Use of Shared Student Data Guide

# Overview

This guide helps educators use data to drive conversations on student support and growth. It is drawn from the practices at **Trousdale County Elementary School** (TN).

**Who this is for:** All educators who support student academic and social-emotional growth, including teachers, school leaders, and intervention staff (academic or non-academic).

**When to use it:** At a minimum, the tool should be used at the beginning of the year; following each important summative assessment; and at the end of the year, when determining class assignments and schedules.

**How to use it:** Used well, it should be a living document to help all staff members understand what each student needs and how to support them. It should not be a compliance or box-ticking exercise.

# Best Practices

An effective data tracker should provide a simple historical overview of student progress and interventions throughout the year. It serves as a shared reference point to make informed, real-time decisions on student support. To use this tool well, consider the following best practices:

* **Select a primary metric.** Select a single academic metric to track consistently for all students to create focus (e.g., summative math and reading scores), along with two to three optional supporting metrics (e.g., vocabulary mastery).
* **Establish a data cadence.** Schedule dates for regular data updates and reviews, tied to the academic calendar or assessment milestones. At minimum, schools should do a data review at the end of each grading period (four times a year for quarterly grading periods).
* **Choose a tracking tool.** Select a place to store the data. This might be a spreadsheet (good for detailed records analysis) or a data wall (good for quick visual assessments of student progress).
* **Assign responsibilities.** Choose a single document owner (to ensure data accuracy) and define responsibilities for updates (e.g., teachers enter student data and intervention staff record progress notes).
* **Use the data to make decisions.** Use the tracker in meetings to review student progress, assess the effectiveness of student support, and plan any adjustments going forward.

# Potential Outcomes

**Informed interventions:** The tracker allows educators to identify trends and patterns in student performance across various metrics. This empowers them to tailor interventions more precisely to individual and group needs, addressing specific learning gaps and challenges more effectively.

**Data-driven collaboration:** The tool facilitates collaborative discussions by providing a centralized source of information. Educators can engage in data-driven conversations, sharing insights, successes, and challenges, resulting in a collective approach to student support.

**Strategic resource allocation:** By consistently tracking data, educators can allocate resources, interventions, and support where they are most needed. This prevents a scattershot approach and ensures resources are utilized effectively to drive improvement.

**Long-term progress tracking:** The tracker captures historical data, allowing educators to monitor students’ growth and progress over time. This longitudinal view offers a more accurate representation of student development, beyond isolated benchmark assessments.

Student Data Tracking Protocol

The protocol has three sections: (1) Choose a Single Academic Metric to Track, (2) Establish Ownership for Updates, and (3) Use the Data to Guide Conversations.

1. Choose a Single Academic Metric to Track

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| **Using the Tracker** | |
| **Administrator/School Leader** | **Teacher** |
| **Step 1: the Purpose Set** | |
| **Open the meeting.** Start with a reflection on the overall use of the tracker.  **Set the direction for the tracker’s purpose.** Collaborate with stakeholders to ensure alignment with the school’s strategic goals.  **Communicate the purpose clearly to all staff members.** Why is the tracker being implemented, and how does it contribute to achieving educational goals? | **Align instruction with the tracker's purpose.** How can your teaching strategies address the specific academic areas identified in the purpose?  **Gather data that corresponds to the tracker’s purpose.** How can you collect relevant information to track progress toward the defined goals? What are the qualitative and quantitative metrics you will use? |
| **Step 2: Identify the Academic Metric** | |
| **Determine the academic metric that aligns with your educational goals and objectives.** Is it standardized test scores, subject-specific assessments, or proficiency in a particular skill?  **Collaborate with educators to choose the most appropriate academic metric.** How can this metric be a meaningful indicator of student success? | **Understand why the chosen academic metric is important.** How can your teaching strategies influence this metric positively?  **Align your teaching practices with the academic metric.** What instructional methods can you use to enhance student performance in this specific area? Be sure to consider linguistic assets, scaffolds, and differentiation. |
| **Step 3: Identify Supporting Metrics** | |
| **Lead discussion to identify two to three supporting metrics that directly impact the academic metric.** What essential pieces of information will help track and improve the chosen academic metric? How do they align with the overall goals of the tracker? Be sure to consider non-academic skills or resources that the students may need access to. | **Utilize these supporting metrics to tailor interventions and strategies.** How can you address specific student needs and leverage student assets based on the insights provided by these metrics? |
| **Step 4: Determine Your Academic Metrics: Proficiency or Growth** | |
| **Lead discussion and decide whether you will measure proficiency or growth.** What method best aligns with your educational objectives and the tracker's purpose? If measuring proficiency, determine the assessment that will indicate mastery. How will this assessment align with the predetermined level of proficiency? | **Understand the difference between measuring proficiency and growth.** How can your teaching strategies cater to each approach?  **Align your teaching methods with the chosen measurement approach.** How can you design instruction that supports either proficiency or growth tracking? |

## 2. Establish Ownership for Updates

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| **Step 5: Determine the Frequency for Tracking and Intervening and Set a Timeline for Accountability** | |
| **Collaborate with educators to identify the key touchpoints over the academic year for data tracking and intervention.** How can these touchpoints support timely interventions in and outside the classroom?  **Collaborate with educators to establish a clear timeline for data collection, analysis, and intervention reviews.** Include meetings and follow-ups, like caregiver partnership conversations, in the timeline. | **Understand the importance of these data tracking touchpoints.** How can they help you monitor student progress and make informed intervention decisions?  **Implement interventions with the established frequency in mind.** How can you ensure interventions are evaluated at the right intervals to determine their effectiveness?  **Participate actively in meetings and follow-ups according to the timeline.** |
| **Step 6: Storage, Accessibility, Ownership, and Update Responsibilities** | |
| **Lead conversation to determine how the tracker will be stored and accessed.** What data storage method best suits your school’s needs and resources?  **Choose between data walls and spreadsheets.** How can each method provide a clear overview of student progress and support detailed analysis?  **Define responsibilities for updating the document.** How can you balance collaboration with efficiency to ensure accurate and up-to-date data? | **Use the chosen method for data entry and analysis.** How can you ensure that the information is accurately recorded and accessible for future interventions?  **Collaborate with the tracker’s owner to provide accurate and timely updates.** How can this collaboration enhance the overall effectiveness of the tracker? |

## 3. Use the Data to Guide Conversations

The tool and data can be used as a valuable resource to guide conversations about students’ progress, needs, and interventions. Here’s how teachers and school leaders can leverage the tool and data to facilitate meaningful discussions:

* **Data-driven student reviews:** Regularly schedule meetings where teachers and school leaders review the data tracker for each student. Discuss the student’s academic metrics, supporting metrics, interventions, and progress. Identify areas of improvement and success, using evidence from data to guide the conversation.
* **Intervention analysis:** Review the documented interventions for each student. Assess the effectiveness of interventions by comparing pre-intervention and post-intervention data. Discuss which interventions yielded positive results and which ones need adjustments.
* **Goal setting:** Use data to set specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) goals for each student. Define milestones and target improvements in academic metrics.
* **Evidence of progress:** Showcase student progress through data visualizations, graphs, and trends. Highlight improvements over time to motivate teachers and show the impact of interventions.
* **Caregiver-teacher collaboration:** Share relevant data insights with caregivers during caregiver-teacher conferences. Collaboratively develop strategies for supporting the student at home and in the classroom. Ensure that communication with caregivers is in their home language.
* **Long-term planning:** Use data to inform long-term planning for students, such as transitions to the next grade level. Discuss how interventions from one year can inform strategies for the following year.

# Scenario: Student Data Tracking in Action

This is a fictional composite of data analysis meetings in Trousdale Elementary.

**Participants:** Second-grade teachers, the assistant principal (Ms. Badru), and the instructional coach

**Background:** When Ms. Badru arrived at Trousdale Elementary, she found that teachers were dedicated to student success, but her initial conversations centered on students’ challenges and lack of progress. The lack of specific interventions and data left Badru uncertain.

Facing the challenge of a new curriculum and wanting to shift focus from superficial resources, Badru turned to data tracking as a solution. She realized that data could provide the missing link.

While the idea of adding another task seemed daunting, Badru needed to start somewhere. She documented teachers’ concerns about struggling students and identified trackable measures. This marked the beginning of a transformative process driven by data, aiming to bridge the gap between teacher efforts and student outcomes.

### Sample conversations:

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| **Teacher Message** | **Tracking Decision** |
| “Last year teachers didn’t get to that.” “Last year Ms. H was brand-new, and she was still working through classroom management challenges.” | Let’s keep track of which teachers a student has had in the past. |
| “She’s always sick. If she doesn’t show up, she can’t learn. That’s why.” | Attendance. We will need to determine what the “concern” level is but for now let’s track the overall percentage present at school. |
| “We’ve tried everything.” | “Everything” seems like a bit of an exaggeration. Let’s document the supports/interventions. |
| “They scored X on this assessment; I just don’t know what to do.” | Let’s identify the key assessments that students take, in addition to the state assessments, and monitor growth and performance. |

Badru created a dynamic spreadsheet that aligned with quarterly teacher meetings. In the initial meeting, she observed, listened, and fine-tuned the format based on discussions. Throughout the quarter, Badru used the intervention notes to informally check in on student support progress. Though they were initially surprised, teachers gradually become more adept at responding to her queries about impact.

In the second quarter's data meeting, Badru adjusted the agenda to integrate the tool's insights. The agenda was structured to foster meaningful discussions:

1. **Overall Reflection on Q2 Assessment and Results**
   1. What are the team’s initial reactions to our assessment results?
2. **Looking Back: Intervention Reflection and Review of Success**
   1. Did the student make progress?
   2. If yes, was it due to support? Is continued support needed? What evidence supports this? Identify successful aspects and factors that could be replicated.
   3. If no, identify reasons and steps for improvement.
   4. Update the “planning forward” list.
3. **Planning Forward: Intervention Support Needed**
   1. Review students who did not master the assessment.
   2. Assess whether lack of success is due to skill or willingness.
   3. Determine whether the challenge is classwide or specific to certain students.
   4. Propose solutions, incentives, or support strategies.
4. **Behaviors**
   1. Identify behavior-related issues and their scope.
   2. Determine whether issues are classwide or specific.
   3. Discuss behavior plans and incentives if needed.

# Additional Resource: Sample Data Tracking Template

Download a [template for a data tracker in Excel](https://tntp.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Student-Data-Tracking-Template.xlsx), which can be customized. Here’s what it does:

* The Excel template is designed with flexibility in mind, allowing educators to customize data categories based on the specific needs and goals of their students and curriculum.
* The Excel template can facilitate collaboration among teachers, intervention specialists, and school leaders. This enables a multidisciplinary team to access, update, and discuss student data in real time, promoting a unified approach to student support.
* The protocol provides a clear, step-by-step framework for collecting, analyzing, and acting on student data in the tracker.

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