

VC Member Support for Meetings and Conversations

Meaningful Group Dialogue

- ❖ Build rapport; suspend assumptions
- ❖ Pace the interaction
- ❖ Carefully select words, phrases to avoid the negative; Watch rate of speech, tone, and volume. Avoid “why” questions, if possible.
- ❖ Listen more than you talk
- ❖ Gather responses from all in the group
- ❖ Be conscious of nonverbal behavior (gestures, facial expressions, eye contact, body language, positioning)- theirs and yours
- ❖ Assume they’re doing “it”
- ❖ Start on time; end early

Meeting Structure

- ❖ **In preparation**
 - Room arrangement; Who’s in charge?
 - Translator services? Name tags? Name tents? Nothing?
 - Clarity about big issues on your part (see *Set the stage*)
- ❖ **Introductory remarks**
 - Welcome everyone
 - Introduce VC team members or let them introduce themselves - briefly
 - Have participants introduce themselves or do a room scan to see range of participants.
 - Set the agenda (3-4 items + time for “anything else.” Then, stick to it!
- ❖ **Set the stage**
 - Confidential (no names, please) and looking for system-wide information as well as specifics
 - We’ll be taking notes only to remember accurately
 - Here are the VC’s areas for clarification/additional information/exploration
 - There will be time for you to add information and ask questions
- ❖ **Guiding norms**
 - All voices need to be heard
 - Ask open-ended, guiding questions
 - Wait time is important
 - Keep listening!
- ❖ **Closing remarks**
 - Thanks. Is there anything else you’d like to share with us that we didn’t talk about? Other questions? (These other questions are often about process and procedures.)
 - More ideas/information, catch us on campus. We can always walk and talk.

Discussion Starters

- ❖ How will/did you know...?
- ❖ Is there a relationship between ...?
- ❖ How does/will you know if this work meets the needs of ...?
- ❖ What questions did the school/group ask about ...?
- ❖ What lead to the school/group’s conclusion about...?
- ❖ Is this characteristic of ...?
- ❖ We understand from the self-study that ...?
- ❖ How does this fit in with other requirements/initiatives ...?
- ❖ Is there interest/need in finding out more about ...?
- ❖ We recognize that ...
- ❖ The VC is struggling with ... Help us understand more about ...
- ❖ What guided your work/conclusions/decisions about ...?
- ❖ Have you considered/thought about ...?
- ❖ We’re curious about...
- ❖ If this, ... then ...?
- ❖ What will/can you do to ensure/help ensure...?

- ❖ What did different groups of stakeholders have to say/feel about ...?
- ❖ What elements of the student/community profile are related to...?
- ❖ In what ways can/will others support ...?
- ❖ If I were a ...? (Great for students and families.)
- ❖ How did the school/group learn from...?
- ❖ What factors contributed to these results?
- ❖ If you want to “tell” the school something, take your statement and turn it into a question. “Have you look at the research around...?” “In looking at ..., what other options/ideas were considered?”

Suggested Focus/Other Group Questions

REMEMBER: the best, most important questions come directly from the self-study. These should help move the understanding of all involved to a deeper, more meaningful place NOT just repeat what’s written in the self-study. You can read.

- ❖ What have you learned about student learning and success? What difference might this make? Relate these to your critical academic needs.
- ❖ How do you feel (are you comfortable with) the self-study results & plans for improvement with respect to you learner goals? If yes, what’s the most exciting? If no, how might it change?
- ❖ How will the plan for monitoring progress work from your perspective? How can/will you contribute to its success? Do you think it will work? How has it worked in the past?
- ❖ Always the concern over “all students.” Talk a little about how what you provide for your very best students is mirrored for your most needy? What about all those in the middle?
- ❖ Share your/your department’s/the school’s growth in data analysis.
- ❖ Taking a word from one of the criterion (coherent, relevant, parent involvement, professionalism, rigor), ask about their shared understanding of its meaning for the school.
- ❖ As you analyzed data and/or the criteria, what were some surprises? New learnings? Ahh-haas?
- ❖ From your perspective, which are the most meaningful/helpful/informative pieces of data? Share with us how you use this data as an individual? Department? Small learning community? School?
- ❖ From the core data, you have x% of students at BB and FBB. What data do you use to identify the more specific needs of these students? Talk about your understandings. How does this affect your own teaching practices? Within the department?
- ❖ How will you know that student learning is improving – especially around your school’s agreements about what’s important to know, understand, and be able to do by graduation?
- ❖ Learn more about professional development. Who decides the topics? Who plans and carries out activities? What about “individual” professional development?
- ❖ All the work of the self-study and our visit is to make clear (as clear as you/we can now) what are the next big issues for the school to work on as a whole school. Talk about what you see happening after we leave.
- ❖ Share how your group gathered information about how the critical academic needs of students are affected by the concepts in the criteria?
- ❖ How will what you learned (the critical academic needs and the action plan) alter you work at (or relationship with) the school? In your classroom? Within your department?
- ❖ What about your previous action plan? How successful? What helped? Hindered?
- ❖ What difference do you think these new understandings (action plan) will make in the school for students in 2 years? 5 years?
- ❖ School celebrates this and this. We do too. And, we’d add these other areas as well.
- ❖ What are you willing and able to do to support the action plan?

Talk – Listen – Hear – Respond