



---

# Contents

---

<b>List of Figures</b>	xi
<b>Foreword by Deborah H. McDonald</b>	xiii
<b>Preface</b>	xv
What This Book Is	xvii
Acknowledgments	xviii
<b>About the Author</b>	xix
<b>1. Using Data to Align School Improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Alignment Between Mission and the School Portfolio	2
Alignment Among Mission, Portfolio, and Concerns	4
Alignment Between Concerns and Priority Goals	4
Alignment Between Goals and Strategies	4
Alignment Between Goals and Assessments	5
Alignment Among Goals, Strategies, and Assessments	5
Alignment Among Strategies, Assessments, and Action Plans	6
Using Data to Create Alignment	6
<i>Baseline Data</i>	6
<i>Focusing Data</i>	6
<i>Studying Before Acting</i>	8
<i>Designing Data</i>	8
<i>Monitoring Data</i>	8
Engaging the People	8
<i>Staff in Particular</i>	9
<i>Ownership</i>	9

<i>Getting Started</i>	10
On the Road Again	10
Notes	10
<b>2. Why Bother to Get Engaged With Data?</b>	<b>11</b>
The Motivation Continuum	12
<i>The Reflective Continuum</i>	12
<i>The "Live" Motivation Continuum</i>	12
<i>No, the List Won't Work</i>	15
Swapping Stories	16
Roles of Staff, Students, and Constituents	17
Notes	17
<b>3. The Status of Data Use (or Nonuse)</b>	<b>18</b>
Reasons for Resistance to Data	20
1. <i>Lack of (Proper) Training</i>	20
2. <i>Lack of Time</i>	22
3. <i>Feast or Famine</i>	23
4. <i>Fear of Evaluation</i>	23
5. <i>Fear of Exposure</i>	23
6. <i>Confusing a Technical Problem With a Cultural Problem</i>	23
Soothing the Limbic System	24
<i>Our Own Thesaurus</i>	24
<i>Warming Up to Data</i>	26
<i>Cheers and Jeers</i>	27
Notes	28
<b>4. Arousing the Passion</b>	<b>29</b>
Monitoring Our Mission	30
The Unmentionable Unmeasurables	32
Mission in Action or Missing in Action?	33
Notes	35
<b>5. So What's Significant?</b>	<b>36</b>
The Constructivist Approach	36
1. <i>What evidence would demonstrate that we are fulfilling the commitments embedded in our mission statement?</i>	37
2. <i>Do we have any existing, ongoing goals that lack baseline data from which to measure progress?</i>	37
3. <i>Is there more than one source of evidence for this decision or more than one indicator of need for this goal?</i>	38
4. <i>What are the assumptions we make about students and their learning? What do we need to do to verify them?</i>	39

5. <i>What data might help resolve smoldering issues in our school?</i>	42
The Compliance Approach	45
<i>The NCA Way</i>	45
<i>Blue Ribbon Criteria</i>	46
<i>State Dictates</i>	47
<i>Constructivist Compliance</i>	48
The Minimalist Approach	49
Notes	49
<b>6. It Matters How It Looks</b>	<b>50</b>
Size	50
User-Friendly Data Displays	51
<i>The Introduction</i>	51
<i>The Graph</i>	51
<i>The Summary</i>	53
<i>A Self-Test</i>	53
Displaying Longitudinal Data	53
Displaying Perceptual Data	57
The Acid Test	60
Notes	60
<b>7. Figuring Out What It Means</b>	<b>61</b>
Preparing the Materials	62
Preparing the Participants	63
Questions for Reflection	63
The Results	64
<b>8. People, Passion, and Proof in Goal Setting</b>	<b>67</b>
Getting It Out and Narrowing It Down	67
<i>Review of the Data</i>	68
<i>Individual Reflection</i>	68
<i>Round-Robin Listing</i>	69
<i>Individual Rating on Three Criteria</i>	69
<i>Adding Individual Ratings</i>	71
<i>Individual Ranking of Five Priorities</i>	71
<i>Group Ranking of Priorities</i>	71
<i>Discussion</i>	72
<i>Repetition of Ratings and Rankings</i>	72
<i>Variations for Participation</i>	72
How We Say It Does Matter	73
The End or the Means	74
Note	75

<b>9. Digging Deeper</b>	<b>76</b>
Further Analysis of the Issue or Need	76
<i>Cause-and-Effect Diagram</i>	77
<i>Go for the Green</i>	80
Investigation of Research and Best Practice	80
Evidence of Progress	82
Notes	82
<b>10. Planning Your Work and Working Your Plan</b>	<b>83</b>
Planning	83
Monitoring	86
Reaping Unexpected Benefits	90
Finding Time	90
<i>Time for All</i>	90
<i>Time for Teams</i>	91
<i>Time for Shared Leadership</i>	91
Time Is Money—Finding Money	92
Timing Is Everything	92
Notes	94
<b>11. A Design for Data Day</b>	<b>95</b>
Purpose	96
Preparation	96
District Session	97
<i>Opening Remarks by Superintendent</i>	98
<i>Aligning School Improvement</i>	98
<i>Why We Need to Use Data More</i>	99
<i>What Data Will We Use?</i>	99
<i>Break</i>	99
<i>Monitoring Our Mission—The First Critical Question</i>	100
<i>The Other Four Questions</i>	100
<i>Swapping Stories</i>	100
<i>What Happens Next</i>	100
School-Based Activities	100
<i>Overview by the Principal</i>	101
<i>Carousel Data Analysis</i>	101
<i>Reporting Out</i>	101
<i>Messages for Strategic Planning Team</i>	101
Follow-Up	101
Note	102

<b>12. Communicating About Data</b>	<b>103</b>
Credibility Begins at Home	103
The Birds and the Bees	104
Offer a Free Test Ride	105
Draw Them a Picture	109
Students Are an Audience, Too	109
Notes	111
<b>13. Using Student Performance Data to Integrate District Curriculum Work With the School Improvement Process</b>	<b>112</b>
Going in Circles	112
Going with the Flow (Chart)	114
Cycling in Synch	117
Note	118
<b>14. Staying Off the Bandwagons</b>	<b>119</b>
Sustaining Focus	119
Celebrating	120
Integrating Programs and Practices	120
Saying No	122
Spreading a Little Cheer	122
Note	122