

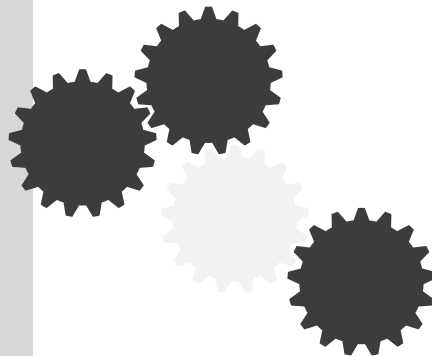
ONTARIO LEADERSHIP STRATEGY

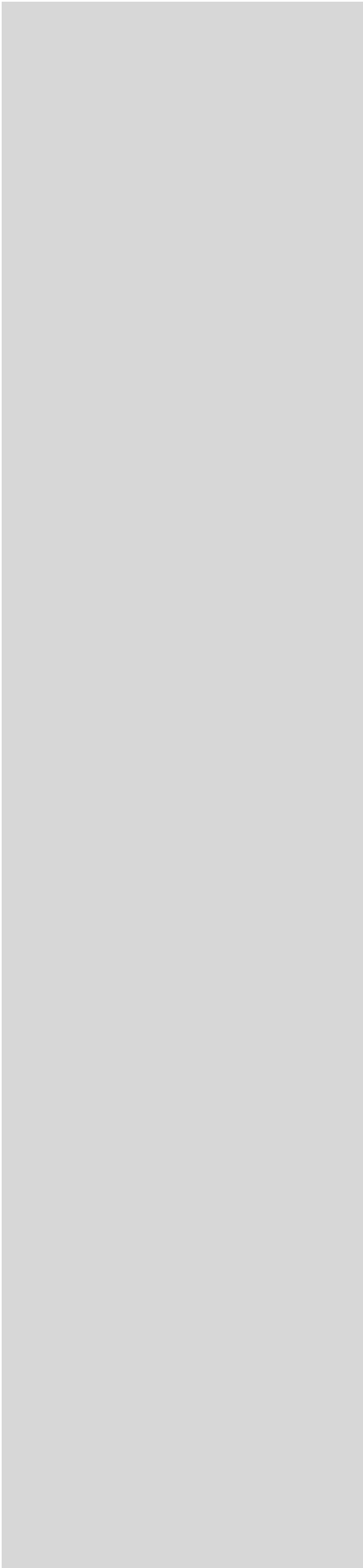
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WINTER 2012–13

Exploring Five Core Leadership Capacities Using Data: Transforming Potential into Practice

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Equipped both with data and the tools necessary to yield the relevant information data can provide, they suggest that educators can make a variety of instructional changes aimed at improving student achievement, including:

- s prioritizing instructional time
- s targeting additional individual instruction for students who are struggling in particular areas of the curriculum
- s identifying individual students' strengths and instructional interventions that can help students continue to progress
- s gauging the instructional effectiveness of classroom lessons
- s refining instructional methods
- s examining school-wide data to consider whether and how to adapt the curriculum based on information about students' strengths and needs.

School Effectiveness

2. Focus conversations on instructional improvement;
for example:
 - Engage in early conversations prior to implementation of a data initiative
 - Centre open-to-learning conversations on instruction and practice
 - Foster collaborative conversations that inspire teacher leadership.
 3. Implement data initiatives purposefully so that:
 - Teachers see the connection between data use and instruction
 - Infrastructures support data use both in terms of available hardware and data
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2. Become data literate

Using data is a whole new approach to working in the culture of many schools. As Earl and Katz (2006) point out, “assembling good data and drawing it into a process of looking at the whole picture, understanding what the results mean and making responsible judgments and decisions is difficult and complex.” Data-literate leaders are those who:

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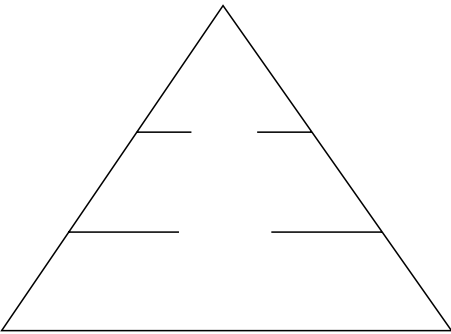
The eight activities fall into three categories – Prepare, Inquire and Act – as illustrated in the chart shown below.

THE DATA WISE IMPROVEMENT PROCESS					
<p>PREPARE is about putting in place the structure for data analysis and looking at existing data.</p> <p>Key Challenge</p> <p>Communicating the need for a data initiative and creating data teams that are equipped to lead the work.</p>		<p>INQUIRE is about acquiring the knowledge necessary to decide how to increase student learning.</p> <p>Key Challenge</p> <p>How to engage the entire faculty in honest conversations about data, particularly when “data can wound.”</p>		<p>ACT is about what to do to improve instruction and to assess whether the changes put in place have made a difference.</p> <p>Key Challenge</p> <p>Helping staff choose, implement and assess a viable action plan based on insights from the data they have gathered. This includes defining consistent instructional expectations across grades.</p>	
Organizational Collaborative Work	Build Asset Literacy	Categorize Data Overview	Dig into Student Data	Exchange Instruction	Plan to Assess and Improve

LESSONS LEARNED

<p>Organizational Collaborative Work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> U patiently prepare. U Choose the right data team. U Focus on what’s relevant. U Share ownership. U Establish productive routines. <p>Build Asset Literacy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> U Set aside time to build capacity. Give team members time to develop their knowledge and to create systems that support the team’s efforts. U Use data to tackle a problem people care about. U Support colleagues in learning how to use data responsibly. U Appreciate the importance of building trust. U Recognize that patience can be a virtue. 	<p>Categorize Data Overview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> U Establish clear norms for data analysis. U Conduct frequent, focused conversations about student learning. U Create a data overview that is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – a collaborative process. – succinct and well organized. – aimed at the staff audience. – based on several data sources. – certain to foster discussion. <p>Dig into Data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> U Expand the definition of data. U Make data manageable. U Learn from the “many” as well as the “one”. U Dig into data with colleagues. <p>Exchange Instruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> U Frame peer observations as non-threatening. U Provide a clear structure for the peer-observation process. U Collaboratively define effective practice. U Explore various styles of peer observation. U 	<p>Plan to Assess and Improve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> U Get down to the basics in action planning: If improvement is the goal, focus on priorities. U Help teachers “keep the faith” when re-norms are needed. U Take heart from evidence of success while continuing to target areas for improvement. U Action plans should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – emerge in response to data about student learning. – focus on how to improve instruction. – include measurable goals for improved student learning. – be collective endeavours. U Set teaching goals collaboratively. <p>Plan to Assess and Improve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> U Agree on how to assess whether practice has changed. <p>Act and Assess</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> U Set student learning goals collaboratively. U Use multiple measures to assess whether student achievement is improving. U Support teachers in leading instructional change.
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Adapted from: Boudett, City, and Murnane 2005; Boudett and Steele, 2007; Steele and Boudett 2008



Tip

1. Spend less time ensuring that schools have large amounts of data and more time helping principals and teachers figure out how such data might help them do the job they are trying to do.
2. Collect data about local family educational cultures – norms, beliefs, values, and practices reflecting families' dispositions toward schooling and their role in it. Many elements of such cultures including parental expectations for children's success at school are malleable in response to school intervention and make quite significant contributions to student achievement.
3. Work with school principals to help expand the range of high quality data available to schools in order to more fully encompass the range of variables implicated in schools' problem-solving efforts. Examples include systematically-collected evidence about the school and classroom conditions

Hill also notes that, at each level, assessment data need to be used, both summatively for accountability purposes, and formatively for improving teaching and learning.

Wayman, Jimerson and Cho (2009) suggest that districts can improve their data use by addressing the following three critical issues:

1. *Working toward common understanding*
This entails working collectively so that processes are inclusive across the district, valuing the process as much as the result, and allowing for self-determination.
2. *Recognizing that the work is never done*
Professional learning for data use focused on building educator capacity should be supported by frequent learning opportunities that allow the building of new skills and knowledge.
3. *Implementing an effective data system*
This includes three key dimensions: centrally-supported and integrated systems, widespread, easy access to a data system and professional relationships and collegiality.

Data in the Ontario Context: The Ontario Leadership Framework 2012

How are these research findings reflected in the Ontario Leadership Framework (OLF) 2012? Within the OLF, the core capacity “using data” is recognized as vital to successful leadership and is reflected within –

**This table illustrates how “using data” is embedded
in the Ontario Leadership Framework 2012**

DOMAINS OF THE ONTARIO LEADERSHIP FRAMEWORK 2012	SELECTED SCHOOL-LEVEL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES & EXAMPLES OF WHAT THESE PRACTICES LOOK LIKE IN ACTION	PERSONAL LEADERSHIP RESOURCES: Leaders draw upon their personal leadership resources to effectively enact leadership practices
Setting Directions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UÊ - Regularly encourage staff to evaluate their progress toward achieving the school's goals UÊ - Encourage staff to develop and periodically review individual goals for professional growth, as well as the relationship between their individual goals and the school's goals 	<p>Cognitive Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> UÊ Problem-solving expertise UÊ Knowledge of effective school and classroom conditions with direct effects on student learning <p>Social Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> UÊ Perceiving emotions UÊ Managing emotions UÊ Acting in emotionally appropriate ways <p>Psychological Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> UÊ Optimism UÊ Self-efficacy UÊ Resilience
Building Relationships and Developing People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UÊ - Encourage staff to reflect on what they are trying to achieve with students and how they are doing it UÊ - Lead discussions about the relative merits of current and alternative practices UÊ - Encourage staff to develop and review their own professional growth goals and their relationship to school goals and priorities 	

Walking the Talk: Building Our Capacity in the Ontario Context

How can we as leaders further develop our leadership practices and personal leadership resources in this critical area of leadership? The following is a brief sampling of current programs and resources that support the development of our capacity in using data.

Ministry Resources and Supports Available to Ontario Leaders:

• MISA (Managing Information for Student Achievement)

Since 2005, all school districts have been growing the capacity of their system leaders, principals, and teachers to better utilize evidence for improved student outcomes.

This capacity building has focused on three areas:

1. Data management to support precise tracking of student progress and planning of effective instructional strategies for improved student outcomes; for example, data accuracy, privacy, timeliness, and relevance.
2. Technology to support improved student outcomes through implementation of local decision-support tools for the collection and storage of key data necessary to maintain precise tracking of student progress and the planning of effective instructional strategies.
3. Training in data use to help board staff, including principals and teachers, better understand how to collect, record/store, analyze, and use data appropriately to track student progress and plan effective instructional strategies for improved student outcomes and reduced gaps in achievement.

In addition, there are seven MISA Professional Network Centres (PNCs) across Ontario; i.e. six regional, English-language centres and one province-wide, French-language centre which function as linked networked learning communities and collaboratively support the efforts of individual boards as they build capacity to work with data and evidence in support of improved student outcomes.

The MISA PNCs facilitate professional learning related to the use of appropriate evidence at the district, school, and classroom levels especiallyCr1_0 177uild capacity

s The Student Success Strategy

Increased use of data for needs assessment and evaluation of improvement has been a precept of the Student Success Strategy. With the introduction of a growing number of programs that suit the diversity of learners in Ontario schools, the use of data to inform and assess the effectiveness of Student Success initiatives has been essential.

Strategic approaches to educational challenges require far more sophisticated ways of analyzing information than have existed in the past. To meet this challenge, the ministry has identified specific assessments that need to be tracked in order to identify program/initiative interventions, enhancements or expansions. To support this tracking, the ministry distributes data packages to boards that provide information at a school, board and provincial level on pass rates, credit accumulation and mark distribution. The data packages afford boards the opportunity to further support data literacy among staff and to identify areas where student

Using Data in Action:

Predictive Modeling of Student Achievement and Targeted Instructional Interventions

An on-going research project involving nine of the province's 12 French-language school boards is demonstrating the applicability of predictive modeling to future student achievement. The approach, along with the K-12 School Effectiveness Framework enables each school, and by extension, each district, to identify predictive indicators of future student performance, particularly those elements on report cards that are associated with the results of EQAO tests.

School principals and Student Success Leaders using this approach have been provided with personalized data enabling them to identify student-level interventions based on students' specific needs. While it is not possible to attribute school improvement to a single factor, it has been possible to determine the combination of factors likely to predict student performance as accurately as possible. Results on annual large-scale tests have increased steadily over the last four years.

The Professional Learning Cycle – Using Data/Evidence to Drive Professional Learning and Instruction

The professional learning cycle, a process used by teams of educators for professional learning, has four iterative phases: plan, act, observe, reflect. Learning occurs during and between team meetings when educators share practice, examine student work and access opportunities to build their instructional skills and knowledge. Although originally introduced as part of the Student Success Strategy for Grades 7-12, the professional learning cycle is for use at all levels of the system K-12.

In the Plan phase, educators:

- examine data/evidence to determine a student need related to achievement and/or engagement
- select a learning focus that addresses the student need and “unpack” the curriculum expectations to acquire a common understanding of expected student learning
- determine educator learning required to address the student need
- plan ‘with the end in mind’, deciding what evidence will indicate that the student need has been met and developing the evaluation task, scoring and tracking tools
- design instruction using research-based instructional strategies and a differentiated approach (DI).

In the Act phase, educators:

- implement instruction while adjusting as needed, based on ongoing assessment and feedback from students
- engage in professional learning to build a collective understanding of the instructional approach
- access professional learning resources.

In the Observe phase, educators:

- monitor student and educator learning
- share and analyse evidence of student learning, including student feedback, and devise next steps
 - share instructional practice, address instructional issues and determine next steps for educator learning.

In the Reflect phase, educators:

- examine and analyze results
- co-assess/evaluate student work and share student feedback
- decide, based on evidence, the extent to which the student need has been met
- reflect on educator learning, and decide next steps.

For video footage and resources visit:

<http://www.edugains.ca/newsite/di2/diprolearningcyclevideo.html>



s The Teaching-Learning Critical Pathway Cycle (T-LCP) Use of Data to Guide Inquiry

There are many systematic processes used by school teams to construct meaning. The T-LCP is one type of a collaborative inquiry strategy used by Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to mine data, reflect on teaching and learning strategies, determine actionable steps and reflect on actions.

Elementary and secondary schools participating in the Leading Student Achievement (LSA) Project use the T-LCP cycle to focus and guide their inquiry process and to build collective efficacy.

The T-LCP process uses various sources of data and evidence to inform the directions and actions of the PLC. The school team begins its inquiry by determining the strengths and needs of the students and visualizes what quality student work, focused on “thinking skills” might look like by end of the T-LCP cycle. Also included is a focus on the “social actions” that will be considered.

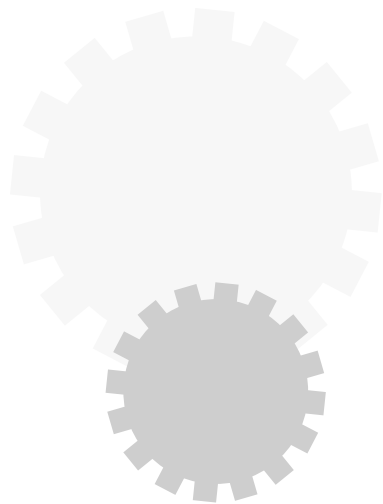
The school team mines the assessment evidence to determine student strengths and needs. Often the Reading for Meaning (The Ontario Curriculum, Language Grades 1-8 and English Grades 9 and 10) curriculum expectations are used as a lens. These include the ability of students to summarize, infer, determine the author’s message, state a personal opinion and detect bias. Questions to consider include:

- Can students support their thinking with appropriate evidence?
- Can students extend their thinking by making meaningful connections or connecting their thinking to ideas that have social significance?
- Are students better able to demonstrate their thinking using one text versus another?
- What role do text features play in demonstrating understanding?

These questions help to provide the focus that is used to examine the data and to determine the direction of the T-LCP. The school team then clusters the curriculum expectations that will be used in the T-LCP.

During the T-LCP, the classroom teacher and school team are most interested in:

- determining the student’s entry point by relying on teacher judgment or diagnostic assessment
- tracking student progress during the T-LCP through use of formative assessments
- making adjustments to teaching and learning based on student needs
- acknowledging student competence at the end of the T-LCP by providing a culminating/summative task.



The T-LCP is an inquiry-driven process that uses assessment and teacher judgment to guide and direct the type of instruction and feedback necessary for improved student achievement. This iterative process looks at the effectiveness of the teaching-learning actions. The inquiry process, within the TLCP, determines and drives “next steps” for both the teacher and the learner.

Publications:

- s **In Conversation** is a series of thought-provoking discussion papers designed to support professional learning and dialogue, available on the ministry’s leadership website at www.education-leadership-ontario.ca Posted most recently are conversations with Dr. Fraser Mustard titled ‘Strong Roots, Bright Futures: The Promise of Education and Early Human Development’ (Winter 2010/11) and Dr. Douglas Willms titled ‘Student Engagement: A Leadership Priority’ (Spring 2011).
- s **New Leads** provides practical strategies for student achievement. See for example, ‘Using Data Walls Leads to Improved Teaching, Learning and Achievement’ written by Tilia Cruz, principal of Our Lady of Mercy Elementary School. **New Leads** is published by the Student Achievement Division and is available at www.inspirelearning.ca
- s **Principals Want to Know (PW2)** is a series of tip sheets for principals that focuses on practical issues faced in schools. Drawn from existing resources, these tips are designed to support instructional leadership practice. **Principals Want to Know** is sponsored by the Institute for Education Leadership (IEL) and is available at www.education-leadership-ontario.ca
- s **Collaborative Teacher Inquiry: New Directions in Professional Practice** a monograph in the Capacity Building Series produced by The Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat (2010), identifies and describes seven characteristics of collaborative teacher inquiry through the voices of teachers involved in several ministry supported collaboratives, including the Collaborative Inquiry for Learning – Mathematics (CIL-M). The series is posted at: www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/literacynumeracy/inspire.
- s **Using Data to Improve Student Achievement** by Dr. Christina van Barneveld (2008), research monograph #15 in the WHAT WORKS? Research into Practice series produced by a partnership between The Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat and the Ontario Association of Deans of Education, has as its primary theme the question “How can teachers use data to improve student achievement at the elementary level?” This monograph is available at www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/literacynumeracy/inspire/research/whatWorks.

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Leadership Matters: Open-to-Learning Conversations

Leadership requires educators to engage in open-to-learning conversations that are reflective, respectful, and at times courageous. Many different terms have been used to describe these types of conversations including learning-focused, courageous, crucial, hard, difficult and fierce. These open-to-learning conversations can arise and be nurtured through various collaborative processes that involve problem solving and decision making. Throughout these processes, leaders demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement and a collective focus on student learning. This webcast features Jennifer Abrams, Dr. Viviane Robinson, and Dr. Kenneth Leithwood who share current understandings, research, and evidence-based perspectives about open-to-learning conversations.

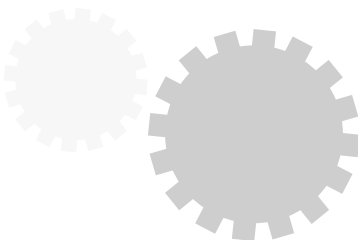
K-12 School Effectiveness Framework is a multi-media resource aligned with the SEF document to support professional learning and reflective practice focused on improving learning for all students. The six components outlined in this resource are: Assessment for, as and of learning; School and Classroom Leadership; Student Voice; Curriculum, Teaching and Learning; Programs and Pathways; and Home, School and Community Partnerships. For each component in the SEF there are a number of indicators and sample sources of evidence. In the multi-media resource, several video clips which demonstrate effective, evidence-based practice are highlighted for each indicator.

Professional Learning Opportunities and Resources Offered by Ontario Leadership Associations:

- Association des directions et directions adjointes des écoles franco-ontariennes (ADFO) and Association des gestionnaires de l'éducation franco-ontarienne (AGÉFO)
- Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario (CPCO) and Ontario Catholic Supervisory Officers' Association (OCSOA)
- Ontario Principals' Council (OPC) and Ontario Public Supervisory Officials' Association (OPSOA)

The six Ontario professional leadership associations listed above represent vice-principals, principals and supervisory officers and share in common their commitment to promoting a collaborative culture of professional learners. Professional learning opportunities and resources offered by the associations – individually and/or in partnership – build and strengthen leadership practice related to all Core Leadership Capacities.

To learn about these associations, visit ADFO at www.adfo.org AGÉFO at www.agefo.ca CPCO at www.cpco.on.ca OCSOA at www.ocsoa.ca OPC at www.principals.on.ca and OPSOA at www.opsoa.org



Dialogue: What You Told Us

Ideas Into Action is designed to support the capacity building being undertaken by the ministry, Ontario's provincial leadership associations, the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) and districts. It is intended to contribute to your ongoing professional learning and provide you and your colleagues with a meaningful springboard for reflection and professional dialogue and for putting these ideas into action.

Reader Insights and Perspectives

In the last issue of Ideas Into Action which focused on the CLC "setting goals" we asked you to share your thoughts and insights. Readers wrote to us not only about "setting goals" but also about "using data."

Reactions on "Using Data"

s An elementary principal reflects on what took place when the school's newly formed SEFlead team decided to take a comprehensive "look in the mirror": "With the support of our board's leadership development team, we crafted questions and activities intended to give all of us a clear picture of what we were doing and how what we were doing is aligned with what we wanted the students to do. What we didn't know at the time that we know now was that we were touching on the work of Richard Elmore and his thoughts about the 'instructional core'.

This examination helped us develop a set of core priorities which we felt would propel us and our students to be the 21st century learners we wanted them to be. The critical notion or the 'aha' moment for the school staff, myself included, was that we are ALL learners related to these initiatives and that although each of us has something to contribute we all have much to learn as well. Talk about a shared purpose!"

Selected Resources and Publications: Recommended by Ontario Leaders

Ahead of the Curve: The Power of Assessment to Transform Teaching and Learning edited by Reeves (2007) provides a comprehensive view of the challenges of assessment from classroom, system and leadership perspectives. The contributors who are all internationally renowned

School Me the Proof! Tools and Strategies to Make Data Work for You by White (2005), is the companion to Beyond the Numbers

Breakthrough by Fullan, Hill and Crévola (2006) defines a new framework for instructional reform using three core components – personalization, precision, and professional learning – to develop precise, data-driven classroom instruction personalized to every student.

Building and Connecting Learning Communities: The Power of Networks for School Improvement by Katz, Earl, and Ben Jaafar (2009) draws on the authors' professional development and research experience to show how networked learning communities (NLCs) can impact school improvement. The authors examine formal/informal leadership roles, collaborative inquiry as an essential tool, and how NLCs support school-wide accountability including effective use of data.

Data Enhanced Leadership edited by Blankstein, Houston, and Cole (2010) offers key concepts about how the informed use of data can translate into highly effective school leadership, this seventh volume in The Soul of Educational Leadership series demonstrates how educational leaders can apply data strategically to strengthen school leadership and significantly improve professional learning, students' learning experiences, and school-wide performance.

Data, Data Everywhere: Bringing All the Data Together for Continuous School Improvement (2009) by Bernhardt describes what it takes to increase student achievement at every grade level in every subject area and with every student group. Bernhardt who is a leading expert on using data has written this short book not to suggest that "data analysis has gotten easier or that the work is less" but to provide school staff with an accessible resource.

'Data: Now What?' is a themed issue of Educational Leadership (December 2008/2009) that aims to provide guidance about how schools can use data to inform decision making. Advice that emerges from contributors' writings includes: focus on questions, not data; be sceptical of easy answers; become assessment literate; think beyond test scores; and use informed judgment.

Data-Driven Dialogue: A Facilitator's Guide to Collaborative Inquiry by Wellman and Lipton (2004) offers guiding principles, practical tools, field-tested tips and a three-phase model for structuring and facilitating data-focused conversations.

Data Teams: The Big Picture – Looking at Data Teams through a Collaborative Lens by Allison, Besser, Campsen, Cordova, Doubek, Gregg, Kamm, Nielsen, Peery, Pitchford, Rose, Ventura, and White (2010) is an anthology of writings about the key components of data teams that shows how implementation of the Data Team Process can positively impact initiatives in schools and districts.

Data Wise: A Step-by-step Guide to Using Assessment Results to Improve Teaching and Learning edited by Boudett, City, and Murnane (2005) presents a clear and carefully tested blueprint for school leaders on how to use assessment data to support student achievement.

Data Wise in Action: Stories of Schools Using Data to Improve Teaching and Learning edited by Boudett and Steele (2007) is a companion to Data Wise: A Step-by-Step Guide to Using Assessment Results to Improve Teaching and Learning and highlights the leadership challenges schools face in each phase of the eight-step Data Wise process and illustrates how staff members use creativity and collaboration to overcome these challenges.

Deliverology: A Field Guide for Educational Leaders by Barber, 2010 draws on the author's pioneering work as head of a Delivery Unit in the UK to show readers how to engage in a concerted and purposeful application of what he terms "deliverology" – an approach designed to help systems set and achieve ambitious goals using data to set targets for next steps in improvement.

'Examining Evidence' is a themed issue of JSD (Fall 2008) that explores what kinds of evidence are useful in particular context. The authors describe the support that teachers and school leaders need to best use available evidence.

Failure Is NOT an Option: Six Principles that Guide Student Achievement in High-performing Schools by Blankstein (2004) offers six guiding principles for creating and sustaining high-performing schools one of which is data driven decision making and continuous improvement.

Leading with Inquiry and Action: How Principals Improve Teaching and Learning by Militello, Rallis, and Goldring (2009) presents

what it looks like when educators, policy makers, and even students try to rethink and change their practices by engaging in evidence-based conversations to challenge and inform their work.

The Principal as Data-Driven Leader by Clark (2009) is a joint publication of the Ontario Principals' Council and Corwin Press Leading Student Achievement series designed to help school leaders use data to shape, revise, and assess their school improvement plans.

School Self-Assessment: The Road to School Effectiveness is the product of a partnership between the Ontario Principals' Council (OPC) and the National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) in the United Kingdom. This guide outlines the process of school self-assessment as a powerful tool that leaders can use for school improvement.

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