

## DATA-DRIVEN DECISION-MAKING

Data-driven decision-making is a continuous process centered on the use of data, numerical and written, to reach evidence-based conclusions.<sup>1</sup> This process should focus on student learning and closing the achievement gap through teacher action over student accountability.<sup>2</sup> Classrooms that implement data-based practices show improved student achievement and student engagement.<sup>3</sup>

### Components of Data-Driven Decision-Making

Data must first be processed to identify needs and inform instructional practices. When data-driven decision-making frameworks are properly followed, they facilitate the creation of goals based on data analysis. This then informs the implementation of evidence-based interventions to improve and adjust instruction and curriculum. In tandem with implementation, the framework facilitates the monitoring of progress to ensure targeted goals are achieved. When analyzing data, the focus should not be on holding teachers accountable, but on whole-student learning with an equity-based mindset.<sup>4</sup> Further, data must connect to the targeted standard where improvement is needed the most.<sup>5</sup> This assures outcomes reflect the goals set from the outset.

#### *Use Data to Identify Needs*

- Focus on areas of greatest concern that can be addressed, that are measurable, and can be accomplished in the classroom to provide results.<sup>6</sup>

#### *Define Rationale and Set Goals*

- Create SMART goals that positively impact student learning.<sup>7</sup> Data-driven decision-making requires having a clear, specific, and measurable goal.<sup>8</sup>

#### *Identify Evidence-based Resources*

- Research quality, evidence-based practices to decide what interventions should be implemented in the classroom to achieve desired outcomes.<sup>9</sup>
- Focus on student improvement by emphasizing the use of evidence-based curriculum and instructional practices while also building on school and classroom strengths to balance the areas that need improvement.<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Bowers & Krumm, 2021; Love et al., 2008

<sup>2</sup> Bowers & Krumm, 2021; Love et al., 2008; Mandinach & Schildkamp, 2021

<sup>3</sup> Albiladi et al., 2020; Debnam et al., 2022

<sup>4</sup> Mandinach & Schildkamp, 2021; Schildkamp & Datnow, 2022

<sup>5</sup> Barnes et al., 2022

<sup>6</sup> Baharav & Newman, 2019; Geiger & Oehrtman, 2020

<sup>7</sup> Love et al., 2008; Mandinach & Schildkamp, 2021

<sup>8</sup> Mandinach & Schildkamp, 2021; Romer et al., 2023

<sup>9</sup> Geiger & Oehrtman, 2020; Love et al., 2008

<sup>10</sup> Geiger & Oehrtman, 2020; Love et al., 2008

## *Monitoring and Achieving Results*

- Actively collect data to determine the effectiveness of interventions in terms of improving student learning.<sup>11</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Data-driven decision-making isn't solely about focusing on areas of weaknesses—it's also about balancing needs with strengths and celebrating areas of growth.<sup>12</sup> Create a positive data culture within the school to emphasize the importance of using student data to drive improvement. Data-driven decision-making is a whole-school approach where all stakeholders share in the responsibility for student learning.<sup>13</sup>

## **References**



<https://k20center.ou.edu/ddi-references/>

---

<sup>11</sup> Buffum et al., 2012; Lane et al., 2014

<sup>12</sup> Abrams et al., 2021

<sup>13</sup> DuFour et al., 2021; DuFour & DuFour, 2009