#1 Measure What Matters

The birth and rise of civic performance management

Ultimately, what we care about is outcomes—not only how many police patrols are conducted, or how much professional development a teacher gets every year (these are outputs) but whether these outputs are reducing crime and improving student achievement. Over the last several decades—and especially in the last few years—city governments have been using data in more sophisticated ways to monitor, manage, and improve their approaches, often focusing first on outputs but ultimately incorporating outcomes as well.

New York was a pioneer with its development in the mid-1990s of CompStat, the New York Police Department's data-driven management model that began as a set of pushpins mapping transit crimes on a city map. Among its elements CompStat combines data on the locations of specific crime complaints and arrests by specific units, the time of day and week of crimes versus arrests, and the percentage of police officers actively making arrests. Law enforcement officials and precinct officers meet regularly to review data and plan improvements. While it is hard to demonstrate conclusively that changes in crime rates are the results of any specific police activities, CompStat is widely credited with a significant role in New York's plummeting crime rates (significantly steeper than in the US as a whole) since the system's adoption.[6]

Baltimore's then-Mayor Martin O'Malley created CitiStat in 2000, modeling it after CompStat and extending it to the management of all municipal functions. CitiStat has improved the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of city services. For example, it has helped to reduce employee overtime costs, absenteeism among city employees, and the city's response times for citizen service requests such as potholes and graffiti removal. Due to CitiStat's success, representatives from other cities, states, and countries regularly visit the city to learn about the program and observe CitiStat in action. A number of states, federal agencies, and at least 11 US cities and two abroad have implemented Stat programs since CitiStat's creation in 2000.[7]

Denver is taking a new approach to performance management, training and empowering front-line employees to innovate through its Peak Performance

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6   Arthur Storch, *CompStat—The Start of a Revolution in Policing*, (New York: Worldwide Law Enforcement Consulting Group, Inc., 2006), http://www.worldwidelawenforcement.com/docs/COMPSTAT%20article.pdf.

7   These cities include Atlanta, Buffalo, Chattanooga, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Providence, San Francisco, Somerville, St. Louis, Syracuse, Washington, DC, and the Serbian cities of Paraæin and Indjija. Teresita Perez and Reese Rushing, "The CitiStat Model: How Data-Driven Government Can Increase Efficiency and Effectiveness," Center for American Progress, 2007, http://www.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/issues/2007/04/pdf/citistat_report.pdf.

program, an initiative Mayor Hancock launched on his first day in office.[8] Denver has embraced the Lean methodology, an approach derived from the Toyota manufacturing process, teaching city employees to listen to the "voice of the customer," and take responsibility for continuously improving results. As a result, city workers have made some significant improvements. For example, the Family and Adult Assistance Division of Human Services identified and redesigned a case management process that reduced the wait time from five days to 85 minutes and increased the number of families served from 357 per day to 517 per day—without additional resources. Through process changes like these, the city of Denver has realized savings of an estimated $9 million in just two years. Peak Performance staff estimate that every dollar invested in Peak Performance has yielded a return of $3.20.[9] Denver's chief performance officer, David Edinger, explains that while decisions on how to reinvest these savings are currently being made at the department level, Denver's goal is to realign dollars across city departments to increase funding for programs that provide a strong return on investment.

The challenge of shifting to outcome measurement

While initiatives like Baltimore's CitiStat and Denver's Peak Performance deliver value for city governments and residents, tailoring city management tools to improve social *outcomes*—not just *outputs*—is a significant

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challenge. For example, a traditional city homeless services program likely already tracks the number of shelter guests it sees, the number of meals it serves, and other outputs. But if the ultimate outcome or goal of such programs is to help get homeless people off the streets and into their own homes, they must find ways to know if they are achieving this goal.

To measure and track outcomes, cities need to develop the basic infrastructure to collect and manage data and aggregate it across multiple departments. The investment in staff with the needed skills and capacity can be significant. Even more important, however, this type of focus requires agency heads to think beyond strictly their own departments' activities, and mayors and city legislators to think beyond their terms of office.

Measuring social outcomes and establishing accountability mechanisms for these outcomes requires a new level of collaboration. Not only do various municipal entities—and often community partners as well—need to share information that

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8   Peak Academy, the training program associated with Peak Performance, was identified by the NYU Wagner Center for an Urban Future as one of the 15 innovations that the next Mayor of New York should learn from, http://nycfuture.org/research/publications/innovation-and-the-city/P1.

9   Melissa Field, "Building a City Where Everyone Matters: Denver's Peak Performance Initiative," Fels Institute of Government, University of Pennsylvania, August 5, 2013, http://www.fels.upenn.edu/news/building-city-where-everyone-matters-denvers-peak-performance-initiative.

previously remained within individual administrative silos, but these entities also need to agree to share accountability. "Organizationally, it's easy to hold a department of transportation responsible for potholes," says Matt Gallagher, former director of CitiStat and current president and CEO of Baltimore's Goldseker Foundation. "If your goal is a safe, healthy, happy child, you have a lot of entities participating in that outcome. It's about getting them to pull in the same direction, adapting to the needs of the child or family. For complex outcomes with a lot of participants, it's hard."

Data by itself is no panacea. It is how cities organize themselves to act on the data that matters for kids and families. Miami, Denver, and New York offer examples of how to do this in education.

Miami-Dade County Public Schools uses data to boost student achievement

Serving nearly 350,000 students and encompassing over 2,000 square miles, Miami-Dade is the nation's fourth-largest school district. Its students are 74 percent low-income and 90 percent black or Hispanic. A decade ago, Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) faced the same performance challenges as many urban districts, with years of stagnant and unacceptably low student achievement, resulting in a generation of urban youth unprepared for college or careers. It was operating without a strategic plan and without data to inform key decisions.

However, over the past decade, M-DCPS has emerged as a bright spot among its peers. Today, M-DCPS takes an entirely different approach, centering its strategy and decision making on what the data says. With this approach, it has made tremendous strides. Over the last several years, M-DCPS ranked among the top districts in the state of Florida in terms of increasing the percentage of Hispanic and black students scoring at the highest academic levels on standardized tests. Additionally, between 2006 and 2009, graduation rates for Hispanic and black students in the district increased more in M-DCPS—14 percentage points—than in comparable districts around the country.

In 2012, the district won the prestigious Broad Prize for Urban Education, which recognized Miami for making the greatest progress in raising student achievement compared to all other large urban districts across the country. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan noted that this achievement reflected "a district-wide culture of results."[10] The question is, how did Miami-Dade achieve such a dramatic turnaround?

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10 Laura Isensee, "Miami-Dade school district wins Broad Prize, top national education award," *Miami Herald*, October 10, 2012, http://www.miamiherald.com/2012/10/23/3062875/miami-dade-wins-top-education.html.

Data as a management tool

Two superintendents have led Miami-Dade over the past decade: Rudolph "Rudy" Crew from 2004 to 2008, and Alberto Carvalho since 2008. While each leader brought his own plans and style to the role, both were big on using data to improve performance. Before Crew became superintendent, evaluations for central office staff were 35 pages long, yet included no data. Crew brought a performance management system to the district that included strategic plans for each department and scorecards for each administrator, district leader, and principal. The metrics on each scorecard, which included both operational and student achievement data, were linked to the one above it, and ultimately to the strategic plan for each school and for the district as a whole. For the first time, M-DCPS had a single coherent system for tracking goals and measuring progress.

But Crew knew that just tracking data was not enough. He made the scorecards the centerpiece of his cabinet meetings, taking red, yellow, and green highlighters to mark up the scorecards at the meetings. His team used these data to identify where things were off-track, diagnose possible causes, and come up with solutions.

Carvalho has continued and expanded the use of data as both a strategic and day-to-day management tool in M-DCPS. The district's Data/COM process helps challenged schools improve their student performance. During Data/COM sessions, leaders of struggling schools meet with the superintendent and his cabinet to discuss the most recent student assessment data. Together they determine what the data reveals about the challenges and obstacles the schools must overcome and identify potential solutions, focusing on what has worked in other schools in the district and nation. The district, then, provides its highest need schools with resources to implement those solutions quickly.[11] For example, M-DCPS targeted its School Improvement Grant (SIG) to fund interventions such as math and literacy coaches and wraparound services from City Year in the places where the data indicated they were most needed. The success of this approach has motivated the district to become creative with its Title I dollars to continue funding many of these same services after the SIG sunset. "We really don't make any decisions without looking at the data," says Marie Izquierdo, an assistant superintendent.

Using data in schools and classrooms

It is not just Miami-Dade's central office that uses data. District leaders have developed a strong data-driven performance culture within individual schools. Administrators and teachers are savvy at accessing, interpreting, and using student data to make instructional decisions.[12] In addition, administrators, principals, teachers, and students regularly engage in "data chats." These occur at all levels. Administrators have data chats with principals, principals have them with teachers, and teachers with students. These conversations help to set goals

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11 "The 2012 Broad Prize." Described as "exemplary practices relating to student achievement," http://www.broadprize.org/asset/1801-tbp%202012%20fact%20sheet%20mdcps.pdf.

12 Ibid.

and map strategies to get there. Ultimately, the objective is for each individual student or educator to understand his or her current performance and what to do to reach the next level of achievement.[13]

In Miami-Dade, data is for sharing, not hoarding. Teachers and administrators can view and analyze the latest data whenever they want. They receive training on how to use the district's comprehensive data warehouse, allowing them to run color-coded reports on such factors as grades, attendance, test scores, or community service hours for an individual, classroom, or school. Teachers and administrators say the data warehouse is easy to use and suits their needs. Parents and students can access relevant portions of the data through a web portal.[14]

A culture of results

In addition to a focus on results in the central office or at the superintendent level, district leaders are also working to create a culture focused on achieving results by modeling their management styles and strategies on other successful organizations, both public and private. For example, when new district initiatives are rolled out, staff now feel that district leaders communicate a clear and compelling vision, set high expectations, and require accountability for performance. Employees report that this has helped create a culture within the district that values student and programmatic results, as well as continuous improvement.

The hope is that this culture will help to sustain achievement gains. "What is encouraging about Miami-Dade is its sustainable improvement over time," says Eli Broad, founder of The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation, which awards The Broad Prize. "Their gains are a testament to the hard-working teachers, administrators, and parents who have embraced innovative methods to modernize schools and ensure that students of all backgrounds get the support they need."[15]

Denver Public Schools uses data to drive continuous improvement

Denver Public Schools (DPS) provides another example of a district pursuing continuous improvement through a data-driven approach: the portfolio strategy. This approach began with former superintendent and now Senator Michael Bennet in 2005. Seeking to scale the district's most effective charter schools, Bennet launched what has evolved into a comprehensive approach to managing all schools in the district for higher performance. Today, under current Superintendent Tom Boasberg's leadership, the district gives schools significant autonomy to make decisions on staffing, curriculum, instructional methods, technology, and many other aspects of operations. With autonomy comes accountability. The district evaluates school performance to identify

13 Ibid.
14 Ibid.
15 Ibid.

the most successful approaches and provide funds to replicate the successful models while de-funding underperforming schools.

In Denver, the central office evaluates all schools on the district's School Performance Framework. "We are systematically looking at schools to first determine needed supports and interventions, and, if supports and interventions are unsuccessful, to decide whether to turn around, replace, phase out, or close down," explains Alyssa Whitehead-Bust, chief officer of innovation and reform, with the goal of creating high-quality options for all students within DPS' choice system.[16] DPS offers struggling schools a set of supports that are backed by research showing they help to increase teacher effectiveness and student achievement.

> **"We are systematically looking at schools to first determine needed supports and interventions, and, if supports and interventions are unsuccessful, to decide whether to turn around, replace, phase out, or close down."**
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> ALYSSA WHITEHEAD-BUST, CHIEF OFFICER OF INNOVATION AND REFORM, DENVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Results from the School Performance Framework also provide a backdrop for the district's annual Call for New Quality Schools, a request for applications to open new district-run or charter schools. DPS specifically seeks to replicate the highest performing schools. "We make it easier for school operators with a track record of success," says Whitehead-Bust. "We intentionally cultivate a pipeline of these schools and give them priority access to facilities."

While a growing number of districts across the country are adopting a portfolio strategy, Denver's model is more rigorous than many others. The district manages the composition of the portfolio, based on performance, regardless of whether the highest achieving schools are district or charter operated.

DPS is also working to "facilitate learning among schools so that they can get supports from each other and not just from the central office," says Whitehead-Bust. For example, the highest performing charter schools train leaders for district schools, and peer-to-peer learning labs bring together high-performing charter schools and district schools to identify, pilot, and demonstrate the most effective practices. Denver is creating a laboratory for identifying best practices based on school performance data and facilitating transfer of those practices between schools.

In the face of flat test scores across Colorado, Denver's student achievement in recent years has been impressive.[17] Since the launch of the portfolio strategy, DPS students have shown more academic growth on state assessments than their peers across the state, more than in any other large school district in Colorado. District proficiency rates have risen in reading (14 percent), writing (12 percent), math (23 percent), and science (14 percent). By comparison, statewide reading

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16 Denver Public Schools Case Study, June 2012, http://www.msdf.org/assets/cs_dps_06_2010.pdf.

17 The October 2011 Denver Plan Progress Update reports that "DPS students have shown more academic growth on state assessments than their peers across the state and more than any other large school district in Colorado," http://2010denverplan.dpsk12.org/pdf/2010_DenverPlanProgressUpdate_HR.pdf.

scores increased just 2 percent and math scores 5 percent, while statewide writing and science scores each decreased by 1 percent.[18] It is difficult to know how much credit the portfolio approach deserves for these results because the district is simultaneously pursuing a number of other initiatives. However, DPS feels it is an important piece of the story, and it is a good example of how districts can act on performance management data and invest in school models that work.

New York City uses data to tackle chronic absenteeism

"In order for kids to benefit from instruction, they have to be in class," says Hedy Chang, director of Attendance Works, a national- and state-level initiative aimed at advancing student success by addressing chronic absence. "What's crazy is most schools don't know how many and which students are missing school so often that they're at risk of academic setbacks."

Research has shown that students who are chronically absent—missing 10 percent or more of school days—are at a much higher risk of failing classes, dropping out, and ultimately ending up in the justice system. Across the nation, as many as 7.5 million students miss nearly a month of school each year, collectively losing 135 million days of instruction.[19] But chronic absenteeism has multiple causes—unstable housing, lack of adequate food and nutrition, transportation problems, and family issues, among others—which can be difficult for school districts to address alone.

Our third example of using performance measurement data to improve outcomes is based on the work of the Mayor's Interagency Task Force on Truancy, Chronic Absenteeism and School Engagement,[20] which was launched in 2010 by New York City Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg. This initiative to combat student chronic absenteeism brings together a dozen city agencies (such as homeless services, the Department of Youth and Community Development, and the Administration for Children Services), over 20 community-based and nonprofit organizations, and some public-private partnerships.

At the heart of the collaboration is a new approach to collecting and analyzing attendance data. Most schools and districts rely on the Average Daily Attendance (ADA) indicator, which reports the percentage of students at school on any given day. However, high levels of ADA can mask chronic absenteeism if the same handful of students is missing day after day. In New

18 Analysis conducted by DPS Assessment Research and Evaluation department, based on Colorado State Assessment Program and Colorado Transitional Assessment Program data.

19 Robert Balfanz and Vaughan Byrnes, *The Importance of Being in School: A Report on Absenteeism in the Nation's Public Schools*, (Johns Hopkins University Center for Social Organization of Schools, 2012), https://getschooled.com/system/assets/assets/152/original/FINALChronicAbsenteeismReport_May16_executivesummary_withcover_20_1_.pdf?1337209810.

20 The Mayor's Interagency Task Force on Truancy, Chronic Absenteeism and School Engagement (2013), http://www.nyc.gov/html/truancy/html/home/home.shtml.

York, the Task Force pioneered a new approach to collect, analyze, and act on real-time attendance, behavior, and coursework data to help students come to school every day and succeed. It also developed new confidentiality agreements that, for the first time, allow sharing of data between these critical stakeholders.

> **"***The district is crunching the numbers so it can let schools know who's chronically absent, so that schools and their community partners can respond.* **"**
>
> HEDY CHANG, DIRECTOR, ATTENDANCE WORKS

The Task Force is piloting a number of initiatives to tackle the complex causes and consequences of truancy and absenteeism, including new models for connecting schools with local resources and strengthening parent and student engagement. Evaluation of several different interventions in 100 elementary, middle, and high schools across the five boroughs

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Spotlight on New York City

New York City is truly a leader in this local government "data revolution." Two examples of how the city is using data to get better results are:

- **NYC Office of Policy and Strategic Planning** analyzes city data to increase efficiency and improve services. Each day, about one terabyte of data—which, if printed, would fill more than 140 million pages—enters the office's data system. Armed with this data and a modest budget of $1 million, the Office of Policy and Strategic Planning has had some significant accomplishments, including doubling the city's "hit rate" in finding stores selling bootleg cigarettes; identifying inhabited apartment units in the chaotic aftermath of Hurricane Sandy; and enabling city inspectors to be 95 percent successful in tracking down restaurants illegally dumping grease down city sewers.[1]

- New York City is also using data to get smarter about the way it treats juvenile offenders through its **Alternative to Detention (ATD) program.** In 2006, the New York City Office of the Criminal Justice Coordinator (CJC) began working with juvenile justice stakeholders to develop a new continuum of ATD programs for youth with cases pending in Family Court and who could be safely released to the community with appropriate supervision. As part of this initiative, CJC partnered with the Vera Institute of Justice to develop a first-of-its-kind Risk Assessment Instrument (RAI). Designed to help identify youth who would be most appropriate for ATD services, the RAI uses objective standards to guide juvenile detention decisions. While more high-risk kids are detained, mid-risk and low-risk kids are offered better services and stronger community supervision. This risk-based approach to juvenile justice has cut in half the rate at which juveniles are re-arrested while awaiting the outcomes of their cases, from 26 to 13 percent.[2]

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1   Alan Feuer, "The Mayor's Geek Squad," *The New York Times*, March 23, 2013, http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/24/nyregion/mayor-bloombergs-geek-squad.html?pagewanted=all&_r=1&.
2   NYC Criminal Justice Coordinator, "Risk Assessment Instrument and Alternative to Detention Programs," 2013, http://www.nyc.gov/html/cjc/html/youth/risk.shtml.

of New York City shows that at least one approach, Success Mentors, has resulted in mentored students gaining over 80,000 days of additional school during the 2012-2013 year, as compared to students who did not have a mentor. The NYC Success Mentor Corp. is now the largest in-school mentoring program in the country.

With New York's absenteeism initiative, says Chang, "The district is crunching the numbers so it can let schools know who's chronically absent, so that schools and their community partners can respond. They can assign mentors, or if a large number of students are absent, take steps to identify if there is a common issue, like inadequate transportation, or health issues."

It's worth noting, the mere collection of performance data was not sufficient to address deeply rooted problems like absenteeism in New York City. The data needed to be available quickly enough to identify specific problems. It also needed to be connected to a system of interventions with the potential to have an impact on those problems.