

Decision Making

The Resource Allocation Review (RAR) includes a district self-assessment. One area of the self-assessment is for the district to describe and provide evidence of the decision-making processes for the allocation of resources to its schools (time, human and fiscal) to improve student achievement.

The examples below were provided as evidence from districts for the decision-making process during previous review cycles.

Learning Walk Data and Rigor Checks: District and school staff participate in learning walks and rigor checks throughout the school year. Feedback is provided to the school with promising practices, shout-outs, notices, wonders, areas of inquiry, leadership focus, next steps with follow-up and quick wins. When learning walks reveal inconsistencies in instructional delivery or a lack of alignment to standards, a district can then reallocate instructional coaches and consultants to provide targeted, job-embedded professional development. “Rigor check” data ensures that the cognitive demand of classroom assignments matches state standards; if a gap is identified, a district can allocate additional time by providing extended professional learning opportunities or professional learning community (PLC) deep dives to recalibrate instruction.

This example highlights the power of learning walk data and rigor checks conducted with fidelity and intentionality. Learning walk data allows for immediate adjustment of resources to close any gaps in the instructional delivery to students. Instructional time may need to be examined and adjusted; additional coaching staff or co-teachers may be added to meet needs. Students and teachers benefit as their instructional needs are elevated and addressed expediently.

District Dashboard: School districts can utilize a district dashboard to analyze data by school that includes grade level and subgroup data along with emerging trends. This process allows a district to analyze disaggregated data easily and accurately and adjust resources accordingly. This practice can result in a new school-wide schedule if needed, and additional support being provided to students utilizing state, local and/or federal funds.

Professional Development: Pre-service professional development can be tailored to meet identified staff needs. Principals can determine which professional development sessions staff attend as a school or assign specific teachers to sessions that are most relevant to their needs. Instructional staff can submit proposals to lead individual sessions which are selected at the district level and based on district/school needs. This shared decision-making process of session presentations illustrates close collaboration across all schools and levels, administrative and instructional staff.

Learning from These Examples

- Walkthroughs with district and school staff can bring to light additional needs at the school level. The information gathered informs the need for adjustments to allocations throughout the year to meet the needs of students in real time.
- District dashboards illuminate trends and needs at the school and district level. The dashboards highlight the efficient use of time as a resource in response to analyzed data. Adjustments to resource allocations are then made quickly and accurately to the area(s) of need.
- All administrators and districtwide instructional staff can have a voice in shared decision making about what is provided as pre-service training, from the planning process to determining which sessions are most beneficial to them. Having instructional staff submit session proposals empower staff as leaders and create involvement in the decision-making process on a larger scale.