any definition of multiple measures should include *four* major measures of data – not just student learning, but also demographics, perceptions, and school processes. Analyses of *demographics, perceptions, student learning, and school processes* provide a powerful picture that will help us understand the school's impact on student achievement. When used together, these measures give schools the information they need to improve teaching and learning to get positive results.

While many schools gather data, barriers begin to form with attempts to analyze the data to help

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Power of data — continued

improve teaching and learning. These barriers can pop up anywhere and for a variety of reasons. It should be noted that schools do not deliberately ignore data. Typically, schools say, “We have lots of data -- we just do not know what data to use, or how or when to use them.” When school personnel first get interested in data and want to do more with the data they have, they often hit the proverbial brick wall.

Whatever it is that keeps us from assessing our progress adequately, we must learn to listen, to observe, and to gather data from all sources that will help us know how we are doing, where we are going, and how we can get there. A great formative assessment idea that engages the entire class and provides evidence of student learning is the white

board. Small, personal-sized white boards allow students to provide answers and information by simply writing an answer and raising the whiteboard so the teacher sees it. Teachers can quickly grasp student understanding and adjust how they move forward.

Data literacy in the context of teaching is about more than looking at reports to analyze data and see patterns. Teachers must transform data into information and ultimately into actionable knowledge. They must put it to use in the ways they manage their classrooms, the ways they approach instruction and the ways they present content.

The promise of data is that it provides a rich context for understanding student learning. The challenge of data rests with us as educators to truly use it.

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