THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF A SYSTEMS APPROACH TO ACCOUNTABILITY

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What Are the Elements of a Systems Approach to Improvement?

- **Input Measures**: Conditions affecting education
- **State/Local Process Measures**: Educational processes that take place
- **State/Local Outcome Measures**: Results of the teaching/learning process

**Systems Accountability**
State Priorities: Input/Process/Outcome

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Required Indicators</th>
<th>Input</th>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher mis-assignment</td>
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<td>Access to materials</td>
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<td>Adequate facilities</td>
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<td>Completion of workplace or service experience</td>
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<td>Outcome Measures</td>
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Establishing the Connections Between Processes and Outcomes

• While all processes may relate to all outcomes generally, the precise relationships are less clear.

• It will be important to establish more direct causal relationships between processes and outcomes.

• This will create a model where schools that implement a process will be more likely to achieve an outcome.
Example Process/Outcome Relationship

- Graduation rates
- Workplace service experience
- Dropout rates
- Attendance
Example: College/Career Readiness

Potential Local CCR Outcome

• Increased AP and dual credit course enrollment

Potential Local CCR Processes

• Increased middle school enrollment in challenging courses
• Focused instruction in learning skills in 6th-9th grade
• Closer relationships between high school and local postsecondary institutions
• Increase in # of teachers in AP training programs
Characteristics of State vs. Local Data Needs

State

- Serves summary, system, longitudinal, comparative purposes
- Is a common denominator
- Addresses equity issues
- Ensures wise use of taxpayer dollars
- Meets high technical quality standards
- Identifies lowest performing schools

Local

- Enables real-time adjustments in programs and strategies
- Is aligned to local priorities and needs
- Addresses equity issues
- Is responsive to local community values
- Spans a wider technical range
- Is useful to all schools, not just lowest performing
Fitbit or Post-Mortem?

Data that can bring about local improvement:

- must be *actionable*
- must be near-real time
- must be highly valid and important
- should be comprehensible by principals and other users
- should contain traditional and new measures
- should consist of more than math & reading test scores
- will have varying degrees of psychometric rigor
- will align with state priorities but also reflect unique local priorities
Multiple Measures of College and Career Readiness: An Example

- EPIC presented the PSAA Advisory Committee with five potential measures of college and career preparedness.
- No one indicator emerged as ideal for all schools.
- Course-taking behaviors and patterns were recommended if only one indicator could be selected.
- Additional indicators with merit were:
  - college admission exams
  - advanced coursework
  - innovative measures (e.g., metacognitive assessments, performance assessments, Seal of Biliteracy)
  - career preparedness assessments (e.g., WorkKeys, ASVAB)
Multiple Measures of College and Career Readiness as an Example

- Judging all schools solely on one indicator will lead to faulty conclusions about and will warp practice at some schools.
  - For example, if advanced coursework participation were to become the sole measure statewide, some schools will offer low-quality “advanced coursework” to bolster enrollment.
  - If SAT/ACT scores become the sole measure, some schools will purchase test-prep programs and devote significantly more time to coaching for those tests.
Multiple Indicators of College and Career Readiness as an Example

- The complexity of college and career readiness requires a multiple indicator approach.
- State sets standards for all local measures.
  - Disaggregation by subgroup required
  - Equal opportunity to learn demonstrated
  - Improvement targets set for all groups/subgroups
  - Local community must sign off on the measure (LCAP process)
- Districts select measures based on local educational program.
  - Performance tasks
  - Demonstrations
  - Culminating portfolios
- Districts then model these indicators for other schools.
Examples of Potential Local College and Career Readiness Indicators

- Dual enrollment participation/completion
- % enrolled in post-secondary programs
- Industry certifications
- % taking higher-level courses
- College-going rate
- % needing college remediation
- % taking Algebra in Grade
- Opportunity to learn metrics

- Speaking and listening
- Goal orientation and aspirations
- Learning techniques
- Metacognitive skill development
- Creativeness and expressiveness
- Student engagement
- Expository writing
- Collaborative skills
School Accountability Profile

- This hypothetical example combines state and local-level indicators.
- Rather than the Evaluation Rubric approach of assigning an overall rating based on performance and trend information, the profile approach is at a higher level of generalization.
- It serves to “tell a school’s story.”
- Evaluation Rubric information would then be used to burrow down.

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<th>Sample School: Grade 11</th>
<th>Performance Score</th>
<th>Trend Score</th>
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<td>State-level Indicator 1. Reading</td>
<td>Meets</td>
<td>Static</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State-level Indicator 2. Mathematics</td>
<td>Approaches</td>
<td>Improving</td>
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<tr>
<td>State-level Indicator 3. Attendance</td>
<td>Meets</td>
<td>Improving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State-level Indicator 4. Graduation Rate</td>
<td>Approaches</td>
<td>Declining</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State-level Indicator 5. Application Rate</td>
<td>Exceeds</td>
<td>Static</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCAP Indicator 1. College/Career Preparedness</td>
<td>Approaches</td>
<td>Improving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCAP Indicator 2. Community Involvement</td>
<td>Meets</td>
<td>Improving</td>
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<tr>
<td>LCAP Indicator 3. Student Interest Explorations to Increase Aspirations</td>
<td>Approaches</td>
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Questions to Ask

• What is the *most important* information the state needs to ascertain how *schools overall* are functioning?

• What is the *most important* information the state needs in order to know *a school* is not functioning effectively?

• How can the state support *local use* of quality multiple-indicator data systems that lead to school improvement?
The Bottom Line

• California schools are still strongly embedded in their local community contexts.

• A set of common statewide indicators is necessary for equity purposes.

• Additional indicators will capture performance in the local context.

• Adding indicators and measures requires a thoughtful, phased approach that entails copious technical assistance.

• California has an unprecedented opportunity to rethink accountability within a systems improvement framework.