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EDFS 355
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1. In your own words, what is data-informed decision making?

Data-informed decision making is not simply using data to rationalize a previously held opinion or created conclusion. Rather, it is used in conjunction with environmental context and collaborative processes to formulate supported and unbiased findings.

2. What role(s) does this type of decision making play (or should play) in your organization?

Within a school environment, it is necessary that decisions related to education, health and safety of students are supported by verified and consistent data. When making decisions about the education of a student, such as testing for an IEP or 504, decisions are made by collaborative teams utilizing approved examinations and iterations. Consistent structures should create consistent results. When data is subjective, decision makers' perspectives and biases can influence the process of decision making and potentially sway the result. Within my organization, decisions about potential student supports are made by a select group of educators and administrators. We use data to choose best practices and finalize student support plans.

Within a larger context, decisions surrounding statewide funding or educational priorities are theoretically data informed. As seen in last semester's read- Bruce Baker's book, *Money Matters*, data can be presented selectively or altered. Decision makers can be misled by unfairly presented data. It is crucial that decision makers have access to unbiased data-sources.

3. As we begin the semester, what are the key points of knowledge or skills that you (as an educational leader) would like to acquire during this semester? What do you perceive to be your strengths? Weaknesses? What goals do you have for the course?

I have personal and professional experience finding scientific conclusions from data. During my undergraduate thesis work, I was tasked with compiling multiple data sets to draw conclusions.

In my professional work, I used objective concrete data to track program growth which allowed me to make decisions surrounding budget allocations. The only subjective data that I have worked professionally with is related to student support planning- most likely my weakness.

My goal for this semester is to gain access to frameworks within which I can analyze my decisions to make sure they are consistent, fair and effective. I would also appreciate historical examples of decisions made with data and good intentions that were ineffective or unintended consequences.