Using Unique Teacher Identifiers: Problems and Promise

Presented by:
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About Eagle County Schools

- Approximately 6,000 students
- 19 schools
  - 9 Elementary Schools
  - 4 Middle Schools
  - 2 High Schools, 1 Alternative High School
  - 2 District Charter Schools
  - 1 Ski & Snowboard Academy
- Geographically Large (1700 Square Miles)
  - “Up Valley” Vail, Minturn, Red Cliff, Eagle-Vail, Avon
  - “Mid Valley” Edwards, Wolcott
  - “Down Valley” Eagle, Gypsum, Dotsero
  - “Ranching Communities” Bond, McCoy, State Bridge, Burns
- Student Population
  - 50% Hispanic, 37% English Language Learners
  - Significant Achievement Gap
- Near complete change in district leadership in 2007.
- Significant private and state charter school options.
- “Bleeding Edge” Innovation

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Why Create Teacher Identifiers?

- Improve Data Analysis Capability
- Incentivize Teaching – Performance Pay
- Target Professional Development
- Improve Teacher Evaluation
- Increase Teacher Accountability
- Human Resource Allocation
- Improve Student Achievement

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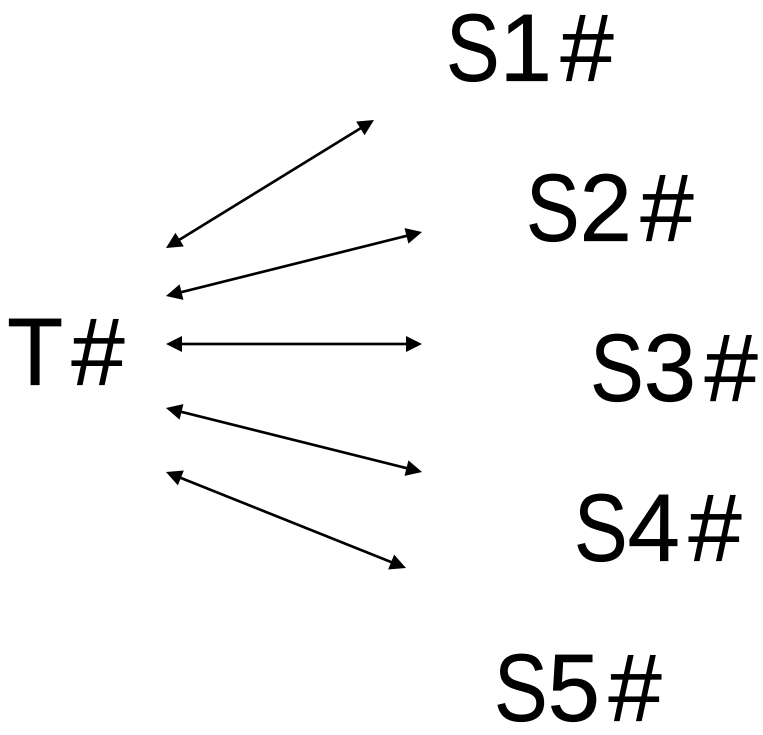
The Basic Concept



Teacher and Student ID #’s

- Creating Unique Teacher/Student ID #’s
  - Not particularly complicated
  - Not particularly technical
  - Not particularly contentious
- Correctly Aligning Teacher/Student ID #’s
  - Extremely complicated
  - Extremely technical
  - Extremely contentious

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What Makes This So Complicated?

- The Dosage and Duration Question
  - How much instruction?
  - How long?
  - Is this different across subjects?
  - Is this different across teachers?
  - Is this different across students?
- What about Co-Teachers?
  - Who owns the scores?
  - How does the D&D question affect this?
  - Is there a synergy that we aren't capturing?

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What Makes This So Complicated?, II

- What About “Resource” Teachers?
  - Academic Specialists
  - Special Education Teachers
  - GT Teachers
  - Title 1 Teachers
  - ELL Teachers
- How Do We Align “Push In” Teachers?
  - Resource teachers flooded into regular classrooms to provide instruction & lower class size.
- How Do We Align “Pull Out” Teachers?
  - Resource teachers who take kids out of regular classroom to provide instruction.

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What Makes This So Complicated?, III

- What About Teachers in Non-Tested Areas?
  - PreK - 2 Teachers
  - Music
  - Art
  - PE
  - Industrial Arts
  - Technology
  - Foreign Language
  - Drama
  - Consumer/Family Studies
  - Business

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What Makes This So Complicated?, IV Specific Issues & Research

- Obtaining reliable estimates of teachers' contributions to their students' performance is more difficult in some subjects than in others (Ballou, 2002).
- Koedel (2007) showed that teachers of non-tested subjects contribute to student achievement gains in reading and math. CDE research in 2008 arrived at the same conclusion for Art instruction.
- Measuring productivity of teachers is particularly difficult for:
  - Pre-K to Grade2
  - High School
  - English Language Learners
  - Students with Disabilities

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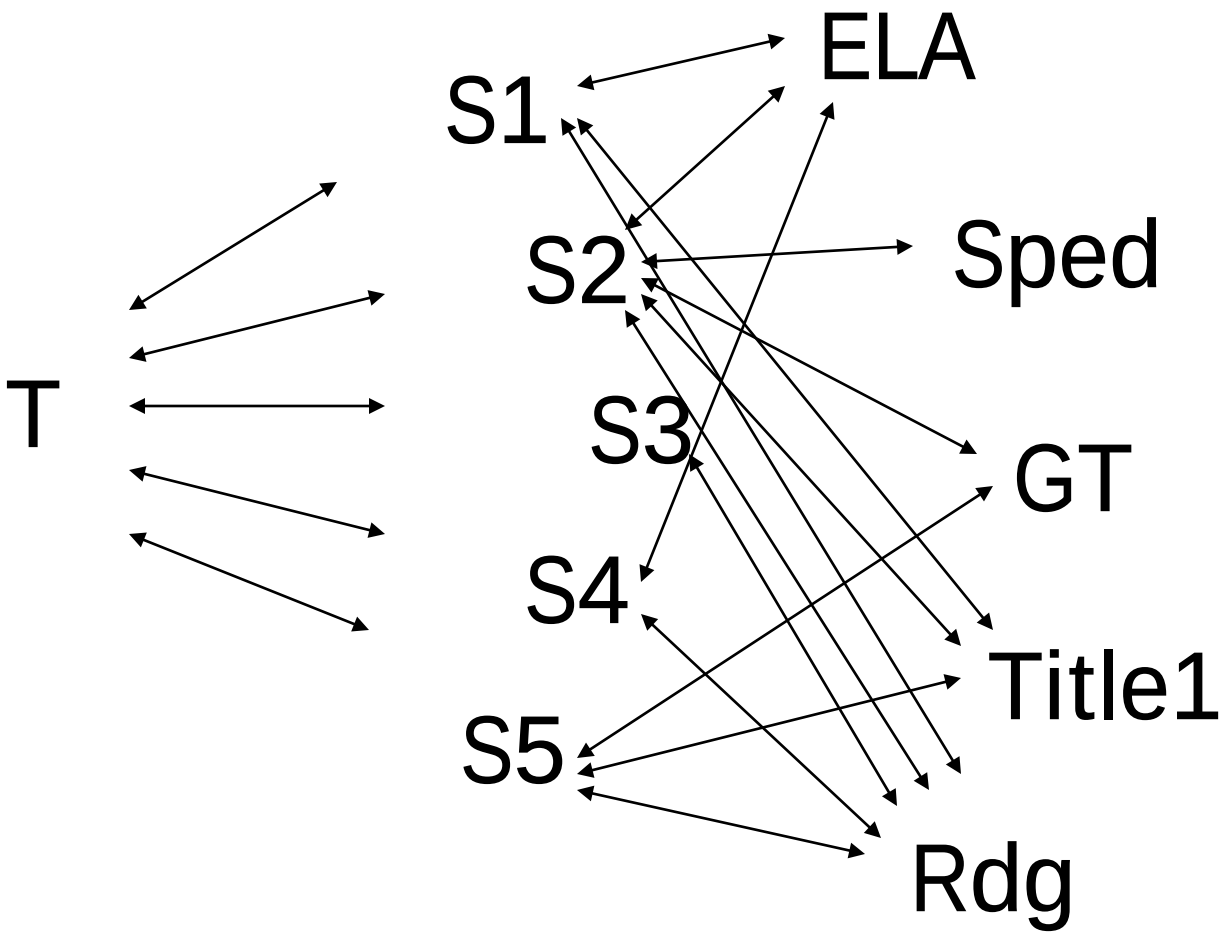
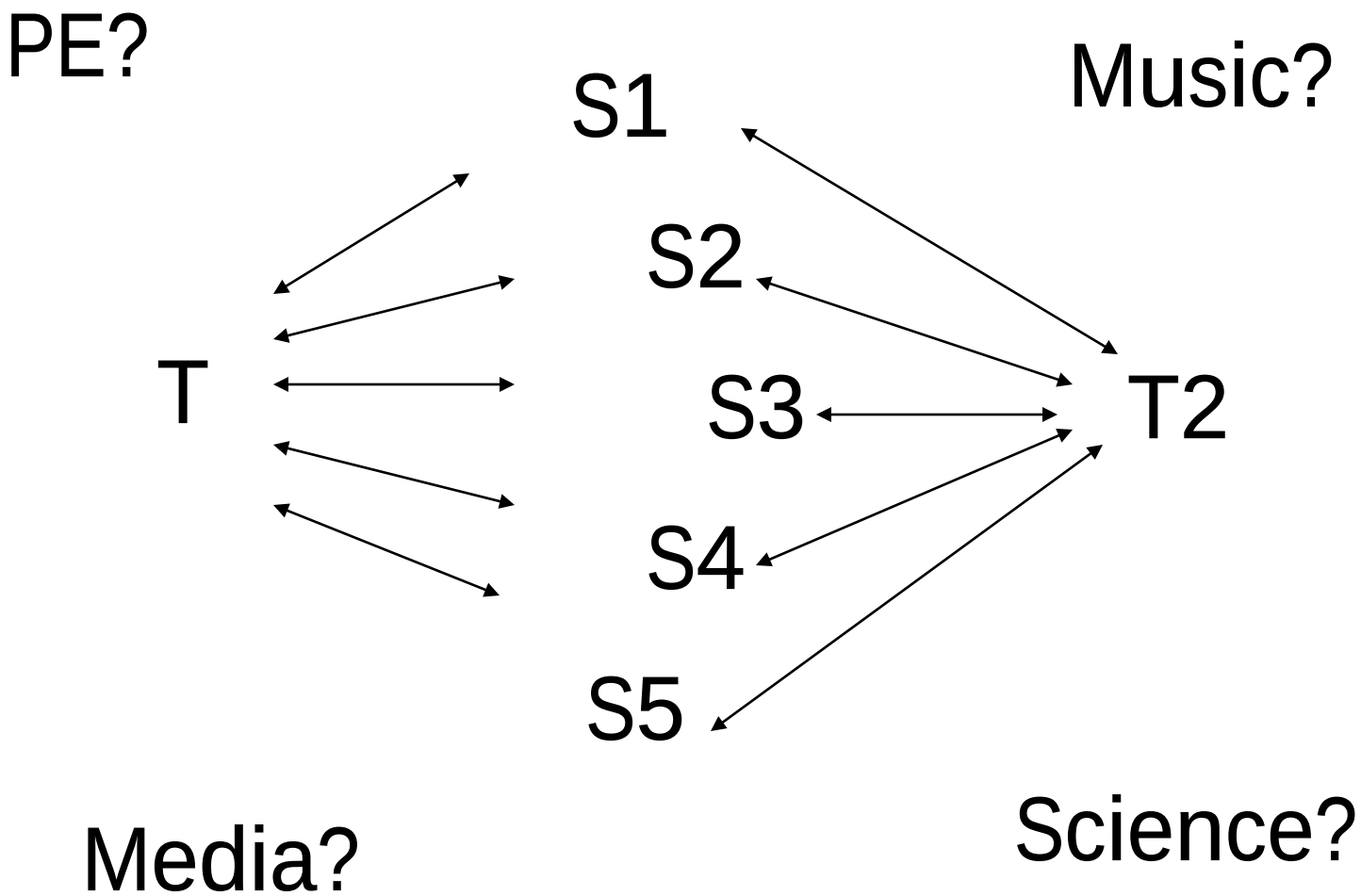
What Makes This So Complicated?, V

- The PowerSchool Problem
  - PowerSchool creates and stores a relationship of:
    - Course Name
    - 1 Instructor of Record
    - Student Roster
  - PowerSchool was never designed to capture the nuanced relationships this alignment requires in order to be “right”.

Some Real Examples, Elementary



Some Real Examples, Middle School



Some Real Examples, High School

Trimester 1	Trimester 2	Trimester 3
Fresh Math 1a	Chemistry Intro	Fresh Eng 1b
Civics	Fresh Math 1b	World History 2
Fresh Eng 1a	ELL	Typing
Band	Art	Band
ELL	World History 1	ELL
Consumer Ed.	Video Prod.	Earth Science

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Unintended Consequences

- Inequity in Performance Pay/Accountability
  - Approximately 69% of our teachers cannot be appropriately aligned to the students they teach for data analysis purposes.
- "Value-Added" is a robust and powerful data analysis method. But...
  - Black-Box Method
  - Relies on Small N
  - Do we really want to rely on it to make instructional and staffing decisions? Or, should it be one piece of information?
- Strategic Gaming by Teachers
  - Withholding instruction based on test cycle timing.
  - Student selection (lobbying) based on perceived gain ability.
  - Not sharing/collaborating good ideas.

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Unintended Consequences, II

- Goal Distortion
  - Achievement versus character education, resiliency, creativity, self-efficacy, youth development, community outcomes, etc.
  - Core subjects versus social sciences, art, music, etc.
- Reduced Employee Satisfaction
  - Between 2001-2007, ECS habitually ranked in the top 3 for teacher attrition averaging around 22% annually.
  - For the 2007-08 year (pre-recession) the attrition rate fell to 16%, appreciably the same as state and national averages.
- A School District Focused on the Wrong “Stuff”
  - An assessment company?
  - A science experiment?
  - “Oracle”-lite?

Positive Uses

- Quantitative Evaluation Tool
  - Best used as ONE piece of evidence in evaluating SOME staff.
- Targeted Professional Development
  - Identifies core weaknesses where PD can be targeted
- HR Decisions
  - Promotions
  - Non-Renewal
  - Dismissal
  - Staffing Allocations
  - Staff Assignments
- Programmatic Evaluations
  - Evaluate different instructional approaches in
    - Teachers
    - Cohorts
    - Buildings

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“Rhetorical” Questions

- Reasons for? Implications of?
- What are the intended consequences? Unintended?
- State level cost/benefit?
- District cost/benefit?
- State level procedures/bureaucracy?
- Impact on smaller districts?
- Does this improve schools and teachers?
- Would this improve learning?

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Thank You!

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