

Profiles of Leadership Series: Mickey Garrison

Mickey Garrison jokes that the DATA Project has its own motto: "In God we trust... All others must bring data."

That catch phrase neatly sums up the [Direct Access to Achievement Project's](#) approach to student achievement, says Mickey, who directs the statewide professional development initiative and was honored last year by the national Data Quality Campaign.

"Educators are very passionate about their work and you often find that passion drives their decisions," says Mickey. "But passion isn't enough. I always say that what's most compelling is when you have evidence, too."

Mickey herself isn't short on passion. A Wisconsin native who started out as a special education teacher and then principal of Fullerton IV Elementary in Roseburg, she has been with the DATA Project since she wrote the grant funding the initiative in 2007.

Since then, Mickey has worked tirelessly to support the DATA Project, which to date has trained some 5,000 educators in districts across the state on strategies for using data to drive instructional decisions and, ultimately, raise student achievement.

Her commitment to using data started during her years as a

special education teacher, a job in which data was essential to understanding her students' strengths and weaknesses. As a principal, she made data-driven decision making a school-wide priority.

During her tenure, students' scores in reading and math climbed steadily even as the school's population of disadvantaged students grew. "We went from good to exceptional," Mickey says. (Fullerton IV continues to be rated "Outstanding" on the Oregon School Report Card.)

The DATA Project has made a huge impact on virtually every school district in Oregon. In Canyon City's Humboldt Elementary School, for example, teachers trained by the DATA Project analyzed student assessments to pinpoint that writing conventions (spelling, punctuation, etc.) needed improvement. The school used data to develop instructional strategies to address this need and as a result students exceeded their annual goal midway through the school year. The Redmond School District established data teams across all grade levels and subjects. The increased collaboration in the district contributed to double-digit gains in students meeting the reading and math benchmarks, especially students with disabilities, who



posted a 47% gain in their performance on assessments.

But the DATA Project's most important - and in some ways, its most surprising - outcome, according to Mickey, is the statewide network it has created. Through the DATA Project, educators are able to exchange ideas, strategies, and even lesson plans. "We're seeing teachers connecting to teachers in a new and focused way," she says.

Mickey is optimistic that the DATA Project will be able to continue its work after its initial grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences runs out in August 2011.

"The key is to sustain what we've started and to go even deeper," she says. "I think it's a bargain when you consider all the outcomes we're seeing for students."

ESD Study Groups Convene to Prepare for DATA Project Certification

Educators interested in becoming certified in Oregon DATA Project's educational strands are encouraged to sign up for preparatory study groups. The study sessions, hosted by regional ESDs, will begin in January and require a time commitment of about 15 hours. Attendance at the sessions is a prerequisite to attending the March 2-3 certification workshop at Clackamas ESD.

For more information about the study groups, contact your ESD or visit the [certification session page](#) on the [Oregon DATA Project site](#). To register for the certification session on March 2-3, visit <http://198.236.15.69/ORP/detail.php?RecordID=1745>.

2011-12 Oregon School Calendar Available

The calendar for the 2011-12 school year is now available on the [ODE website](#). This calendar contains 2011-12 holidays, dates for spring break and the state-wide inservice day, and relevant Oregon Statutes and Rules. Access Oregon school calendars at: <http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=2093>.

December State Board of Education Actions

- Adopted Essential Skill Assessments for English Language Learners OAR 581-022-0617
- Adopted Instructional Programs – Private Career Schools OAR 581-045-0009
- Approved the following Community College Programs:
 - Umpqua Community College: Green Technician (statewide certificate)
 - Clackamas Community College: Utility Trade Preparation Line Worker (Certificate of Completion)
- Approved the Academy for Architecture, Construction & Engineering (ACE) Waiver Request
- Approved the Four Rivers Community School Waiver Requests
- Declined to sponsor the KNOVA Learning Hillsboro Charter School
- Agreed to sponsor the Bennett-Pearson Academy Charter School
- Repealed the Charter School Revolving Loan Fund OAR 581-020-0350
- Approved David Rives as the new Board community college faculty advisor
- Adopted the Reading Level Descriptors
- Adopted the draft October minutes
- Approved the Commissioner's travel

2010-11 News Release Calendar

Below are the official ODE data releases for the remainder of the 2010-11 school year to assist you in your communications planning.

February 2011

February 8: 2010-11 Statewide Fall Enrollment

March 2011

March 9: Special Education Child Count

March 30: Special Education Report Cards

Spring Break: March 19-27

April 2011

April 19: Cohort Graduation Rate/Dropout Report

