



# From Messy to Meaningful—Turning Data into Boardroom Insights with Frontline Education and West Des Moines Schools

**Ankeny, IA**—Last week, attendees at the IASB Summit on Student Success had the opportunity to hear how Frontline Education helped West Des Moines Community Schools power their vision and goals with data driven decision-making.

The partnership began with the West Des Moines school board coming together to map out their desired daily experiences for students, families, and staff. For students, the board wanted to create a school environment where ALL students feel welcomed and supported, allowing them to build caring relationships with teachers, staff, and their peers. They wanted their students to have access to engaging, interactive learning experiences, while feeling valued and heard in the classroom. The board wanted families to feel a sense of security, knowing that their child is physically and emotionally safe, while being offered a wide range of academic and extracurricular activities. Lastly, their goal was for staff to have everything they need to serve students effectively, while working in a safe, clean, and purposeful environment.

The board also considered their core values as a school district, such as equitable access to education that celebrates and culturally affirms the diversity in their community, evidence-based and personalized instruction, and a system to continuously measure, assess, and improve the quality of their programs and services. With their goals and values determined, the board now needed concrete data to fully understand what changes were needed to drive student achievement.

Through a back-and-forth process, West Des Moines Schools' Director of Data Management Mike Sherman was able to work with Frontline Education to narrow in on a set of data that best fit the needs of the district. "Our board came to us with a want, and with Frontline we were able to put together a plan with the data needed to fulfill that want," said Sherman.

School boards are faced with the challenging task of organizing and making sense of a wide variety, or 'mess' of data from several sources. For a district like West Des Moines, they had the vision, they just needed the data to make the best possible decisions for their staff, students, and their families. Frontline Education addresses this problem directly by compiling all the relevant data from multiple platforms and storing it all in one place for analysis and comparison. Jaime Jordan, a Student Analytics Advisor with Frontline said, "The program we offer can address having all of your data available in multiple platforms such as student discipline, behavior, and attendance all in one spot so you can really compare and get a view of the whole student."

In addition to organizing and displaying your district's data, Frontline Education helps to align district leaders from top to bottom. Jamie Jannotta, also a Student Analytics Advisor with Frontline Education

shared, “The goal is to align the leaders of a district all the way down to building admin. This way, everyone can see the same data points and align with the data cadence so that we can make the best possible decisions moving forward for student achievement.”

Thanks to Frontline Education, West Des Moines Schools was able to develop a collaborative process to frequently assess and monitor their data to fill gaps across the district. In using Frontline Education’s District Pulse Report, West Des Moines staff and board members could get a quick snapshot of the ABCs of student performance: attendance, behavior, and course performance. This allows whoever is reviewing the report to quickly review key metrics relating to student achievement and engagement. Having this report on hand simplifies the process and has led to successful data-driven decision-making across the board in West Des Moines.

Thank you, Frontline Education, for sponsoring this year’s Summit on Student Success and sharing insights from your journey working with West Des Moines Schools. To learn more about Frontline Education and their impactful programs, click [here](#).



*Photo: Jamie Jordan, Mike Sherman & Jamie Jannotta*