

**GREENWICH PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**Greenwich, Connecticut**

Title of Item Review of District Data Team Report

REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION OR PRESENTATION OF INFORMATIONAL  
ITEM

By: May 14, 2009

     Action Required

  X   Informational Only

Submitted By: Mr. John Curtin and Dr. Ellen Flanagan

Position: Assistant Superintendent and Director of Human Resources

I will be present at Board meeting to explain if called upon:

  X    
Yes

      
No

Synopsis of Proposal:

Late this spring a district data team was formed to provide better alignment between improvement efforts at the district and school levels. The attachment gives an overview of the theory, Holistic Accountability, underlying data teams and outlines the process data teams follow at the district, school and classroom levels.

# Greenwich Public Schools Holistic Accountability System

## Introduction

Student-centered accountability, or holistic accountability, refers to a system that includes not only academic achievement scores, but also specific information on the impact of curriculum, teaching and leadership practices. It includes a balance of quantitative and qualitative indicators while focusing on the progress of individual students. The Greenwich Public Schools currently has many components of a Holistic Accountability System in place. The major missing piece is a process that integrates and aligns these components into a focused, unified whole. Within the Holistic Accountability framework, data teams provide such a process by aligning the work of educators at the district, school and classroom levels. Data teams, if implemented well, will increase the likelihood of success as we strive to continually improve student achievement. Elements of Holistic Accountability that are currently in place:

- **District:** Mission, Vision of the Graduate, Areas of Focus, Success System, Leadership Development, Administrative Evaluation System,
- **Schools:** Strategic Improvement Plans (SMART goals, objectives and instructional strategies), Breakthrough Coach, Collaboration Time, Teacher Evaluation Process, Leadership Structures (Shared Leadership)

The following diagram provides an overview of our emerging Holistic Accountability System:



# Greenwich Public Schools Holistic Accountability System

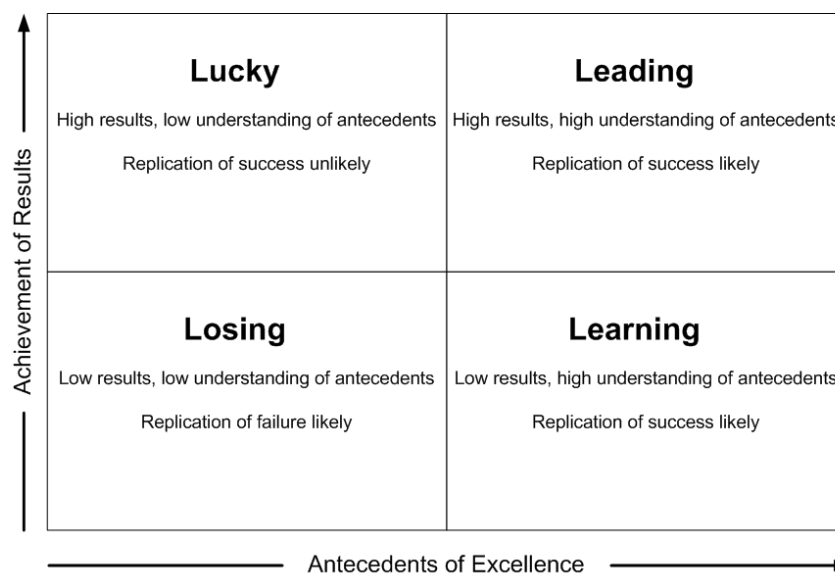
## Terms

There are also emerging terms that assist in understanding our Holistic Accountability System:

- *Data Teams*: Data Teams are groups of staff members who adhere to continuous improvement cycles, examine patterns and trends, and establish specific timelines, roles, and responsibilities to facilitate analysis that results in action (S. White, *Beyond the Numbers*, 2005).
- *Holistic Accountability*: A system or structure created by a district which enables them to focus, align, prioritize and continuously evaluate the effectiveness of its' efforts and make necessary changes or modifications based on agreed-to student outcomes.
- *Goals*: Broad Statements of desired outcomes.
- *Student Outcome Indicators*: Specific statement that delineates what it is we want to accomplish in terms of student achievement. They are written in SMART goal language. (Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Relevant, Timely)
- *Adult Action Indicators*: Specific statement about what the adults will do in order to support the desired student outcome.
- *Action Plan*: Strategies that the district will employ with specific dates, benchmarks, and people who will be responsible for implementation.
- *Result Indicators*: These help the district determine if it is on the right track. Are the adult actions working? Is the action plan appropriate?

## Holistic Accountability System Process

### Leadership for Learning Framework



Douglas Reeves, *The Learning Leader* (2006)

## **Greenwich Public Schools Holistic Accountability System**

“The essence of holistic accountability is that we must consider not only the effect variable—test scores—but also the cause variables—the indicators in teaching, curriculum, parental involvement, leadership decisions, and a host of other factors that influence student achievement.” (D. Reeves, *Accountability for Learning*, 2004) The Leadership for Learning Framework on the previous page bluntly summarizes the relationship between student achievement (effect data) and adult actions (cause variables). The objective of data teams is to increase our understanding of which adult actions are effective and why they are effective so that we can focus our resources in a way that will benefit the most students.

- The first step is to set Goals and Student Outcome Indicators at the district level. Goals broadly define what success will look like for students in the system and are aligned with the district mission statement. Goals are expressed in specific, measurable terms through Student Outcome Indicators. Each Student Outcome Indicator sets a district target for improvement over a three to five year period of time.
- After the Goals and Student Outcome Indicators are established, a series of teams are formed. One team focuses efforts at the District level (Greenwich District Data Team). This team is responsible for developing a limited number of high leverage, research-based, adult actions that will enable the system to achieve the goals. These are called Adult Action Indicators.
- Each school also assembles a team representative of its grades/departments (School Data Team). The school data team is responsible for setting a school target for each Student Outcome Indicator identified by the district (creating **alignment**). These targets are based upon each school’s analysis of its’ own data in regard to the district Student Outcome Indicator. Each school then identifies which area represented by the Student Outcome Indicators is the highest priority for the school to address. In other words, although the school is setting a target for improvement in all areas designated by the district, the school will establish its highest priority(s). For example, the school may conclude that its performance in Mathematics, although not as high as wished, will make sufficient progress using the approach that has always been used perhaps with slight modifications. On the other hand, Reading performance might be totally unacceptable and will have to improve. In this case the school will craft a set of adult actions designed to significantly change the manner in which Reading is taught in the school. These are school-based Adult Action Indicators. By limiting the number of Adult Action Indicators addressed at any given time either at the district or school level the system is allowed to **focus**. Since a limited number of actions are going to be pursued at any given time, they will be implemented thoroughly and monitored carefully. Selection of the Adult Action Indicators is done with an eye to choosing items that have high leverage. In other words, they have broad effects (**integration**).

## **Greenwich Public Schools Holistic Accountability System**

- The last team structure is at the classroom level. In elementary schools this is usually by grade level and at the secondary level by common course. These teams have two primary responsibilities: 1) carry out directives from the school team and 2) guide their students' progress through the curriculum. For purposes of the accountability system, the focus here is only on the former – carrying out directives from the school team. For example the school team may decide to change the intensity of reading instruction and as such may give specific directions to each grade level team about actions they must take (creating internal **alignment and focus**). Instructional Data Teams use benchmark assessments to monitor student progress and refine instructional strategies. As Mike Schmoker, a noted expert in school reform, has observed: “More collegiality won’t cut it. Even discussions about curricular issues or popular strategies can feel good but go nowhere. The right image to embrace is a group of teachers who meet regularly to share, refine and assess the impact of lessons and strategies continuously to help increasing numbers of students learn at higher levels.”
- Since goals and actions are measureable, teams at all levels can use data to track the implementation and measure their impact on the identified student outcomes (**data-driven decision-making**). This information is used to modify the actions in response to the data, creating a dynamic process.

### **Greenwich District Data Team**

The Greenwich District Data Team (GDDT) was established in March, 2009 as one element of the new GPS Holistic Accountability System. At the school level, school and instructional/course data teams are being established to support the new GPS Holistic Accountability System. Although we have greatly enhanced data decision making, the GPS Holistic Accountability System will require focused training and monitoring before it becomes fully operational.

- *District Data Team* - charged with developing district goals AND the designing, implementing, and monitoring of action plans designed to meet those district goals. The District team deals only with those issues the district is best equipped to address.
- *Membership:* Betty Sternberg (Superintendent of Schools), Ellen Flanagan (Deputy Superintendent), John Curtin (Assistant Superintendent), Mary Forde (Director PPS), Chris Winters (Director Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Learning), Kim Eves (Communications Director), Jan Gunnip (Director IT), Sheila Civale (Science Coordinator), Jennifer Mitchell (Language Arts Coordinator), Colleen Morey (PE/Health/FCS Coordinator), Tuck Southworth (Mathematics Coordinator), Stacey Gross (Principal WMS), Chuck Smith (Principal NS), Rick Piotrkowski (Assistant Principal GHS), Judy Nedell (Assistant Principal EMS), Barbara Riccio (Assistant Principal PK), Brigid Barry (English Program Associate GHS), Cathy Delahanty (President GEA) and Brenda Brush (Teacher NS)

## Greenwich Public Schools Holistic Accountability System

	<b>Current</b>	<b>Enhancements</b>
<b><i>Improvement Planning</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All 15 Schools have Strategic Improvement Plans that include SMART goals, objectives, instructional strategies and action plans.</li> <li>• SIT Teams</li> <li>• Leadership Structures at each School</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Greenwich District Data Team will develop a three year District Improvement Plan (DIP) that includes two broad goals, student outcome indicators, adult action indicators and strategies.</li> <li>• SIT goals and objectives will align to the District Improvement Plan's student outcome indicators.</li> <li>• SIT forms will align to the DIP form.</li> <li>• Instructional, School and District Data Teams</li> </ul>
<b><i>Accountability</i></b>	<p>Schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SIT Action Plans are part of teacher and administrative evaluations</li> </ul> <p>District:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Success System</li> </ul>	<p>Schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SIT goals and objectives will align to DIP student outcomes indicators.</li> <li>• Schools must go through an approval process for their SIT Action Plan in October, 2009.</li> </ul> <p>District:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The GDDT will closely monitor the DIP goals, student outcome indicators and adult action indicators. The student outcome indicators will align to the Success System.</li> <li>• The Board of Education will be provided ongoing updates from the GDDT in 2009-2010.</li> <li>• Instructional, School and District Data Teams</li> </ul>
<b><i>Initiatives</i></b>	<p>Schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SIT</li> </ul> <p>District:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Areas of Focus</li> </ul>	<p>Schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SIT Adult Action Indicators must support student achievement areas of need.</li> </ul> <p>District:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The GDDT will develop adult action indicators that align to student data areas of need. This will replace the Areas of Focus. The DIP will drive resource allocation when developing the 2010-2011 budget.</li> </ul>

# Greenwich Public Schools Holistic Accountability System

## Greenwich District Data Team Agendas:

March 30, 2009

- Set norms
- Review role and charge of committee
- Training
- Introduce key documents (Success System; Monitoring Reports, etc)
- Assign homework

April 16, 2009

- Set Norms
- Background Building
  - *Common Vocabulary*
  - *Assessment Packet*
  - *Vision of the GHS Graduate (Revised)*
  - *District Coherence Visual*
- Establishing Goals and Indicators
  - *Homework Exercise*
  - *Chart Goals and Indicators*
  - *Whole Group Reflection/Feedback*
- Revisit Goals
- Data Questions/Issues (Assign Tasks)
- Adult Action Brainstorm
- Communication Action Plan
- Homework Assignments

April 20, 2009

- Review of Norms
- Review of:
  - 3 Goals
  - Student Outcome Indicators
  - Glossary
  - Graphic
- Finalize Goals and Indicators
- Adult Action Discussion (Goal 1 and Goal 2)
- Communication Plan
- Homework

# **Greenwich Public Schools Holistic Accountability System**

April 30, 2009

- Review Norms
- Homework Debrief
- Feedback (Principals, Coordinators and Assistant Principals)
- Adult Actions
- Homework

## **Board of Education Review**

May 14, 2009 (Work Session)	Overview of Holistic Accountability
June 4, 2009 (Work Session)	Discussion of Draft Goals, Student Outcome Indicators, Adult Action Indicators and Action Plan
June 18, 2009 (Business Meeting)	Approval of Goals, Student Outcome Indicators, Adult Action Indicators and Action Plan

**Greenwich Public Schools  
Holistic Accountability System**

**Criteria for Evaluating Student Outcome Indicators**

- The indicator is aligned to the broader goal statement.
- Group size is sufficient to reduce variations from year to year due to small numbers of students.
- Benchmark comparisons can be made to groups of students outside of the Greenwich Public Schools.
- Data for the indicator is readily available, preferably over the last five years.
- Indicator is expressed as a **SMART** goal:
  - **Specific** (Which students are you targeting?)
  - **Measurable** (What performance growth are you expecting? What level of performance do you expect to meet?)
  - **Achievable** (What is your baseline data relative to your performance growth expectation?)
  - **Relevant** (What gives you confidence that achieving this objective would enable your students to reach your goal in a timely fashion?)
  - **Time-specific** (What is your expected timeline for improvement?)

**Smart Goal Statement:**

The percentage of [*Student Group*] scoring [*performance level*] or higher in [*content area*] will increase from [*current reality %*] to [*target %*] by the end of [*school year*] as measured by [*assessment*] administered on [*assessment date*].

For example:

The percentage of students in grade three scoring at the goal level or higher in reading will increase from 73% to 80% by the end of the 2012-2013 school year as measured by the Connecticut Mastery Test administered during March 2013.

**Greenwich Public Schools  
Holistic Accountability System**

**Criteria for Evaluating District Adult Actions**

- The adult action represents a major change and would not be considered refinement of an existing improvement or “business as usual.”
- The adult action is “leveraged” in that successful implementation will support improvement in achievement across multiple student outcome indicators.
- The efficacy of the adult action is supported by a body of research and practical experience.
- The adult action contributes to and supports a coherent District improvement plan.
- Funding the adult action is reasonable given anticipated budget constraints.
- The action plan takes into consideration demands on staff time at the building level.

**Elements of the District Action Plan**

- Clear statement of the Adult Action.
- Sequenced list of the specific strategies to implement the adult action with a timeline for completion.
- Estimate of the financial impact and funding source by fiscal year for each strategy.
- Assignment of the person or persons responsible for each strategy.
- Listing of results indicators that will be used to monitor the implementation of the strategy and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy in improving student outcomes.