

With the many varieties of data available to them, educators don't lack for information. What they need are structures and time to investigate and interpret the data, whether it comes from formal or informal assessments, high-stakes tests, demographic information, or other sources. Conversations are a logical beginning. The framework below suggests a variety of data conversations that can be useful in different contexts.

TYPES OF DATA CONVERSATIONS

Type of data dialogue	Data used	Who is involved	Conversation topics	Frequency
Whole-school conversations	State assessments, district benchmarks	School improvement team, entire staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Patterns of student achievement. Needs for schoolwide programs (instructional, curricular, professional learning). Needs for additional knowledge and skills for staff. 	2 times a year
One-on-one conversations with focus on multi-year growth of students	State assessments, benchmark exams, end-of-course assessments, classroom assessments, common assessments	Teacher and administrator and/or coach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growth of students. Overall proficiency of students. Instructional strategies to meet student learning needs. 	2 to 3 times a year
Department and/or grade-level teams with focus on individual student interventions	Student performance on classroom and common assessments, discipline records, student work	Core teams, grade-level teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diagnosis of individual knowledge and skills. Next steps for students. Grouping of students for instruction and intervention. Pyramid of interventions. 	Once a month or more often
Department and/or grade-level teams with focus on instructional strategies	State assessments, benchmark assessments, common assessments, unit assessments	Grade-level or content-area groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growth of students. Patterns in proficiency. Instructional strategies. Assessment strategies. 	Once a week to once every 6 to 8 weeks
Student goal-setting conversations	Student work, grades, state assessments, common assessments, benchmark assessments	Teacher and individual students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goal setting. Strategies for success. Celebrations of learning. 	Once a week to once a month

Source: Adapted from Harrison, C. & Bryan, C. (2008). Data dialogue: Focused conversations put evidence to work in the classroom. *JSD*, 29(4), pp. 15-19.