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Abstract Information

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:?A Systemic Approach to Data-based Decision Making in Education

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Abstract:

All evidence-based movements rely on data-based decision making to translate interventions into practice and the success of a data-based decision making approach lies in the capacity of stakeholders to develop the infrastructure to support data systems. In this symposium we will address the components of a data-based decision making system across three different levels of the system: (1) student data, (2) systems data, and (3) performance management. We will highlight the necessity for a well-organized approach to assure that student level data-based decision making results in the use of evidence-based practices that improve outcomes. The ultimate success or failure of an evidence-based approach depends on the degree to which school personnel select effective practices and subsequently implement interventions and policies with integrity. In order to assure that a data-based decision making approach is successful it is necessary that a system-wide performance management system exist. The take home message from this symposium is that data-based decision making is essential to the establishment of an evidence-based culture. Paper 1 The evidence-based practice movement holds promise for identifying effective alternatives but, in many respects, is in its infancy. The sources of information are relatively limited and often are contradictory. Effective data based decision-making strategies must be adopted if the full potential of the evidence-based movement is to be realized. This paper identifies the critical features required for developing and maintaining a systemic data-based decision making model aligned at all levels, beginning with an individual student in the classroom and culminating with policy makers. Data-based decision-making offers the practitioner the critical tool required to select practices that offer the best chances of working, monitor the effectiveness of interventions once employed, establish that practices are being implemented as designed, and offer the necessary information required to trouble shoot issues when an intervention fails. (132 words) Paper 2 Even the best designed, researched, and proven practices will be ineffective if school personnel do not implement them, implement them correctly, implement them on an ongoing basis, and modify them based on performance data. Data-based implementation requires social/cultural change across all levels of an organization (systems, policies, resources, values, and contingencies). The most common forms of data-based implementation--information dissemination, training, and supervision--have repeatedly been shown to be ineffective resulting in ineffective implementation of an intervention. Performance management strategies are essential in building a data-based decision making culture capable of sustaining outcomes.
