



What about the Data?

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Disclaimer

- My views are my own. The information provided is not act as legal, financial, or medical advice. Participants should consult the necessary professional for advice.

Objectives

- By the end of this presentation participants will be able to do the following:
 - Understand the Collaborative Communication Model
 - Define the word data
 - Identify four or more sources of data
 - Apply the difference between quantitative and qualitative data
 - Ask questions to provide context about data

Collaborative Communication Model

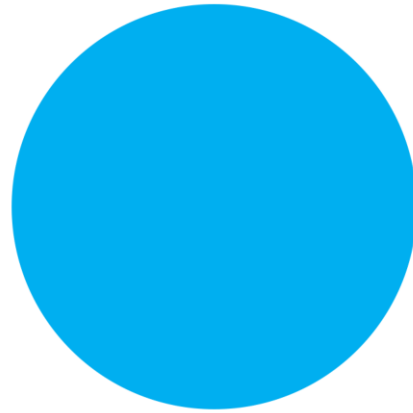
- Families, students, community member, family friends, and school staff members working together toward mutual goals and achieve a shared vision (Solone et al., 2020)
- Parents are mandatory members of the team and are equally valued (Individual with Disabilities Education Act [Sec. 300.321 IEP Team](#))
 - Parents and school-based team members have vital data to provide about the student. This data should address the academic, functional, developmental, and behavioral strengths and the deficits of the student to meet legal mandates ([34 C.F.R. § 300.324](#))

- **Without collaboration and input from the school-based team, the family, and community-based providers the data is highly likely to be incomplete. The decision-making required for the IEP will be negatively impacted if the data is incomplete.**

$$1 + ? = ?$$

Exercise

Describe this image using no more than 4 words



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Definition and Sources

- According to Merriam-Webster's Dictionary (2025), data is defined as "factual information used as a basis for reasoning, discussion, or calculation"
 - Data is information
 - Data can be used for calculations
- Sources of data vary but for students they can be grades, testing data, homework, reports from a parent or a student concerning their experience of behaviors, emotions, or the academic setting
 - Behaviors: John screams and cries when its time to do homework and on average uses two hours answering three questions for his homework



Sources of Data cont'd

- Emotions: Tyler expresses feeling anxious before going to school each morning
- Academic setting: Javier reports that science is his favorite subject and math makes his head hurt

Quantitative or Qualitative

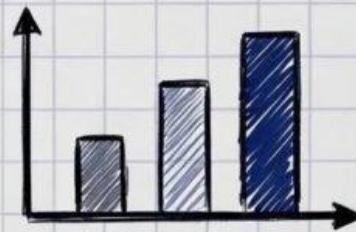
Qualitative vs Quantitative Data

Qualitative Data

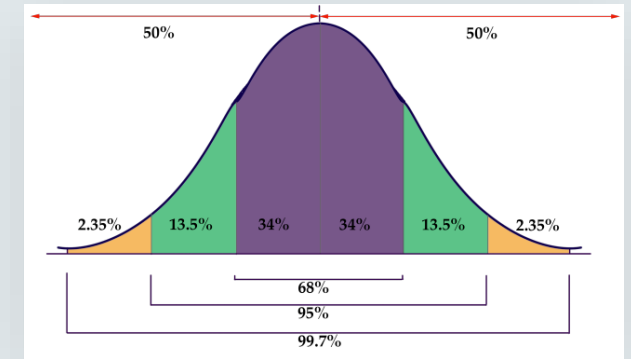


- Themes
- Patterns
- Insights

Quantitative Data



- Numbers
- Statistics
- Metrics



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Quantitative or Qualitative cont'd

- Quantitative:

- Ratio: the data has a zero that has a value of “0” (e.g., weight, height, age)
- Interval: Test scores or temperature, whereby “0” does not represent the absence of value, it is not possible to have a “0” on an IQ (intelligence quotient exam), instead the score is stated as a range

(Scribbr, n.d.)

- Qualitative:

- Nominal: Labels (e.g., gender, place of birth, label of emotions, etc.)
- Ordinal: First, second, third

(National Library of Medicine, n.d.)

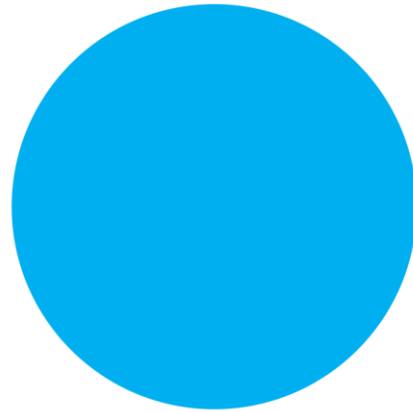
- Common experiences of this data in IEP teams are observations from the functional behavioral analysis (FBA), student interviews, staff input

Data Must be Complete

- If only one type of data is discussed, such as standardized test scores or grades, the data is incomplete
 - What about classwork, homework, behaviors, home video of the student attempting to complete assignments, etc.?
- Data must demonstrate strengths and areas of impact for the IEP to be accurately developed, reviewed, or changed

What did we learn from the exercise?

Describe this image using no more than 4 words



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To discuss data, we must understand standard definitions and context

Meaning of Data

- We cannot understand the meaning of the data, if we do not understand the context which includes the definition and other descriptive characteristics such as the minimum, maximum, average, and extremes
- Some people may have called the image a “circle” others may have called it a “shape”, for those that used either name, it is understood because the label of “circle” or “shape” have a standard meaning in most languages that can be translated
- Data requires discussion concerning the meaning, application concerning our student’s academic, functional, and behavioral impact

The Meaning of Data cont'd

- Questions to pose to gain greater understanding of data?
 - Can you provide me with the law, administrative policy or procedure for this testing, rule, or decision?
 - How are the labels defined?
 - What is normal according to the standard of the test?
 - What is abnormal and is there a range?
 - Does a “0” indicate that there was value in the context where it was discussed?
 - In the state report of students that are suspended for more than 10 days, if a “0” is reported does that indicate no students have been suspended for 10 or more days or is there a different standard for the “0”?



The Meaning of Data cont'd

- Questions to pose to gain greater understanding of data?
 - If the data does not show a disability according to the definition of the test, does it show a need?
 - Can you show me where the average student scores on this test and where my child scored?
 - Can you explain to me how this could impact their learning experience?
- What is the trend of the data?
 - What was the data two years ago?
 - What was the data from last year?
 - What direction is the data going in?
 - Is there an improvement?
 - Is there no improvement but also no movement in the opposite direction?
 - Does the data show a decrease in scores over time?

Good to Know Information

- You have the right to request to have your IEP meeting recorded. Recording for your own records is ideal should the school have challenges providing you with the recording ([PGCPS Admin Policy 5132](#))
- Students with disabilities who are disciplined or removed in a manner that meets criteria for exclusion (being removed from instructional environments or activities), a Manifestation Determination Review must be held ([PGCPS Admin Procedure 5146](#))

Good to Know Information

- The reality is that we have no idea exactly how many children are removed from school “off the books” because school districts do not include these removals in reports to the public
 - If you are called as a parent and asked to pick your child up from school, the school must clarify if the request is a suspension or provide the legal mandate or administrative policy for the removal of the student upon request ([National Disability Rights Network, 2022](#))
 - “Informal removals can take the shape of repeated “sent homes” by the school, shortened school days, mandatory homebound placement with little or no education, and other methods” (National Disability Rights Network, 2022, p.4-5)

Contact Information

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- Services:
 - Parent training and education
 - Resource coordination
 - Staff training and education
 - Advocacy training

References

- Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) & CEEDAR Center. (2017). *High-leverage practices in special education*. Council for Exceptional Children. <https://ceedar.education.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/CEC-HLP-Web.pdf>
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- Solone, J., Thornton, A., Chiappe, J., Perez, C., & Salloum, S. (2020). Creating collaborative schools: A review of best practices for parent-professional partnerships. *International Electronic Journal of Elementary Education*, 12(3), 283–291. <https://doi.org/10.26822/iejee.2020358222>

Appendix A

Resources

- [IEP / IFSP / 504 Conceptos Básicos](#) (Spanish)
- [Latino Education Advancement Fund](#) (English & Spanish)
- [Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council](#) (Spanish)
- [Maryland State Department of Education Publications and Information](#) (English & Spanish)
- [Technical Assistance Bulletins](#) (English)
- [SERIE INFORMATIVA PARA PADRES: Proceso de Educacion Especial](#)
- [Special Education Resource YouTube Channel](#) (English)

Appendix B

High-Leverage Practices in Special Education by the Council for Exceptional Children

- “Collaboration: High-level practice 2 Organize and facilitate effective meetings with professionals and families.
 - Teachers lead and participate in a range of meetings (e.g., meetings with families, individualized education program [IEP] teams, individualized family services plan [IFSP] teams, instructional planning) with the purpose of identifying clear, measurable student outcomes and developing instructional and behavioral plans that support these outcomes. They develop a meeting agenda, allocate time to meet the goals of the agenda, and lead in ways that encourage consensus building through positive verbal and nonverbal communication, encouraging the sharing of multiple perspectives, demonstrating active listening, and soliciting feedback.”

Appendix A

High-Leverage Practices in Special Education by the Council for Exceptional Children cont'd

- “Collaboration: High-leverage Practice 3 Collaborate with families to support student learning and secure needed services.
 - Teachers collaborate with families about individual children’s needs, goals, programs, and progress over time and ensure families are informed about their rights as well as about special education processes (e.g., IEPs, IFSPs). Teachers should respectfully and effectively communicate considering the background, socioeconomic status, language, culture, and priorities of the family. Teachers advocate for resources to help students meet instructional, behavioral, social, and transition goals. In building positive relationships with students, teachers encourage students to self-advocate, with the goal of fostering self-determination over time. Teachers also work with families to self-advocate and support their children’s learning.”

Appendix A

High-Leverage Practices in Special Education by the Council for Exceptional Children cont'd

- “Collaboration: High-leverage Practice 4 Use multiple sources of information to develop a comprehensive understanding of a student’s strengths and needs.
 - To develop a deep understanding of a student’s learning needs, special educators compile a comprehensive learner profile through the use of a variety of assessment measures and other sources (e.g., information from parents, general educators, other stakeholders) that are sensitive to language and culture, to (a) analyze and describe students’ strengths and needs and (b) analyze the school-based learning environments to determine potential supports and barriers to students’ academic progress. Teachers should collect, aggregate, and interpret data from multiple sources (e.g., informal and formal observations, work samples, curriculum-based measures, functional behavior assessment [FBA], school files, analysis of curriculum, information from families, other data sources). This information is used to create an individualized profile of the student’s strengths and needs.”

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