



This tool, adapted from the ATLAS Looking at Data Protocol from the National School Reform Faculty Harmony Education Center (nsrfharmony.org) and the CASEL SEL Data Reflection Protocol (casel.org), presents a structured reflection process for teams to observe trends and discuss ideas for continuous improvement of academic and SEL implementation. The structured approach of a protocol, with clear norms and expectations for conversation, creates a safe space for all participants. This protocol supports equity of voice and allows all members to describe the data, make inferences, and share implications for future work.

Why is equity a critical lens for data reflection?

Reflecting on data produces new insights, which in turn inform new actions to support systemic academic and SEL implementation. While data can provide many insights, it does not easily show the full reality and lived experience of those it represents. Looking at data through an equity lens requires us to highlight the student's identity in an asset based manner, we must be knowledgeable of our biases and actively redress them, and we must be willing to challenge long held notions and practices that are not benefiting students. Without an equity lens, conversations about data often lead to 'one-size-fits-all' solutions that obscure biases and ignore differences in environment, identity, and culture. Data reflection should inform decision-making that promotes equitable outcomes for all members of the school community.

For example, if a BLT or PLC team is reviewing data from a feedback survey related to academics within a Multi-tiered System of Supports, they would need to consider questions like "Do the parents who responded to this survey represent the larger community of families in our school? Who was left out of this survey and how can we gather their perspectives?" or "Do we see a difference in survey responses based on home language/race/education level/age of children/academic achievement of children? What can we learn from those differences about the way we are engaging families?" Without questions that push the team to apply an equity lens, there is a risk of overlooking how aspects of identity such as gender, race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic background contribute to the story the data is telling. In disaggregating data through an equity lens, we are able to create an inclusive community with school programs that meet the needs of all.

Things to do before using the Academic Data Reflection Protocol

Prepare the data: Data gathered through the continuous improvement process needs to be summarized in charts, graphs, or short reports. To bring equity into the conversation, see if there are ways to organize the data by subgroups (e.g., race, socioeconomic level, gender) that may highlight inequities.

Prepare questions that prompt reflection on equity: Issues of equity are not always apparent in data. Use the final page in this tool, to find examples of questions that can help push the group to consider additional factors and perspectives when making decisions that will impact the school community. These questions should be thoughtfully interspersed throughout the protocol.

Think about equity of voice: An equity lens should be applied not only to the interpretation of data but also to the team dynamic. Consider what group agreements and/or methods of sharing will best ensure that all members of the team have an equitable opportunity to share their perspective. Facilitators should prepare to call this out explicitly and reorient the conversation if it becomes inequitable. Further, when interpreting data, it is important to consider which voices are not at the table, what blind spots this may create, and whether to seek out more perspectives.

Academic Data Reflection Protocol —Facilitator’s Guide

At the start of the meeting:

- Designate a team member to take notes during the meeting.
- Establish BLT/PLC norms for discussion or revisit existing PLC norms and how they apply to this discussion.
- Preview the steps below so team members know what to expect. Be sure to explain the difference between describing the data objectively (step 1) and offering interpretations about the data later on.

1. Facts: Describe the data. (3-5 minutes)

The team member who prepared the data gives a brief statement of the data and avoids explaining what she or he concludes about the data.

Ask: ***What do you see?***

Team members describe what they see in the data in a neutral way, avoiding interpretations, judgment, or conclusions. If there is little or inequitable engagement, you can use the following techniques:

- Have team members take notes independently about what they see and then share out.
- Have team members discuss what they see in small groups and then share out.
- Use follow-up prompts:
 - o *Look at parts of the data that relate to the students you work with. What do you see?*
 - o *Are there any noticeable differences among the populations represented in the data? Similarities?*
 - o *Are there any clarifications you need about how the data is presented?*

If judgments or interpretations arise, prompt the team to describe the evidence that supports their argument. Use the following prompts to redirect interpretations:

- o *That sounds like an interpretation. Be sure to write that down so we can discuss it later.*
- o *Remember, let’s try to read the data objectively first so the discussion about interpretations can be well-informed.*

- o *We want to wait to make interpretations until we've established what everyone can agree on about this data.*

Compile the team's observations on chart paper, a whiteboard, or anywhere that is visible to the whole team. The notetaker should record the team's observations as well.

2. Omissions: What information is missing in this data? (3-5 minutes)

Ask: ***What additional information could help us interpret this data?***

As needed, use one or more of the following prompts to stimulate discussion:

- *Who is not represented in this data?*
- *Whose experiences or perspectives should we learn more about to understand this data (e.g., students)?*
- *Do certain voices represented have more influence at our school than others?*
- *What personal biases should we be mindful about before we move into the interpretation stage?*
- *What additional context (such as race, gender, ethnic background, socioeconomic level) should frame how we interpret and make decisions using this data?*

3. Interpretations: What does the data suggest? (5-10 minutes)

During this section of the protocol, the team tries to make sense of what the data says about academic implementation and infer what is or isn't working and why. Encourage the team to think creatively and try to generate as many different interpretations as possible.

Ask: ***What does the data suggest?***

As needed, follow up with:

- *What root causes might best account for what we see in the data?*
- *Think about the students you work with. What does this data mean for them?*
- *In what ways do the actions of school staff members or our organizational routines impact this data?*

If engagement is low or inequitable, use the following techniques:

- Have team members journal independently about their interpretations and then share out.
- Have team members discuss interpretations in small groups and then share out.
- After providing think time, pass a 'talking piece' around the table. When a team member has the talking piece, they may offer a question, a comment, or they may pass. During the passing of the talking piece, team members do not respond directly to one another.

4. Implications for Practice (10-15 minutes)

Ask: ***How might this data inform our approach to schoolwide academic Multi-tiered System of Supports?***

As needed, follow up with:

- *What are the ways we can innovate to address what we see in the data to be more effective and equitable?*
- *Does the data suggest that any of our practices are ineffective? How could they be changed?*
- *What does this conversation make you think about in terms of your practice? About teaching and learning in general?*

- *Sometimes data warrants a classwide intervention*
 - *Look at your median score (middle score) at bottom of report*
 - *How does it compare to the fall benchmark score?*
 - *If the majority of my students are not showing low risk, do I need to consider a classwide?*
 - *If yes, what? (now count how many students show an accuracy issue)*

5. Articulating Next Steps (3-5 minutes)

Ask: ***What are our team's next steps to promote continuous improvement?***

As needed, follow up with:

- *Who else needs to see this data? How will we share it?*
- *What else do we need to know before taking action on this data? How will we gather that information?*
- *What are we going to stop doing/start doing/keep doing as a result of this data? How will we communicate that to our staff and stakeholders?*

The team collaboratively develops next steps for taking action, assigns ownership, and sets a timeline for each. Within 24 hours, use the meeting notes to send a summary to all team members.

Academic Data Reflection Protocol – Participant Note Catcher

1. Facts: Describe the data (3-5 minutes)

- Describe—do not interpret or judge.
- Focus on observations of ‘Who,’ ‘What,’ ‘Where,’ and ‘When.’
- Notice differences/disparities across the data.

2. Omissions: What information is missing in this data? (3-5 minutes)

- Consider the lived experience behind this data. What additional context would be helpful to the team in interpreting and acting on this data?
- What additional information would give us insight?
- Whose voices and experiences are not represented?
- What biases or blind spots might exist within our team as we interpret this data?
- How could students help us make sense of this data?

3. Interpretations: What does the data suggest? (5-10 minutes)

- Look for the bright spots and think about what may be contributing to success.
- Consider root causes.
- Connect the data to your personal observation and experience without blaming or naming individuals.
- Interpretations should be framed with an equity mindset.

4. Implications for Practice (10-15 minutes)

- What are ways we can innovate to be more effective and equitable?
- Does the data suggest that any of our practices are ineffective? How could they be changed?
- What does this conversation make you think about in terms of your practice? About teaching and learning in general?
- What ambitious yet feasible actions could our team take?

5. Next Steps (3-5 minutes)

- Team next steps (think communication, further inquiry, and possible adjustments to academic implementation)
- My personal next steps

Additional Prompts for Equity-Minded Data Reflection

These questions can stimulate equity-centered discussion throughout the data reflection protocol, particularly in steps 2-4 of the facilitator’s guide. Select questions that best fit the type of data the team will be reviewing or brainstorm original questions using these as a model. Come to the data reflection with 2-3 questions and look for opportunities to ask them while the team is working through the protocol.

