

Sokheap Heng, a 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at Aspire Port City Academy (PCA) in Stockton, CA sits with a colleague reviewing the results from her 5<sup>th</sup> grade students' most recent benchmark assessment. The screen on Heng's laptop is a smattering of greens, yellows, and a few reds. Students who scored 80% or above are highlighted in green, while those who scored between 79% and 40% are in yellow, and below 40% in red. "Let's put these three students in a small group during Reading Workshop," says Heng "and work on standard I.3 (synonyms, antonyms, and homonyms) with them." Throughout her prep period, Heng and her colleague will plan their week's lessons based on benchmark and weekly assessment data—identifying skills to re-teach and students for small group instruction or after school supports.

| Aspire Port City Basic Facts |                                       |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Address</b>               | 2040 West Lane<br>Stockton, CA 95205  |
| <b>Started</b>               | 2007                                  |
| <b>Grades Served</b>         | K - 5                                 |
| <b>Principal</b>             | Shelby Sheideman                      |
| <b>School Day</b>            | 8:00 – 3:20                           |
| <b>Website</b>               | <a href="#">Aspire Port City Page</a> |
| <b>Student Performance</b>   | <a href="#">2009-2010 CST Scores</a>  |

PCA's expanded school day allows teachers more time to analyze student data and teachers like Heng use this student data to ensure that the additional time they have with students is well-used. With 30 schools across the state educating over 10,000 students, Aspire Public Schools is the largest charter network in California. PCA, one of three Aspire schools in Stockton, serves 405 students in grades K to 5, 82% of whom qualify for free and reduced lunch. Despite its student population, the school has outperformed surrounding district schools on the California Standardized Test (CST) in both reading and math—67 and 84 percent of PCA's students scored proficient or above on the reading and math CST, respectively, compared to 56 and 69 percent at surrounding district schools. In 2010, the school was recognized as a distinguished California school by the California Department of Education.

### Quarterly and Weekly Student Assessments

Aspire Port City runs two different but complementary assessment systems throughout the year. Each Friday, all students take weekly, Cycle of Inquiry, tests. These teacher created assessments typically contain 15 to 17 multiple choice questions, covering topics taught throughout the week. Additionally, Aspire Port City administers four benchmark assessments each year—fall, winter, before the CSTs, and spring. These benchmark assessments are created by Aspire and align to California's learning standards.

Students complete both COIs and benchmarks on multiple choice forms, which are then fed into two separate reporting tools. For the COIs, the school uses Edusoft, an outside assessment management tool, to deliver weekly data to teachers. Based on performance on individual standards and the overall assessment, each student is grouped into bands (see Artifact 1).

#### Report Options

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Schools: Port City Academy | Ed Programs: All                                    |
| Grades: All                | Ethnicities: All                                    |
| Teachers: ██████████       | Custom Groups: All                                  |
| Courses: All               | Roster: 2010-2011 Quarter 2, School Year, Quarter 3 |
| Gender: All                | # Students: 29                                      |

#### Student Performance

| Student              | Overall Performance | Grade Five Number Sense: 1.2 (Section 1 - Multiple Choice: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7) (7 pts. possible) | Grade Five Number Sense: 1.4 (Section 1 - Multiple Choice: 8, 9) (2 pts. possible) | Grade Five Number Sense: 1.5 (Section 1 - Multiple Choice: 11, 12, 10) (3 pts. possible) | Grade Five Number Sense: 2.1 (Section 1 - Multiple Choice: 20, 13, 14) (3 pts. possible) | Grade Five Algebra and Functions: 1.5 (Section 1 - Multiple Choice: 15, 16, 17, 18) (4 pts. possible) |
|----------------------|---------------------|---|--|--|--|---|
| <b>GROUP AVERAGE</b> | Band 3 15.9(69.12%) | Band 2 5.1(72.41%)  | Band 2 1.7(84.48%)   | Band 2 1.9(62.07%)   | Band 2 2.1(68.97%)   | Band 2 2.7(67.24%)  |
| ██████████           | Band 3 16(89.57%)   | Band 2 6(85.71%)  | Band 2 2(100.00%)  | Band 1 0(0.00%)  | Band 2 2(66.67%)   | Band 2 2(50.00%)  |
| ██████████           | Band 2 12(52.17%)   | Band 1 2(28.57%)  | Band 2 2(100.00%)  | Band 2 2(66.67%)   | Band 2 2(66.67%)   | Band 2 3(75.00%)  |
| ██████████           | Band 3 17(73.91%)   | Band 2 5(71.43%)  | Band 2 2(100.00%)  | Band 2 2(66.67%)   | Band 2 3(100.00%)  | Band 2 3(75.00%)  |


Artifact 1: COI Report

From these bands, teachers can more easily distinguish between students who have mastered a standard taught that week (higher numbered bands) from those who require additional support (lower numbered bands). Additionally, Edusoft delivers item response reports for each student, allowing teachers to identify common errors.

A separate data portal, created by Aspire, generates data reports for benchmark assessments, and contains historical data on all students. Through the portal, each teacher has access to student, classroom, and school wide performance data on individual questions and their corresponding standard (see Artifact 2).


| Standard | Standard Description  | CST | Fall | Winter | Pre-CST |
|----------|---|-----|------|--------|---------|
| WS 1.6   | Edit and revise manuscripts to improve the meaning and focus of writing | 5   | 64   | 63     | 83      |
| WA 1.3   | Understand and explain frequently used synonyms, antonyms, and homonyms | 5   | 37   | 54     | 58      |

Artifact 2: Aspire Data Portal Benchmark Report



**COI Reporting Tool**

- ✓ Classroom and student level performance, by performance bands
- ✓ Recent and historical testing data
- ✓ Item analysis reports



**Data Portal: Benchmarks and Student Profiles**

- ✓ Classroom and student level performance data
- ✓ School/classroom data at other Aspire schools
- ✓ Item analysis reports
- ✓ Historical data on individual students
  - Assessment data: CST, Benchmark, Grade reports, DRA, SRI (reading assessments)
  - Non-assessment data: Attendance

Teachers use the COI and quarterly benchmark assessment data for two primary purposes: identifying content for re-teaching and selecting students for additional small group instruction and after school tutoring. For instance, Aspire Port City’s 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, Sokheap Heng, places any student who scored less than 80% on any standard into a small group for targeted intervention, planning different activities and lessons for these groups. When Heng identifies questions and standards in which the whole class struggles (standards for which the class average fell below 70%), she will plan a lesson to re-teach these standards to all students. She also uses assessment data, prior CST performance, and classroom grades to identify students who may benefit from after school tutoring.

### Using Data to Ensure Every Student Succeeds

Many schools administer benchmark assessments for their students, but few are as rigorous and thorough in their interpretation of the results as PCA. At PCA data analysis is a dynamic process that results in immediate action—triggering interventions or re-teaching of specific standards.

“When I came to PCA [from a Stockton Unified District school],” says Heap, “the most difficult thing for me to adjust to was that here, we look at every student and make sure every student learns what they need to learn. The data we get from benchmarks and each week from our COIs allows us to do that and allows each student to be successful.”

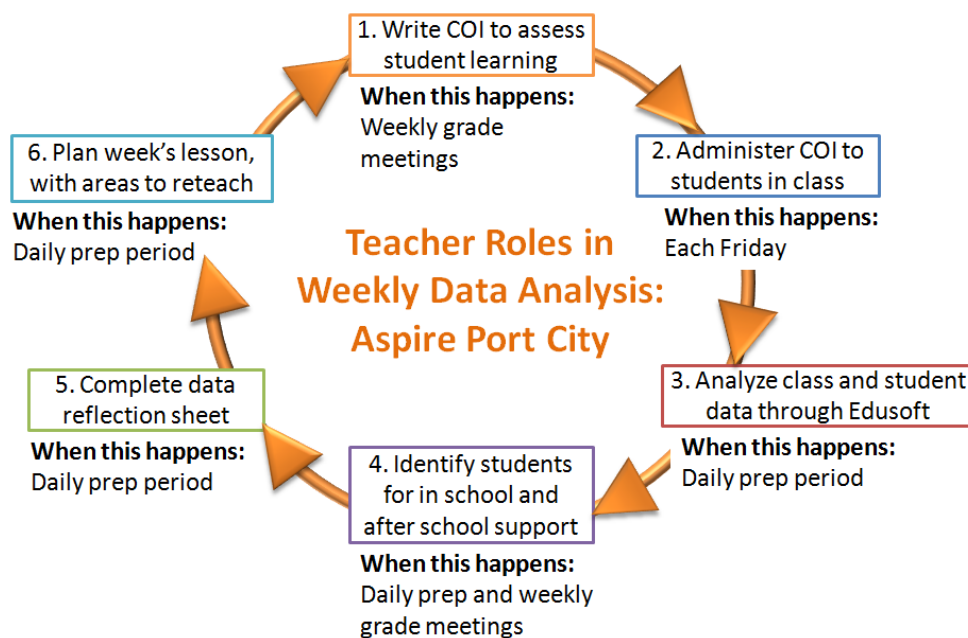
Once each week, grade level teachers hold an hour long meeting to create COIs and analyze data from the previous week’s COI and/or quarterly benchmark data. In preparation for these meetings, teachers complete a Cycle of Inquiry Post Test Data Reflection, which contains the following information for each standard covered on the COI:

- Number of students who scored 80% or above
- Individual student performance by band
- Strategies that worked for students who achieved mastery
- Chief challenges, including distracter items
- Next steps, including concepts to focus on, and students to target
- Progress monitoring

Through these meetings teachers identify students for supports both within and outside the school day. During the school day teachers create “small groups” within the classroom, a practice Aspire schools train and guide teachers on implementing in all their schools. Small group instruction can take many forms, including: learning centers, student led problem solving, work stations, and reading/writing workshops. Interventions are provided by the teacher or one of the school’s four intervention staff, who coordinate with teachers across all grades to identify times and students to support throughout the day. During daily prep meetings and weekly grade level meetings, teachers use the COI and benchmark data to identify which students should participate in small group instruction and on what topics.

For additional supports, struggling students are assigned to after school tutoring, based on their benchmark performance, past CST scores, and teacher observations. This after school tutoring period is held from 3:20 to 5:30 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday—Wednesday is an early release day during which students leave the school at 12:40 or stay until 3:20 p.m.

for science enrichment. The after school tutoring serves approximately 90 students, and is staffed by 11 outside tutors and the school’s intervention staff; the former are typically comprised of recent college graduates who are interested in education but have not received certification yet.



During after school tutoring, students are placed in classrooms of 18, where the time is structured much like a typical classroom lesson. After a brief ten minute snack, students receive whole group instruction for ten minutes and receive small group (three students) instruction for the remainder of the period—typically a guided reading or math workshop group. The after school time is intentionally structured to mirror lessons during the day to maintain the same academic and behavioral expectations.

## Keys to Success: Culture and Systems

At PCA, cultivating a culture that focuses on and values the power of data to drive instruction is equally important as the tools and protocols that facilitate data analysis. At PCA, that culture begins at the top. “Our leadership team has always been very open with our data,” says Shelby Scheideman, PCA’s principal. “It’s not just the good data that we share either. We want to show our staff that we all have areas we can improve on, but we need to look at the data to first identify those things.” All data conversations at PCA—during grade level meetings, prep periods, or during school-wide professional development—are focused on students. PCA encourages its students to become invested in their performance on COIs, benchmarks, and the CST as well. Twice a year, students lead parent teacher conferences, setting two measurable goals with teachers on reading, writing, math, and personal growth. These goals are revisited throughout the year, and student success is celebrated both in the classroom and throughout the school. Despite its systems and culture, PCA continuously looks to strengthen both, including a data sharing initiative among Aspire schools that will allow them to identify and learn from strong instructional practices outside of PCA as well as share some of their own.

