

What do the data tell you?

Adapted from Ruth Johnson, (2002). *Using Data to Close the Achievement Gap*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press. P. 77.

Several questions to consider when looking at data....

- 1 What is the **nature or type of data** examined? [student achievement reflected by quantitative data such as student test scores, or by qualitative data such as classroom running logs or diaries of class activities...team or staff functioning, norms or expectations reflected by quantitative data such as likert scale scores from staff surveys, or qualitative data such as annotated transcripts of structured staff interviews ...]
- 2 How is the **data described and reported?** [student test scores, school culture scores or reports, staff or class or individual behavior, or so forth]
 - a. How is the **data** – as an indicator for the focus of the examination or analysis - **measured and reported?** [i.e., quantitative data and results such as frequency counts, medians, means, box and whiskers, aggregated / disaggregated scores and so forth; Are the data results reported in a norm referenced context (individuals performance compared to the performance of a group) or criterion referenced – performance measured against an established criteria – advanced, proficient, and so forth... That is performance measured against a set “standard,” “benchmark,” or “cut score...”]
 - b. How is the **level** of performance or progress **determined and reported?** [i.e., percents above or below some cut point, or so forth – or qualitative data such as descriptions, narratives, “story lines.”]
- 3 Are there **multiple components** performing or being examined? If so,
 - a. How do the different parts perform?
 - b. Do different parts perform differently? If so,
 - i. Are some groups meeting target goals or expectations in behaviors, achievement, quality or so forth – and some not, or not as well?
 - ii. Patterns of performance by those individuals or groups – i.e., by those meeting / not meeting an expectation or determined cut score or at points along a continuum.
 - iii. If so – how might the results be described? Effect of various descriptions, groupings, portrayals.... graphics?
- 4 What don't the data tell us?
- 5 What other data do we need?

6. What other sources of data [information] might we look at? i.e.
 - a. With what other groups might we need to talk? [students, teachers, parents... other providers, observers, or stakeholders?]
 - b. What other data sources might we want to consult or reference? [SBAs, class work reflected in report cards or test scores or teacher observations or notes, chapter tests, end-of-course tests... and so forth.]

7. What are the implications for...
 - a. How we understand and thus report the data?
 - b. and how that understanding and reporting frames the issue(s) to be addressed?
 - c. Uncovering – making explicit - the assumptions we bring to our examination, understanding, and interpretation of the data - and thus our understanding and framing of the issue?
 - d. How we define the problem to be addressed and “solved.”...and
 - e. How we view and discuss our roles and relationships to the issue(s) and the problem(s) we have identified or defined Developing or revising policies?
 - f. How those frames and understandings affect our efforts related to developing or revising strategies or behaviors - Our own or others’?
 - g. Those strategies and behaviors might employ (these might include)
 - i. Reading literature?
 - ii. Visiting other schools?
 - iii. Revising, eliminating, adding programs
 - iv. Dialoguing with experts, consultants, other practitioners, others? Who?
 - v. Professional development

8. How do we share and present the data to various audiences....?
(How we understand the data and our relationship to the data influences how we present the data ...And how we present the data influences how others understand and consider the data... i.e., Grinder)