



Forming a School Data Leadership Team for Rhode Island's Data Use Professional Development Series

R.I. Department of Education (RIDE)

This document provides guidance for LEAs and school principals to form School Data Leadership Teams (SDLTs) for the Data Use Professional Development Series developed with Race to the Top funding.

The Basic Education Program (BEP) states that, "each LEA shall develop school and district level data-based, decision-making teams. These teams shall review comprehensive assessment data to develop, evaluate and modify academic instruction and support services." (BEP, G-14-1.1) To this end, the **Data Use Professional Development Series** will help create and/or foster a transparent, collaborative data culture in each building.

Q: What is a School Data Leadership Team, or SDLT?

A: The School Data Leadership Team is a group of **four educators** from each building that is committed to participating in the **Data Use Professional Development Series** for one year and championing data use and collaboration at the school level. The Data Use PD series is made up of the following components:

- 3-day Initial Training (to be held in the summer)
- 3 Off-Site Workshops (to be held throughout the school year)
- 3 days of On-Site Coaching (immediately following the off-site workshops)
- 1-day Sustainability Planning Workshop (to be held in June)

Q: Who should participate as part of the School Data Leadership Team?

A: The **building principal** (or in some cases, the assistant principal) should participate on the SDLT. The SDLT functions as a *leadership team*, and the success of the team relies heavily on strong leadership involvement. Up to **three** additional educators should also join the SDLT. The remaining team members may be classroom teachers, representatives or leaders from a variety of school-based teams or roles, specialists, or other building educators. **At least one member of the team** should have the flexibility and time to meet with his/her peers during the regular school day, and therefore should not be a classroom teacher.

Q: What characteristics should you look for when forming the SDLT?

A: Members of the School Data Leadership Team must demonstrate a willingness to fully participate in all components of the training, the ability and the **time to sustain this work** at a school and classroom level for multiple years. They should have the respect of his/her peers and be **seen as a leader** within the school building. Additional characteristics may include:

- A desire to work collaboratively with his/her peers
- A passion for using data to improve student achievement, and/or a passion for improving student achievement in general
- Previous experience with data-informed decision-making (e.g., RTI, Ladder for ELLs, TERC's Using Data for School Improvement)

Members of the team do not need to possess all of the above characteristics. It is not essential that team members have experience using data, though it may be helpful. Please note that the SDLT members will bring this work back to their school buildings, and are therefore acting as representatives for their schools. While they may have baseline or even advanced knowledge of using data to inform instruction, the focus is still on bringing the knowledge back to the school writ large. The goal of the Data Use PD Series to have *all* educators using data to inform instruction, and the training resources are designed for SDLT members to easily turnkey to educators with all levels of data use experience.

Q: What is the time commitment for the Data Use Professional Development series?

A: SDLT members will attend **seven days of off-site** professional development workshops throughout the summer and the school year. They are also encouraged to be present and involved in the **three on-site coaching visits** in which a data coach visits each school individually. Data Analysis Coaches may, for example, facilitate data meetings, help organize and analyze data, and/or coach other educators not participating in the Data Use PD. Most importantly, they will need time to help other educators in the building collaborate and use data to inform instruction.

Q: Is there Race to the Top funding available to cover the costs associated with the Data Use Professional Development?

A: **There is RTT funding available.** LEAs should check AcceleGrants under Instructional Improvement Systems for budgeting information.

Q: Outside of actual trainings, what is expected of educators?

A: The success of the Data Use Professional Development series depends not just on the participation in the training components, but a dedication to sustaining this work at the school and district level in the years to come. SDLT team members should be willing to **share best practices** with fellow educators, work collaboratively with their peers around data and the **turnkey exercises**, and **continue the work** beyond the professional development.

Q: Will there be “homework” from the trainings?

A: During each off-site workshop SDLT members will complete an implementation plan for conducting turnkey exercises at their school. SDLT members will receive flexibly designed turnkey materials, and will have designated time during workshops to plan for how and when to facilitate turnkey exercises. Additionally, in order to ensure that workshops are relevant to schools’ individual differences, SDLT members will bring their own school’s resources to each workshop. Guidance will be given about what types of data, assessments, and additional materials to bring prior to the sessions.

Q: Who should I contact if I need more information or assistance forming my SDLT?

A: We understand that the Data Use Professional Development Series requires a substantial commitment of SDLT members. If you have concerns regarding your capacity to form an effective SDLT please contact us. We encourage that you reach out to us with questions or assistance requests.

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