Barriers to Data Use

Research has found three common areas that are barriers to data use[[1]](#footnote-1).

# Cultural

* Culture and beliefs exert a powerful influence on the way decisions are made, the way organizations learn, and the data that programs find meaningful and useful.
* Many early intervention providers/teachers and administrators make decisions based on their judgment rather than on information that is collected systematically.
* There is little agreement among stakeholders about what kinds of data are meaningful or what to prioritize.

# Political

* Political factors include shifting legislative priorities, instability of funding, and turnover of key state and local leaders can present a barrier to effective data use.
* Data have often been used politically, leading to mistrust of data and data avoidance.
* Early intervention providers/teachers and administrators may worry about the way data will be used to penalize them.

# Technical

* Technical factors, such as time, funding, technology availability, and access are common barriers when using data.
* Programs and schools rarely provide or compensate for the time needed to collect and analyze data.
* Early intervention providers/teachers and administrators lack the access or capacity to analyze data for program improvement.

1. Ingram, D.S. (2004). Accountability policies and teacher decision making: Barriers to the use of data to improve practice. Teachers College Record, 106(6), 1258-1287. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)