

Use Case Scenario: *Using the Data Model to Answer Important Education Questions*

Challenge¹

The Platte Valley School District, Weld Re-7 (CO) wants a mechanism to bring together the various stakeholders within the LEA that play a role in the identification, management, sharing and reporting of educational data. Theoretically, this awareness building and alignment exercise would enable better “business management” of this data and increase communications and needs across these various stakeholders. Without a mechanism to convene around the various data needs of the District, there will continue to be inefficiencies and a “silo” mentality around how data policies and procedures are implemented.

Summary

Glenn McClain, superintendent of the Platte Valley School District first convenes a core group of administrators, teachers, program managers and data input specialists to determine their current data management policies and procedures.

Here is the process they came up with:

- Identify the various persons and roles in the school district that need to be involved in their data management processes evaluation and development.
- Generate a set of “educational data questions” that need answered by all identified stakeholders
- Identify what data “points” are needed to answer these questions.
- Using the Education Data Model Version I: pK12 perform an evaluation between what data is needed currently and what data should be linked for greater question answering through Data Model “linkages”.
- After generating the “what is needed” data the group reviews the district’s current data management policies and procedures and revises based on a more “global” view of the various stakeholder needs.
- Perform a gap analysis between data points required for answering these questions and what data points are currently available in district data system

See the *Steps* section below for detail on how this was done.

Actors/Positions

¹ This use case example is meant only to illustrate the use of the Education Data Model in addressing the challenge. Other Forum documents such as *Technology at Your Fingertips* are available that will also be useful in addressing the challenge.

Glenn first identified a Data Team to help him devise a strategy for the project. This team identified who needed to be at the table, when, and in what order. The Data Team also took ownership of the work of the project. Individuals came and left the Team as they were needed in the process.

Data Team

Superintendent

Building Administrator

Director of Technology

Data Input Specialist/Registrar

School Business Official

Counselor

Strategic Business Officer

Technical Director

Director of Achievement (C&I person)

Accountability Person

Educator

Parent

The Data Team also identified the following roles as being important but they were involved later in the evaluation process.

- Support Services (Facilities Department, Transportation, Food Service)
- Personnel Services
- Special ED/BOCES
- Department Heads
- Health Services
- Safety

Steps

1. Superintendent McClain sent out a communication to identified Data Team members asking for their involvement in the project and also solicited them to generate at least 10 questions requiring data that they need to answer in their professional role.
2. The first meeting of the Data Team was held and questions combined to create a master list. During the first meeting the Team chose 5 of the questions and walked through the perceived data points required to answer the stated questions.
3. This Team then browsed the Data Model and uncovered additional relationship between data points that were not stated in initial review of the five questions.
4. The Team then individually used the Data Model to identify the data needed to answer their original questions: “What would we like to change? What features/functions would we like to see in the new system?”

5. After combining these needed data points, the Team then identified the various other stakeholders that should be involved in the data management process review.
6. This exercise provided the group with a higher level perspective to data identification and management and better informed them to review and modify the current District Policy and Procedures for educational data management.
7. A revised set of policies and procedures are set in place by the district.
8. Jeff Stowe, the data manager performed a gap analysis.
 - a. The data manager, or the contracted vendor maps the information in the existing system to the Data Model Information Requirements.
 - b. The data manager compares the Information Requirements to the existing data system. This is done by using the entity descriptions and attributes for each entity in the Data Model Information Requirements.
 - c. During the mapping process, the data manager discovers whether the proposed system data definitions are consistent with other software systems in the District.
 - d. The data manager summarizes the results in a gap analysis document possibly to be used in future RFPs.