



PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

Association des directions et
directions adjointes des écoles
franco-ontariennes

Association des gestionnaires de
l'éducation franco-ontarienne

Catholic Principals' Council of
Ontario

Council of Senior Business
Officials

Council of Ontario Directors of
Education

Ministry of Education

Ontario Catholic Supervisory
Officers' Association

Ontario Principals' Council

Ontario Public Supervisory
Officials Association

Module Five: Strong Districts and Their Leadership Characteristic

Deliberate and Consistent Use of Multiple Sources of Evidence To Inform Decisions

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Deliberate and Consistent Use of Multiple Sources of Evidence To Inform Decisions

Agenda

1. Objective

As a result of participating in this module, district leaders will gain a better understand of the types of evidence needed and the ways that evidence can best be used, at district and school levels, to improve decisions influencing student learning.

2. Overview of relevant research ([PowerPoint presentation](#))

3. Case Study: Conseil des écoles catholiques du Centre-Est

What can be learned from this case study about how to use evidence to better inform decisions?

- Discussion of the written case study (in teams of four or five people)
- Debriefing of what was learned from the written case study by each team
- Synthesis of key findings

5. Case Study: Rainbow District School Board

What can be learned from this case study about how to use evidence to better inform decisions?

- Discussion of the written case study (in teams of four or five people)
- Debriefing of what was learned from the written case study by each team
- Synthesis of key findings

6. Appendix C: Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board

What can be learned from this case study about how to use evidence to better inform decisions?

- Discussion of the written case study (in teams of four or five people)
- Debriefing of what was learned from the written case study by each team
- Synthesis of key findings

7. Full group discussion

- Participants identify other promising approaches to district and school uses of evidence to better inform decisions (similarities and differences with case approach)
- How does the research summarized in 2 (above) relate to or inform these district cases?
- Key lessons: what to do for sure, what not to do at any cost?

Self-assessment

In order to assist you with your learning, use a rating scale in response to the following:

(1 = not at all, 2 = a modest amount, 3 = significantly, 4 = a great deal)

Please indicate the extent to which you feel that participation in this module has extended your ability, or increased your awareness of the need, to address the following challenges associated with the deliberate and consistent use of multiple sources of evidence to inform decisions in your school district:

1. Provide schools with relevant evidence about their performance;
2. Assist schools in using evidence to improve their performance
3. Create collaborative structures and opportunities for the interpretation of evidence in schools
4. Use appropriate evidence for accounting to stakeholders
5. Make effective use of existing research to guide policy making and planning.

Samples of Relevant Research

- Anderson, S., Leithwood, K., Strauss, T. (2010). Leading data use in schools: organizational conditions and practices at the school and district levels, *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, 9, 292-327.
- Daly, A. (2012). Data, dyads, and dynamics: exploring data use and social networks in educational improvement, *Teachers College Record*, 114.
- Datnow, A., Park, V., Wohlstetter, P. (2007). *Achieving with data: how high performing school systems use data to improve instruction for elementary students*. Los Angeles, CA: Center on Educational Governance, Rossier School of Education, University of Southern California.
- Earl, L., Katz, S. (2002). Leading schools in a data-rich world, In K. Leithwood & P. Hallinger (Eds.). *Second International Handbook of Leadership and Administration*, Volume 8, pages 1003-1024. Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer.
- Finnegan, K., Daly, A., Che, J. (2013). System wide reform in districts under pressure: the role of social networks in defining, acquiring, using and diffusing research evidence, *Journal of Educational Administration*, 51, 4, 476-497.
- Honig, M., Venkateswaran, N. (2012). School–central office relationships in evidence use: understanding evidence use as a systems problem, *American Journal of Education*, 118.
- Leithwood, K. (2011). *Characteristics of high performing districts in Ontario (Part 1)*. Toronto: Final report of research for the Institute for Educational Leadership.

Appendix A: Data Usage at the Conseil des écoles catholiques du Centre-Est

Guiding Questions

1. *This case study traces the emergence of data-informed decision making through a series of stages beginning in 1989. What have been the main sources of motivation for increased reliance of systematically collected data in your district?*
2. *As compared with this district's efforts, how have you attempted to increase data use at the school level?*
3. *What challenges to effective data-informed decision-making by schools remain and how are you planning to address those challenges?*

CASE STUDY

Appendix B: Rainbow District School Board

Guiding Questions

1. *This district used “learning cycles” as a vehicle for school improvement. What is a “learning cycle” and how does it compare with your district's approach to school improvement?*
2. *As part of the work taking place in learning cycles, staff in this district have access to, and make use of a wide range of data. What is this data and how does it compare with the data used in your schools?*
3. *How did this district align its' efforts at data use with its professional development initiatives?*

CASE STUDY

Appendix C: Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board

CASE STUDY

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1. If your participation in this module has caused you to consider doing something different in your own system, please describe what that is.
 2. Please identify any changes or refinements that could be made to this module that would improve participants' learning.
 3. How can this work best be used with others in the future?

The Institute for Education Leadership (IEL) invites you to share your responses to the above questions with the coordinator of the IEL at communication@education-leadership-ontario.ca.