Data Dig Process[1]

Selecting Data to Share:
Data is the center of the group discussion. The following process can assist in selecting data or artifacts that will promote the most interesting and productive group discussions. Data or artifacts (e.g., student work samples, STAAR data, district assessment data) that DO NOT lead to a single conclusion generally lead to rich conversations.

Sharing and Discussion of Data:
Discussions of some forms of data sometimes make people feel "on the spot" or exposed, either for themselves, for their students or for their profession. The use of a structured dialogue format provides an effective technique for managing the discussion and maintaining its focus. A structured dialogue format is a way of organizing a group conversation by clearly defining who should be talking when and about what. While at first it may seem rigid and artificial, a clearly defined structure frees the group to focus its attention on what is most important. In general, structured dialogue formats allot specific times for the group to discuss various aspects of the work.

1. Getting Started: (5 Minutes)
- The facilitator reminds the group of the norms, and asks for a volunteer timekeeper.
    - *Note: Each of the next four steps should be about 10 minutes in length.*
- The educator providing the data set gives a very brief statement of the data and avoids explaining what s/he concludes about the data if the data belongs to the group rather than the presenter.

2. Describing the Data: (10 Minutes)
- The facilitator asks: "What do you see?"
- During this period the group gathers as much information as possible from the data.
- Group members describe what they see in data, avoiding judgments about quality or interpretations. It is helpful to identify where the observation is being made—e.g., "On page one in the second column, third row . . . "
- If judgments or interpretations do arise, the facilitator should ask the person to describe the evidence on which they are based.
- 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.

3. Interpreting the Data: (10 Minutes)
- The facilitator asks: "What does the data suggest?" Second question: "What are the assumptions we can make about students and their learning based on the evidence?" These questions may be repeated as needed.
- During this period, the group tries to make sense of what the data says and why. The group should try to find as many different interpretations as possible.
- Think broadly and creatively. Assume that the data, no matter how confusing, makes sense to some people; your job is to see what they may see.

[1] This process was adapted from the National School Reform Faculty website at www.nsrfharmony.org. ATLAS Looking at data protocol.

- As you listen to each other's interpretations, ask questions that help you better understand each other's perspectives. You might want to chart it on paper for all to see.

4. Selecting Student Expectation/s (SE): (10 minutes)

- The facilitator asks: "What patterns do we see in our data?" Second question: "What are the vertical implications?" Third question: "What SE(s) will help us leverage the most progress on student learning?" Last question: "How does this SE align to our research theme?"
- During this period, the group selects a student expectation that will leverage the most skill and will tightly align to the research theme.
- Next, the team examines their scope and sequence and determines when and how the prospective SE will be delivered during the upcoming unit.
- The team develops a consensus about the SE at this time and records it in the Lesson Proposal.

5. Debriefing the Process: (10 Minutes)

The facilitator asks:

- How well did the process work?
- What about the process helped you to see and learn interesting or surprising things?
- What new perspectives did you gain?
- What questions about teaching and assessment did looking at the data raise for you?
- How can the team pursue these questions further?
- Are there things you would like to try in your classroom as a result of looking at this data?