Glossary

Accessible: Able to be reached by others. Without barriers.

ACT: A testing system designed by the American College Testing Corporation (ACT) to assess high school students' general educational development and their ability to complete college-level work. The ACT tests cover four skill areas: English, mathematics, reading, and science reasoning. (WISEdash)

Action plan: A plan that describes who will do what, by when, and in what order.

Action planning: Explains the steps the group will use to collect, analyze, and report their evaluation results. Includes timelines and resources required or needed.

Ad hoc group: A group that forms for a specific purpose and is usually temporary. The group's purpose is to solve a problem or resolve an issue.

Advanced (performance): "Advanced" is one of four general proficiency categories used in the WKCE. Demonstrates in-depth understanding of academic knowledge and skills tested on the statewide standardized test. (WISEdash)

Advisory group: A group concerned with a single issue and where members represent a broader group of people affected by the issue and who have expertise in the issue.

Agenda: A schedule or roadmap for the meeting and includes what the group will be discussing at the meeting and the amount of time each item will take.

Aggregate: A grouping of particular persons or items, formed into one body. Typical examples would be total sum and overall average.

Analysis: An examination of the individual parts of a subject/thing, looking at each part separately and investigating their relations in making up the whole.

Analyzing data: Thinking about what the patterns in the data mean. May have to look at the data in several ways to make a decision.

Attendance or Attendance Rate: Actual days of attendance divided by possible days of attendance, expressed as a percentage (%). For a student group, school, or district, this is the percentage of students in the group, school, or district in attendance on a typical school day. (WISEdash)

Basic (performance): Demonstrates some academic knowledge and skills tested on the statewide standardized test. "Basic" is one of four general proficiency categories used in the WSAS.

Best practices: Method or technique that has consistently shown results superior to those achieved with other means

Brainstorming: A strategy used when groups want to generate and collect lots of ideas. Spontaneous and free-flow of thoughts and ideas.

Broker or brokering: Advisor; negotiator; someone who works on issues that a group is unable to agree on

Bylaws: The rules of an organization that explains the types of members, how long they can serve, how many can serve, duties of the offices, types of committees, and how the organization will operate.

Categorical Data: Data that makes qualitative data countable. Data that is organized into different categories or groups based on it's characteristics.

Challenges: Results showing areas where focus is needed.

Closed session: Groups use this type of meeting when it is not appropriate for the public or non-members to attend. Generally these sessions cover personnel or employment issues, negotiations, and confidential information.

Collaboration: Members voluntarily bring their knowledge and experiences together to work toward a common goal. Also known as team work or group effort.

Collecting data: Data should be collected for a specific reason or purpose relevant to the work of the group.

Community Activities: School-sponsored and school-supervised activities which emphasize service to and involvement with the community. These activities fit into two categories: voluntary and required. (WISEdash)

Community of Practice (CoP): A community of practice (CoP) is a group of people who "share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly".

Community organizing group: A leadership group with similar interests and concerns about the community in which the live and/or work. The group seeks to make changes they believe will improve some condition or ongoing situation.

Glossary

Compacts: Similar to an agreement that includes a statement of common purpose, goals, and actions that they will commit to.

Comparisons: The act of looking at things to see how they are similar or different. Comparing direct relationships between a number of variables can be displayed using a line graph. (Webster's)

Confidentiality: A set of rules or a promise that a person makes to limit access or put restrictions on certain types of information.

Consensus: A process where every member shares information and perspective; arguing is avoided; no votes are taken, allows time to build agreement. The group comes to mutual agreement where they can live with the decision made. A harmonious agreement.

Correlation: The relationship between things that happen or change together. A statistical relation between two or more variables such that changes in the value of one variable changes the other. (Webster's)

Dashboard: A visual collection of interactive graphs and tables that provides multi-year educational data about Wisconsin schools. (WISEdash)

Data: Information in the form of numbers, facts, opinions, ideas, or stories. Factual information. important for the process of making decisions. A collection of facts from which conclusions may be drawn. Data is also a value or set of values representing a specific concept or concepts. Data become "information" when analyzed and possibly combined with other data in order to extract meaning and to provide context. The meaning of data can vary depending on its context. (source: Federal Enterprise Architecture: Data Reference Model)

Data-based decision making: Using data to allow one to make decisions based on facts, not guesswork or a feeling but through ongoing collection and analysis of data.

Database: 1) A collection of all the data needed by a person or organization to perform their required functions. 2) A collection of related files or tables that is organized to answer questions.

Data Stories: Stories or messages developed from complex data analysis that allows others to quickly and easily assimilate the material, understand its meaning and draw conclusions from it. (©Miriam Gilbert Storytelling with Numbers)

Data suppressed: In a WISEdash graph label, "data suppressed" means that the number of students in that group was too small and was masked to protect student data privacy.

Disability Status: Indicates that a student has been reported by the school district as needing special education and/or related services.

Disaggregate data: Taking a set of data and looking at the results or scores by separating the data into smaller groups. Disaggregating data is useful in comparing performance between and among different groups and provides information to help make instructional decisions.

Dropout: Dropouts are publicly reported as annual events for grades 7 through 12. A dropout for the reported school year is a student who was enrolled in school at some time during the school term, was not enrolled at the beginning of the next school term (3rd Friday of September), has not completed high school, and does not meet any of the following exclusionary conditions: transfer to another public school district, private school, or state- or district-approved educational program; temporary absence due to expulsion, suspension or school-approved illness; death. (WISEdash)

Economically Disadvantaged Student (Econ Disadv): Economically disadvantaged status. An "economically disadvantaged" student is a student who is a member of a household that meets the income eligibility guidelines for free or reduced-price meals (less than or equal to 185% of Federal Poverty Guidelines) under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). (WISEdash)

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English Language Learner (ELL) or Limited English Proficient (LEP): English language learner status. Also called Limited English Proficient (LEP) status. Any student whose first language, or whose parents' or guardians' first language, is not English and whose level of English proficiency requires specially designed instruction, either in English or in the first language or both, in order for the student to fully benefit from classroom instruction and to be successful in attaining the state's high academic standards expected of all students at their grade level. (WISEdash)

Enrollment: A way of counting students. Head count of students who receive their primary PK-12 educational services either (1) directly from school district employees or (2) from third parties under the direct supervision of the school district. If a district is accountable for a student's educational outcomes, then the student is included in the district's enrollment counts, regardless of the location of or schedule for service delivery. (WISEdash)

Evaluation: As an assessment or appraisal that tests and determines the value or condition of (someone or something) in a careful and thoughtful way. This is done prior to providing special instruction or services to a student.

Evaluation group: A group that exists to evaluate the work of others. Members of the group have expertise in one or more areas and do testing and evaluating. They then will prepare reports for the rest of the group for their consideration. The group works together to review the results.

Extra-/Co-Curricular Activities: School-sanctioned activities intended to broaden, develop, and enhance a student's school experience in the areas of academics, athletics, and music. Participation is not required and the group or event is not offered for credit or grade but rather for enjoyment, motivation, and improvement of skills. (WISEdash)

Facilitator: Someone who runs a meeting. This person keeps the discussions on track and on time while making sure everyone is able to share.

Family centers: Centers in the community or school that offer a place for parents to meet, gather information, or seek help and support.

Focus group: A small group of representative people who are questioned about their opinions, suggestions, and ideas about a particular subject.

Focused monitoring: Paying attention to the quality of services or efforts put forth by an organization. Focused monitoring is a data-driven approach to monitoring that focuses on a small number of carefully chosen priorities that have demonstrated the greatest impact on improving outcomes.

Formative evaluation: Data collected through assessment at regular intervals or checkpoint to determine if progress is being made. This feedback is used by the group to "tweak" the plan or actions as necessary.

Goals: Something that you are trying to do or achieve. What a groups wants to see happen and knows what they are working towards. (Webster's)

Governing group: A more formal group where members are either appointed or elected. The governing group sets policy, governs over the organization, and oversees fund usage.

Grassroots organizing group: A small group of individuals who have a concern that affects them. The group may start out to be small and as the word spreads-usually by word of mouth the group gains members and influence.

Ground rules: A basic set of rules that dictate the behavioral expectations of the group so that everyone may participate.

Hypothesis: A proposed explanation for some event or problem.

Intervention: Something that comes between two things or something that changes the course of something.

Leadership group: A group which includes any combination of family members, youth, community members, policymakers, and professionals. This group can provide important direction for state lawmakers or larger organizations that affect funding for education, health, and human services.

Learning community: A learning community is a group of people who share common academic goals and attitudes, who meet semi-regularly to collaborate on classwork.

Glossary

Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Student: Any student whose first language, or whose parents' or guardians' first language, is not English. The student's level of English proficiency requires specially designed instruction, either in English or in the first language or both, in order for the student to fully benefit from classroom instruction and to be successful in attaining the state's high academic standards expected of all students at their grade level. (WISEdash)

Listservs: Email lists where people can receive newsletters and information.

Logic models: Diagrams that illustrate how a group's activities connect to its goals and outcomes.

Mean: The average of a group of numbers. It is found by adding up all the numbers, then dividing by how many numbers there are.

Median: The middle value of numbers when they are ordered from smallest to largest.

Meeting minutes: The formal record of the meeting and are very important because they record decisions made and actions to follow-up on.

Mentor: Someone who can serve as a guide to support someone else.

Minimal (Performance): Demonstrates very limited academic knowledge and skills tested on the statewide standardized test. "Minimal Performance" is one of four general proficiency categories used in the WSAS.

Mission statement: A statement or set of statements that provides direction and sets the goals, actions, and decision-making processes of the group.

Mode: Is the most frequent value.

Not Economically Disadvantaged: Counted as being "not economically disadvantaged" based on household income above the income eligibility guidelines for reduced-price meals or the absence of evidence of economically disadvantaged status. (WISEdash)

Not Proficient: Does not demonstrate competency in the academic knowledge and skills tested on the statewide standardized test. It is a sum of the Basic and Minimal general proficiency levels used in the Wisconsin Student Assessment System (WSAS).

On-going data collection: A way to measure progress toward outcomes. A way to show patterns, trends, and changes, allowing for interpretation and analysis on an ongoing basis or schedule.

Open meeting: Groups that conduct their meetings which are open to anyone who wants to attend. Public can attend, listen to discussion, and provide their input or views to the group.

Outcomes: The changes a group wants to see that are most likely to produce long-term results. Final products or end results can be in the form of curriculum, a study unit, something that can be seen, touched, manipulated, or read. A visible item. Something that results or happens because of an activity or process.

Outlier: A very high or very low value.

PALS: Phonemic Awareness Literacy Screening. By screening Kindergarten to 3rd grade students with PALS, school staff are able to identify struggling readers and start interventions that will help the child.

Parliamentary procedure: A process for managing discussions and reaching agreement. It outlines the order of business, motions, and amendments during meetings.

Pie chart: A way to display information by dividing a circle into sections that show how each part or group relates to the whole. Also referred to as a circle graph.

Planning group: This group is formed to deal with a specific issue, to develop a recommendation, or a plan. Usually it plans and carries out an activity directed by a formal decision-making group like a governing group or board.

Policies: Describe how a group will take action on a decision, explains the "what" and the "why". Policies describe intent.

Practice group: Members of this group agree to meet regularly to promote connections and shared work between different agencies and stakeholders

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Procedures and protocols: Established rules and guidelines that an organization will follow. They explain the "what", the "how", the "where", and the "when", and are usually developed by those who oversee carrying out decisions.

Proficient (Performance) or Proficiency: Proficient demonstrates competency in the academic knowledge and skills tested on the statewide standardized WSAS tests. "Proficient" is one of four general proficiency levels used in the Wisconsin Student Assessment System (WSAS). (WISEdash)

Public listening session: Before important decisions are made, decision-making groups may set aside time on the agenda or schedule a separate meeting for citizens to share their concerns and give input.

Qualitative data: Qualitative data are collected as descriptions, anecdotes, opinions, quotes, interpretations, etc., and are generally either not able to be reduced to numbers, or are considered more valuable or informative if left as narratives. **(Community Tool Box (http://ctb.ku.edu/))**   Not something that you can count such as a family's story or samples of a student's work.

Quantitative data: Quantitative data refer to the information that is collected as, or can be translated into, numbers, which can then be displayed and analyzed mathematically. (Community Tool Box (http://ctb.ku.edu/)) Usually in the form of numbers and answers how much, how often, when, or where.

Questionnaire: A written set of questions that are given to people in order to collect facts or opinions about something. (Webster's) A way of gathering information.

Race/Ethnicity: A person's "race/ethnicity" is the racial and/or ethnic group to which the person belongs or with which he or she most identifies. Ethnicity is self-reported as either Hispanic/Not Hispanic. Race is self-reported as any of the following 5 categories: Asian, American Indian or Alaskan Native, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, or White. (WISEdash)

Range: The difference between the lowest and highest values.

Redact or Redaction of Data: The process of masking data to protect student privacy with small groups of students. See DPI webpage on Redaction.

Reliable data: Something that is able to be trusted to do or provide what is needed. Data that is accurate and true every time.

Reliability: The quality of always being dependable, reliable, and true.

Robert's Rules of Order: A process tool that provides a set of rules to bring up and vote on issues and how meeting minutes document the steps. There are rules for making and passing motions. A majority of members must vote in favor. This is a very structured meeting process.

School Year: "School year" means the time commencing with July 1 and ending with the next succeeding June 30. This definition is based on Wis. s. 115.001(13), Stats.

S.M.A.R.T. Goals: Goals described as Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely. Keeping the "SMART" in mind helps to define processes and guidelines to make sure the goals are clear and understandable.

Shared decision-making: A way to explain the process that a group goes through to make decisions that involve many perspectives and allows many voices to be heard.

Shared Responsibility: Everyone agrees to do their part to get the work done. Every member of the work is committed to the work and to do their part to help.

Shared vision: A shared vision is a view of some future state that is agreed upon and shared by others. It is useful when managing change. Can include Ideals that a group believes will give direction to and a focus to go back to when decisions are made.

Social Math: Social math is used to make data easier to grasp by relating it to things that we already understand. This is done by creating meaning about something that is unfamiliar to you by relating it with something that you are familiar with.

Glossary

Stakeholders: Individuals within a community who have a common interest in something that can effect aspects of their lives such as policies, funding, and either have a positive or negative impact on that common interest. Some or all members will share in the work and help with making decisions.

Standing committee: A permanent group that usually studies issues, reports, and advices to others on what they uncover or find. Usually requires a long-term commitment to complete the work.

Statistical test: A number formula used to answer a question.

Statistically significant: Results are probably true or not due to chance.

Statistics: The mathematics of the collection, organization, and interpretation of numerical data (numbers). It also uses probability theory to estimate population parameters. Numerical data or sets of information or data.

Strengths: Results in the data that show a success.

Student with Disabilities (SwD): A student with an impairment(s) that requires special education and related services as determined by a current evaluation and a current, active individualized education program (IEP). To be counted as "with disabilities", a student must be IDEA-eligible. Otherwise, a student is counted as "without disabilities". A student with disabilities meets the definition of "child with a disability" in the federal regulations (34 CFR 300.8) under the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA) and s. 115.76(5)(a), Wis. Stats. (WISEdash)

Subgroup: In the WISEdash portal, a subgroup is a way to filter and visualize data on students by attribute, such as gender, disability status, or race/ethnicity. (WISEdash)

Summary report: A short report that explains what the group has done as a result of feedback from parents or the community.

Summative evaluation: Data obtained when the group has accomplished tasks. This data evaluates the efforts made and helps measure outcomes at the end of a unit or project.

Survey: To gather information by individual samples so as to learn about the whole thing. A method of investigation that uses question based or statistical surveys to collect information about how people or organizations think, act, or perform.

Systemic: Something that is spread throughout, system-wide, affecting a group or system, such as a school district, or society as a whole.

Timeline: A schedule of activities or events; a timetable.

Town meeting: A meeting held in a community center or library where there is a conversation about unique issues. This public meeting involves all people in the town where they may share opinions and ideas openly.

Trends: Data from multiple periods of time (months, years) or data collections that can show increases or decreases in what is being measured. Bar graphs, line graphs, and spreadsheets can help display trend data.

Triangulated data: The group looks at and compares three or more sources of data that describe the same thing. This tells the group whether the information from one source is supported by other sources. This is very useful in confirming results.

Two-way communication: Communication that goes both ways; everyone gives input and takes input from others.

Valid data: Data that is accurate and useful information and can be used to make a reasonable decision.

Validate the findings: Validating findings is an ongoing process that occurs during the data-collection phase and upon its completion, when the data are reviewed and compared. To accept the results as accurate.

Validity: The quality of having legal force or effectiveness. Confirming with other outside sources.

Variable: Something that may or does vary; a variable feature or factor.

Variance: The quality of being subject to variation and difference.

Glossary

Vision statement: Describes the changes the group wants to see happen in the future as a result of their actions. A state of future being.

Wisconsin Alternate Assessment for English Language Learners (WAA-ELL) WINSS: Wisconsin Alternate Assessment for English Language Learners (WAA-ELL) was a standards-based alternative to the WKCE at grades 3-8 and 10. The WAA-ELL was given to Limited English Proficient (ELL/LEP) students whose academic English skills were not yet sufficient to take the WKCE test in the subject area with allowable language accommodations. (WISEdash)

Wisconsin Alternate Assessment for Students with Disabilities (WAA-SwD): The Wisconsin Alternate Assessment for Students with Disabilities (WAA-SwD) is administered to any student with significant cognitive disabilities when the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team determines that the student is unable to participate in the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination (WKCE), even with accommodations. The WAA-SwD is administered to students in grades 3 through 8 and 10 in reading and mathematics, and grades 4, 8 and 10 in science, language arts, and social studies. (WISEdash)

Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examinations (WKCE): The Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examinations (WKCE) are statewide achievement tests given annually to students at grades 3-8 and 10. The WKCE measures achievement in reading, language, mathematics, science, and social studies using multiple-choice and short-answer questions. Students also provide a rough draft writing sample. (WISEdash)

Wisconsin Student Assessment System (WSAS): Wisconsin Student Assessment System (WSAS) includes both regular assessments at grades 3-8 and 10 taken by nearly all students and alternate assessments taken by certain students with limited English proficiency or disabilities. WSAS regular assessments are the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examinations (WKCE) at grades 3-8 and 10. WSAS alternate assessments are alternatives to WSAS regular assessments and consist of DPI-approved protocols and rubrics for the local collection and local scoring of student work.

WISEdash: Wisconsin Information System for Education (WISE) Data Dashboard is an official public reporting portal from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI). WISEdash is located at http://wisedash.dpi.wi.gov. WISEdash uses "dashboards," or visual collections of graphs and tables, to provide multi-year educational data about Wisconsin schools. WISEdash can be used by anyone to view educational data published by DPI. See also "Portal."

Written guidance: Helps an individual know how to interact with the group. A method for sharing information about the organization; especially for new members.

NOTES