

Data Principles and Safety Regulations

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Principles of Effective Data Use

- Go visual with the data: create large, colorful, and simple displays of data to aid understanding.
- Use data to build understanding and ownership of problems. Engage in dialogue with data so the team owns the problem and embraces the solutions together.
- “Hang out in uncertainty”: take time to learn as much as possible from the data. The first solution might not be the best one.
- Separate observation from inference. Fully explore what is there to be learned before imposing interpretations on the data.
- Pay attention to the process: carefully structure Data Team meetings to maximize engagement, learning, attention to equity issues, and the integrity and safety of the group.
- Assure that diverse voices are brought into the analysis. Multiple perspectives provide the richest information.

Some “Safety Regulations” to Guide the Use of Data

- Don’t use data to punish (administrators, teachers, students, schools).
- Don’t use data to blame students or their circumstances.
- Don’t jump to conclusions without ample data.
- Don’t use data as an excuse for quick fixes. Focus on improving instruction!