Leah: How to disseminate cross-site project? Who is right audience? How to communicate people and place data? What types of products would be best for those new audiences? Create more useful and transparent products, i.e. fact pages, articles in Governing, working with Attendance Works on getting out topical impacts, etc.

Laura McKieran: Anything been decided?

Leah: Not formally. Thought about topical pieces to write, i.e. absenteeism, more technical piece on methodology, look at impacts, discuss value of work, and make recommendations or policy reform suggestions to further IDS work.

Denise Groesbeck: We’ve run into some issues with the school district and had to work around FERPA. Maybe that is where some of the advocacy should be. A lot of this information would be extremely valuable to the school district. I hear from some people (Paul Stiles) that FERPA is not a barrier but it is for the school boards. Maybe the school boards would be an audience.

Cindy: That’s important. Something for AISP? We’re working with DQC to work on building public will for this work. They’ve pointed out that each state can legislate to be more restrictive regardless of if the federal government makes a change. In some places they are trying to close things up. It’s state and federal legislation.

Ashley Clark: We’ve had some of that. There can be a fear factor in giving out information.

Sabina: Piece on the DHS and their agreement with the Pittsburgh public schools. May be useful for people trying to get around it.

Leah: Sometimes it is not law that gets in the way but the lawyers. DHS changed lawyers.

Denise: We have agreement with school historically and we’re part of data collaborative but they can’t share data with us. It’s hard to get the data together. That was hard. We got the two attorneys to talk to each other. They created a relationship and that is what it was all about.

Cindy: There’s a whole category of “how to” stuff we could do. Learn about success stories, etc. The monographs you read on IDS are very technical and scholarly but when you think about what you did with the data, that is what the partners want to know. It’s important to say that “this is what changed by using this data.”

Denise: When we had to think about policy pieces, we had to think about results board would want to see. We had to have conversations about what would happen after the study is over and how it would live on. Next year, all of our committees have agreed to look at the issues of absenteeism. As an organization, were applying to the Campaign for Grade Level Reading to become the lead entity for that. That way, we can give our data to this group and they can do something with it and we can show our results.

Starr: One of the benefits of the data sharing group we have is that we can talk about common issues. I’m confident there will be some changes in the way that we fund some of the programs that go into the schools. We’re having good discussions about where to put programs and whether or not it is the right intervention. It’s a win-win all around. I’m confident we can change over time. That could be a model.

Laura: What would help is having some demonstrated value to the agency that is sharing the data. Are there any cases where the school district got something back? That might take a written form but I don’t feel like there are that many champions that will risk saying that FERPA doesn’t have to be a barrier. People want to use it as an excuse not to share data. It’s not as if there is no direct benefit to the school district.

Starr: It might be useful to have someone involved in those groups as part of the data sharing group.

Leah: Do any of you have agencies that would be willing to write that kind of piece?

Cindy: If someone were to send someone to do interviews and then write up the pieces, would that be useful?

Starr: Yes.

Cindy: I was thinking of Pat Auspos. Something saying that despite FERPA, we looked at the benefits and this is what they were.

Claudia: Our Invest in Children agency has done a lot of that. This is something where people realized that they needed a cross-sector solution to meet their goals and solve some of their problems. For the last twelve years, we’ve had the Invest in Children Initiative. It’s a cross-sector group (foundation, government, nonprofit, private). I think there are 500 attendees at our yearly breakfast. They fully rely on integrated data for all of their metrics and evaluations of their progress. To zero in on specific activities, there was a desire to have children be immunized by age 2 and there were partners who had to deliver on that—home visitors and health centers. They were working together and thinking they were doing well but through the cross-system data we determined that only 48% of children who were getting home visits got an immunization. The home visiting agencies were helped and the health centers were helped and the county Medicaid agency felt that their program was being improved. There were a lot of agencies that felt helped. Thinking of who it has helped is interesting, especially when thinking of agencies.

Laura: I’m a little surprised that the home visitors didn’t feel like there was a “gotcha” element.

Claudia: The middleman was happy. I’m not sure all the home visitors were happy.

Denise: People do want to know these things. They want their programs to be good. If we were the funder, it would be different but here we all just want the best results.

Seema: It also helps make the mission a lot clearer. For example, the Executive Director might say one thing but the people on the ground say another—the message gets lost.

AC: People also might be ok with sharing but don’t know how to get the data out of their system. We’ve encountered agencies where their data provider told them it would be $10,000 for a data pull. It was HMIS.

Denise/Charles: We had issues with HMIS.

Claudia: We can just go in and pull HMIS ourselves.

Leah: It can be an issue to get data from people of they don’t know how to do it.

Laura: Providing some sort of manual could be useful for folks who don’t know how to do this.

*Ways to match data: LinkKing, BigMatch (can’t distribute, from Bill Winkler at Census, Jaro-Winkler matching), MatchIt…*

Laura: Since all people with IDS have these issues, it would be good to have all this info

Cindy: Some sort of document that lists all the problems people running IDS would have: how to manage, how to clean, software programs, processes and procedures, infrastructure of IDS, etc..

Claudia: Everyone is dealing with this and we all have our own solutions. The next leap we have to make is to take advantage of the rapid advances in machine learning to get this all automated. I’ve talked to the tech people and we aren’t alone on the human and property end of things. There are all kinds of companies trying to come into these markets and sell you an expensive solution. It seems in ten years we ought to be able to overnight run a stream form an agency so it gets cleaned, matched and put where it is supposed to be to be linked with other things.

Seema: The entire concept hinges on how good the match is. They can always argue that the 48% is a matching issue. Figuring out what is a valid match is an issue in this field. We’re doing two tests (address and name and SS) to check match rates and see the rate with each. We wanted to try and measure how good the match is.

Greg Sanders: I have a list of all the matching software. Can send to Leah.

Starr: Are there standards for matching?

Seema/Greg: Not rally, it’s hard to know. I don’t think we can do record linkages like that until you’ve done it 10 or 12 times to know what the cut-off will be.

Rebecca Lee: There’s also Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems work group who are trying to put out best practices.

Cindy: Could put Greg’s spreadsheet on website. Was there a history in NNIP when you were dealing with other technical issues? How can we build the field of neighborhood indicators and IDS and get these materials out?

Leah: We try to go to some of the academic conferences that look at neighborhood data.

Cindy: The National Governors Association has had people come to them to talk to IDS. Government would be less interested in the technical issues but academics interested in tech.

Laura: Is there a typology of what an IDS can do?

Seema: That might be on AISP.

Cindy: Something simple showing the different stories and circumstances would be good. It’s not one size of what an IDS should be.

Claudia: Government agencies have kind of been free riders and they really should be more involved. Could be a case study: shows value of IDS and how some outside champions say some things to really help it. We just did the first county-based Pay for Success Project for social impact bonds. To look at those projects you need integrated data since usually the innovation is for people who won’t be where the government benefits. You have to figure out how much money can be saved and document it or the investors will be nervous. Document how much could be saved if you solved the problem—data hungry issues. In Cleveland these investors were working with well-meaning agencies and floundering around trying to do this project. Someone recommended us since we do IDS and the whole project took off because we could nail down the dollars and the investors came to the table. Now the program is underway. You also have to prove it with rigorous research design that the impact occurred and do it to the standards of the private sector investor. IDS is really useful to do that since it needs go on for 7 years. Needs to be done with admin data. Our intervention is helping homeless families keep their kids out of foster care. Millions could be saved if the children could be diverted even though they may have to stay for a short time. Local housing authority provided some vouchers, Enterprise provides some supportive housing. Called Critical Time Intervention (??). The intervention is complicated but the cost savings comes from saving foster care days.

Leah: Pinellas has specific infrastructure—state legislation allows orgs to form data collaboratives.

Charles Dion: Not used very often, only know of Pinellas County. It’s specific legislation that allows local jurisdictions to share data.

Seema: SLDS is mandated in Maryland. We’re getting involved in Social Impact Bonds around the improvements to housing through weatherization and the health benefits. When it is just good government, it doesn’t pay, though. I don’t feel like our sharing agreement will go anywhere since it isn’t mandated.

Leah: What about sharing between JFI and BNIA?

Seema: That could work. There are also many organizations that do similar work—one at University of Maryland, one at Johns Hopkins. Instead of doing a big IDS< we just need to work together.

Rebecca: New leadership in Rhode Island came from Maryland and they had some bad experiences with IDS there. They are skeptical of what has been going on in Providence.

Claudia: SLDS mandated in Ohio but there is a queue of 32 approved queries before us.

Leah: Info from DQC on SLDS?

Cindy: Could do more analysis on Data for Action Survey. Go into a lot of detail but it is underexploited database.

Laura: Wish list—identify recurring costs of maintain IDS, data governance models (who controls it?), technical documentation (data dictionaries schematics, etc…), policies and procedures, security plans…

Seema: We’ve had to hire a computer scientist so that would be the cost. Hard to get someone on a non-profit salary.

Civic hackers bad at documentation.