Data Principles and Safety Regulations

Principles of Effective Data Use

• Go visual with the data: create large, colorful, and simple displays of data to aid understanding.

• Use data to build understanding and ownership of problems. Engage in dialogue with data so the team owns the problem and embraces the solutions together.

• “Hang out in uncertainty”: take time to learn as much as possible from the data. The first solution might not be the best one.

• Separate observation from inference. Fully explore what is there to be learned before imposing interpretations on the data.

• Pay attention to the process: carefully structure Data Team meetings to maximize engagement, learning, attention to equity issues, and the integrity and safety of the group.

• Assure that diverse voices are brought into the analysis. Multiple perspectives provide the richest information.

Some “Safety Regulations” to Guide the Use of Data

• Don’t use data to punish (administrators, teachers, students, schools).
• Don’t use data to blame students or their circumstances.
• Don’t jump to conclusions without ample data.
• Don’t use data as an excuse for quick fixes. Focus on improving instruction!