

An Equity-Focused Approach to TSI/ATSI School Improvement

Lunch and Learn Highlights – December 8, 2020

Each month, the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) and the Region 11 Comprehensive Center are hosting interactive, 90-minute content-focused sessions as a part of the year-long “An Equity-Focused Approach to TSI/ATSI School Improvement” Virtual Learning Communities.

Following each session, a Lunch and Learn is hosted where colleagues participating in the Learning Communities network continue the conversations from the previous content session and reflect on the intersession activity. Following are discussion highlights from the Lunch and Learn held on December 8.

How can you [democratize, demonstrate, and demystify data](#) to support your student subgroups?

- The NDE Assessment Office has a professional learning lead who trains certified facilitators who in turn help school personnel understand assessments and assessment data.
- Educational service unit (ESU) staff have helped schools use [eduCLIMBER](#) to organize student data. They have also helped school staff interpret data, observed classrooms, facilitated conversations where data are compared to observed instruction, and asked questions to refine practices and guide instructional decisions.

There is no student learning data for students identified as economically disadvantaged. How do you decode data for equitable outcomes to support those students?

- Before collecting and examining the data, it is important to articulate the question being sought to answer (see [Understanding Data](#) session).
- The [NDE Collaborative Planning Tool](#), for ESUs, districts, and schools, is designed to guide conversations around data-informed continuous improvement focused on meaningful indicators of student outcomes. This resource includes tools (e.g., 5 Whys, fishbone diagramming) that may help when generating questions and identifying biases.
- Look beyond surface explanations to uncover the root cause behind the issue. For example, rather than identifying family engagement as a problem, dig deeper to identify root causes within the district or school locus of control. Tools such as the 5 Whys and fishbone diagramming can help this process, as can Victoria Bernhardt’s Problem-Solving Cycle and examining the education research literature.
- Data downloads are available on the [Nebraska Education Profile](#) that provide district and school-level subgroup data.
- Perception data is also important in understanding economically disadvantaged student (and all student) needs. One participant shared a method for collecting perception data designed to help build relationships and provide students with social-emotional supports. All students in a district were asked to write down the name of an adult in the district to whom they felt they could talk. Those students who did not identify an individual were provided with targeted support. This example also demonstrates that there are various ways to collect data quickly and powerfully.
- A guiding principle when decoding any data is to check one’s own biases and provide space for others to identify and express their biases in a way that permits difficult conversations. A system cannot change unless the people operating the system change.