

Notice and Wonder Protocol – SEED Survey

This protocol centers *what* the data say before interpreting *why* and creates space for multiple perspectives. A *Notice and Wonder* protocol helps educators approach student voice survey results with curiosity, objectivity, and an equity lens, ensuring that student experiences drive meaningful reflection and informed action.

1. Establish clear purpose and norms
 - a. Name the focus of the data review (e.g., student sense of belonging, engagement in learning)
 - b. Set norms: avoid “means,” “because,” or “caused by;” honor student and staff voice as valid expertise; use strengths-based, non-judgmental language
2. Prepare the data for integrated viewing
 - a. Create simple tables that only contain the results relevant to the focus of the review. Filter the large SEED Survey Excel files to show just the grades, domains, and student groups your team is interested in.
 - b. Display data in parallel formats when that is appropriate (e.g., same grade bands, same student groups, same years)
 - c. Use simple data visuals with clear labels
3. Individual, silent noticing
 - a. Individuals write what they observe, using sentences such as “I notice sense of belonging is lower for middle school students than it is for high school students”
“I notice that students who have experience in the foster care system show higher perceptions of self-efficacy in science than the average domain scores for all students.” “The percentage of students who report that an adult at their school cares about them is between 85-90% for elementary school students.”
4. Share and cluster “notice” statements
 - a. Facilitator chooses a format for sharing that promotes equity of voice
 - b. Record “notice” statements on chart paper, cluster by theme
 - c. Redirect interpretation statements back to “notice” statements

5. Individual, silent wondering
 - a. Wonder questions are generated using sentence stems such as, “I wonder why...” “I wonder how students might experience...” “I wonder what else we would need to know about...” “I wonder about staff perspectives related to what students reported...” “I wonder how our recent curriculum adoption in math impacts students’ math self efficacy...”
 - b. Strong wonder questions are open-ended, avoid blaming, center system conditions over individuals, and invite multiple data sources or voices
6. Share and cluster “wonder” questions
 - a. Facilitator chooses a format for sharing that promotes equity of voice
 - b. Record “wonder” questions on chart paper, cluster by theme
 - c. Redirect attempts to answer the questions back to sharing and grouping by theme
 - d. Note: this step often reveals shared assumptions, data gaps, and new inquiry directions
7. Identify priority wonders for deeper inquiry
 - a. Move from many questions to focused learning: Which wonder(s) are most aligned with district priorities? Which could inform action if explored further?
 - b. Product: 1-3 priority wonders to carry forward (documentation of questions, not conclusions)
8. Next steps planning
 - a. Clarify what comes next. Examples include examining disaggregated data, conducting empathy interviews, revisiting survey items for deeper understanding, connecting to improvement planning or professional learning
 - b. This last step is important for laying a data-informed foundation for actionable insights.

Notice and Wonder Protocol: Facilitator Guide

Purpose of This Guide

This facilitator guide supports district and school leadership teams in leading objective, equity-centered data conversations using the *Notice & Wonder Protocol*. The protocol intentionally separates observation (what we see) from interpretation (what we think it means) to support disciplined sensemaking.

When to Use This Protocol

This protocol is most effective **early in the analysis process**, before decisions or action steps are determined. Use this guide when:

- Reviewing newly released survey results
- Exploring differences across grade bands, student groups, or years
- Preparing for deeper inquiry and engagement with groups such as parents, community-based organizations, District Equity Committees, school boards.

Suggested Session Length: 60–90 minutes (adjustable)

Purpose, norms, and setup	10 min
Individual Notice	5 min
Group Notice share	10–15 min
Individual Wonder	5 min
Group Wonder share	10–15 min
Prioritizing Wonder questions	10–15 min
Closing and next steps	5–10 min

Materials Needed

- Prepared data displays (slides, dashboard, or printed handouts)
- Chart paper or shared digital note-taking space
- Two clearly labeled sections: NOTICES and WONDERS
- Sticky notes or digital equivalents (optional)

Facilitator Preparation (Before the Meeting)

1. Clarify the focus area (e.g., belonging, engagement, opportunity to learn).
2. Select data (results) relevant to the focus area.
3. Ensure visual simplicity—use clearly labeled charts.
4. Review survey content and purpose so you can help participants distinguish between similar-sounding constructs, domains, and topics.
5. Plan reminders to redirect interpretation back to noticing when needed.

Facilitation Steps

Step 1: Set Purpose, Context, and Norms

Time: 10 minutes

Facilitator Script (adapt as needed):

“Today we’re using the Notice & Wonder Protocol to look at data from the Student Educational Equity Development Survey, also known as the SEED Survey. Our goal is not to explain or solve yet, but to understand what the data are telling us before we draw conclusions.”

Share Key Norms

- Notice = facts only (what is visible in the data)
- Wonder = questions, not answers or explanations
- Avoid words like *because*, *means*, or *caused by*
- Use strength-based, non-judgmental language
- Treat student and staff voices as expertise

Post or display norms throughout the session.

Step 2: Frame the Data for Integrated Viewing

Time: 5 minutes

Facilitator Actions:

- Name which survey results are included.
- Clarify what participants should look for (patterns, similarities, differences—not reasons).
- Confirm shared understanding of key terms when necessary.

Step 3: Individual Silent Notice

Time: 5 minutes

Participant Task: Individually review the data and write **only observable statements**.

Sentence stems to display:

- “I notice that...”
- “Across results, ... appears higher/lower...”
- “I notice a difference/similarity between...”

Examples of strong “notice” statements:

- “I notice that 10th-grade students report lower belonging on SEED than 7th-grade students.”
- “I notice that students experiencing poverty and homelessness report lower self-efficacy beliefs in Language Arts.”

No discussion yet.

Step 4: Share and Record Group Notices

Time: 10–15 minutes

Facilitation Tips:

- Invite participants to share one notice at a time.
- Record statements verbatim in the NOTICES section.
- Group similar notices, *without summarizing or interpreting*.

If interpretation appears, gently redirect:

“Let’s pause—how could we restate that as something we directly observe in the data?”

Step 5: Individual Silent Wonder

Time: 5 minutes

Participant Task: Based on what was noticed, write open-ended questions.

Sentence stems to display

- “I wonder why...”
- “I wonder how students experience...”
- “I wonder what else we would need to know about...”
- “I wonder how our recent curriculum adoption in math impacts students’ math self-efficacy...”

Step 6: Share and Cluster Wonder Questions

Time: 10–15 minutes

Facilitator Role:

- Capture all wonder questions in the WONDERS section.
- Cluster by theme (e.g., relationships, access, engagement, systems).
- Avoid answering or validating one question over another.

If deficit-based framing appears, reframe toward systems or conditions:

“How might we phrase that as a question about conditions rather than people?”

Step 7: Prioritize Wonders for Deeper Inquiry

Time: 10–15 minutes

Participant Task: Work as a group to select 1–3 priority wonder questions using criteria such as:

- Alignment to district or school priorities
- Potential to inform improvement if explored further

Sample Prompt

“Which of these wonder questions, if explored further, could most help us better support students?”

Document the selected questions clearly.

Step 8: Close and Name Next Steps

Time: 5–10 minutes

Participant Task: Clarify what comes next

Examples may include:

- Disaggregating data for specific student groups
- Reviewing qualitative data or listening sessions
- Engaging students or staff in follow-up conversations
- Connecting findings to improvement planning

Closing Script:

“Notice & Wonder helps us slow down, so our actions are grounded in what students and staff are actually telling us. Today’s priority wonder questions will guide our next phase of learning.”

Facilitation Tips for Success:

- Protect silence—thinking time matters
- Expect and normalize discomfort with not jumping to solutions
- Honor differences rather than forcing alignment
- Re-center student voice if adult perspectives dominate

Optional Adaptations:

- Virtual meetings: Use chat or collaborative documents for notices and wonders
- Student participation: Use smaller groups and student-friendly language
- Extended sessions: Pair this protocol with a root cause or empathy interview process