Data: What is it good for?
How to use data to tell our story and inform our decisions
THINGS WE’LL CONSIDER TODAY

• *Why* using data is important
• *What* some data include and may tell us
• *Where* you can obtain data
• *How* you can develop and embed a practice of using data
• *Who* needs to know *what* and *when* to make decisions
CONTEXT

WHY USING DATA IS IMPORTANT
2 KEY PRINCIPLES THAT WE’LL EXPLORE TODAY

• We need to be willing to listen to the stories data tells
  • What do these data invite us to celebrate? What do they challenge us to address?

• We need to move from learning → action
  • What can we do about what we’ve found in the data?
DATA FOR DUAL PURPOSES

Data can both serve as a window *looking out* to develop insights into students, schools, districts, etc…

…and as a mirror to *look in* and gather insights about our own practices and systems.
ENGAGING OUR EQUITY LENS

Any system produces what it was designed to produce.
WHAT’S THE BIG IDEA?

Focused Results
- Increased Student Achievement

Data-Driven Actions
- Policy
- Programs
- Practice
- Placement

Conditions for Data Use
- Quality
- Capacity
- Culture

Data Use Theory of Action
- Sustained
- Systemic
- Student Centered
To build a collective *culture of engagement* to *inform practice*:

- Commitment across all stakeholders
- Clearly articulated vision for data use
- Accountability
- Culture of collaboration and trust
- Modeling of data use by leaders at all levels
- Commitment to improvements in instruction and programming
YOU’VE GOT DATA, NOW WHAT?

3 SIMPLE DATA PROTOCOLS
HERE’S WHAT. SO WHAT? NOW WHAT?

- Participants review a single data set and reflect on simple prompts, either individually, collectively, or in combination.
- Guides participants through observation → inference → implications.

1. **Here’s What.**
   What did you learn from the data that was especially useful?

2. **So What?**
   What are the implications for your community?

3. **Now What?**
   What is one thing you will do as a result?
PLACEMAT PROTOCOL

• Builds collective understanding of a single dataset or set of datasets in small groups (5-7 people)
• Begins with quiet individual reflection and then moves into group discussion and documentation
• Small group members can simultaneously write on the “placemat” in response to the prompts
• If using multiple datasets, groups will rotate through multiple placemats and add to previous groups’ notes

1. What do you objectively observe?
2. What surprised you in the data?
3. What do you believe the data suggest? What do you infer from the data?
4. What questions arise from this analysis (anything that will require further study)?
5. What actions might these data prompt?
DATA WALK PROTOCOL

- Uses large data visualizations to engage participants and build collective understanding about specific data points pointing to challenges the group can address.
- Participants review data individually and post reactions using sticky notes.
- Protocol builds through individual, paired, and facilitated group discussion and reflection toward identifying key actions to take in response to the data.
COMPARING PROTOCOLS
Key things to consider when choosing which to use

Here’s What, So What, Now What
Great for newbies
Simple and adaptable
Can be used for individual and/or collective reflection

Placemat Protocol
Great for internal meetings
Can be used with one dataset or more
Useful for building collective understanding

Data Walk
Great for larger groups
Works well with multiple datasets/visuals
Useful for public reporting and reflection
TIME FOR ACTION!

PROTOCOLS IN PRACTICE
PROTOCOL PRACTICE GOALS

- *Develop* shared understanding of some metrics of interest
- *Practice* observing and interpreting data
- *Consider* the narratives we may begin to construct around these data
- *Practice* identifying strategies in response to data
- *Consider* implications for how to bring data into decision-making processes
WHERE TO LOOK FOR DATA

Some Public Sources

- Illinois 60 by 25 Network Dashboard ([Link](#))
- Advance Illinois Data Desk ([Link](#))
- IL Report Card ([Link](#))
- ILColllege2Career ([Link](#))
- Coming Soon: Illinois Postsecondary Profiles
REFLECTING ON THE WORKSHOP

Something still circling in my head is...

Today’s learning squares with my thinking because...

Three important points from today are...
THANK YOU