District-Level Data Availability and Usefulness for District Administrators
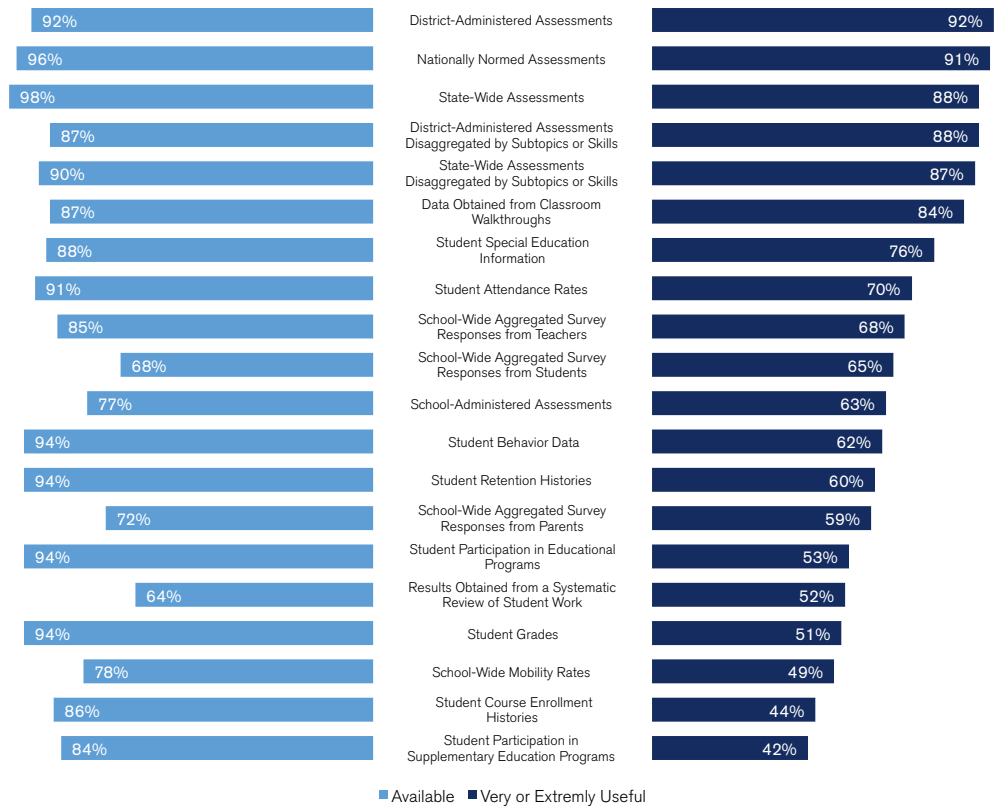
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In 2013, 174 district administrators in one Midwestern state were asked to complete a survey about district-level data availability and the available data's usefulness in their decision-making. District superintendents were asked to complete the online survey or redirect the survey to either an assistant superintendent or the director most knowledgeable about data. Ninety-five districts participated.

The figure illustrates several key findings:

- **A majority of district administrators have access to a variety of data elements.** Not surprisingly, almost all (98%) district administrators indicated that state-wide assessment data are available to them. In comparison, nearly two-thirds (64%) of administrators indicated that they had access to data that represented a systematic review of student work.

- **Even though data elements are available, they are not necessarily perceived as useful.** Student grades are data that are widely available (94%), whereas only 51% of those said the data were useful. This was also true for student course enrollment histories (86% available; 44% useful), followed closely

by student participation in supplementary educational programs (84% available; 42% useful).

- **District-level assessments are both widely available and widely perceived as very useful.** District-administered assessments (92% available; 92%

useful) and these same assessments disaggregated by subtopic and skills (87% available; 88% useful) were reported by district administrators as available. Of those administrators who reported these assessments' availability, a similar percentage reported them to be useful. ■

Availability and Usefulness, by Data Element

Data Element	Available	Very or Extremely Useful
District-Administered Assessments	92%	92%
Nationally Normed Assessments	96%	91%
State-Wide Assessments	98%	88%
District-Administered Assessments Disaggregated by Subtopics or Skills	87%	88%
State-Wide Assessments Disaggregated by Subtopics or Skills	90%	87%
Data Obtained from Classroom Walkthroughs	87%	84%
Student Special Education Information	88%	76%
Student Attendance Rates	91%	70%
School-Wide Aggregated Survey Responses from Teachers	85%	68%
School-Wide Aggregated Survey Responses from Students	68%	65%
School-Administered Assessments	77%	63%
Student Behavior Data	94%	62%
Student Retention Histories	94%	60%
School-Wide Aggregated Survey Responses from Parents	72%	59%
Student Participation in Educational Programs	94%	53%
Results Obtained from a Systematic Review of Student Work	64%	52%
Student Grades	94%	51%
School-Wide Mobility Rates	78%	49%
Student Course Enrollment Histories	86%	44%
Student Participation in Supplementary Education Programs	84%	42%

■ Available ■ Very or Extremely Useful

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