

Communication Plans Revisited

Successful Communication Strategies

Julia Koppich

Two Very Different Examples



- Minneapolis and Austin
- Have very different programs and very different communication approaches
- Both programs appear to be working smoothly
- Both programs developed locally, but (primarily) state funded
- Neither is a TIF program

Minneapolis - Background



- Program is a cooperative effort between Minneapolis Public Schools and Minneapolis Federation of Teachers
- Minneapolis began developing alternative pay plan about a decade ago (before state-funded Q Comp that now exists)
- Heavy focus on professional development
- No written communication plan

Minneapolis



- Communication strategies developed, executed by teacher-on-special-assignment (who is now the union president)
- She now wishes she had had a written plan, but she was a one-person operation
- What she did:
 - Over 2 months, visited every school to talk to teachers to explain plan

Minneapolis



- Explained new pay plan would be voluntary
- Set up system (email and phone) to ensure teacher questions answered quickly
- Met with community groups
- Principal dilemma: District wanted to explain teacher pay plan with union not in the room—created some mixed messages between teachers and principals

Minneapolis



- No media contact...
- Some written “outside” communication (e.g., article in American Educator, AFT’s professional journal)
- Now has small cadre of teachers trained to be spokespeople for program

Austin - Background



- AISD REACH—billed as “strategic compensation plan”—11 schools
- Four program elements:
 - student growth
 - professional growth
 - focus on high-needs schools
 - improved teacher retention
- Texas not a collective bargaining state, but district worked very closely to develop, implement plan with Education Austin (AFT affiliate)

Austin

- Very extensive written communication plan that includes timelines, methods/strategies, persons responsible, deadlines, status
- Among activities:
 - Program logo
 - Frequent written/electronic communication to principals and teachers
 - Media briefings (including with editorial board)
 - Identified teachers and principals to be spokespeople with media

Austin

- Dedicated website
 - Back-to-school kickoff celebration
 - Radio PSAs
 - Briefings with Chamber of Commerce and state legislative staff
- Developed rollout plan leading up to first payouts, including FAQs for teachers and principals
 - Included with payout, thank you letter from superintendent

A Cautionary Tale

- What not to do
- 3:00 pm example



For more on Communication



- View the videos on:
 - New Communications Challenges
 - Two Ways of Connecting Value-Added Attainment: Part 1
 - An Example of Value-Added Attainment Data Presentation from Chicago
 - Two Ways of Connecting Value-Added Attainment: Part 2
- Read the Guide to Implementation module on Communication

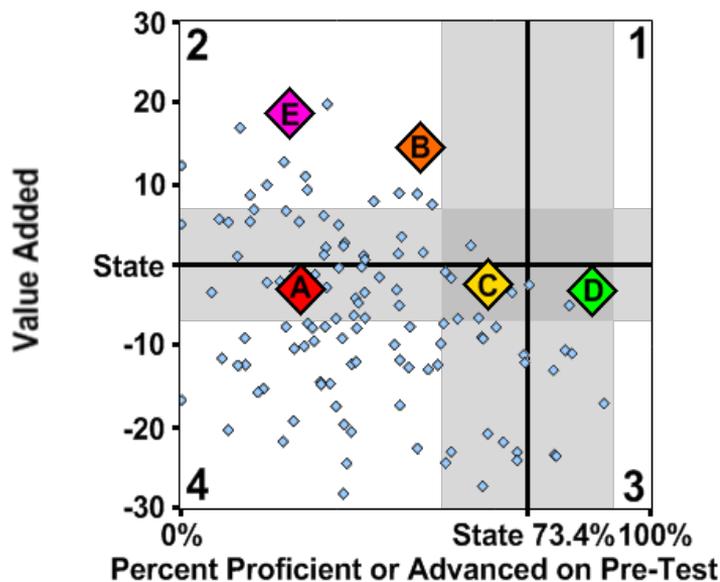
Communication Plans Revisited

Two Ways of Connecting Value-Added Attainment: Part 1, Effects of Value- Added Education

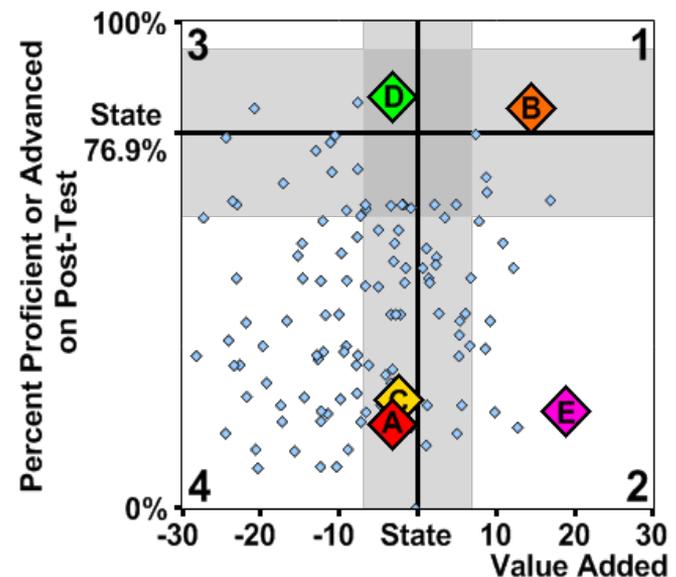
Robert Meyer

Two Options for Connecting Value-Added Attainment Data

**Pre-Test Attainment
Grade 5**

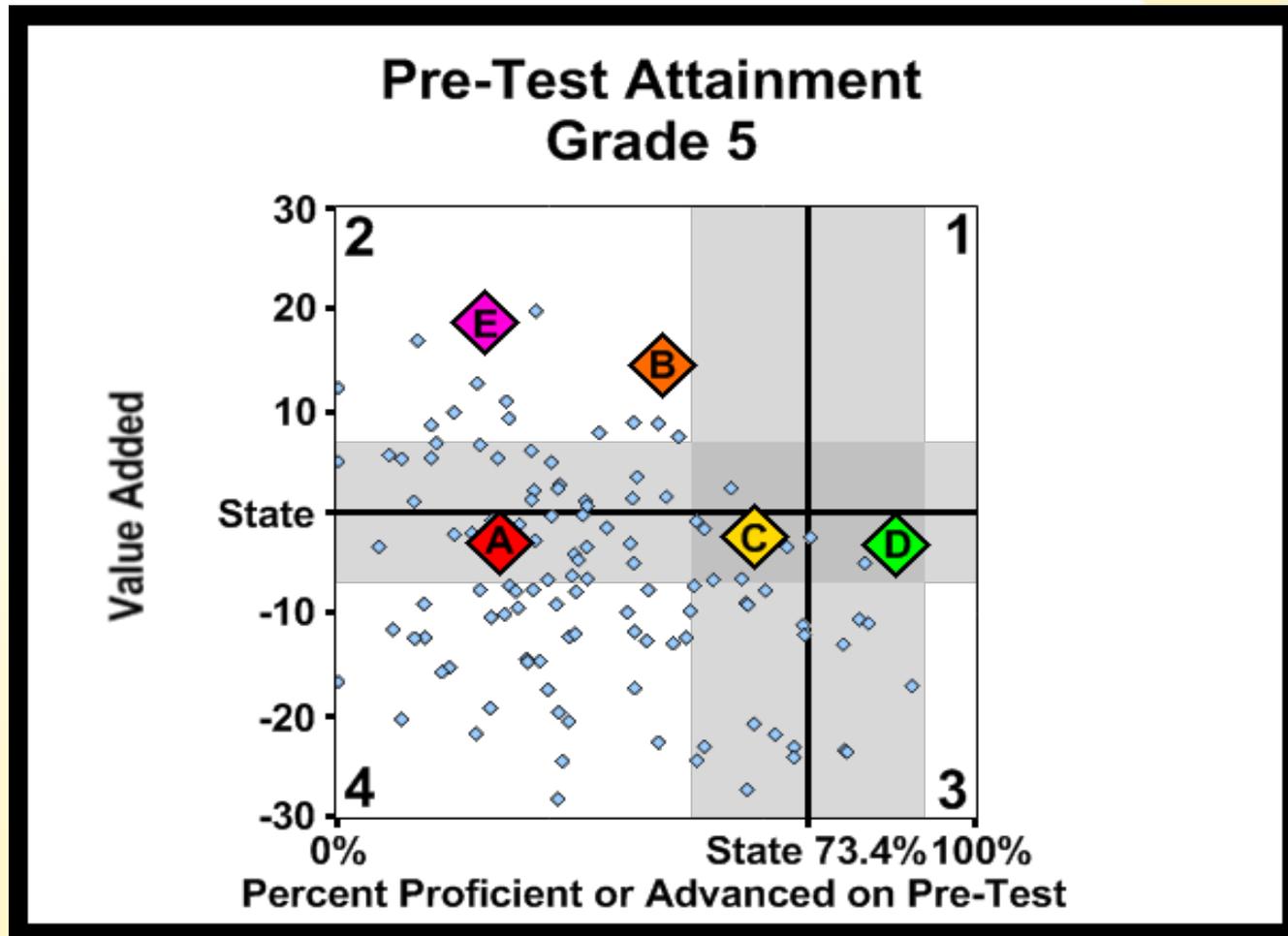


**Post-Test Attainment
Grade 5**



Quadrant 1 - High Value-Added, High Attainment
 Quadrant 2 - High Value-Added, Low Attainment
 Quadrant 3 - Low Value-Added, High Attainment
 Quadrant 4 - Low Value-Added, Low Attainment

Do Low Achieving Students Attend High Value-Added Schools?



For more on Communication



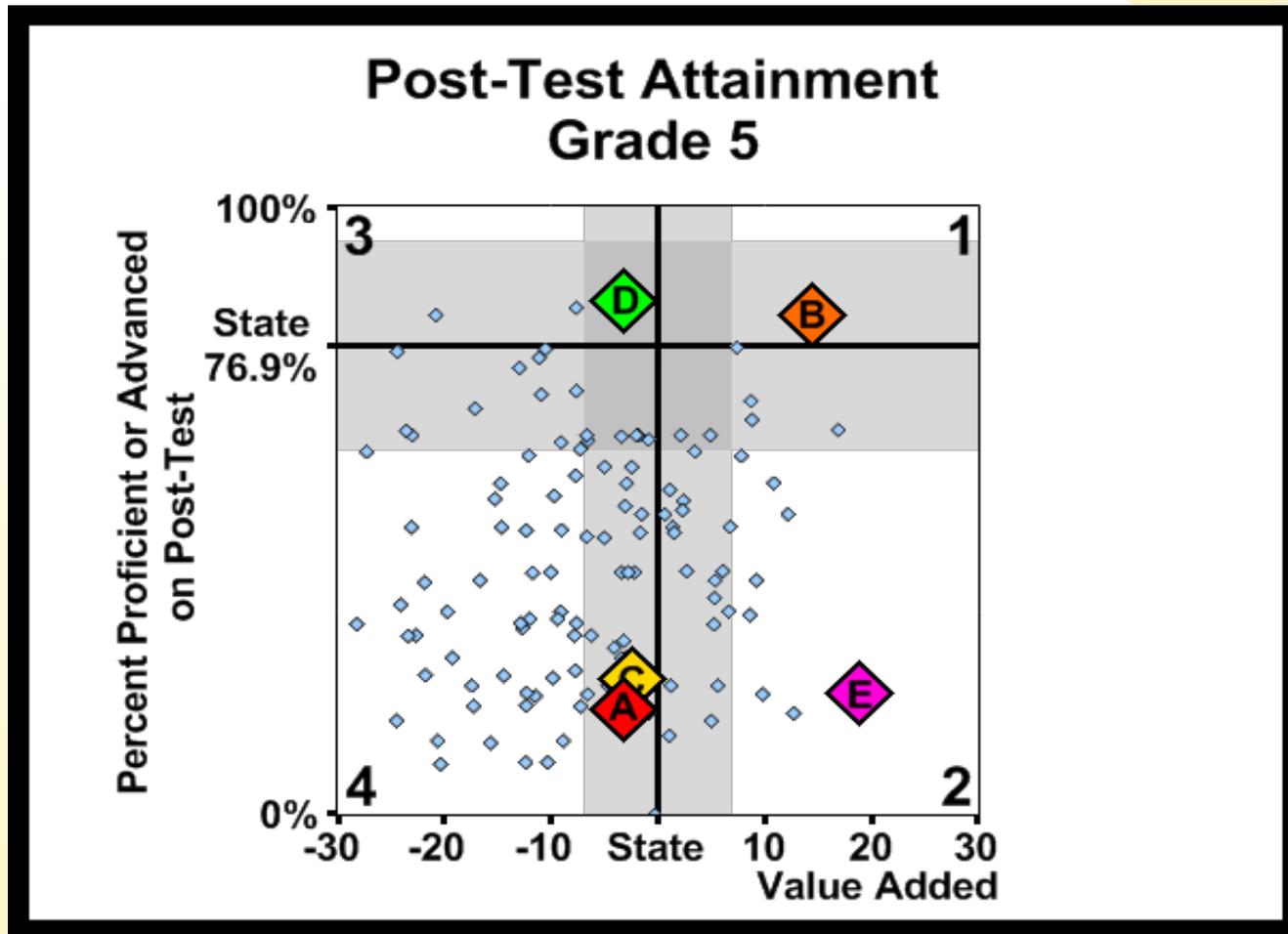
- View the videos on:
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 - An Example of Value-Added Attainment Data Presentation from Chicago
 - Successful Communication Strategies
 - Two Ways of Connecting Value-Added Attainment: Part 2
- Read the Guide to Implementation module on Communication

Communication Plans Revisited

Two Ways of Connecting Value-Added Attainment: Part 2, Making the Most of Value-Added Attainment Data

Robert Meyer

Value-Added vs. Attainment: Is There a Difference?



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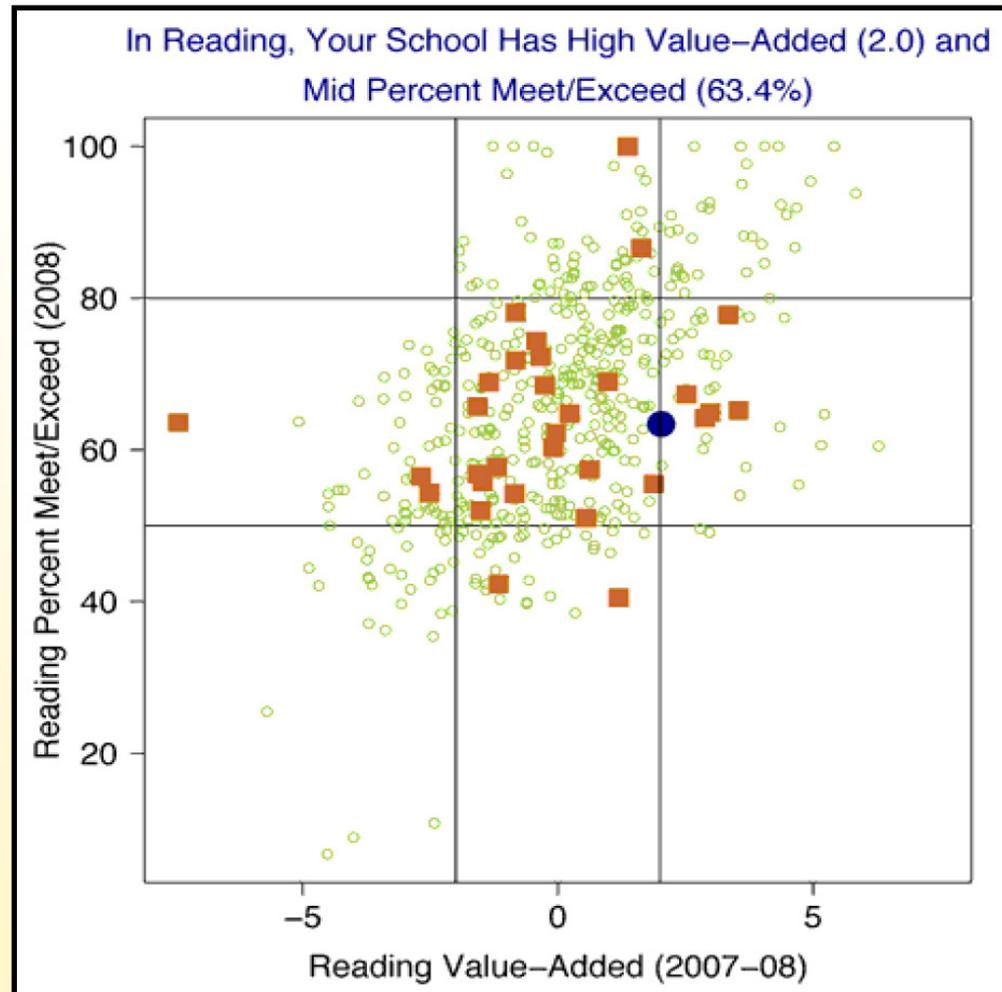
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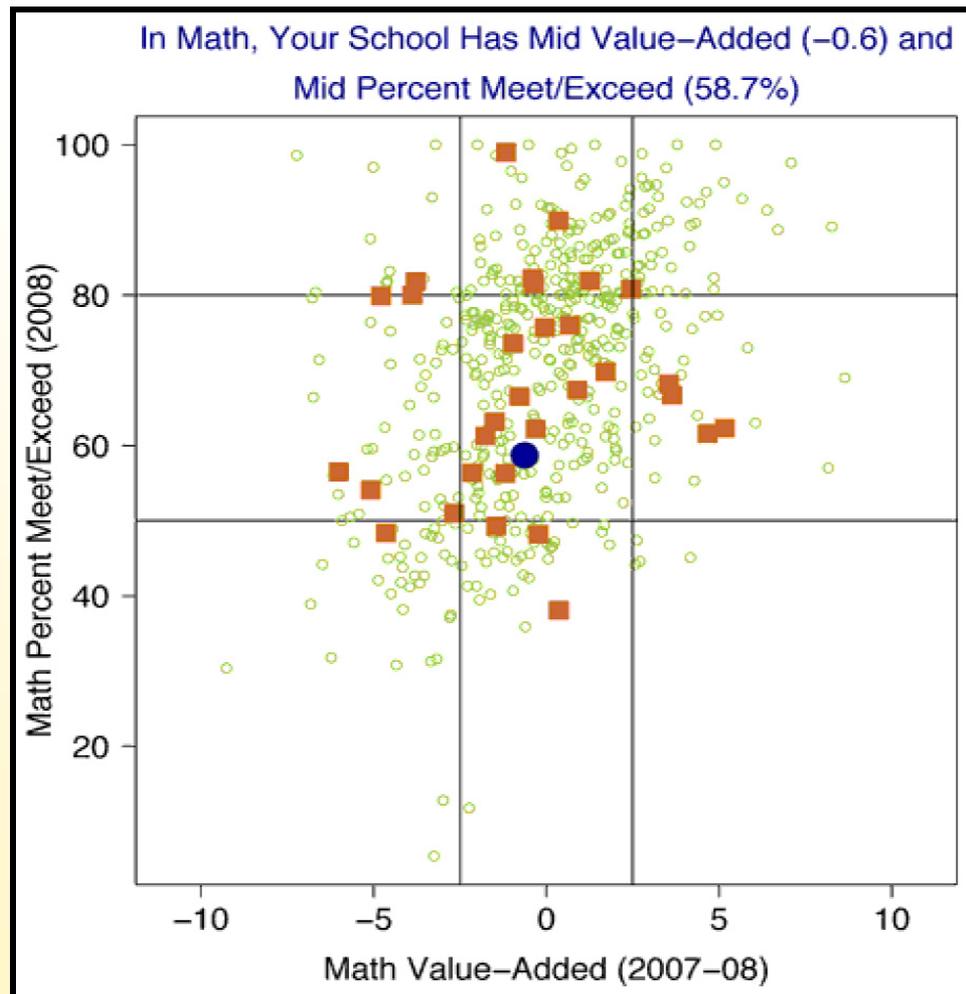
An Example of Value-Added Attainment Data Presentation from Chicago

Robert Meyer

Value-Added and Post Attainment: Low, Medium, and High Comparisons: Reading



Value-Added and Post Attainment: Low, Medium, and High Comparisons: Math



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Center for
Educator Compensation
Reform

Communication Plans Revisited

New Communication Challenges

Cynthia Prince

Changes that create new communication challenges



- Leadership changes
- Economic changes
- Change in focus due to natural progression of the project:
 - Securing cooperation, building momentum
 - Keeping constituents informed about the work and its progress
 - Sustaining the work

Stakeholder engagement and communication module – 5 Steps



- Assemble a representative compensation committee
- Plan carefully
- Design the new compensation plan
- Build support for the work and the plan
- Develop a feedback loop to make midcourse corrections
- Evaluate the results

Step 4: Build support for the work and the plan



- Strategies to “spread the word” and build support and momentum
 - Written materials
 - Meetings
 - Electronic communication
 - Written communications plan

Lessons learned about effective communication strategies



- Choose language carefully
 - Explain terms clearly and accurately
- Give the plan a name and an identity
- Anticipate the critics and skeptics
- Communicate with the media
 - Develop working relationship with local media
 - Select point persons for media contact
 - Meet with editorial board and education writers
 - Produce periodic news releases about the project

Step 5: Develop a feedback loop to make midcourse corrections

- Focus groups
- Satisfaction surveys

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