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From Data to Dialogue: Revitalizing Communication and Engagement with School Communities

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Our Mission

WestEd, a nonpartisan research, development, and service agency, works to promote excellence, improve learning, and increase opportunity for children, youth, and adults.
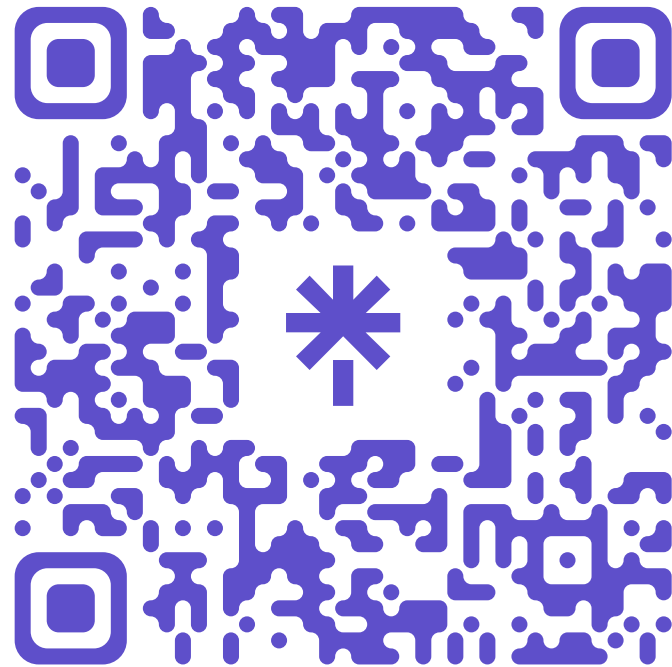
Agenda

- Key characteristics of local assessment systems
- Communication and engagement in your local context
- Making data comprehensible and accessible
- Tools for helping partners work with data
- Data visualization makeover
- Telling a story with data

https://linktr.ee/WestEdAssessment4Learning

Assessment System Components

Classroom
- Formative Assessment Process
- Formal Classroom Assessments

School and District
- Interim/Benchmark Assessments
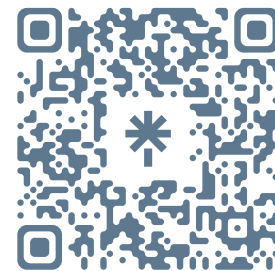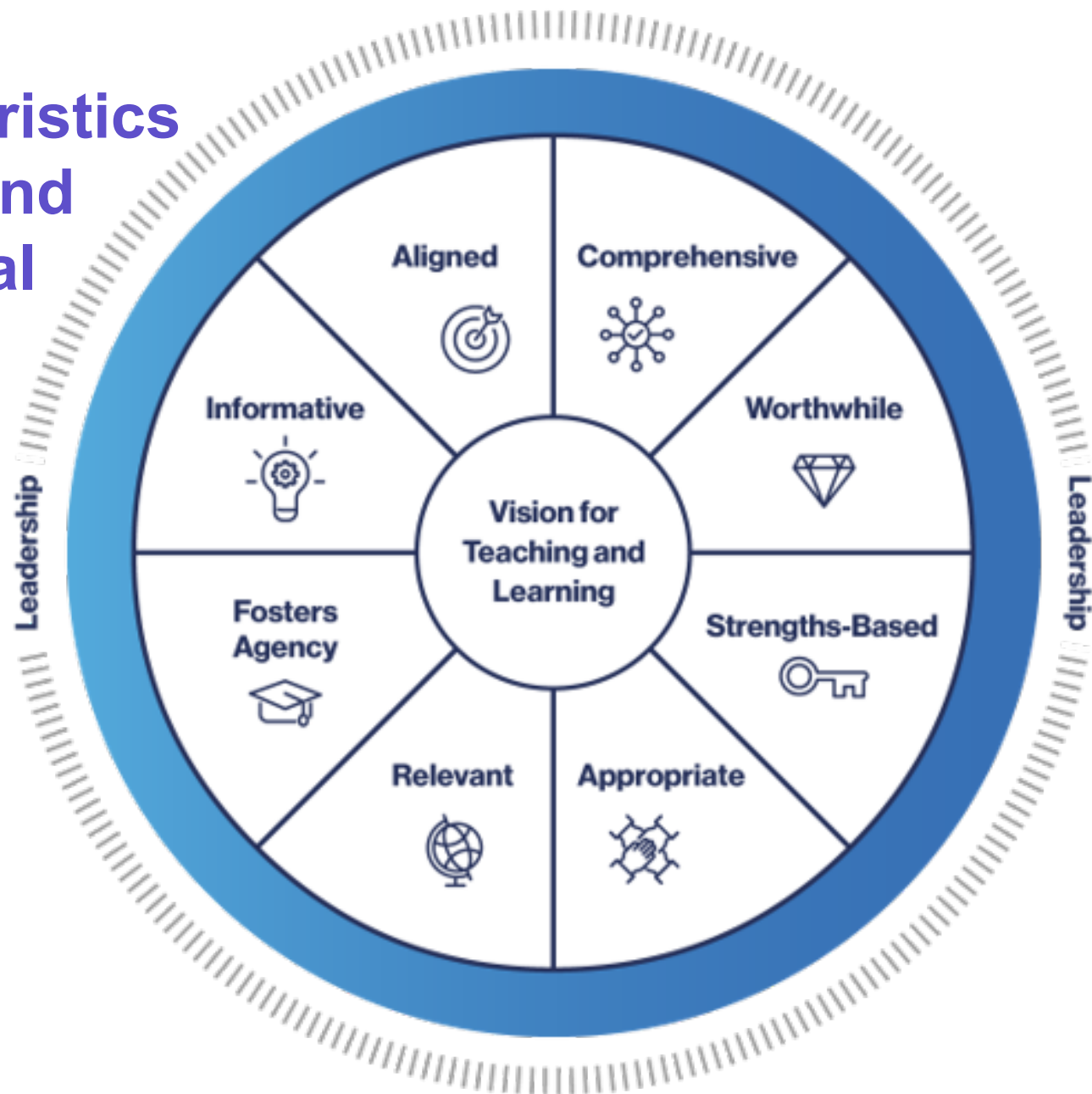- Screening and Intervention Assessments

State
- Standardized Summative Assessment

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Coherent and Effective Local Assessment Systems

- Are intentionally designed to improve learning outcomes for all students

- Are aligned with a shared vision for teaching and learning

- Use multiple measures to present a complete picture of learning

- Contain accessible assessment tools and strategies for all learners

- Focus on student strengths, valuing languages, cultures, and experiences

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Key Characteristics of Coherent and Effective Local Assessment Systems

Arnold, J., & Webb, J. (2024). Key characteristics of a coherent and effective local assessment system. Center for Standards, Assessment, & Accountability at WestEd.

Key Characteristic: Informative

- Assessment is used efficiently to make decisions regarding teaching, learning, and system improvement.

- Assessment tools and practices are of high quality and provide meaningful information that informs decision-making.

- Redundant, misaligned, and underutilized tools are removed.

- *All education partners (teachers, leaders, students, families, and caregivers) have access to timely, usable information about student learning.*

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Communication and Engagement

- **Communication** is the sharing and exchanging of information regularly between students, educators, and caregivers.

- **Engagement** is active participation and a power and opportunity balance between students, educators, and caregivers.

McCauley, C., Webb, J., Abdelrahim, S., & Mahmoud-Tabana, S. (2023). A Community Engaged Framing: Building Successful Community Engagement for Schools and Families of Bilingual Students through Inquiry. *School Community Journal*, *33*(1), 11-36.

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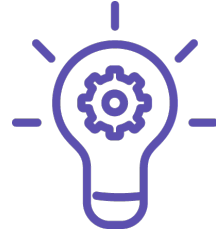
Understand Your Local Context

- **Tailor data communication and engagement to partner needs.**
  - What topics are most important to your community?
  - What are your partners interested in learning?
  - What are their communication and engagement preferences?
  - What challenges or barriers exist?

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Make Data Comprehensible

- **Translation and interpretation services**
  - Data are translated into languages represented in your community
  - Data engagements include interpretation services
    - Be prepared to respond to requests for language assistance
    - Encourage translanguaging among participants
    - Make use of real-time, two-way communication tools such as Microsoft Translate

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Make Data Accessible

- **(a)ccessibility**
  - Data are communicated clearly to multiple audiences
  - Data are presented in ways that promote understanding
- **(A)ccessibility**
  - Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
  - Data are usable for individuals with disabilities

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Data Discussion Protocols

Benefits

- Promote partner communication and engagement

- Guide group facilitation and collaboration

- Build collective meaning

- Support informed decision-making

Best Practice

- Choose protocols that match data analysis purpose

- Consider partner needs to support effective participation

- Plan all aspects of facilitation

- Gather partner feedback

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Example Protocols

- **1-2-3 Reflect**
  - Encourages a comprehensive review of data, prompting groups to question assumptions and beliefs while deepening understanding
- **Affinity Mapping**
  - Effective protocol for engaging participants and ensuring that all have opportunities to be heard
- **Conver-stations**
  - Allows participants to encounter a variety of viewpoints, while ensuring that all participants' voices are emphasized and discussions continue to progress
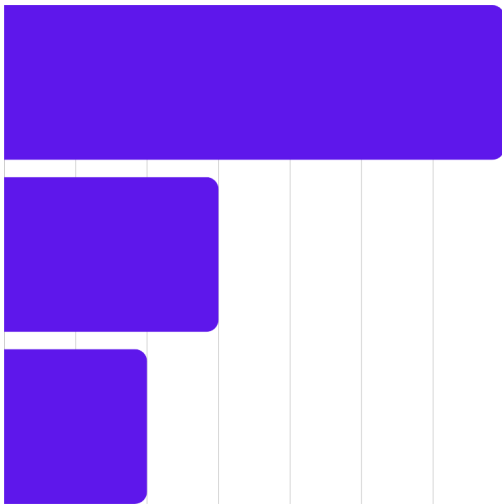
Data Visualization Checklist

- **Make your data visualizations scannable, understandable, and accessible.**

    - Is the data visualization appropriate for the data and purpose?

    - Are the data organized thoughtfully and intentionally?

    - Does your visualization use contrasting colors?
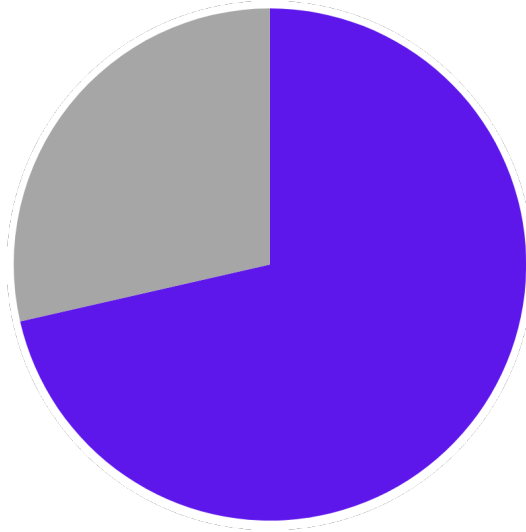
    - Do images include clear labels?

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Select Effective Data Visualizations

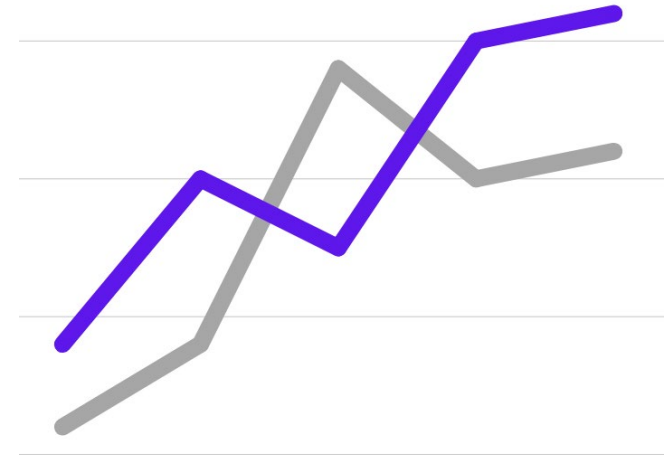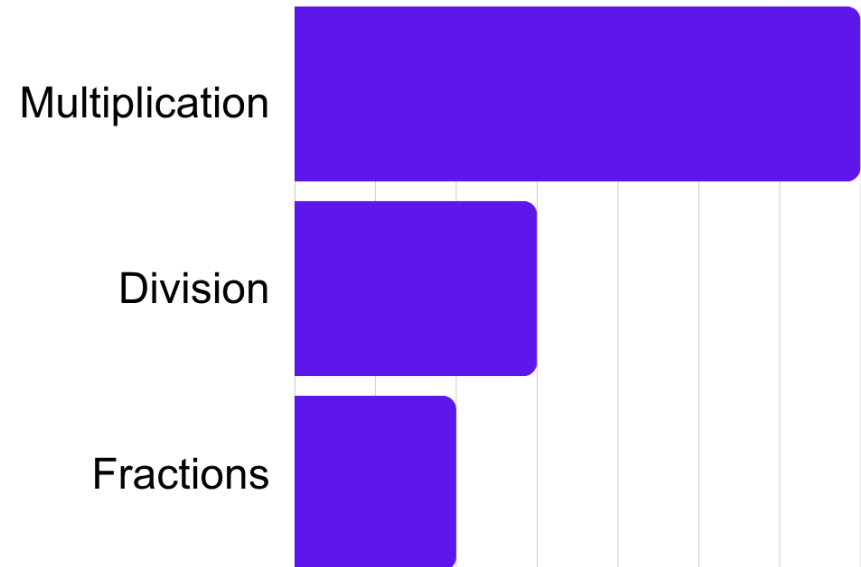- Choose visualizations based on type of data, purpose, and audience.

Bar chart

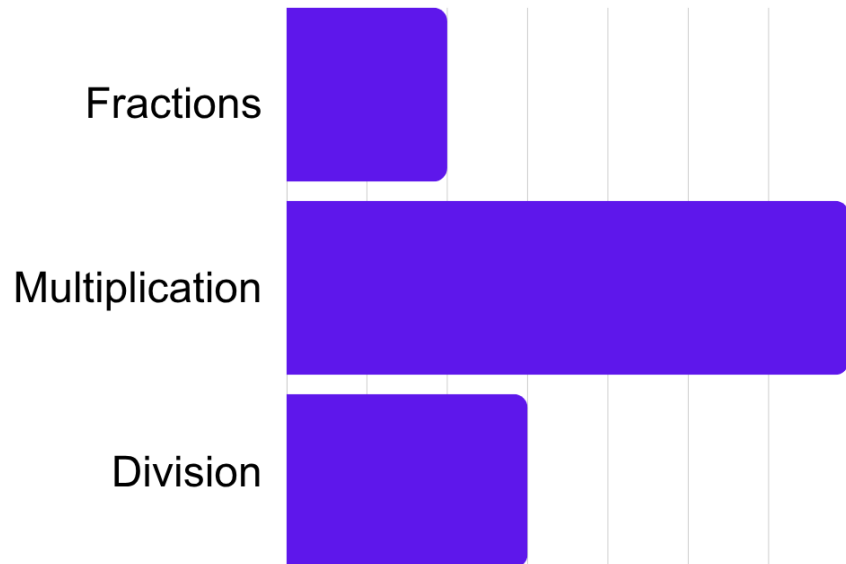Pie chart

Line chart

Data Visualization Makeover

- Scenario: School Site Council Discussion
  - Members including caregivers plan to review student math scores
  - Administrator prepares the data and facilitates the discussion
- Selection: Bar Chart
  - Conveys differences in the data set to be discussed
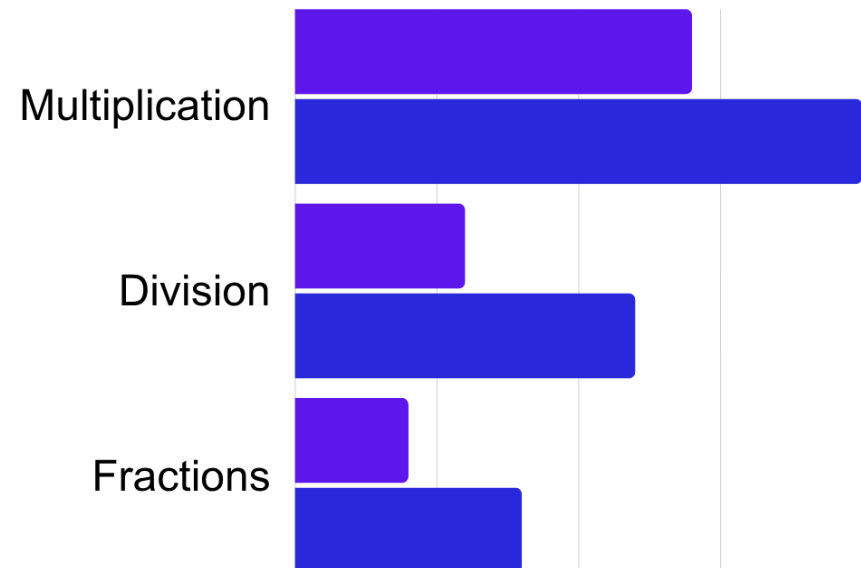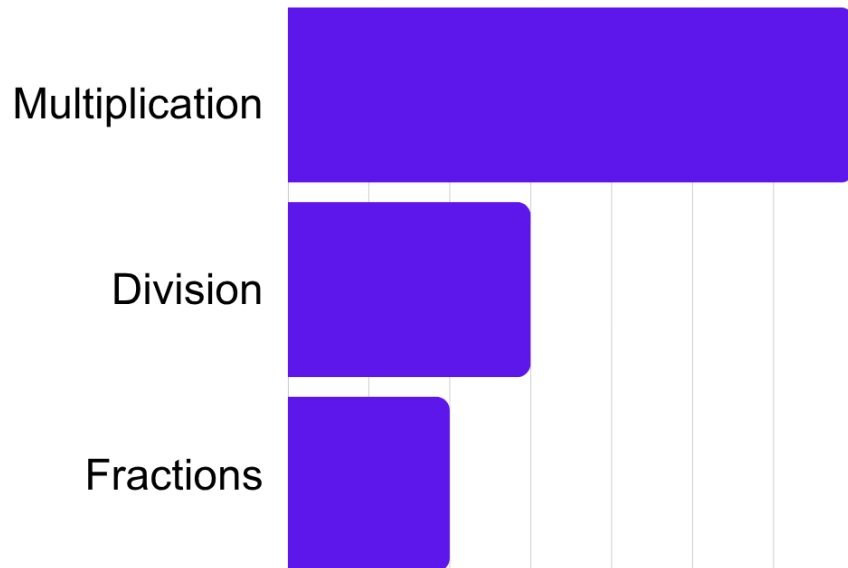 - Members have experience interpreting this type of data visualization

Step 1: Organize the Data

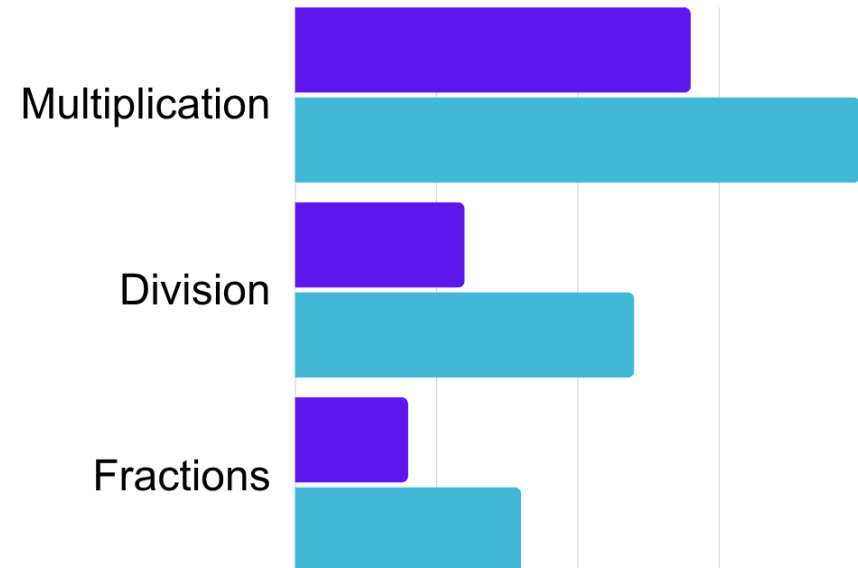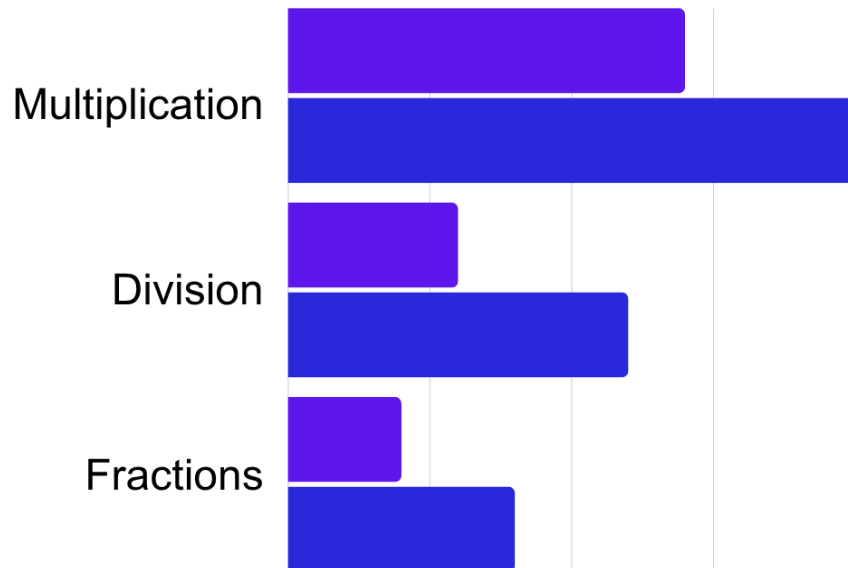- Intentionally organize the data to focus audience attention.

Step 2: Verify the Data

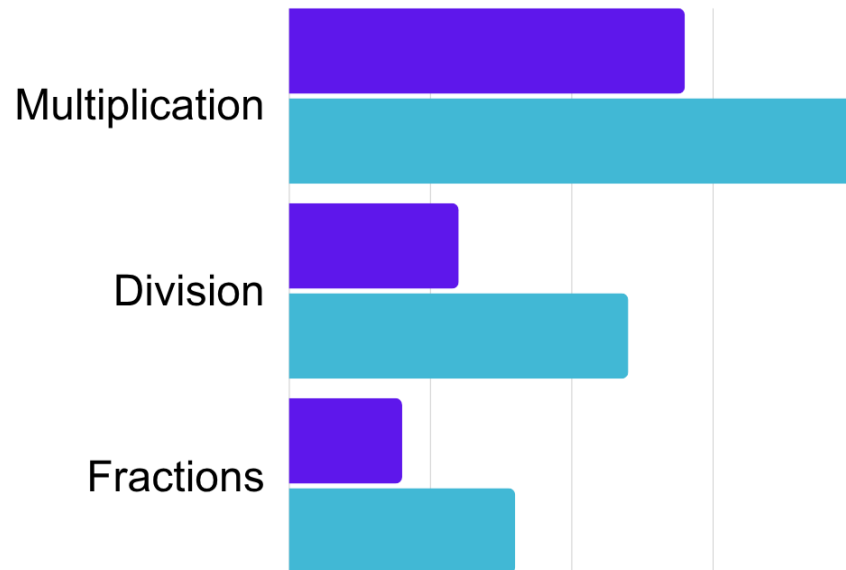- Determine all the data needed for your purpose and revise.

Step 3: Highlight the Data

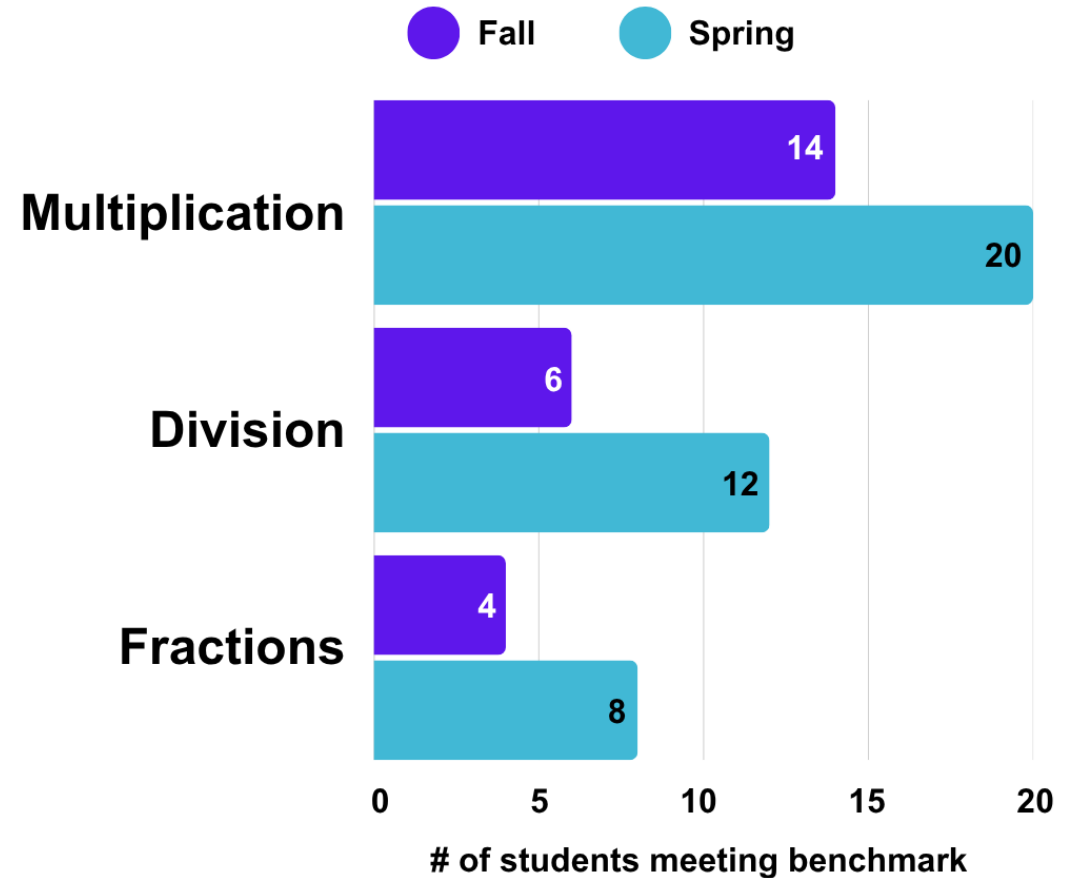- Use color to help the audience understand the data.

Step 4: Label the Data

- Add text for making meaning.

Third Grade Math Scores

Fall · Spring

	Fall	Spring
Multiplication	14	20
Division	6	12
Fractions	4	8

# of students meeting benchmark

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Tell a Story with Data

- Scenario: School board presentation

  - A district improvement goal is establishing and maintaining a supportive learning environment.

  - School climate survey results indicate some facilities at the high school received more positive ratings than others.

  - A committee of partners will make a forma recommendation to the board about how to spend facilities funds.

  - Committee members determined they need more information, so they survey high school students to gather their input.
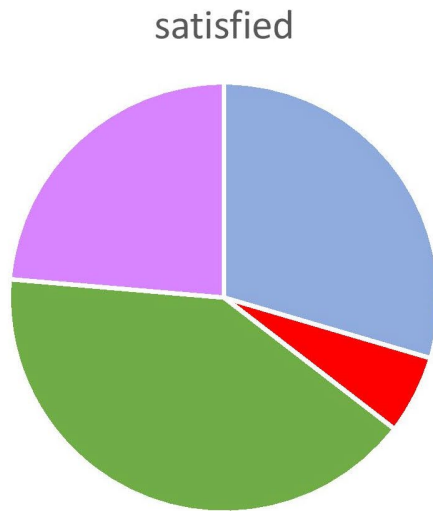
Students Rate Their Level of Satisfaction with Facilities

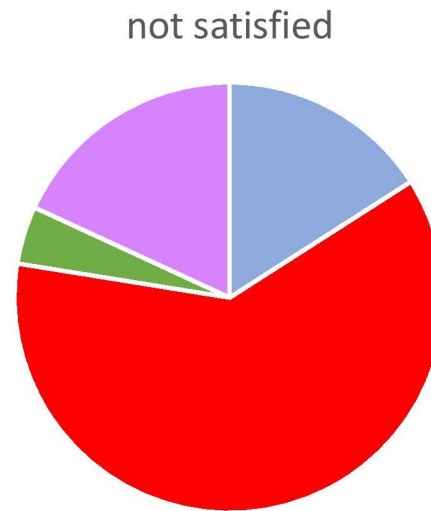Are there school facilities that students like better than others?

	satisfied	not satisfied	no opinion
cafeteria	65	22	13
quad	13	85	3
library	90	6	4
gym	52	25	23

Pie Charts Depict Breakdown of Student Ratings

Are there school facilities that students find more appealing than others?

satisfied
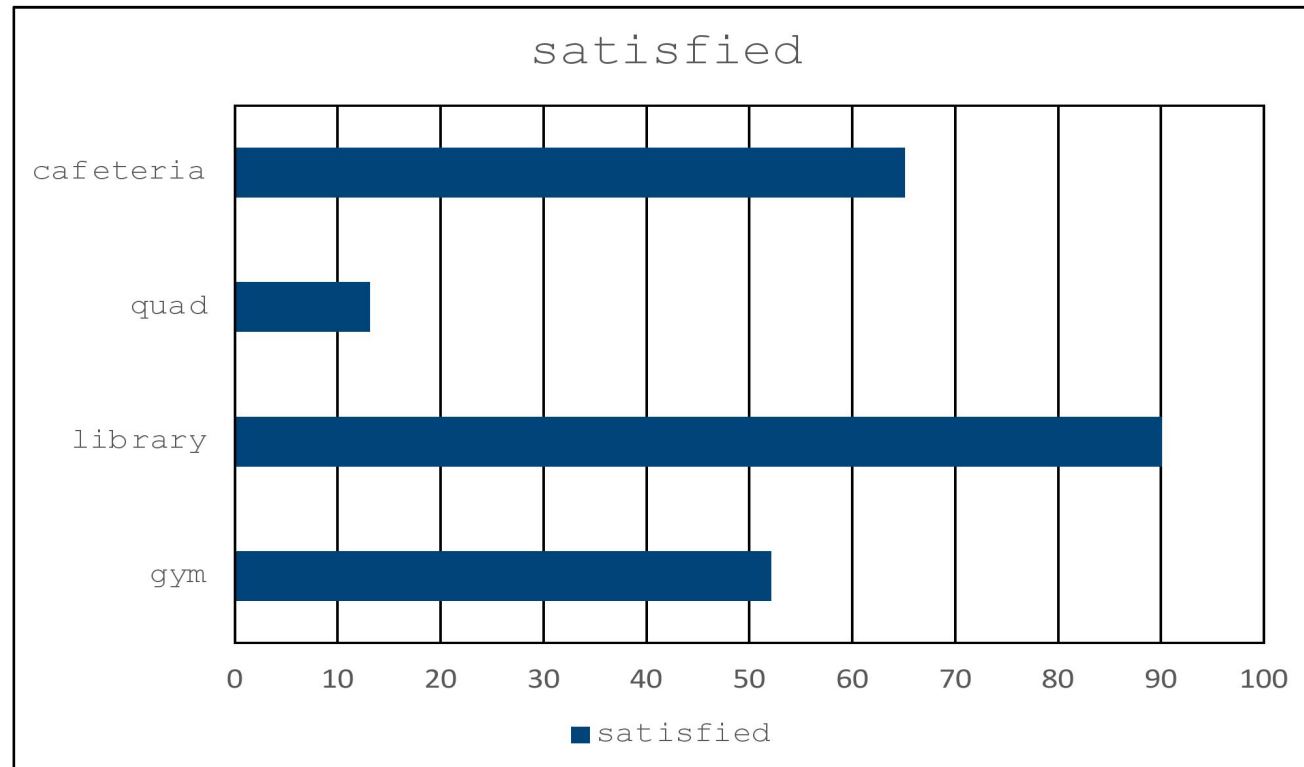
not satisfied

no opinion

cafeteria   quad
library   gym

cafeteria   quad
library   gym

cafeteria   quad
library   gym

Bar Chart Features Simplified Data

Are there school facilities that students find more appealing than others?

satisfied

Improvements Convey Information Clearly and Succinctly

Student Satisfaction with High School Common Areas

	satisfied	no opinion	not satisfied
library	90%	4%	6%
cafeteria	65%	13%	22%
gym	52%	23%	25%
quad	13%	3%	85%

*213 of 1,050 students responded to the survey

Clear Data Lead to Important "Why" Questions

The school district should use facilities funds to *invest in upgrades to the high school quad*

Student Satisfaction with High School Common Areas

	satisfied	no opinion	not satisfied
library	90%	4%	6%
cafeteria	65%	13%	22%
gym	52%	23%	25%
quad	13%	3%	85%

■ satisfied ◇ no opinion ■ not satisfied

*213 of 1,050 students responded to the survey

Students are Satisfied with the Library

- Fun place to meet friends
- Climate controlled
- Modular seating
- Attractive environment
- Positive interactions with staff

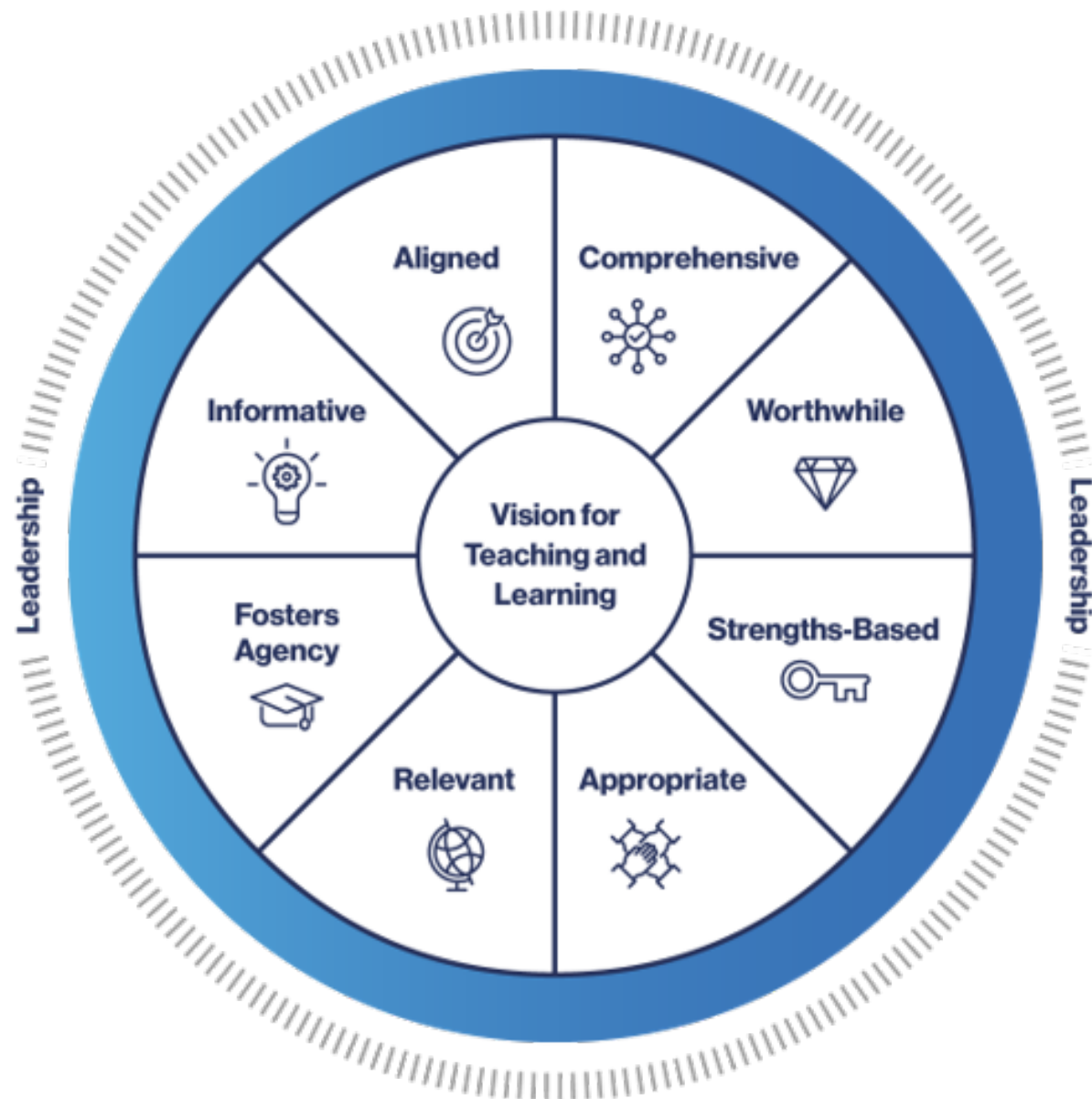**Students are Not Satisfied with the Quad**

- Concrete is uncomfortable
- Not enough seating
- Weather is a deterrent
- Unsafe student behavior

*18 students participated in focus groups

Facilities reports indicate that for the past 10 years **the library has had $10,000 in facilities upgrades,** while during the same time period **the quad has had no facilities upgrades.**

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Improving interactions with data can help us more effectively communicate and engage with partners toward a shared vision of teaching and learning.

Thank you!

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