

## Find the bad news in your IA results

Creating credibility by evaluating and addressing areas to improve

***“Two things happen before I report IA results to my school board. First, I go through the data subject by subject to find the areas we need to improve. Then the staff and I talk it about in our meetings, reviewing what I’ve found and what they’ve seen. We decide which area to address this year and research different approaches for making improvements.”***

Rick Nelson  
Chico Oaks Adventist School

Why? Because every organization has room for improvement. So if you talk only about the positives people will question your credibility.

Secondly, while building credibility you have a golden chance to energize your school board by giving them a role--funding needed resources based on a plan for improvement.

### **Review the details of your Iowa Assessments carefully for an area your school can improve this year.**

- Share this job with your teachers (if you are not the only teacher)
- Once you've identified an academic area to improve, create a game plan with your staff for addressing it.
- List any resources you will need for this game plan.
- Decide how you will evaluate the success of your approach in next year's scores

### **Share the good and bad news in your board report--along with the plan for addressing it.**

As a prior board chair, I can certify that your board will be most impressed with a full report that includes:

- The good news
- The bad news
- The plan for improving the bad news
- The resources needed for the plan (even if they can't or don't give you all you ask for)
- The criteria you will use, and report to them, on the success of the plan after next year's IA test

## **Carefully communicate this to your parents as well.**

Parents are (usually) realistic. Most parents will appreciate that a) no school is perfect, b) you are systematically working on continuous improvement, and c) change doesn't happen overnight but needs a longer range plan.

So I would give a broad overview of the area you are working to improve (using very careful wording in small schools to protect confidentiality) and your plan for achieving that improvement. Then, update them with interim results during the year and after next fall's tests.

Here's some verbiage that may be useful (feel free to edit or to skip this entirely and use your own).

Although there is a tremendous amount of good news in our IA results this year, we also looked closely for areas that are not so good. We have carefully reviewed both our strong areas and the areas we in which we can improve. Based on this review, all of the teachers together [or simply "I"] have determined that \_\_\_\_\_ is the area we are planning to focus on for improvement this year. Here is our plan...

**Credits:** Rick Nelson

Thank you for sharing the process you use for evaluating IA results and acting on them.

**Binder tab:** October

**School size:** All