

Case Study: Response to Data

Building Distributed Leadership Through Survey Data and Staff-Driven Improvement



The Challenge

Use survey data to drive systematized structural changes that would continue the great work Grand Meadow is doing while also improving scores in areas of identified need.

The Team Effort

Grand Meadow is a rural public school with a population of approximately 450 students committed to strong staff culture and empowerment through distributed leadership.

School Perceptions is a Wisconsin-based, independent education research firm that works with school districts, regional service agencies, as well as state and national organizations.

Agile Ideas Leadership supports schools and education systems to design and implement holistic school improvement plans that address leadership, staff, and systems needs.

The Approach

- 1 Collected **staff survey data** and shared findings with the school board and staff.
- 2 Conducted a **deep data review**, incl. a 360 Leadership Review of administrators and teacher leaders.
- 3 Build **consensus-driven priorities** through workshops with leaders and school staff to build shared commitment.
- 4 **Actionable goal setting** with processes and timelines for implementation.
- 5 **Distributed Leadership Development** - Build teacher leaders to lead transformation work throughout the staff.

Results

By November 2025, the initiative produced measurable cultural shifts.

85%

of staff expressed confidence that positive changes were happening.

92%

of staff reported feeling able to contribute meaningfully to improvements.

Staff identified experienced teachers (**97%**) and supportive leadership (**72%**) as the district's greatest assets.

Objectives



Student Discipline: Align staff capacity to address inconsistent practices and unclear expectations undermining accountability and trust.



Staff Development: Increase access to professional learning opportunities for all staff; address gaps for paraprofessionals and support staff.



Building Bridges: Address staff desires for stronger communication and connection on shared vision and capacity for change.

Implementation Timeline

- **Spring 2025:** Gather Survey Data and Present to board and staff.
- **Summer 2025:** Needs assessment and leadership 360 review.
- **August 2025:** All-staff consensus workshops and action planning.
- **Fall 2025:** GM Compass launched; teacher leaders facilitated peer conversations.
- **November 2025:** Mid-year implementation checks and progress refinement.
- **Spring 2026:** Sustainability planning and preparation for follow-up survey.

● School Perception

● Agile Ideas Leadership

Key Lessons

Grand Meadow's experience offers transferable insights for other districts:

- Data must lead to dialogue, not just reports.
- Distributed leadership builds sustainability, ownership, and resilience.
- Consensus processes create buy-in, trust, and validate voices.
- Visible leadership strengthens relationships.
- Actionable, staff-owned goals anchor progress.
- Culture change must precede structural change.
- Intentional responses to data build trust in administration and systems.

Conclusion

Grand Meadow transformed survey data into a catalyst for cultural change by engaging staff in consensus-driven workshops, empowering teacher leaders, and supporting administrator responsiveness. The district is now equipped with the structures, skills, and shared vision needed to sustain growth. Grand Meadow's administrators demonstrated remarkable openness and leadership in embracing this change, setting a powerful example for the entire staff.

Extra designs

Implementation Timeline

- SP** **Spring 2025:** Gather Survey Data and Present to board and staff.
- AIL** **Summer 2025:** Needs assessment and leadership 360 review.
- SP** **AIL** **August 2025:** All-staff consensus workshops and action planning.
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Case Study: Moving from Data to Action

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The Approach

- Spring 2025: Collected staff survey data and shared findings with the school board and staff.
- Summer 2025: Conducted a deep data review, including a 360 Leadership Review of administrators and teacher leaders.

Consensus-Driven Priorities

- All staff engaged in facilitated workshops to identify and prioritize key improvement areas.
- Priorities were framed as “How might we...?” questions to generate actionable solutions with clear timelines.

Distributed Leadership Development

- Teacher leaders were upskilled in collaborative communication and middle-leadership systems.
- Administrators received coaching to increase visibility, strengthen trust, and reinforce system supports.

Actionable Goal-Setting

- Staff used the WORTHY goal framework to commit to attainable goals aligned with district priorities.
- The “GM Compass” was co-developed to articulate shared values and guide daily interactions across the school.

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Objectives



Student Discipline: Align staff capacity to address inconsistent practices and unclear expectations undermining accountability and trust.



Staff Development: Increase access to professional learning opportunities for all staff; address gaps for paraprofessionals and support staff.



Building Bridges: Address staff desires for stronger communication, recognition, and visible leadership.

Implementation Timeline



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