Education in Minnesota has a serious LEARNING TO IMPROVE problem.

Results and Recommendations from the Minnesota Needs Assessment: Research, Evaluation, Assessment, and Data Use in Schools.
2015 State Needs Assessment

**Stakeholder Groups and Organizations**

- Association of Metropolitan School Districts (AMSD) Education Minnesota
- Minnesota Administrators for Special Education (MASE)
- Minnesota Assessment Group (MAG)
- Minnesota Association of School Administrators (MASA)
- Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP)
- Minnesota Business Partnership (MBP)
- Minnesota District Assessment Coordinators (DACs)
- Member Districts of the CAREI Assembly
- Minnesota Elementary School Principals’ Association (MESPA)
- Minnesota Rural Education Association (MREA)
- Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA)
- Minnesota Superintendents Association (MSA)
- Schools for Equity in Education (SEE)

**Data Sources**

<table>
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<th>Data Source</th>
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<tr>
<td>Directors of Stakeholder Groups and Organizations</td>
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<td>Directors of Regional Centers of Excellence</td>
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<td>Minnesota District Assessment Coordinators (DACs)</td>
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<td>TOTAL Participants</td>
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Education in Minnesota has a serious **LEARNING TO IMPROVE** problem.

- **Educators believe in the use of data.** The want to use data to tailor instruction (73%), monitor achievement (77%), evaluate educational programs (70%), and provide accountability (69%).
- **Educators need assistance to use data.** They need support to analyze (61%), report (61%), and interpret/use data (61%). They need professional development (69%).
- **Educational leaders lack capacity to learn from data.** They lack resources to train staff (70%), evaluate programs (51%), and analyze (54%), report (51%), or interpret data (70%).
Solutions are not known. They must be discovered/learned.

Six **Foundational Principles** for Learning to Improve.

1. Use **disciplined inquiry** to drive disciplined improvement.
2. Be **problem-specific** and user centered.
3. Explore the **systems and solutions** that produce the outcomes.
4. Do not try one solution. **Try many.** Let them compete.
5. Measure better and **use the right data to learn.**
6. **Focus on variations** across communities and populations.
Build Capacity with **Networked Improvement Communities (NICs)**.

- CAREI is a research and service center at the University of Minnesota with 25 years of experience and 44 partnered educational agencies and professional organizations. **Leverage CAREI as a resource** to help educational agencies throughout the state.

- Use NICs and Six Foundational Principles so schools effectively
  - learn from data,
  - learn from each other,
  - learn from evidence, and
  - learn to improve.
Education in Minnesota has a serious **LEARNING TO IMPROVE** problem.

- Solutions are not known. They must be **discovered/learned**.
  - Six Principles
- **CAREI will build Capacity with** Networkekd Improvement Communities (NICs).
  - Collaboration, Communication, Expertise, and Shared Processes
  - Rural and High Need Communities
- **Help Minnesota schools** **GET BETTER AT GETTING BETTER**.
  - Professional Development
Supplemental Slides
• Educators believe **good quality data** can improve educational decisions.

• Nearly everyone with whom we spoke articulated that they would benefit from additional **assistance** to use of data.
• Educational professionals consistently described the need for additional resources and professional development to help them use data.

• There are very limited resources at all levels of the educational systems in Minnesota to access, analyze, present, and interpret data in a timely and effective manner.
• School’s or district’s capacity to effectively use data is fair or poor.

• Despite substantial efforts to use data, most educational systems in Minnesota lack the capacity to meet their own needs for data-based decision making.
Educational leaders indicated that they do not have the time or personnel to design, develop, or implement assessment and evaluation programs to inform programs or policies.

- The results of surveys indicate that those personnel with expertise are too few in number in Minnesota and, perhaps, too costly for many educational systems to afford.
Reported Needs (p. 14):
Time & Efficiencies

**TIME.** One of the most prevalent needs that people listed was the need for more time to work with data. Examples of comments from survey respondents include:

- *Time for utilization of data.*
- *Restructuring time for staff to complete mindful research, evaluation and assessments in order to develop data based decisions.*
- *Our district data team needs to create a time to meet consistently.*
- *We lack time that is built into to our schedule to examine and discuss data.*
• **TRAINING.** Survey respondents and interviewees indicated a need for more training on how to analyze, interpret, use, and display data. This could include the use of common templates or protocols for examining data. Examples of comments from survey respondents include:

  • *We need more professional development around using data from tests and having that impact instruction and interventions.*
  • *Help in using the data provided from testing.*
  • *We need our teachers to receive professional development on data interpretation and instructional match.*
  • *We have lots of data, but we struggle with helping teachers use the data to drive instruction effectively.*
  • *A simple protocol to collect, manage, and relay meaning of data would be a good place to start.*
• **STAFF EXPERTISE.** Survey respondents and interviewees acknowledged that districts have varying levels of staff expertise to conduct research, evaluation, and assessment tasks. Survey respondents felt that an unmet need of theirs was staff expertise and resources for staffing in this area:
  
  • *Respondents indicated a need “for research, evaluation, assessment, and data-based decision making.”*
  
  • *Another indicated that they need “Resources to hire staff to lead in research, evaluation and assessment.”*
  
  • *A District Assessment Coordinator said they could use the support of “a data expert who could attend regular data meetings with staff.”*
Need (p. 15): Organization, Analysis and Reporting

**DATA ORGANIZATION.** Survey respondents indicated that they could benefit from data organized in a useful manner. Having a uniform system across school districts was also mentioned as something that would enhance the use of data in school districts. Examples of the responses from MASE/MAFA and DAC survey respondents include:

- Simple access to the data in a manner that can be used to make decisions.
- Ability for staff to easily pull ... data.
- Data bank that is easy to display and not something that takes so much to figure out.
- Streamlined systems that are not cumbersome to access data.
- Online data portals where all student data is kept, and is transferable from school to school.
- No uniform system for student management statewide! This would allow import and export of data between school districts and for comparison between districts... I believe there would be a huge savings in time and resources to get us all moving in the same direction on student information and data.
Need (p. 15):
Development and Selection of Assessments

• **ASSESSMENT DEVELOPMENT.** In the interviews, we heard people talking about how districts need help to use formative and benchmark assessments. We also heard that districts struggle with selecting assessments for their district assessment program. “There are standards for assessments, and we could help districts if they’re in the process of selection to look at reliability and validity standards, and content matched with standards” (Dave Heistad, Executive Director of Research, Evaluation & Assessment, Bloomington Public Schools).

  • Survey respondents also discussed the need for continued help in developing and selecting assessments. Examples of comments from survey respondents include:
    • Continued support on creating assessments aligned to standards.
    • We need help guiding teachers to create reliable formative assessments.