Data Carousel Activity

Time Needed

2 to 3 hours

Purpose

There are many ways to do this! The essence of the activity is that all staff have a chance to see the same data and formulate what they believe are strengths and concerns.

Directions

- Data in three or four categories is prepared for staff member groups to review at four different stations.
- Staff members are divided into groups of no more than eight people. For a faculty of more than about 32 the data "stations" should be duplicated, i.e., two stations for each of the four types of data.
- Each group considers the data and writes narrative statements. After approximately 15 minutes, the group looks at a new type of data.

Important: Divide staff members up into mixed groups so they have the benefit of various perspectives as they consider the data.

How to Present the Data

The packet method - 1 packet per data type placed at each table. Direct staff members to review the data individually in their small groups. After each person has considered all data, the group discusses strengths and concerns and the recorder writes these key points on two different sheets. At the end of the rotation, the sheets are collected and the group rotates to the next data station (or the data is rotated). This process continues so that each group looks at all types of data.

The large chart method - data displayed on walls and tables

All data is enlarged so that it is easier to digest and understand. An advantage of this method is that it makes it easier to have conversations about the data.

Explaining the Activity

1. Each group will consider all the data and information that's been collected for each area. The group gets to look at a different type of data.
2. Each group should choose a recorder and a facilitator who will keep you on track.
3. The task is to look at all the data sets at the table.
4. As a whole group, generate a brief narrative statement about each piece of data on the *Narrative Tally Sheets.* Narrative statements should: be simple, communicate a single idea about student performance, and be non-evaluative. See *Three Tips for Writing Powerful Narrative Statements.*
5. After 15 or 20 minutes, each group moves on to the next set of data, first reading what the other group wrote, then creating new and/or modified statements the group agrees on. Groups will have 15 minutes at the second, third, and fourth tables.

Very important! The group should not spend time during this exercise generating solutions or having

conversations about how to fix the concerns - this comes later.

Two ways to determine if narratives are strengths, challenges, or both

6. When the last rotation is finished, leadership team members collect narrative statements for each data category, type into the narrative tally sheet forms (keeping the redundancies) and print them out. When staff returns each group will read through the entire list and mark off redundant statements. (For example, each group should have written a statement about a three year trend in ISAT reading scores—the small group decides which statement is most accurate and clear. Next, the leadership team presents the statements on the overhead projector and the whole group agrees on the most accurate statements and then decides if the statement is a strength or a challenge (it may be both!).

Adapted from "Figuring Out What it Means." Holcomb, E.L. (2004) Getting Excited About Data (2nd Ed.): Combining People, Passion and Proof to Maximize Student Achievement. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.