

UpLift Evaluation – Youth Engagement Evaluation Process and Questions for Focus Groups with Students

March 30, 2022

The following provides a suggested process and questions for focus groups that will be conducted by Evaluators from UpLift (two at each session) with students in schools who have participated in UpLift (e.g., received a grant and implemented or underway with implementation of the project, have been supported by the YEC). The schools are being purposefully selected by the YEC in the region and the focus groups will be conducted with students who are helping to lead the work (e.g., were involved in developing the grant, supported or are supporting the project). The number of students participating in each focus group session will range from 6 to 8 participants to 20 to 25. Therefore, the process will need to be adapted depending on the number of students.

Introduction (10min):

- We are here to learn from your experience with UpLift. This opportunity is not available everywhere yet and we want to learn how it's working. We hope to offer it to other students/schools in NS (you can help us make this the best!).
- What is your name? Your pronoun? What grade are you in? Why did you/your class join this team? (Written on board/paper, name tags).
- Briefly develop "community agreements" together (e.g., We want to hear all of your ideas. What can I/the group do to help you share? We may not all agree, but we'll listen to everyone).

Graffiti Wall

*This would be set up using a large paper mural template, with space to write community agreements, graphic(s) to cue the discussion of a healthy school and the grant project pathway (e.g., inside/outside of the school, road representing grant project pathway), and a section for theming the answers. **See draft mural design in Appendix 1.***

*RA will take photos of the mural before rolling up at the end of the session.
The session will also be audio recorded with permission.*

<p>Data Collection (5 min) (Student Voice)</p>	<p>On a sticky note, write/draw something that comes to mind when you think of a healthy school.</p>
<p>Participatory Theming (10 min)</p>	<p>What categories can we create using the words/drawings? [RA moves sticky notes into categories]</p> <p>Did your project fit into any of the categories we made? Which one(s)?</p>
<p>Data Collection (10 min) (Student Leadership/Decision-making)</p>	<p>On the path to developing [insert project name]...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who came along? • Who helped? • What were the steps? • Would you change anything about this? • Who might have helped (did we miss involving anyone?) <p><i>*Checking if students took part in deciding, inclusion of diverse students (outcome: student leadership/decision-making)</i></p>
<p>Data Collection (15 min) (Student Action)</p>	<p>What did you do once you decided?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How were you involved in making the project happen? • How did you work with other students? Did you work well together? • How did you help each other? • How did you work with teachers or the principal? What about other adults?

	<p>How did it go?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you feel like you made a difference? How? • What did you learn? • Did you have fun? How? What was the best part? • Was your work noticed/appreciated? By who? • What would you have liked to do? Or what would have made it better? <p><i>*Checking if/how students took part in enacting the project (outcome: student action). Probes may vary for different projects.</i></p>
<p>Data Collection (10min) (Student Voice, Student Leadership/Decision-Making)</p>	<p>Did you <i>feel</i> engaged in planning and making this project happen? <i>[Come up to the board/piece of paper and draw a dot/symbol to represent you in the spot that matches your engagement]</i></p> <p><i>*Evaluation team will design mural to display engagement categories, ensuring that all are represented as valuable/interesting roles (i.e., not suggesting that leadership is necessarily the best answer, using a square/splatter design instead of a continuum on a line).</i></p> <p>Categories:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Not engaged</u> (graphic: not involved in the action, things happening separate from you) 2. <u>Gave your ideas</u> (graphic: someone with a tie/clipboard and smaller people giving their ideas) 3. <u>Worked together</u> (graphic: taller people & shorter people's ideas mixed into one thought bubble) 4. <u>Leader</u> (graphic: leader of the parade, group is following)
<p>Optional activity (~5-10 min if time allows) (Student Voice)</p>	<p>Would you want to be involved in HPS work in the future? Please share some thoughts/draw on a piece of paper and leave it on your desk.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What would you do if you had this opportunity again? • What would you suggest to other students who might do this work?

	<i>*Inviting additional information about what students want/value, with anonymity to encourage honesty.</i>
Closing	Thank you for sharing with us! Together, we're going to keep working to make school a healthy and safe place

*Engagement categories derived from HPSAT Student Engagement Rating Scale have been rephrased for Student Engagement Self-Reporting:

Original HPSAT Statement	Student Engagement Self-Report Category
Students were not involved	Not engaged (graphic: not involved in the action, things happening separate from you)
Students were asked to provide input , but did not have decision-making power	Gave your ideas (graphic: someone with a tie/clipboard and smaller people giving their ideas)
Students actively collaborated with staff and were involved with decision-making	Worked together (graphic: taller people & shorter people's ideas mixed into one thought bubble)
Students were engaged as leaders in the process and shared decision-making power	Leader (graphic: leader of the parade, group is following)



Appendix 1: Draft Graffiti Wall Mural Design

Created by Rena Kulczycki (Uplift Youth Engagement Consultant)