



GUIDEBOOK: The K-12 Human Capital Management Journey

Tips and real-life examples to better attract, engage,
grow and retain your greatest asset: your people.



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INTRODUCTION...



THE PROBLEM

Fast Facts:

A teacher is estimated to have **2-3x the impact** of any other school factor on students' reading and math test performance.¹

About **1/3 of educators** leave their positions for other teaching positions within the first three years.²

46 states report shortages in special education, while 43 report shortages in science, and 41 in foreign languages.³

All but six states have seen new teacher pipelines drop – some by as much as 65 percent.⁴

Many HCM programs lack the harmony needed to drive performance.

It's been well-documented that people – especially your teachers and principals – have the greatest impact on student achievement. But high teacher turnover and a growing teacher shortage are making it increasingly difficult to keep engaged, well-prepared staff in every classroom and building.

This problem is exacerbated by:

- A siloed approach to employee engagement, growth and retention
- No easy access to data that can help drive decisions
- A lack of tools to support employee efficiency and effectiveness





THE OPPORTUNITY

In Their Own Words:

*"With the teacher shortage, retention is very important to us, and we want to keep high-quality and exemplary teachers if at all possible. **The primary root of our success is in the strength of our teaching staff.**"*

- Bob Kreifels, former Chief Human Resources Officer, Blue Valley Schools, KS

A people-focused problem deserves a people-focused solution.

By taking a strategic approach to human capital management (HCM), you can **attract, engage, grow and retain employees** who are focused on continuous learning. And that means better outcomes for kids.

A strategic approach to HCM is evidenced by:

- Taking a holistic approach to the employee lifecycle
- Leveraging data to make decisions and measure results
- Continuously improving employee efficiency and effectiveness

Dive in with us to learn more about strategically approaching a human capital management program in K-12 – and learn from some of the school district rock stars seeing success!



SETTING THE STAGE





THREE LEVELS ALONG THE HCM JOURNEY



Is your HCM program ready to rock 'n roll?

If you took our quiz, then you know that your HCM journey is at one of the following stages:

- **The One-Man Band** (Reactive)
- **Garage Band** (Proactive)
- **Rock Stars** (Strategic)

Let's talk more about taking it to the next level!



THE ONE-MAN BAND (REACTIVE)

The One-Man Band

Just keeping up a steady drumbeat is consuming a lot of time for these HCM artists – but that’s ok! Unlocking the full potential of collaboration, data and technology working in harmony will help your HCM program gain some momentum.





THE GARAGE BAND (PROACTIVE)

The Garage Band

Teams at this level are starting to work in harmony, with some positive results around HCM. But a few notes are still a bit... off-key, should we say? There's room to amp up the strategic use of data, team collaboration and connected technology to take HCM to the next level!





THE ROCK STARS (STRATEGIC)

The Rock Stars

HCM rock stars have a strategy in hand – and they're not afraid to use it. Backed by data, collaborative teams and connected technology, these strategic teams are making a masterpiece – and it shows in their performance.





KEY INDICATORS OF HCM MATURITY

To make great music, you have to hit the right notes.

In determining the stages in the HCM journey, we looked at a number of best practices at successful districts. Here are three keys to a human capital management program that really sings.

A Holistic Approach to the Employee Lifecycle

Are all the teams in your district marching to the beat of the same drum? A collaborative, unified view of the employee lifecycle is key to strategically managing your people.

Leveraging Data to Make Decisions & Measure Results

If you can't measure it, you can't manage it! How's your district doing with setting goals and measuring results? Putting data on center stage can take your HCM to the next level.

Continuously Improving Employee Efficiency & Effectiveness

Continuous improvement is key – across your leadership team and for your educators. So does everyone have the tools to return time to what matters most?

Now let's dig into each of the key indicators – and how they can amp up your HCM results.



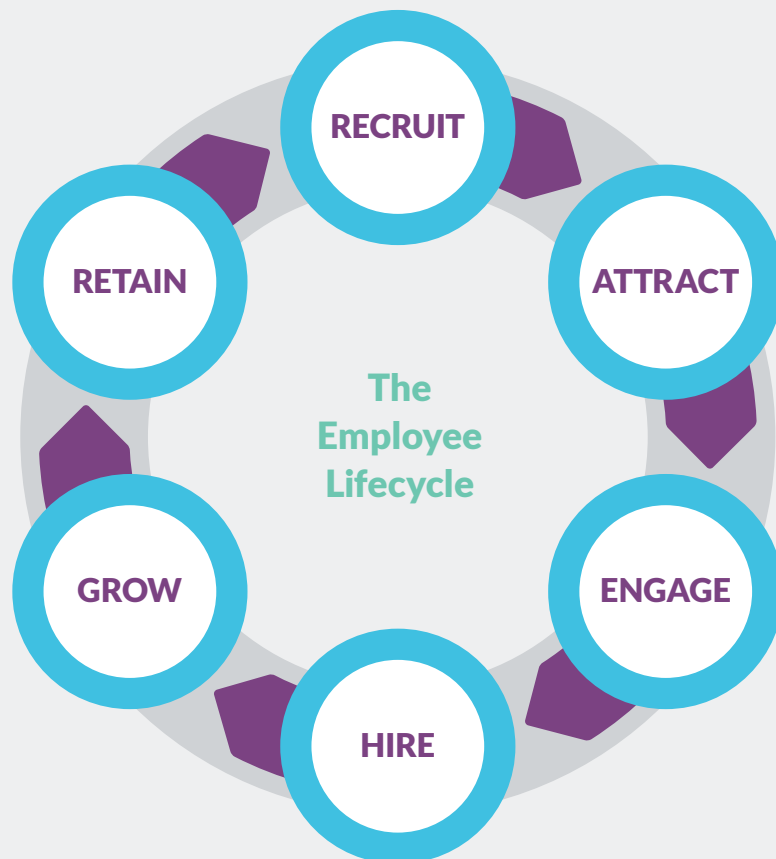


A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO THE EMPLOYEE LIFECYCLE





#1 A UNIFIED VIEW



Breaking down silos in teams, data and technology.

A holistic approach to the employee lifecycle – what does that mean? Let's break it down into 3 practical parts:

A unified view of attracting, engaging, growing and retaining employees

A unified view of human capital management goes from hire to retire. Instead of managing different pieces of the employee lifecycle in disconnected parts, strategic teams are thinking about HCM as one big continuum of employee engagement and retention.

This unified view means one team can't be thinking about how to recruit one day, with a different team thinking about how to grow educators another day.

This leads us to our second part of a holistic approach.



#2

CROSS-DEPARTMENTAL COLLABORATION



What a few rock stars have to say:

"Nothing exists in isolation. We all work together and that collaboration is necessary for it to be an effective learning environment for students."

– Robert Hagstrom, Director of Research & Development, Flagstaff USD, AZ

"We are in collaboration with all divisions, and our annual goals include action steps that include leading cross-division teams to effectively approach each process. In a way, HCM is all HR, and HR is everyone."

– Eric Punswick, Executive Director for HR, Blue Valley Schools, KS

Cross-departmental collaboration in setting and achieving goals

Strategic leaders sing the praises of cross-departmental collaboration in holistic human capital management. Goals specific to HCM have to be set as a district leadership team, and can only be achieved as a team.

Put it into practice:

Collaboration sounds good in theory. But what does it look like practically?

Strategic districts recommend rethinking people management processes that are historically siloed in different teams – but have potential to reap great benefits with cross-team collaboration.





#2 CROSS-DEPARTMENTAL COLLABORATION

continued



Words of rock stars:

"If everyone who is in a group is able to listen and hear what others are saying, listening before talking provides the most innovation possible."

– Dietrich Sauer, Executive Director of Human Resources, Flagstaff USD, AZ

"My approach is a team approach to try to get the best people in place in our organization."

– Robert Vogelaar | Assistant Superintendent, Liberty Public School District, MO

Could you break down silos in any of these areas?

- ☐ Recruiting and hiring
- ☐ Screening and interviewing
- ☐ Employee onboarding
- ☐ Mentoring programs
- ☐ Reducing employee absences
- ☐ Employee wellness
- ☐ Connecting evaluations to professional learning
- ☐ Analyzing data around HCM effectiveness
- ☐ Improving district culture
- ☐ Employee engagement and retention



#3

HIGH-PERFORMING
EMPLOYEE CULTURE

Words of rock stars:

*“Culture is incredibly important for **retention**. A happy teacher is going to be a teacher who feels like their needs are being met. And if you feel like your needs are being met, the likelihood that you’re going to leave your district is pretty low. You’re going to stay.”*

- Bridget Seeman | Executive Director of Human Resources, Geary County USD 475, KS

Shared commitment to building and maintaining a high-performing employee culture

A recent report from the Frontline Research & Learning Institute found that **cultural fit is widely considered the most important element in a hiring decision** – even above experience and training. While the research suggests that emphasis could be a little too heavy, there’s no doubt that cultural fit is incredibly important, not only to the district, but also to current and potential employees.

Even beyond recruiting and retention, **culture has a direct impact on students**. Consider this finding from a report on Chicago schools⁵:

“In improving schools, where trust and cooperative adult efforts are strong, students also report that they feel safe, sense that teachers care about them, and experience greater



#3

HIGH-PERFORMING EMPLOYEE CULTURE

continued

academic challenge. In contrast, in schools with flat or declining test scores, teachers are more likely to state that they do not trust one another, and both teachers and students report less satisfaction with their experiences.”

Culture can’t be separated from what we just talked about, either – a cross-collaborative emphasis at the leadership level.

Put it into practice:

As your district thinks about culture, it’s important to develop a clear, systematic way to articulate and measure what “culture” and “cultural fit” mean to your district. Simply following your gut can result in misalignment and, even worse, hiring bias based on likeability.





#3

HIGH-PERFORMING EMPLOYEE CULTURE

continued



Words of rock stars:

"Having a culture where people feel valued, feel respected and feel like they have an important role greatly enhances the morale in the district. It creates an environment where people want to be there. We know that the most important person to be with a student is the teacher. When you have an environment where people don't want to come to work... that is going to impact student achievement."

– Brian White | Executive Director of Human Resources and Operations, Auburn-Washburn USD 437, KS

Here are some consistent, objective ways to articulate and measure culture and cultural fit:

- District vision and mission statements
- District "brand standards"
- Standardized interview questions
- Research-based hiring protocols
- Engagement surveys
- Stay / exit interviews





CASE STUDY: GUILFORD COUNTY SCHOOLS, NC



In Guilford County Schools, district leaders leave no stone unturned in finding out-of-the-box solutions to the teacher shortage. And they do it by taking a holistic approach to the employee lifecycle.

First, they have a unified view of recruiting and retention, centered on data.

“One of the things that we do in our district is we connect recruiting and retention data,” says Alison Coker, Executive Director of Human Resources. “We can start to project what our needs are going to be and start recruiting earlier. We can also identify potential attrition in our schools and start identifying strategies to address those teachers who may be considering leaving.

We conduct stay interviews to find out why people stay, and what we can do to make them stay. We also talk to them about long term plans and professional development. Connecting recruiting and retention is important in order for us to make sure our classrooms are filled with the top talents.”

Second, they collaborate with others within the district.

“The human resources department, the regional superintendent’s office and some of our schools partnered this summer to ensure that some of our schools that are highly impacted by shortages were staffed well before most of our other schools,” shares Alison. “That type of collaboration is crucial

in order to make sure that our students receive the highest quality teacher possible.

In fact, one school that we worked with that has a 100% free and reduced lunch rate was staffed before the end of June, and normally that school would have been staffed sometime in August. Collaborating across the district, I think, is key to recruiting and retaining talent for some of your hard to fill schools.”

They also foster collaboration by inviting those outside of HR – their curriculum specialists – to attend and interview at recruiting fairs.





CASE STUDY: GUILFORD COUNTY SCHOOLS, NC

continued



"I think that helps them buy into the - applicants that are coming in," says Alison Yates, Director of Staffing. "It also helps us identify those folks who might be strong in the content area."

Lastly, they focus on culture as a key way to attract and retain talent.

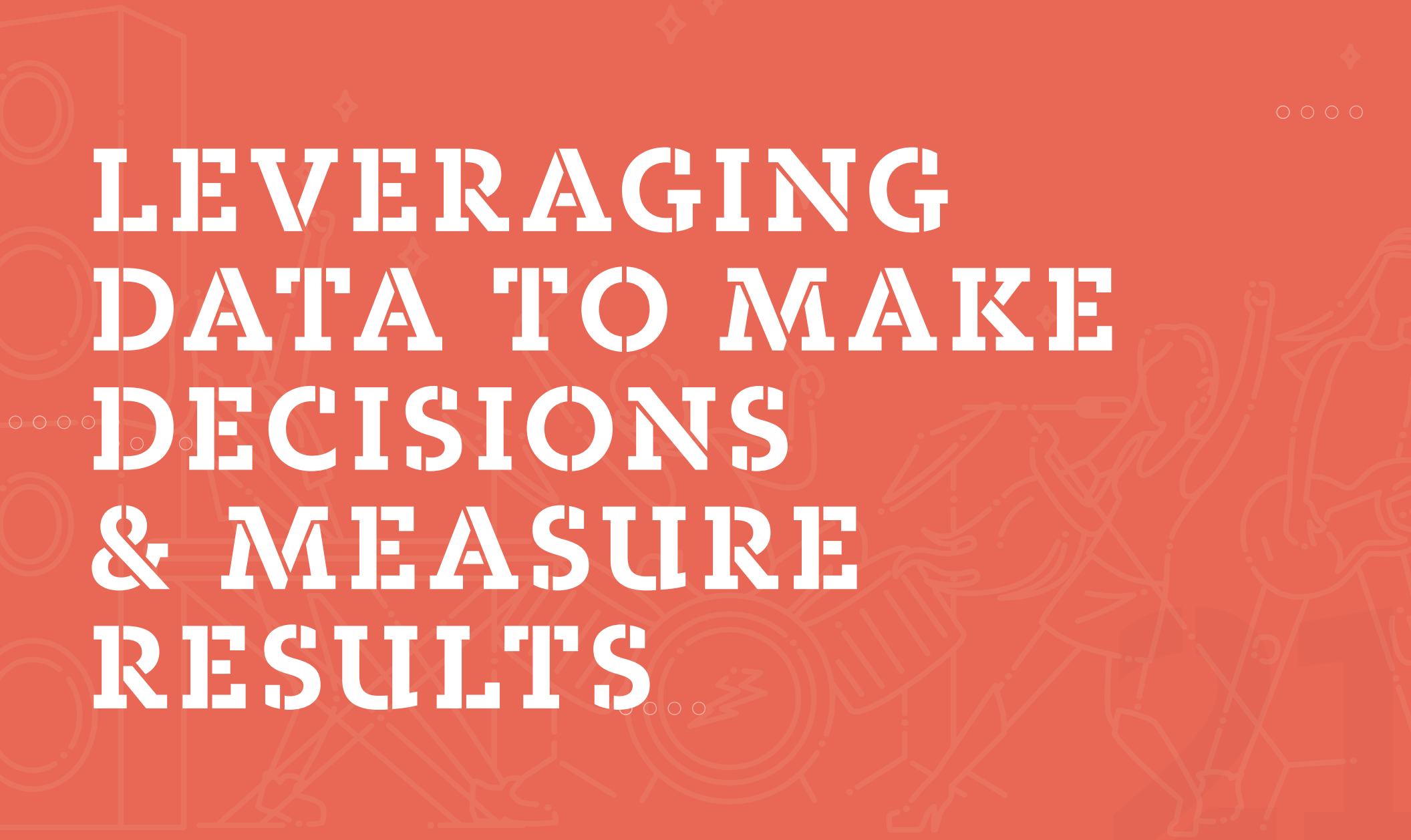
"We're looking at our working conditions surveys and identifying strategies to improve those," says Alison Coker. "We're also taking a look at our existing policies and procedures to make sure that they support retaining top talent. We've made some changes recently to some of our policies, so that they would support keeping our top teachers."

"We were able to start our school year 100% staffed, and I think our recruiting and retention strategy supported that effort."

– Alison Coker

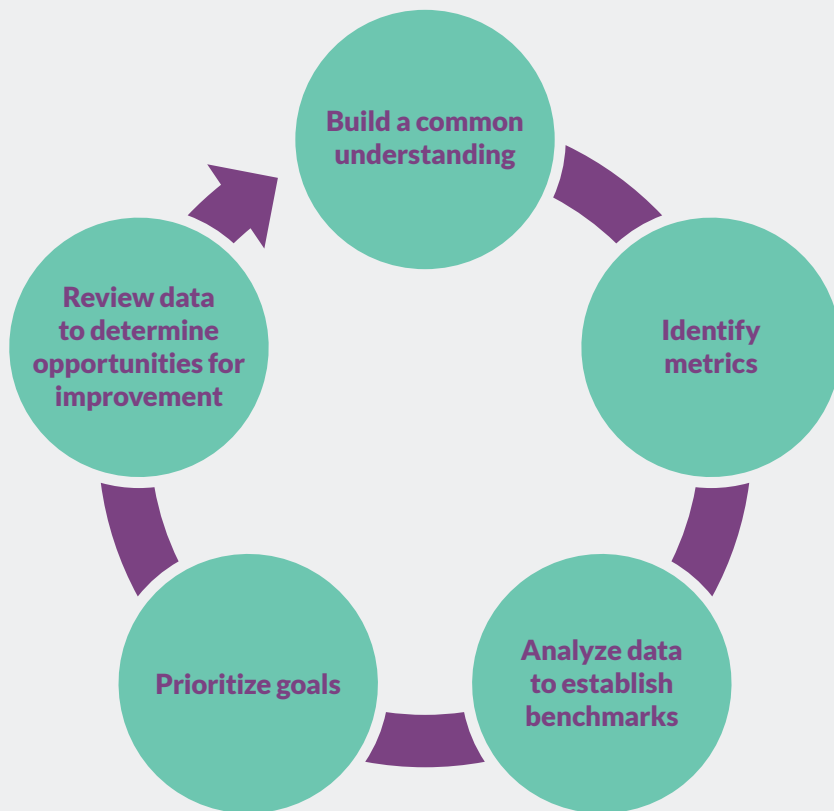


LEVERAGING DATA TO MAKE DECISIONS & MEASURE RESULTS





IF YOU CAN'T MEASURE IT, YOU CAN'T MANAGE IT



Our second key HCM indicator is all about data. You've probably heard all the buzz words – “data-driven,” “big data,” “real-time analytics” ... what does it all mean for school districts?

A good starting point is to look at what you're trying to accomplish with your data. How is it going to help your team make decisions?

Consider this framework:

1. **Build a common understanding** of what leadership wants to accomplish, including shared definitions of the language and terms you're using.
2. **Identify metrics** that will help you measure progress toward your ultimate goal. Focus on a few rather than many.
3. **Analyze data to establish benchmarks.** Get a sense of your starting point and talk about where you want those numbers to be.

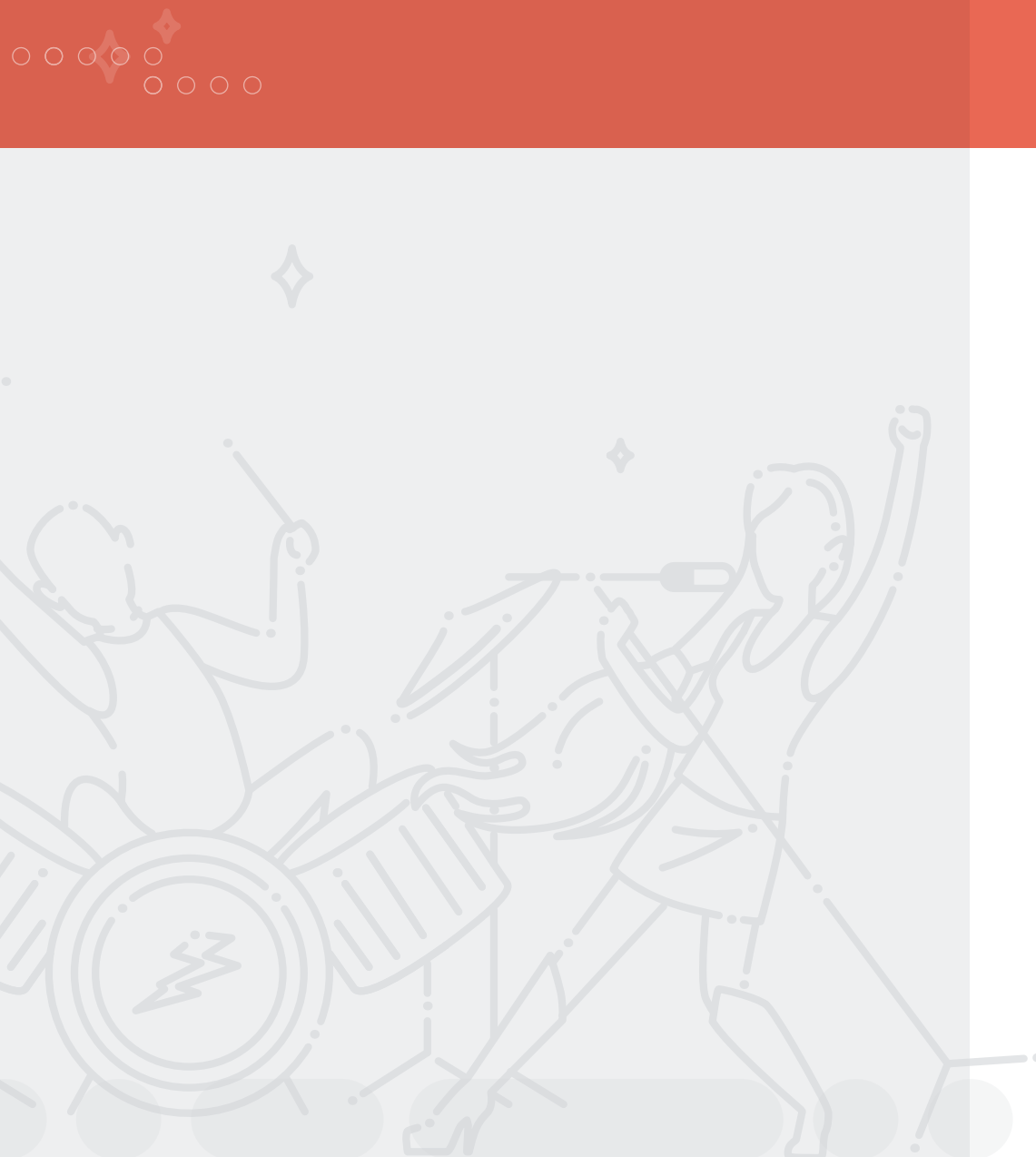


IF YOU CAN'T MEASURE IT, YOU CAN'T MANAGE IT

continued

4. **Prioritize goals.** Based on your identified metrics and performance so far, determine where to focus your attention. Again, focus on a few rather than many.
5. **Review data to determine opportunities for continual improvement.** Has the focus on your goals made a difference? Continue to identify small steps that can deliver some easy wins.

Now that we have a framework for using data, let's explore three elements of an HCM strategy that leverages data to make decisions and measure results.





COLLECTING AND ANALYZING DATA

Shared responsibility and systems for collecting and analyzing data

Shared Responsibility

The importance of shared responsibility for data can't be stated any better than the words of HCM rock star **Marguerite Dingba, Director of the Professional Learning Center at Greece Central School District in New York:**



*"It's important to work collaboratively because one person can't do it alone. And if there isn't buy-in by the participants in your system, change is never going to occur. It's important to really look at results, to **look at data as a team**. People need to own that data, own those results, and think about ways they can evolve as a system."*

At Greece Central, being "data-driven" is core to their approach to educator professional learning. This commitment starts at the leadership level and cascades to the educators, who must identify how any professional development activity will align to the district's strategic plan. Because everyone is committed to and diligent in collecting and analyzing data, their team has incredible insight into what's effective in their program.

Shared Systems

In addition to shared responsibility, teams need shared systems that not only effectively collect the data, but also present it in a way that simplifies analysis and decision-making. Many districts have a treasure trove of data, but manual spreadsheets or siloed software systems with clunky reporting make it difficult to make sense of the data.



COLLECTING AND ANALYZING DATA

continued

Dale Fisher, Assistant Superintendent for HR at Deerfield School District 109, can speak to that:

*"One of the greatest benefits to having **all of our solutions under one roof** is how I can work really efficiently with the building-level leadership. My ability to access something and know that a principal can see the same information from her building in real time helps us make the best decisions for the school and for the district. It's really empowering for us as a team."*





MEASURING RESULTS

Measuring results against key performance indicators (KPIs) and benchmarks

You've developed a common understanding of goals, shared responsibility for data and a system for collecting and analyzing all of it. The next step in leveraging data is setting key performance indicators (KPIs) and benchmarks you can measure against.

Key Performance Indicators

Your KPIs should be directly driven by your strategic objectives. Pick just a few ways you can measure the success of any changes you're going to make to your HCM program.

Examples of KPIs in HCM:

- Number of candidates in your hiring pipeline
- Time to hire
- Teacher turnover rate

- Number of absences per employee
- Employee engagement score
- Alignment of professional learning to ESSA criteria
- Employee evaluation results
- Hours spent on manual processes

Benchmarking simply means picking a starting point. You can use your own current KPIs as your benchmark, and then measure your progress against yourself.

For an even broader perspective, some HCM software solutions allow you to actually benchmark your progress against other school districts.



Sayreville Public Schools is a rock star example.

They're stepping it up a notch by benchmarking their district's employee absence data against not only their own data, but data in neighboring districts and even across the country.



MEASURING RESULTS

continued

*"Sometimes we can lose perspective, and **the national comparison gives us perspective that we definitely need,**" says Superintendent Dr. Richard Labbe. "It speaks volumes about staff attendance and really helps me in talking to my collective bargaining units."*

Dr. Labbe accesses these insights by leveraging the Institute Report in Frontline Absence & Time. This report aggregates data from more than 5,000 educational organizations, validated by the Center for Research & Reform in Education at Johns Hopkins. With benchmarking data at his fingertips, Dr. Labbe can see how Sayreville stacks up against other districts on everything from the number of employee absences, to the percentage of non-working substitutes, to their average fill rates.

Dr. Labbe believes these insights are critical because they enable his team to have critical conversations with building leaders, department heads and even the board.

*"If you can't measure it,
you can't manage it."*

– Peter Drucker



INSIGHTS-DRIVEN DECISIONS

Insights-driven decisions aligned to strategic objectives

Lastly in leveraging a data-driven approach to HCM, it's time to make decisions! Looking at your data against your goals and benchmarks, you can evaluate (as a team) how you're doing. The insights you glean can start to point to small steps you can take to make improvements toward your goal.





CASE STUDY: GUILFORD COUNTY SCHOOLS, NC



Leveraging Data to Make Decisions & Measure Results

Atlanta Public Schools saw their average fill rate rise from 79% with their previous absence management system to 96% with Frontline Absence & Time. But to take it a step further, they compared their data to national benchmarks from the Frontline Research & Learning Institute.

“National benchmarks of K-12 data are so important to us,” says Skye Duckett, Deputy Chief HR Officer. “It gives us a little more insight into how we’re doing compared to other people, not just how we’re doing compared to last quarter or last year.”

Administrators found that they directly caused or approved 32% of employee absences — 14% higher than the national average. Those absences could cost the district \$1.8 million in substitute wages in just one year. Even worse, the lost instructional time was estimated at over 90,000 total student days.

Skye was not surprised to find that many absences were for professional development or other professionally-related reasons. However, she was surprised by the short lead time. 55% of professionally-related absences were requested within just 4 days of the absence – significantly lowering fill rates.

The Human Resources and Professional Development offices collaborated to identify solutions, including scheduling professional development opportunities for low-absence times of year. This collaboration led to a **10% decrease in PD absences**, and a **55% decrease on Mondays and Fridays**.

They also communicated the need for longer lead times to their teachers. As a result, 96% of the absences for the first PD series were entered two weeks in advance, with a 99% fill rate across the district.

Through collaboration, benchmarking and data-driven insights, Atlanta continues to offer a high level of professional



CASE STUDY: GUILFORD COUNTY SCHOOLS, NC

continued



development without sacrificing educator time in the classroom.

"I am also pleased to report that our teachers really, really enjoyed the development that they received and the opportunity to collaborate with teachers on the same grade level in other schools," Skye said. "It was a win-win for everyone."

Through collaboration, benchmarking and data-driven insights, Atlanta continues to offer a high level of professional development without sacrificing educator time in the classroom.



CONTINUOUSLY IMPROVING EMPLOYEE EFFECTIVENESS & EFFICIENCY





THE TEAM THAT LEARNS TOGETHER STAYS TOGETHER.

Continuously Improving Employee Effectiveness & Efficiency

The last key indicator of a strong human capital management program is, perhaps, also the reason an HCM strategy is so important: efficient and effective educators lead to better outcomes for our kids. And that's a continuous process!

1. Organization-wide commitment to continuous learning
2. Continual improvement to drive educator effectiveness
3. Tools to support educator efficiency and return time to teaching

Let's dive in to the 3 elements that make up this indicator.



#1 CONTINUOUS LEARNING

Organization-wide commitment to continuous learning

Continuous learning is at the core of educator development – but it should extend to all levels, departments and roles within the district. Making continuous learning a core part of the district culture, vision and mission shows that your district takes it seriously.

And district and school leaders can lead by example – continuously engaging in relevant, job-embedded learning, reflecting on it and sharing learnings back with the team.



Kildeer Countryside School District 96 models this environment through their heavy emphasis on PLCs (Professional Learning Communities). As told in *All Things PLC*⁶, Kildeer Countryside Elementary School has implemented collaborative teams, learning walks and

a two-year mentoring program to support continuous improvement.

Pulling a variety of roles together into this larger effort is key for Kildeer, including principals, instructional coaches, various specialists and educators. They develop common assessments, collaboratively plan and assess progress using data – all in order to build high-performing teams who positively impact students. Ongoing, job-embedded professional learning for these teams is critical, too.

PLC's are a way Kildeer not only builds high-performing teams, but also infuses continuous learning into the very backbone of the district.



#2

EDUCATOR
EFFECTIVENESS**Continual improvement to drive educator effectiveness**

Educator effectiveness is a BIG topic – more than we can cover in this guide! But what we want to hone in on here is human capital management. What have we learned so far that shows how a strategic approach to HCM directly impacts educator effectiveness?

HCM Impact on Educator Effectiveness:

- Hiring the right people leveraging data and connected systems
- Starting employees on the right foot with a holistic approach to the employee lifecycle
- Setting clear goals and expectations for leaders and educators alike
- Building a collaborative culture that supports and retains effective educators

- A commitment to data, including identifying areas of growth for educators
- Measuring results using benchmarks to get a sense of perspective
- Making data-driven decisions to improve educator impact on the classroom

A Growth Mindset

Having a “growth mindset” is paramount to this work. Just like continuous learning, continuous improvement should extend to all levels and be infused into the everyday thinking at your district.



Greece Central School District has really capitalized on this growth mindset in their professional learning program.

As Marguerite Dimgba, Director of the Professional Learning Center at Greece, shares: “*Professional learning*



#2

EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS

continued

over the course of a teacher's career should **evolve as the teacher evolves**. Trying to offer more creative choices — a more online, blended-type approach — is a challenge. It's something we're always **constantly thinking about and growing** in ourselves."

The work doesn't stop once a teacher completes a learning activity. Greece Central actively works with teachers to ensure that professional development for teachers makes a difference in the classroom.

"I'm not evaluating you and your knowledge after having taken this course. I want to know, '**Did this course have a change on your practice?** Did it have any impact on student learning? What's the evidence you have?'"



#3 EDUCATOR EFFICIENCY



Here are a few rock star success stories:

Guilford County Schools, NC:

Eliminated 90% of their paper hiring process

Cedar Falls Community School District, IA:

Saved 4 days a month with electronic time and attendance

Washington County Public Schools, MD:

Saved 45 minutes per employee in onboarding time

Alvin ISD, TX:

Went from an hour to just minutes finding student documents for ARDs/IEPs

Tools to support educator efficiency and return time to teaching

Question: What happens to all the best-laid strategies and plans in the world if no one has time to implement them?

Answer: They wither and die. Not good!

From the district office, to school leadership, to educators and support staff – everybody has too much to do and too little time. Strategic management of your human capital demands exploring creative ways to fix this problem. If you can save time for yourself and other leaders, you can propel your HCM strategy forward. And if you can save time for your educators, wow! They will thank you with greater engagement, retention and outcomes for students.



#3 EDUCATOR EFFICIENCY

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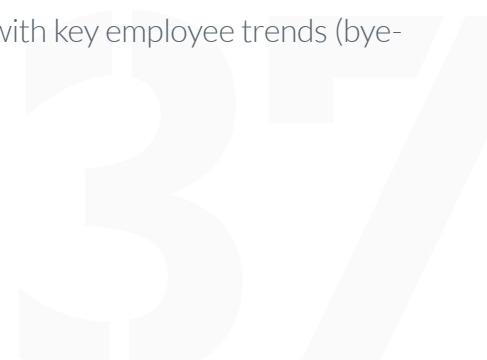
Words of rock stars:

"The automation of tasks previously done by hand has enabled a small HR team to efficiently manage behind-the-scenes details, allowing educators who work directly with students to give their full attention to teaching and learning."

- Lisa Hatfield | Director of Human Resources,
Raymore-Peculiar School District

Could you reclaim time for yourself, other leaders or educators in any of these areas?

- ☐ Automating your applicant tracking process
- ☐ Going electronic with all that onboarding paperwork
- ☐ Automation of complex payroll calculations (bonus: reduce payroll errors!)
- ☐ Automated employee absence tracking and approvals
- ☐ Automated professional learning tracking
- ☐ Electronic employee evaluations (capture feedback on-the-go!)
- ☐ Electronic IEP creation and management
- ☐ Real-time dashboards with key employee trends (bye-bye, spreadsheets)





CASE STUDY: RAYMORE-PECULIAR SCHOOL DISTRICT, MO

Continuously Improving Employee Effectiveness & Efficiency

Raymore-Peculiar School District has a small team, but they're seeing big efficiencies by continuously improving and automating every stage of the employee lifecycle.

From recruiting and hiring, to employee absence and attendance management, to professional learning and evaluations, Ray-Pec keeps staff members across the district focused on students rather than paperwork.

First, they rely on an electronic applicant tracking system, integrated with research-based screening tools, to guide their recruiting and hiring process. Data is available at a glance and easily shared

with principals. These solutions help move candidates through the pipeline quickly.

Ray-Pec depends on an electronic absence and substitute management system to eliminate another manual headache: tracking employee absences and finding substitutes.

Taking it even further, in the past, their classified employees kept track of hours worked using paper calendars. Ray-Pec replaced that paper-based nightmare with an electronic time and attendance system that integrated with their absence management tool. More time saved!

Lastly, Ray-Pec uses integrated professional learning management and employee

evaluation management software solutions to save time tracking and monitoring employee growth. These tools support their focus on ongoing, deliberate, meaningful and timely feedback.



**WHERE DO I GO
FROM HERE?**





WHERE DO I GO FROM HERE?

It's a journey – and you might want a guide!

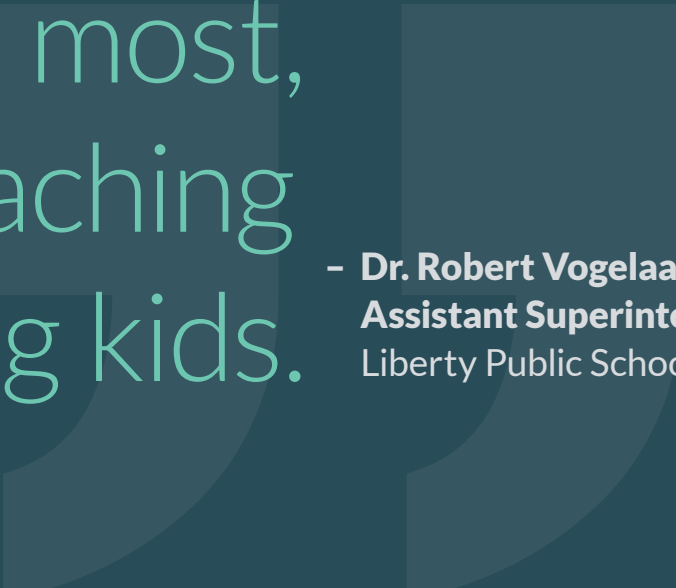

What we said in the beginning still stands – strategically managing your human capital management program is a journey. It's all about setting your goals, building alignment and then tackling those challenges one small bite at a time.

But you don't have to go it alone! Every rock star we highlighted in this eBook has something in common: **they have a guide.**

Frontline Education is a partner to education. We provide the right tools to empower strategic leaders in their human capital management journey. Frontline's human capital management suite spans recruiting and hiring, onboarding, compensation and benefits, absence management, time tracking, professional growth, analytics and reporting, and more. And our aim is to make it easy for you to have a holistic approach to HCM, with quick access to data and intuitive solutions that increase efficiency and effectiveness.

**LEARN MORE ABOUT
FRONTLINE'S HUMAN CAPITAL
MANAGEMENT SUITE**

FrontlineEducation.com/K12HCM



Our partnership with
Frontline Education...
allows us to put the
right things in the right
perspective. It allows
us to leverage our time
where it matters most,
and that's in reaching
and teaching kids.

- **Dr. Robert Vogelaar**
Assistant Superintendent
Liberty Public School District





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