



# Using Program Evaluation to Introduce Performance Measurement: Building System Capacity

**Managing Information for Student Achievement  
Barrie Region Professional Network Centre Fall Symposium**

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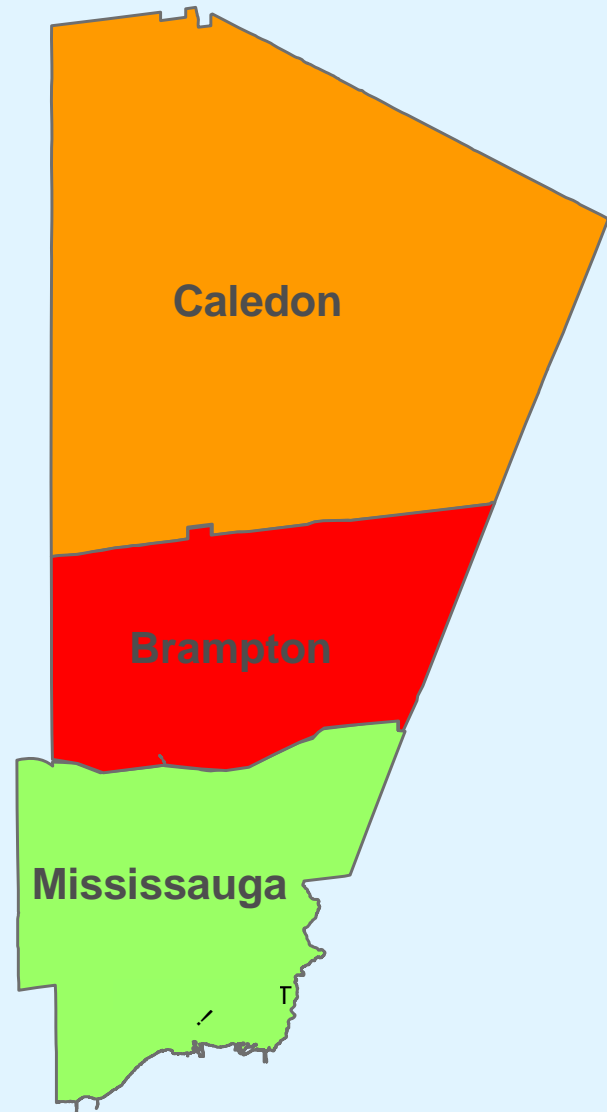
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# **Presentation Overview**

- **The Peel DSB Context**
- **Program Evaluation & Accountability Framework**
- **Building System Capacity**
- **Successes and Challenges**

# The Peel DSB Context

- 776 square km
- 3 municipalities
- 155 000 students
- 223 schools
- Unparalleled growth
- \$1.06 Billion (05-06)



# Programs and Program Evaluation

- A program can be thought of as a group of related activities that is intended to achieve one or several objectives. Programs are means-ends relationships that are designed and implemented purposively.

**(McDavid & Hawthorn, 2006)**

- A program evaluation in the typical sense involves the systematic collection and analysis of information about program activities, characteristics, and outcomes, to improve program effectiveness and/or inform decisions about future programming.

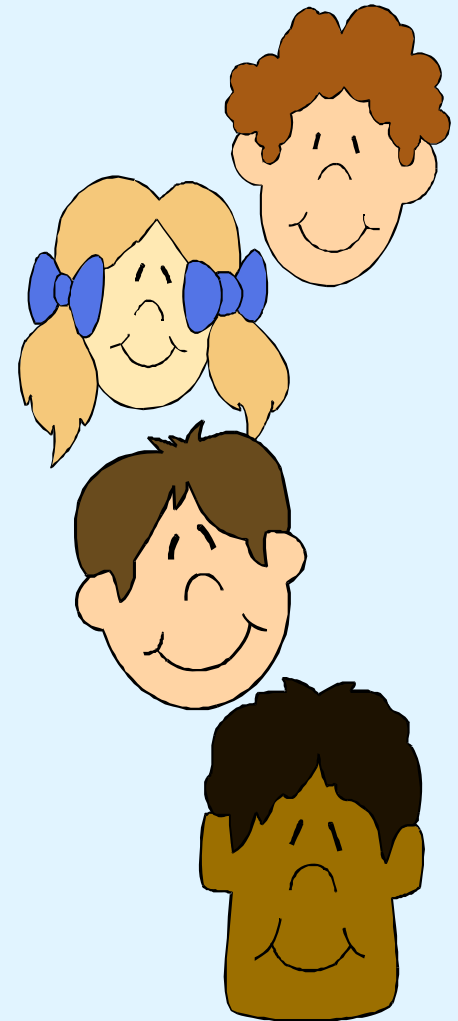
**(Patton, 1997)**

# The Special Education Accountability Framework

- A three-tiered model (Ali & Favaro, 2004; in press) built on the premise that successful program development cannot occur without program evaluation (Sanders, 2000).
- Use of Program Evaluation to introduce Performance Measurement - not uncommon in the business world (McDavid & Hawthorn, 2006), but here, new ground was being broken within our field and organization.

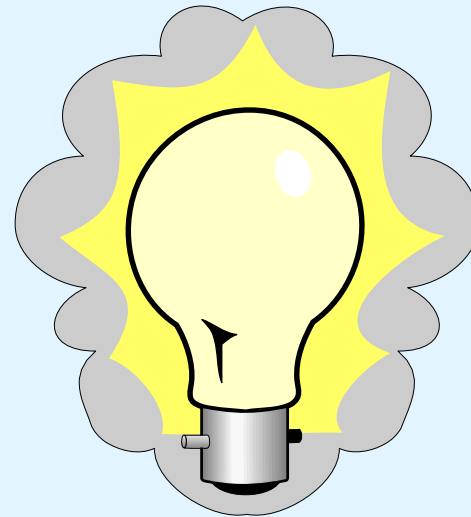
# The Communication Program Evaluation

- First program evaluation in the Accountability Framework
- Contained classes for students with LD - Short-term intensive programming re literacy
- **Performance Measure** – A standardized test of reading achievement (Ali, 2006)
- Careful positioning of the **performance measure** to obtain "buy-in" (McDavid & Hawthorn, 2006)



# The Communication Program Evaluation

Pause for thought: **What system challenges would you expect from the introduction of this performance measure as part of a program evaluation?**



# **Building System Capacity**

**Challenges are met through the use of key enablers:**

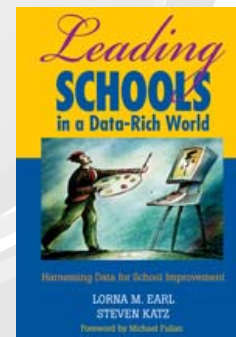
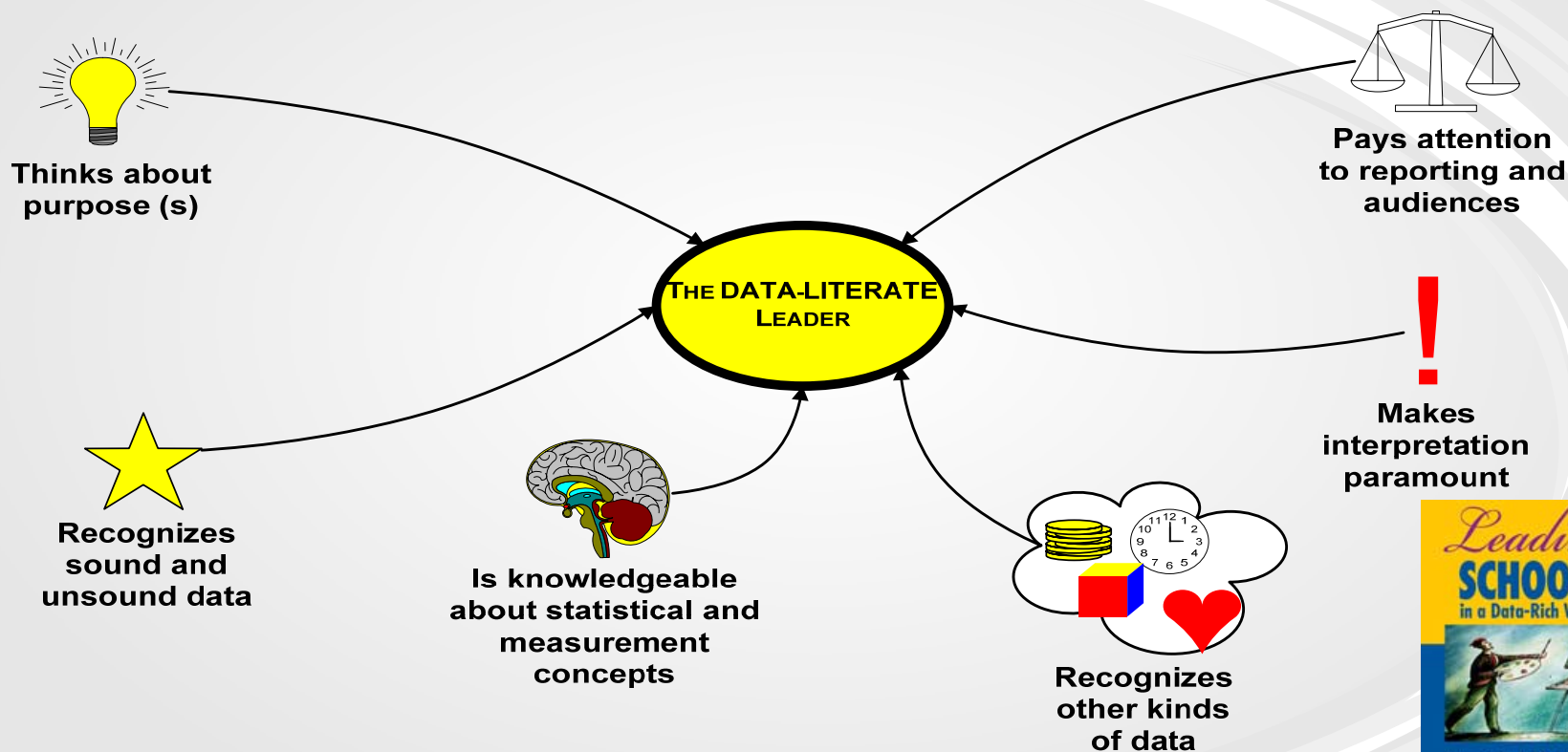
- **Supporting the data-literate leader**
- **Organizational structure/expertise**
- **Catering to a diversity of programs**
- **Use of cutting-edge technology/methodology**

# Building System Capacity

The Data-Literate Leader - (Earl & Katz, 2006)\*



“IF SCHOOL LEADERS ARE GOING TO BE ACTIVE IN INTERPRETING AND USING DATA, AS WELL AS IN CHALLENGING AND DISPUTING INTERPRETATIONS OR USES THAT THEY BELIEVE ARE CONTESTABLE, THEY MUST BECOME ‘DATA-LITERATE’” (P. 18).



\*Leading Schools in a Data-Rich World: Harnessing Data for School Improvement, Corwin Press

# Building System Capacity

## Organizational Structure/Expertise

### Program Evaluation in the PDSB



- 25 years of program evaluation
- Excellence in leadership
  - (Dr. Ben Levin, Dr. Kris Kirkwood, Dr. Paul Favaro)
- Quality work through different Directors of Education, different political agendas, different system priorities
- Work in-house as well as by highly qualified contractors
- Publications
- AERA recognition

# **Building System Capacity**

## **Organizational Structure/Expertise**

- ***Chief of Assessment & Accountability***
- ***Officer (Early Years)***
- ***Officer (System Reporting & Success Planning)***
- ***Officer (Alternative Programs)***
- ***Officer (Special Education)***
- ***Research Analyst***
- ***Testing/ Assessment Technician***
- ***Understanding the Early Years Coordinator***
- ***Administrative Assistant***
- ***Co-op student***



***Assessment and Accountability  
Curriculum, Instruction and Special  
Education Support Services***

# Building System Capacity

## Diversity of Programs

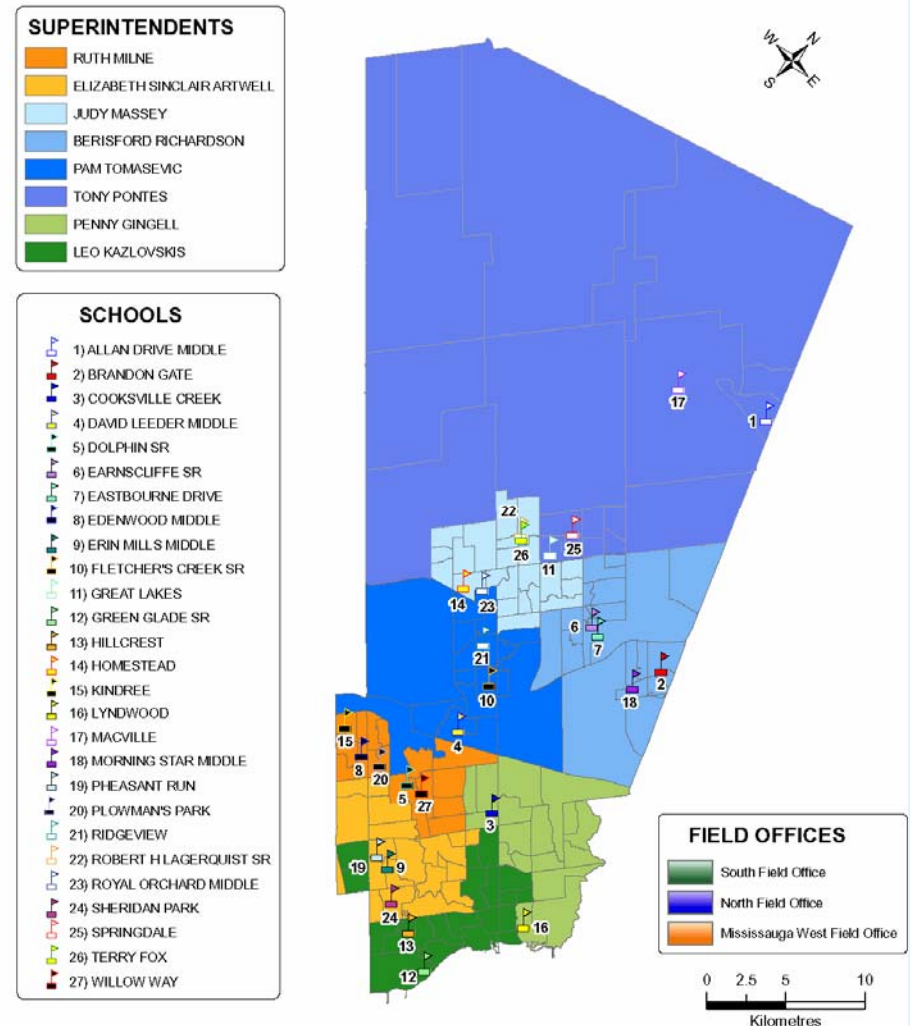
- *A Review of the Early Identification Program (1982) – Research Unit*
- *Co-op Education Program Review (1991) – Research and Assessment*
- *Sexual Abuse Prevention Program Evaluation (1996) – Assessment and Evaluation*
- *Youth News Network Evaluation (2000) – Research and Evaluation*
- *Elementary Communication Program Evaluation (2006) – Assessment and Accountability*

# Building System Capacity

## Use of Technology /Methodology

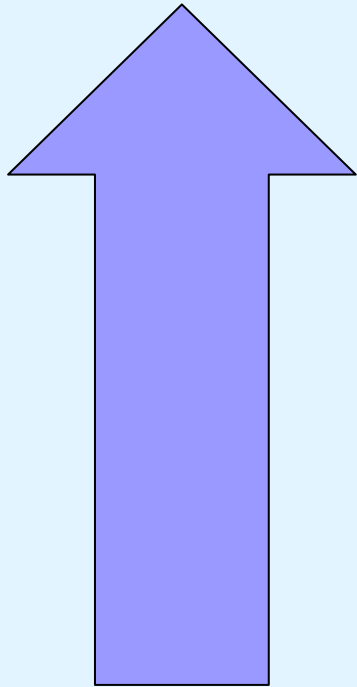
- On-line surveys
- Scan-able forms
- GIS mapping
- Scoring software
- Web-based GI data delivery
- HLM and Value-added

Figure 2 - Map of Peel Region with Program Schools



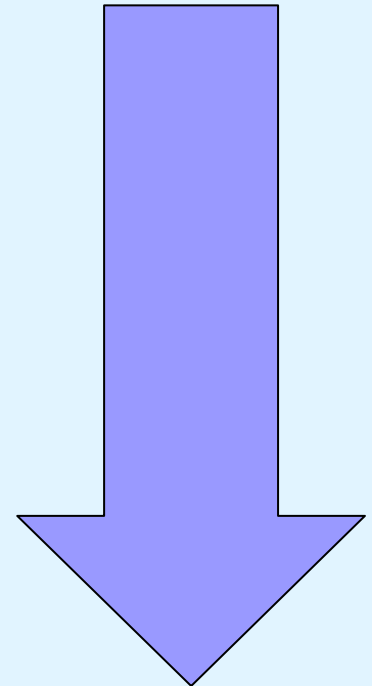
# Building System Capacity

Used enablers to increase:



## **Information Flow**

- ***System Needs***
- ***Senior Leadership***
- ***Program Managers***
- ***Program Support Staff***
- ***Program Operators***



# Building System Capacity

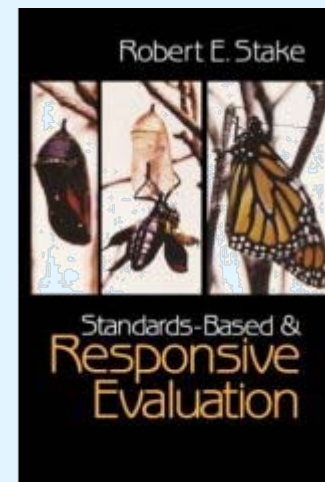
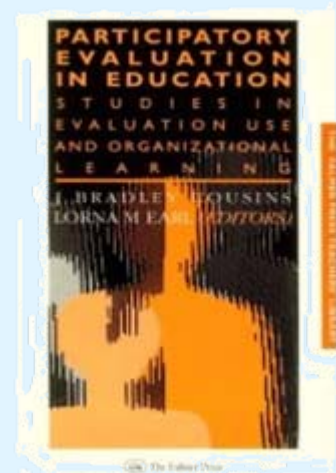
Used enablers to obtain:

"Buy-In" – partly through:

- *Participatory Evaluation*  
(Cousins & Earl, 1992, 1995)

and

- *Responsive Evaluation*  
(Stake, 2004)



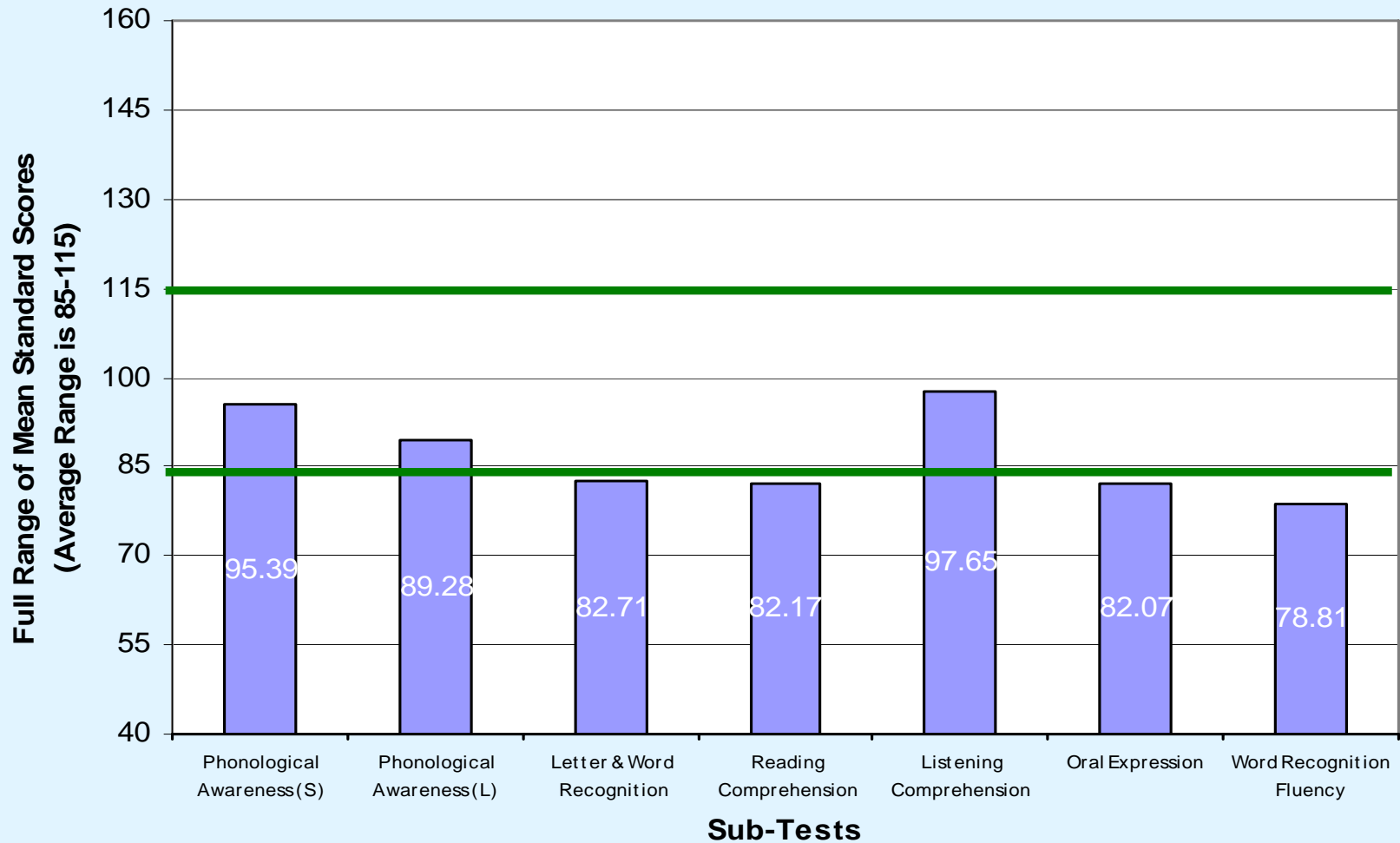
# Building System Capacity

Used enablers to :

- Reduce anxiety re Accountability - A course for program improvement, not surveillance (Earl, 1999)
- Build relationships with key individuals and stakeholder groups
- Routinize (as much as possible) the **PM system** – adding value

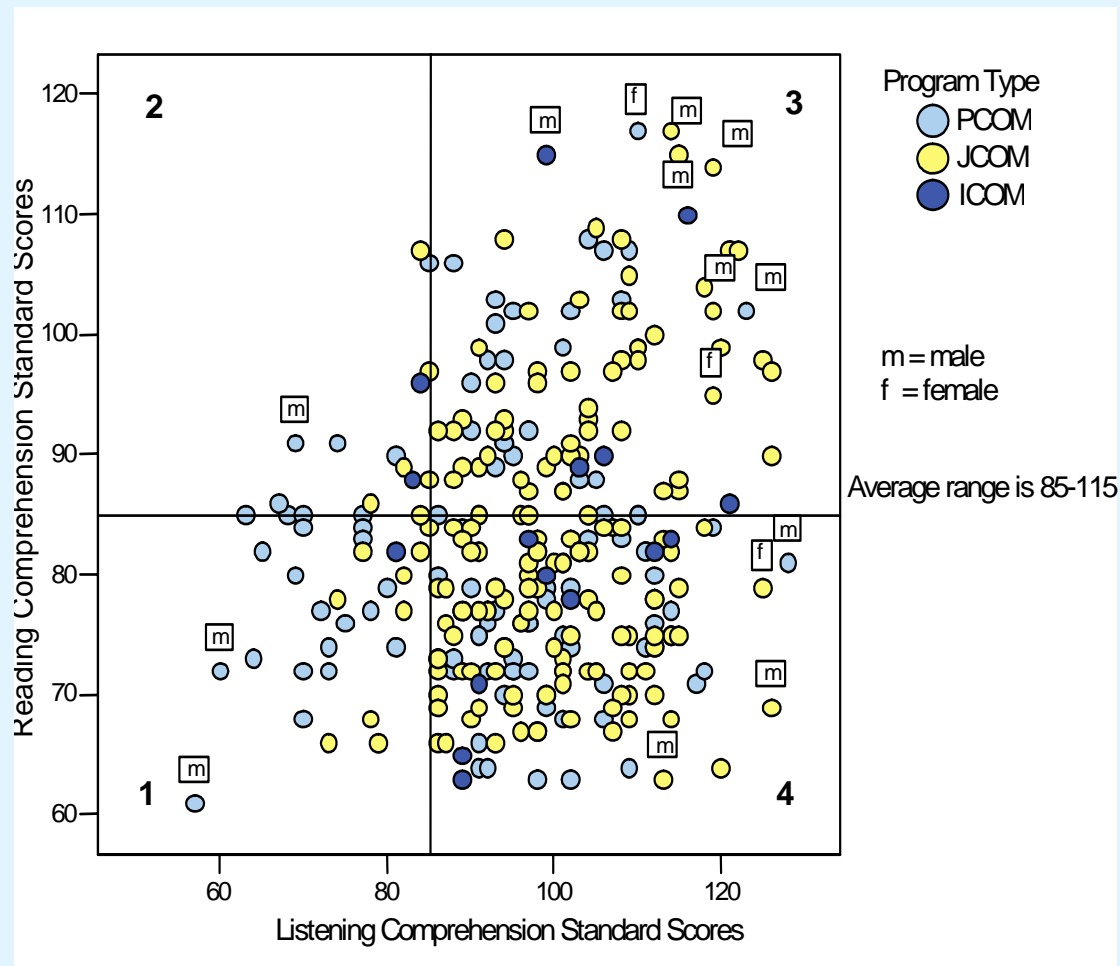
# Building System Capacity

## Performance Measurement Data:



# Building System Capacity

## Performance Measurement Data:



# Successes and Challenges

## Successes

- Acceptance of the Performance Measurement as an on-going Accountability data piece
- Data use at the classroom, school and system levels to inform programming decisions
- Willingness to be part of the process

# Successes and Challenges

## Challenges

- Complex needs of a large, vibrant, dynamic system
- Resistance to change
- The spectre of accountability
- With the good comes the bad and with the bad comes the good

# Final Thoughts

- **Successful program evaluation in the PDSB is established through hard work, utilizing enablers to build the system's capacity for evaluation.**



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