POWERSHOT COMPANION

Check & Correct Data Assumptions with PVAAS

This document supports the presentation and video Powershot:

Check & Correct Data Assumptions with PVAAS

available on PDE's PA Data Powershot webpage at **pa.gov/education >**

Who might use this Powershot?

The intended audience is LEA/District Leaders, School Leaders, Teacher Leaders, Data Teams, Continuous Improvement Teams, and School Improvement Committees.

Why use this PA Data Powershot?

This Powershot provides a brief overview of how educators and leaders can:

- **Recognize assumptions** about student performance, including misconceptions about whether all student groups can demonstrate academic growth.
- **Use multiple measures of data,** including achievement and growth data, to confirm, challenge, or refine those assumptions.
- **Build a shared understanding of current reality** before making decisions or developing action plans.
- **Focus improvement efforts** on areas of greatest need and opportunity.
- **Create more productive data conversations** that move beyond opinions toward evidence-informed decision making.

How might you use this PA Data Powershot in your work?

There are many opportunities to make use of this Powershot! Below are some examples to get started:

Leadership Team Discussions
Use the Powershot to establish a common expectation that questions, concerns, and assumptions should be explored through data before determining next steps. Engage teams in asking, "What does the data tell us?" and "What additional information do we need?"

School Improvement Planning
Before identifying goals or action steps, use achievement and growth data to validate assumptions about student performance trends and areas of need. Ensure planning priorities are grounded in evidence.

Faculty Meetings or Professional Learning Communities
Launch data conversations by examining common assumptions about student learning and performance. Use PVAAS growth and achievement data alongside local measures to deepen understanding and identify possible causes and next steps.

Program Evaluation Conversations
When evaluating interventions, instructional programs, or academic supports, use data to move beyond perceptions and determine what results are being achieved and for whom.

Data Team Meetings
Model a structured inquiry process in which teams begin with assumptions or observations, examine relevant data, refine their understanding, and identify instructional implications.

What are possible follow-up action steps?

1. Establish a Data Inquiry Protocol

Use a consistent process when examining data:

- What assumption or belief are we examining?
- What does the achievement data tell us?
- What does the growth data tell us?
- Where do data confirm our assumptions?
- Where do data challenge or refine our assumptions?
- What additional information should we consider?
- What actions should we take as a result?

2. Analyze Achievement and Growth Together

Encourage teams to examine both achievement and growth data to develop a more complete understanding of student performance and school effectiveness.

3. Identify Priority Areas for Improvement

Use findings from data discussions to identify strengths to sustain, challenges to address, and opportunities for growth.

4. Develop Action Plans Based on Evidence

Translate data findings into specific instructional, programmatic, or organizational actions designed to improve student outcomes.

5. Monitor the Impact of Decisions

Revisit achievement and growth data based on local and state assessments regularly to evaluate progress and determine whether actions are producing the intended results.

Links to Resources

You may access the resources referenced in the PA Data Powershot with the links provided below:

- Digging Deeper to Find Root Cause (YouTube)
  youtu.be/J-5iRNH3a34

  An intentional root cause process increases the likelihood of a plan that addresses areas of need. View this brief video with your team to bring the root cause process to life with school-based scenarios!

  Companion Guide: Digging Deeper to Find Root Cause (PDF)
  https://www.pa.gov/content/dam/copapwp-pagov/en/education/documents/instruction/assessment-and-accountability/pvaas/professionallearning/diggingdeepertofindrootcause_3of3_powershotcompanion.pdf

- Finding Root Cause(s): A Focus on Variables Within Our Control (YouTube)
  https://youtu.be/qXltNkbpcbI

  Getting to the root causes of what we observe in our data trends requires us to shift away from students' weaknesses and instead focus on the variables in curriculum, instruction, assessment, and organization that are within our control - and there are many! View to learn more about guiding teams to address what they can control.

  Companion Guide: Finding Root Cause(s): A Focus on Variables Within Our Control (PDF)
  https://www.pa.gov/content/dam/copapwp-pagov/en/education/documents/instruction/assessment-and-accountability/pvaas/professionallearning/companionguide-rootcausevariables.pdf

- Achievement & Growth: Using Both Measures to Assess Student Performance (PDF)
  https://www.pa.gov/content/dam/copapwp-pagov/en/education/documents/instruction/assessment-and-accountability/pvaas/achievementandgrowth-usingboth.pdf

- PVAAS Scatterplot Desk Reference (PDF)
  https://evaas.sas.com/support/assets/PVAAS-Scatterplot-Desk-Reference.pdf

- PVAAS Diagnostics Desk Reference (PDF)
  https://evaas.sas.com/support/assets/PVAAS-DRRd-Desk-Reference.pdf