Courageous Conversations About Data
A Protocol for Making Use of Campus Climate Survey Findings
Created by CSUCI CLC Coaches: Blending ATLAS and Looking at Data Sets protocols

ATLAS: Looking at Data

Learning from Data is a tool to guide groups of teachers discovering what students, educators, and the public understand and how they are thinking. The tool, developed by Eric Buchovecky, is based in part on the work of the Leadership for Urban Mathematics Project and the Assessment Communities of Teachers Project. The tool also draws on the work of Steve Seidel and Evangeline Harris-Stefanakis of Project Zero at Harvard University. Revised November 2000 by Gene Thompson-Grove. Revised August 2004 for Looking at Data by Dianne Leahy.

Looking at Data Sets

Purposes of the Looking at Data Sets protocol are to provide the participants with: an opportunity to articulate participants’ initial reaction to the data presented; a lens to examine and understand the data; feedback on participants’ assessment and analysis of the data; additional perspectives and what might be significant in the data; and opportunity to synthesize thinking and consider next steps. Developed by Anthony Conelli and Alan Dichter, New York.

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Before the meeting, the facilitator:
- Selects the data point and pages from the Campus Climate Survey findings on which to focus the next meeting’s discussion
- Sends data point/pages to group members, ensuring that they have time to read prior to the meeting
- Selects/prepares a brief team-builder or asks another group member to select/prepare one

To begin the meeting, the facilitator (30 minutes)
- Leads review of group norms – either created by the group or using PACIF norms (5 minutes)
- Conducts a brief team-builder (15 minutes)
- Shares campus climate survey data to be discussed (5 minutes)
  - Reviews the data point selected from campus climate survey findings
  - Note: Helpful to bring a laptop to hook up to a screen or bring printed copies
  - Reminds the group to:
    - avoid any value statements, judgments, or explanations of what is concluded about the data
    - make sense of the data and think about how it could be helpfully used to improve campus climate (not to negate, refute, argue with the data)
- Prepares to launch the protocol (5 minutes)
  - Briefly reviews each step
  - Informs the group that they will be taking notes with no identifiers of who said what
  - Pauses for questions
  - Launches Step

THE PROTOCOL (60-90 minutes)

Step 1: DESCRIBE (5-10 minutes)
In this step, participants describe what the data literally says and how their role impacts how they see the data.
- The facilitator asks:
  - What does the data literally say that stands out to you? Avoid inferences or interpretations.
    - It may be useful to list the group’s observations on chart paper. If interpretations come up, they can be listed in another column for later discussion during Step 3.
  - How does your identity/perspective inform how you are seeing the data?
    - Encourage people to respond to how identity/role impacts reading of data, not how we feel about data.
Step 2: INTERPRET (10-15 minutes)
In this step, the group works to make sense of what the data says and why. Inferences and interpretations are encouraged, knowing they are tentative and could be wrong.

- The facilitator asks:
  - What do the data and our questions suggest?
  - What do you infer from the data?
  - What questions do you have about the data (without judging or negating it)?

Step 3: RESPOND (10-15 minutes)
In this step, the group reflects on personal responses to the data.

- The facilitator selects from the following prompts:
  - What confirmed and/or challenged your perceptions/experiences?
  - What surprised and/or concerned you?
  - What does this data point push you to think about?
  - How does this conversation help you think about your work? about the campus as a whole?
  - Why and/or to whom does this data point matter?
  - What are the implications for equity?

Step 4: REFLECT & RECOMMEND (15-20 minutes)
In this step, the group thinks about implications and possible recommendations for campus leaders

- The facilitator selects from the following prompts:
  - What are the implications of the data?
    - For us as individuals
    - For colleagues and/or students
    - For the campus as a whole
    - For society
  - A few years from now, what is the reality you would want to see instead?
    - What kinds of activities or interventions could lead to that improved future?
  - If you were in a formal position of leadership (e.g., President; member of cabinet; school, unit, or program administrator; elected faculty, staff, or student leader):
    - What steps could/should be taken next?
    - What strategies might be most effective?
- The facilitator takes anonymized notes:
  - What are the key things from this conversation the group would want to share with the campus community and/or campus leadership?

Step 5: LEARN (10-15 minutes)
In this step, group members explore the personal/professional value of this discussion thus far.

- The facilitator selects from the following prompts or invites group members to select their own:
  - What did you learn from listening to your colleagues that was interesting or surprising?
  - How can you make use of your colleagues’ perspectives?
  - What questions about your own work did looking at the data raise for you?
  - Did questions of equity arise?
  - Are there things you would like to try in your work as a result of this conversation?

Step 6: DEBRIEF (5-10 minutes)
In this step, the group moves from discussing content to thinking about the process.

- The facilitator asks:
  - How did the protocol and our group process work? What did you appreciate?
  - What could have gone better or be improved for next time?
  - What about the protocol and/or process helped you to see and learn interesting or surprising things?

CLOSURE: In preparation for the next meeting, the facilitator closes with the following (5 minutes)

- Reminds members of the date/time of next meeting
- Indicates when data point(s)/content for the next meeting will be sent
- May choose to invite another group member to come up with/facilitate the next meeting’s team-builder