

Developing Data Useful for Decision Making – Example 2

Team's Vision – Example 2

Professionals partnering across agency lines to collaboratively develop goals for the future with youth and families

Goal

All teachers will implement a career-based program that teaches both academic and work skills in order to better prepare all youth for the transition to adult life.

Baseline Data for the Goal

Define the starting point for the goal

Will set a target for improvement once a baseline is established; progress is likely to be slow at first and take multiple years to achieve the goal of 'all' teachers.

Progress Benchmark

Define the progress, level of success or effectiveness expected after the goal is implemented

Will need to determine how to quantify how many teachers currently teach both academic and work skills, using a career-based curriculum/program. Working in collaboration with general education leaders to establish data to track.

Progress Monitoring Method

Describe how data will be gathered to monitor progress

To be determined

Discussion

This example illustrates how to think logically about what data would describe the starting point, when such data does not already exist.

The Team previously analyzed the problem 'Youth do not know about their own skills or about the world of work' using the 5 Whys. The root cause they decided to tackle is 'Teachers need training to implement a career-based program that teaches both academic and work skills.' They also reviewed SWOT information. Then they talked through an If...Then...Because discussion to affirm that the Goal they had in mind was aligned with their Vision. See the Vision – Goal Discussion for more information.

A 5 Whys discussion uncovered a pending change in school district priorities that would emphasize teaching skills needed for work alongside academics. The special education administrator on the Team knew this training would be required of all staff. Since it is often difficult to get PD time with educators, this required event presented an opportunity to ensure the learning needs of students with disabilities, and their teachers, were included in the district's plans. The Team will partner with other school administrators to work out the logistics.

The Team reviewed their Vision 'Partnering across agency lines'. They discussed that getting to 'partnering' would necessitate additional information to be included in presentations to educators, since the last time adult serving agencies interacted with a group of educators was several years ago. People would first need to meet each other and learn basic information about each other's system.

The Team decided to propose an informational session to overview agency services available to transition youth, within the planned roll out of the career-based curriculum training. Educators need to be familiar with agencies, their eligibility and referral processes and the role they might play in working with transition youth. Likewise, agency personnel working with transition youth need to know about the school's role, processes and requirements and have a contact person in schools. Having this type of knowledge about each other's systems is a prerequisite to knowing how to partner and work collaboratively with transition youth. Since many of the students with disabilities are integrated into general education classes, all teachers would benefit from an adult services overview.

In thinking about the Baseline data the Team needed for their plan, they wondered if they could assume that no teachers currently taught in a way that integrated academic and work skills. However, that would involve conjecture and as such would

not be based in fact. They decided what they needed to know, but were uncertain about how to gather the information. They needed to consult with curriculum administrators in the district to ensure special and general educators were on the same page about what constituted a 'career-based program' and how to determine a baseline measure.

The Team feels comfortable with the Goal they have established. Their initial strategies, however, will be focused on first getting baseline data. The data will indicate the appropriate starting point for their work.