Using data to predict and improve student outcomes

California district uses the Measured Progress DATAWISE platform to link district and state assessments, help teachers target interventions

s school districts strive to meet Adequate Yearly Progress targets, they struggle with two key issues: how to identify students who may not achieve "Proficiency" on state tests, and then how to improve their learning and outcomes.

The Twin Rivers Unified School District in suburban Sacramento—a diverse district that serves 27,000 students—aims to meet this challenge with a new approach. The district uses Measured Progress' DATAWISE platform to create assessments and to analyze and share the results. DATAWISE helps teachers identify which standards are causing their students difficulty, so they can target appropriate interventions.

With the DATAWISE assessment and data management platform, educators can measure student knowledge against both traditional state standards and the Common Core, track learning over time, and quickly and easily share results.

Uve Dahmen, Twin Rivers" director of assessment and accountability, has been using DATAWISE for the past three years to test students and group them according to their specific skills and content knowledge needs. This approach helps teachers differentiate instruction to improve student learning and achievement.

Dahmen says Twin Rivers uses DATAWISE to focus initially on student groups that range from the mid-point of the "Basic" category to just below "Proficient." He notes that, on average, approximately 16 percent of the district's students fall into this range.

According to Dahmen, DATAWISE enables Twin Rivers to create benchmark assessments that predict how students will likely perform on state tests. He notes that by scaling his district's tests on the same continuum as the state's accountability tests, he can use students' scaled scores on



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—Uve Dahmen Twin Rivers USD the district assessments to predict how well they are likely to perform on the state exams.

The DATAWISE platform also generates easy-to-read reports for teachers to view and interpret on their personalized dashboards. Dahmen works closely with the district's learning coaches to show them how to use these reports to inform individualized interventions for students who are struggling with specific standards. The coaches then work with teachers to develop the skills to effectively use the data to inform their instruction.

"The purpose is to bring out the formative nature of summative tests," says Dahmen. "What I am trying to do is get teachers to also look forward—not just backward—and see where they can affect students now to increase learning and their success on our state exams," he says. "This significantly shifts thinking

about how benchmark assessments can be used."

While this is the first full year of implementation and hard results don't yet exist, Dahmen has great confidence in his predictive model. He says success will be achieved when:

- Twin Rivers uses DATAWISE district wide to improve student learning and achievement, and
- State test scores consistently exceed benchmark predictions because of effective instructional interventions.

For more information about DATAWISE and Measured Progress, visit www.measuredprogress.org/datawise.



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