Using A Research Agenda To
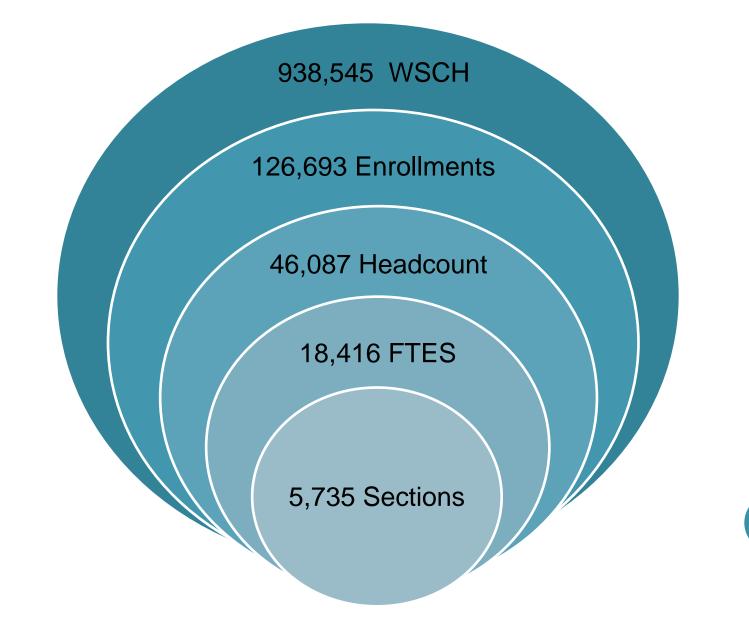## PROMOTE A CULTURE OF INQUIRY

Presented by:
Lynn Neault, Vice Chancellor, Student Services
Cathy Hasson, Director, Institutional Research and Planning

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San Diego Community College District

SAN DIEGO COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

- 3 credit colleges: San Diego City, Mesa, & Miramar Colleges
- Separately accreditated non-credit continuing education program:
  - 6 campuses
  - Approximately 5% matriculate to credit annually
- Service area is the city of San Diego
- Large contract military education program on 29 military bases nationwide (146,861 service personnel enrolled)
- San Diego County's 13th largest employer

SDCCD FALL 2009 ENROLLMENT DATA

938,545 WSCH

126,693 Enrollments

46,087 Headcount
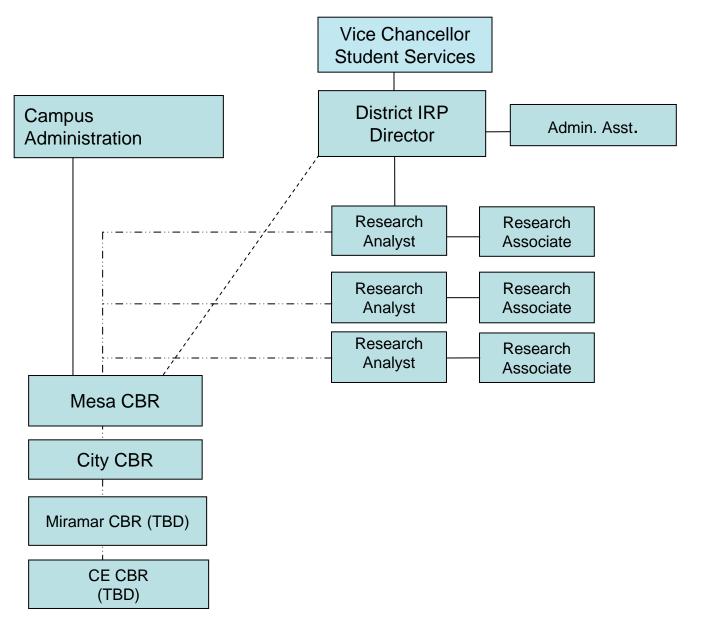
18,416 FTES

5,735 Sections

INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

- Function and Purpose
  - Respond to data and information needs of the district, the colleges and continuing education: institutional, program, course and student services levels
  - Provide data facilitation and coaching to faculty, staff and administrators
- Input and Output
  - Planning, student success interventions, program quality evaluations, grants development, accountability, marketing and public relations
  - Reports, briefings, informational sessions, technical feedback sessions, web presence and consultations

IR ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE & MODEL

Vice Chancellor Student Services

District IRP Director

Admin. Asst.

Campus Administration

Research Analyst — Research Associate

Research Analyst — Research Associate

Research Analyst — Research Associate

Mesa CBR

City CBR

Miramar CBR (TBD)

CE CBR (TBD)

SAMPLE DATA AND INFORMATION NEEDS

- Enrollment & Budget Management
  - Productivity measures: FTES, Headcount & Sections
  - Efficiency measures: Fill rates and Load
  - Projections: Enrollment, FTES Target Goals
- Program Review
  - Enrollment & Student Characteristics Trends
  - Student Outcomes: Success, Retention, Persistence
- Special Programs/Interventions
  - Basic Skills Subsequent Success
  - Learning Communities Success and Transfer

SAMPLE DATA AND INFORMATION NEEDS

- Accountability Mandates
  - Accreditation Self-Study
  - State and Federal Reports
  - Grants
- Surveys & Focus Group Studies
  - Student and Employee Perception
  - Programs, Courses and Services Satisfaction
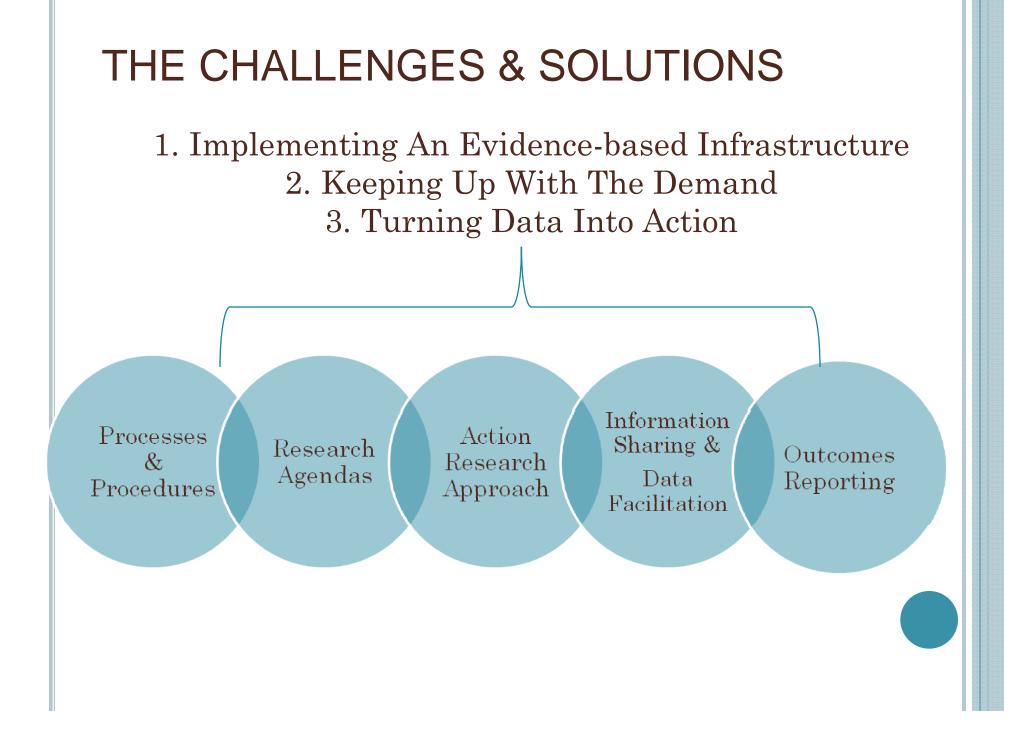 - Community Needs Assessment

INFORMATION CAPACITY CHALLENGES

✖ Building an Evidence-based Infrastructure
  + Managing and responding to myriad requests
  + Maintaining quality and integrity of data process
  + Making data and information widely accessible

✖ Keeping Up with the Demand
  + Responding to heightened accountability mandates
  + Linking research to (resource) planning
  + Supporting data-driven decision-making

✖ Turning Data into Action
  + Making data available and applicable at all levels
  + Making sense of and taking action on the data
  + Building a *Culture of Inquiry*

A CULTURE OF INQUIRY

*Schools that have established a culture of inquiry recognize that their work **does not end with a few lasting improvements**. They know that improving teaching and learning is an **intentional and ongoing process**. These schools find that **questions lead to action** and **action leads to new questions**. This ongoing cycle of inquiry establishes a **more thoughtful approach** to improving teaching and learning schoolwide.*

Sharon F. Rallis and Margaret M. MacMullen, "Inquiry-Minded Schools: Opening Doors for Accountability" (Kappan, June 2000).

THE CHALLENGES & SOLUTIONS

1. Implementing An Evidence-based Infrastructure
2. Keeping Up With The Demand
3. Turning Data Into Action

Processes & Procedures

Research Agendas

Action Research Approach

Information Sharing & Data Facilitation

Outcomes Reporting

S1. RESEARCH PROCESS & PROCEDURES

- Guidelines for use of data and information
- Protection of human subjects policy
- Review panels and research committees
- Request and fulfillment procedures
- Criteria for prioritizing ad hoc requests
- Linking requests to broader goals & initiatives

S2. RESEARCH AGENDAS

1. A useful organizing tool.
2. A descriptive map with a way forward.
3. A means to help balance and link research.
4. A powerful communication piece.
5. A mechanism for facilitating college-wide dialog and building a culture of inquiry.
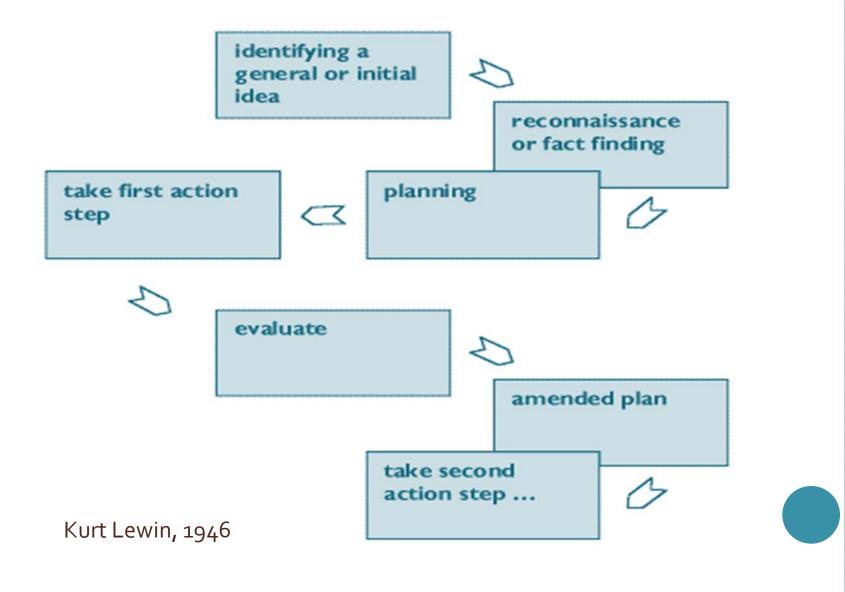
TYPES OF RESEARCH AGENDAS

- **College-wide Research Agenda**
  - Supports major college-wide initiatives & activities
  - Tied to college-wide plan (goals & priorities)
  - Includes recurring requests

- **Topical Research Agenda**
  - Focused on a single topic or group of interest
  - Tied to a specific initiative or activity
  - Fewer research activities than college-wide

S3. ACTION RESEARCH APPROACH

*Action research is a form of collective self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own social or educational practices, as well as their understanding of those practices and the situations in which the practices are carried out… **The approach is only action research when it is collaborative**.*

Kemmis and McTaggart, 1988

LEWIN'S ACTION RESEARCH SPIRAL

identifying a general or initial idea

reconnaissance or fact finding

take first action step

planning

evaluate

amended plan

take second action step …

Kurt Lewin, 1946

ACTION RESEARCH GUIDED DISCUSSIONS

Developing the Research Agenda

1. What and who will be researched?
2. How is research tied to college plans, goals, initiatives and/or activities?
3. How will the information be used, by whom and how often?
4. Which methodology or approach will be used?

Turning Data into Information

1. What do the data tell us?
2. Which questions were fully answered by the research and which need more exploration?
3. What are reasonable benchmarks based on the research?

Taking Action on the Information

1. What interventions or strategies do we need to deploy in order to move the needle?
2. How should this information be shared and applied across the college?

S4. DATA FACILITATION & INFO SHARING

- Presentations
- Briefings
- Informational Sessions
- Data Integration Workshops
- Reports: Comprehensive, Exec Summaries, Highlights
- One-to-one Consultation
- Action Research Team Activities
- Strategy or Design Meetings
- Web Presence

S5. OUTCOMES REPORTING

- Systematic Reporting on Key Indicators
- Trend Analysis
- Performance Benchmarking (targets and goal setting)
- Process Benchmarking (sharing of strategies & interventions)
- Balanced Scorecard Approach
  - Holistic
  - Indicators and Metrics
- Developing Action on Outcomes Data & Information

DATA INTEGRATION STRATEGY MATRIX

	Impact	
Scope High	• Website Postings • District Research Cmt. Facilitations	• Action Research Teams • College Research Cmt. Facilitations • Sharing of Actions Taken on Data
Low	• Informational Sessions • Presentations • Technical Assistance Meetings	• Briefings • Data Integration Workshops • Research & Assessment Methods Workshops • Research Agenda Development & Implementation
	Low	High

THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING OUR SESSION!

http://research.sdccd.edu/pages/1.asp