

Kent Intermediate School District Student Well-Being Survey Session 2

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Meet the presenters



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Agenda

- Welcome, agenda, and session goals
- Review of progress—*Sunil Joy, Kent Intermediate School District (Kent ISD)*
- Developing focus group research questions
- Using focus groups in data collection
- Determining how focus group data will be used
- Focus group best practices
- Next steps and closing

Session goals



Define what Kent ISD hopes to learn from focus groups.



Determine the most practical approach for data collection with focus groups.

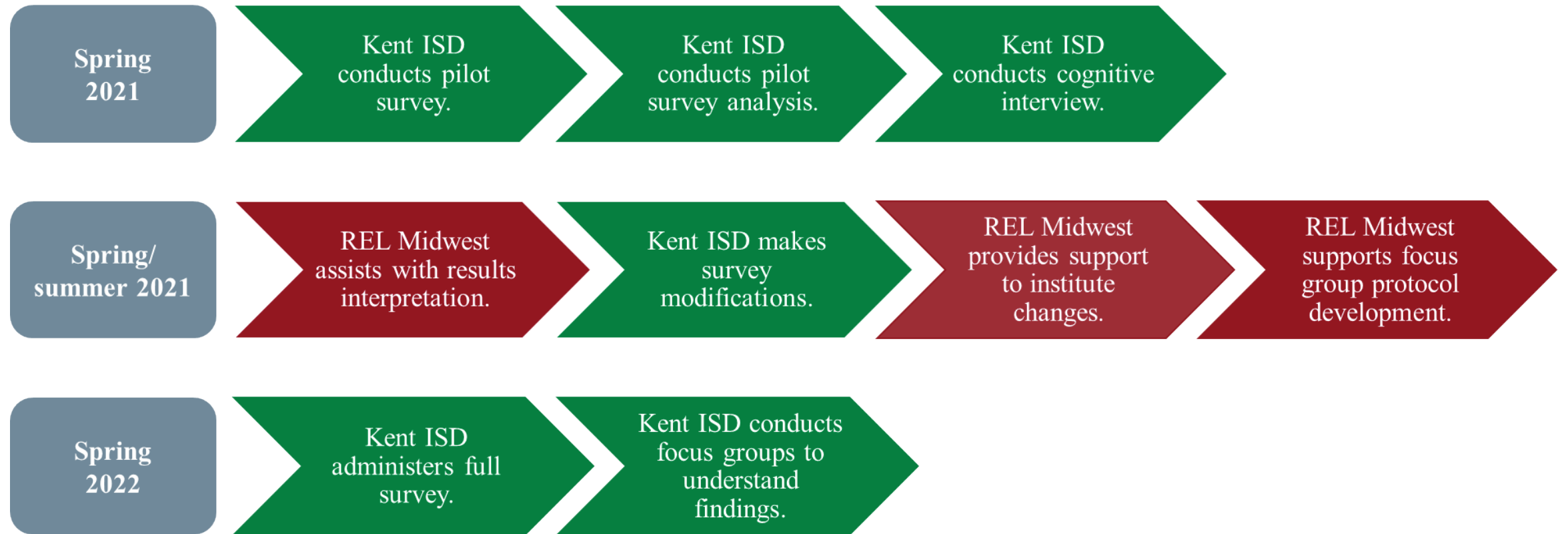


Learn best practices for focus group facilitation.



Determine next steps for qualitative data collection.

Project timeline with REL Midwest



Review of progress

Developing focus group research questions

Define your research goals

How will the focus groups help expand on responses from the student survey?

Many high school students reported they did not feel comfortable having conversations about race. I want to know why.

How will information from the focus groups inform the work of schools and Kent ISD?

The results will inform initial conversations about policies and interventions to improve opportunities for authentic conversations about race.

Fill in the blanks

“If we had a better understanding of _____, we could be better at _____.”



Define your research question

Research
Question(s)



Questions of interest that are
**specific, definable, and
measurable** through an analysis
of existing data or new data
collection

Activity: Developing research questions

Discuss the following questions:

- Based on the pilot survey findings, what are you most curious about?
- Are your questions specific, measurable, and definable?

Using focus groups in data collection

When are focus groups a useful research strategy?

- If there might be experiences or opinions that may need more investigation to understand trends in quantitative data analysis.
- **When bringing participants together might yield an enhanced understanding of the issues because of mutual discussion.**
- When prospective research subjects are similar in social position or position of authority.

Be careful with sensitive topics or discussions of potential trauma. These situations need forethought about how to optimize participants' comfort and mitigate potential harm of participation.

Determining how focus group data will be used

Activity: Group discussion

Discuss the following questions:

- How might findings from the student focus groups help schools and educators improve their practice?
- What specific actions could schools take based on findings from the student focus groups?
- Who should know about your findings from the survey and focus groups?
- How might you communicate findings to different audiences? Presentations, flyers, reports?

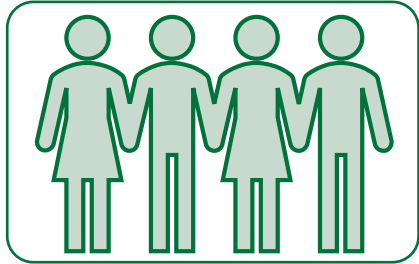


Take a break!

Developing a sample

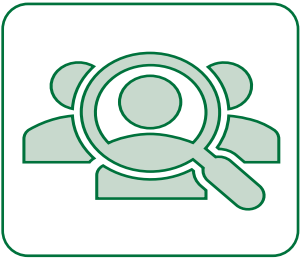


Considerations for developing student focus groups



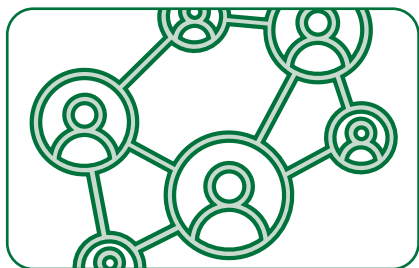
Ideal size

- 4–6 participants
- 2 facilitators



Sample selection

- Grade level
- School size
- Urbanicity
- Student demographic composition



Participant dynamics

- Relationships with other participants
- Relationship to facilitators (regulatory authority)
- Creating a safe environment for sharing

Considerations for developing student focus groups

Given your research questions, how will you ensure that diverse student groups are included in data collection efforts?

Consider:

- Race/ethnicity
- Family income
- First language
- Sexual identity
- Gender identity
- Disability diagnosis
- Academic ability
- Other?

Activity: Open brainstorming

Discuss the following:

1. What are the most important student characteristics that need to be represented?
2. How will you recruit participants to ensure representation?



Focus group best practices

Kicking off the focus group

- Welcome participants and introduce presenters.
- Conduct a “tech check” and explain expectations for engagement (camera on, microphone muted if not talking, etc.).
- Read confidentiality statements and inform participants that they can opt out at any time.
- State clearly the high-level goals of the conversation.
- Ask participants to state their name or other identifier each time they speak.



Facilitator best practices



- Ideally focus groups have two facilitators:
 - One facilitator to navigate the protocol and encourage conversation.
 - One facilitator to assist with technology (if needed), keep time, and take notes.
- Eye contact and body language are important, even on screen.
- Be aware of nonverbal cues from your respondents including body language and tone.

Facilitator best practices



- Turn off cell phones and other notifications.
- Be patient with participants. Youth might need extra time and encouragement to be comfortable sharing their thoughts.
- Make hesitant members feel comfortable.
- Use body language and eye contact to control excessive talkers and encourage reluctant talkers.
- Be careful that your own body language doesn't communicate approval or disapproval.

Navigating the protocol

Essential items

- Ensure confidentiality.
- Obtain permission to record.
- Let participants know they can opt out at any time.
- Explain the purpose and goals of the conversation.

Primary questions

- Note the essential concepts to capture on your script.
- Ensure the language is aligned and familiar to the participants (acronyms, names, etc.).

Subquestions

- Note the essential concepts to capture on your script.
- Modify language as needed for conversation to flow.

Flow

- Let the conversation happen.
- Take notes on items to follow up on or explore more.
- Make sure everyone has a chance to respond.

Encouraging conversation

Do you have anything to add to what [name] shared?

Have you had a similar experience or something to add to what was said?

I'd really like to hear your perspective on this.

Can you describe that experience?

Can you tell me more about that?

Thank you so much for sharing. [Name] I'd love to hear your thoughts on this topic.

Wrapping up



- Thank participants for their time and provide contact information should they want to share anything after the session.
- Take 10–15 minutes to debrief with your co-facilitator.
- Take notes on your immediate reactions, noticings, and questions that arose during the conversation. These notes can also be included for coding.

Next steps and closing

Next steps

- Refine your plan for focus group recruitment
- Plan and execute focus groups
- Attend session 3: Developing a codebook, qualitative data analysis, and communicating findings



