Assignment #6: Summative Analysis

In your previous assignment, you chose 3 comparable districts and developed a profile of comparative characteristics in four major areas across the 10 districts, including your "Target district" and Aspiration District". You examined THEMES, PATTERNS and DISCREPANCIES, ala Edgar Schein, and, perhaps, looked for potential ROOT CAUSES ala Paul Preuss using the raw data you compiled for the Target District, Aspiration District and 3 comparable districts. This examination should have given you a good, if not better, idea of where your target district is in relation to a group of similar districts and your aspiration district. You are well armed, now, to take action on behalf of your target district!

We turn, now, to our summary analysis. We know quite a bit about these districts from a data point of view, but what summary conclusions can we draw? These data are all quite different. They are all quite complex, when taken separately or as a whole. How do we take this complexity and make it simple?

Each year, USNEWS and MONEY MAGAZINE offer some interesting conclusions about "Best" schools and "Best" places to live. The complexity in both sites revolved around a variety of indicators they examined for each of their tasks and the summary analysis they used to arrive at what is "BEST".

So, we, too, will conclude with a summary analysis much the same as both of these magazines did. We will "RANK" each of the school districts in the four area tables you completed in Action Assignment #5, and summarize those rankings within each table. Because these data are so different, the rankings should enable us to see the THEMES, PATTERNS, and DISCREPANCIES in a much simpler, less complex form.

Of course, the first caveat here is that we may lose some of the depth of each indicator, particularly because a rank is a simple number that does not take into account the relative "distance" between one district or another. For example, two districts could be very close in Per Pupil Expenditures by a dollar or so. But one will have a rank of "10" and the

other, while just about the same, will get a "9". A third district might be ranked "8" and be considerably lower than the first two. Such is the loss of data with rankings.

One second caveat is deciding what is a "high" ranking. For example, is it better to have larger class sizes or smaller? If you believe, fiscally, that larger class sizes are cost efficient, your highest class size would get a "10". But, if you believe lower class sizes are better educationally, than the smallest class size would get a "10". You must decide what your philosophy is and how that philosophy impacts your ranking decisions.

Yet, despite these ranked data anomalies, if we rank enough indicators and SUM up those ranks, we should arrive at a better overall view of these districts, one that presents a decent picture of the relative position of each district in each major area.

Part 1:

Please take the data you found for each of the four tables in Assignment #5 and Rank Order these data. Use the same approach as before…a high ranking gets a "10" and a low ranking gets a "1". As usual, you may perform this task easily by hand or you can view how to rank your data by a formula using a spreadsheet by viewing my small video entitled "Ranking Data in Excel". Either way, you will have a table for each area with JUST ranks. Sum those ranks up so that each district has a summary "score" in the "Sum of Ranks" column. Do this ranking for all four major areas. You may use your own tables or those below as templates. (Make sure you put the name of the districts in the first column labeled "District".)

Your table might look something like this:

Table 1: Finance Area 2003

District	Rank Per Pupil Expenditure	Rank Total Expenditure	Rank Income Per Pupil	Rank Combined Wealth Ratio	Rank Revenue Per Pupil	Rank Instructional Expenses as Percent of Adjusted Expenses	Sum of Ranks	Rank Sum of Ranks
Deer Park	2	4	4	3	2	5	**20**	**3**

East Moriches	4	3	3	4	3	1	**18**	**2**
Hampton Bays	5	5	2	4	5	2	**23**	**5**
Patchogue-Medford	1	2	5	5	4	4	**21**	**4**
Hauppauge	3	1	1	2	1	3	**11**	**1**

Start Ranking!

Table 1: Finance Indicators							
District	**Indicator 1**	**Indicator 2**	**Indicator 3**	**Indicator 4**	**Indicator 5**	**Indicator 6**	**Sum of Ranks**
Aspiration							
D1							
D2							
D3							
Target							

Table 2: Instruction Indicators							
District	**Indicator 1**	**Indicator 2**	**Indicator 3**	**Indicator 4**	**Indicator 5**	**Indicator 6**	**Sum of Ranks**
Aspiration							
D1							
D2							
D3							
Target							

Table 3: Community Demographic Indicators							
District	Indicator 1	Indicator 2	Indicator 3	Indicator 4	Indicator 5	Indicator 6	Sum of Ranks
Aspiration							
D1							
D2							
D3							
Target							

Table 4: Achievement Indicators							
District	Indicator 1	Indicator 2	Indicator 3	Indicator 4	Indicator 5	Indicator 6	Sum of Ranks
Aspiration							
D1							
D2							
D3							
Target							

Part 2:
Please address these questions:

1) **As before, can you identify THEMES, PATTERNS, and DISCREPANCIES from these tables? Note these.**
2) **Do you see some data aspects you did not see before? Name some.**
3) **What might you conclude, now, given these ranks, about your target district? Note your conclusions for each ranked table.**