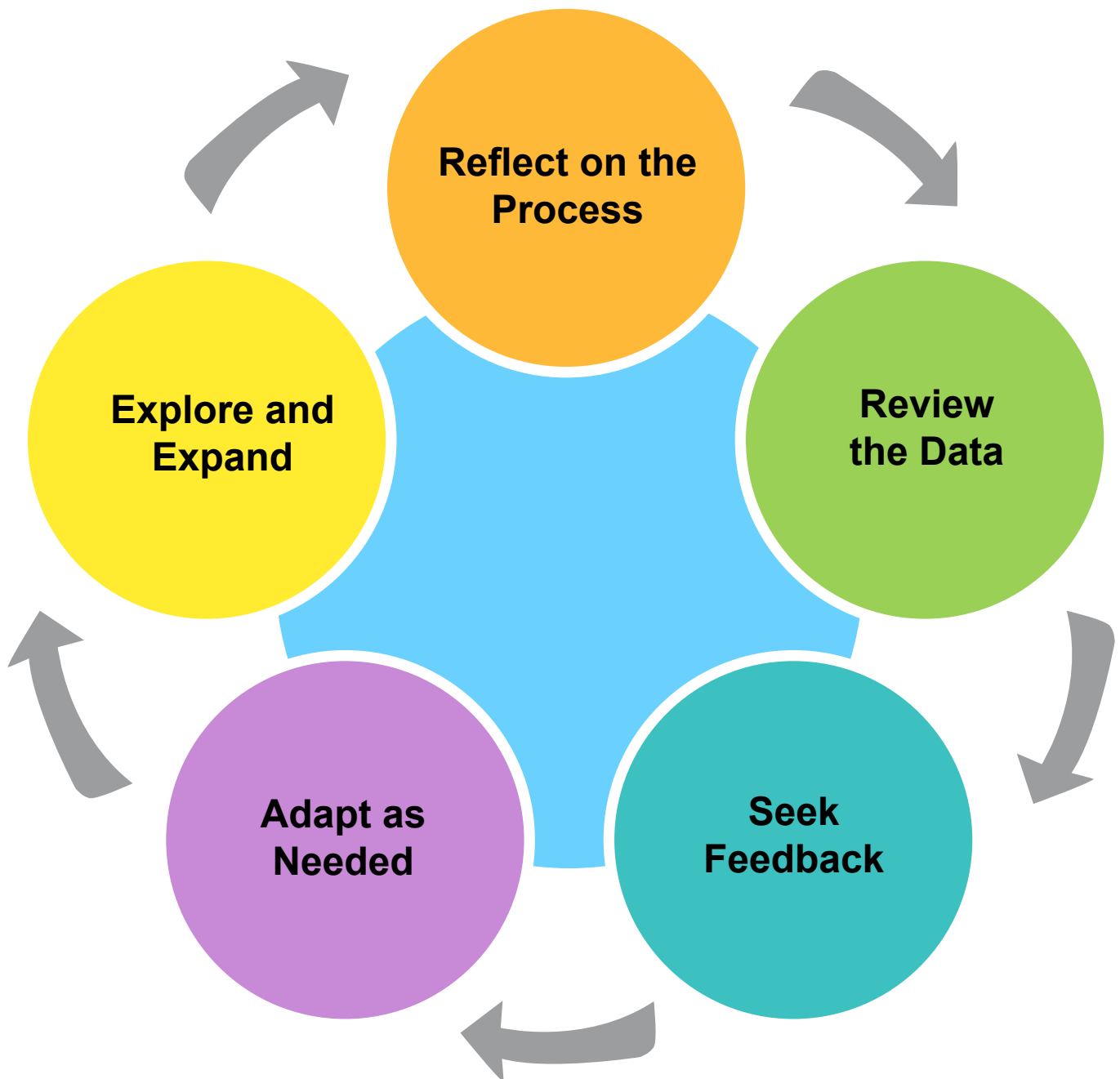




ONGOING EVALUATION OF CULTURALLY INCLUSIVE RECIPES INFOGRAPHIC

The graphic below represents the steps in the evaluation of culturally inclusive recipes. It is important to evaluate the process and monitor participation in the meal program when including culturally inclusive items on the school menu.



Reflect on the Process

Once the new menu item has been offered the first time, gather your team to reflect on the implementation. There may be some immediate modifications that must be implemented prior to offering the item again. Reflect on how collaborating with students and community members impacted the new recipe roll out, and whether the marketing plan was successful. There are always opportunities for improvement, so don't be discouraged if setbacks are experienced in the process. Capture suggestions for the next round of recipe development.

Review the Data

Participation and production numbers provide general data about new items, but may not be reliable in the first few menu cycles. When items are new on the menu, there may be variations in participation and production numbers due to a variety of factors. For example, numbers may be low if students in your school are reluctant to try new items, if there are production issues in the kitchen related to new item preparation, or if there was limited marketing to advertise the new item. Numbers may be high if students in your school are eager to try new items, or if there is a strong marketing campaign for the new item.

It is recommended that you review your data after the item has been offered at least three times. Be sure to capture unexpected and non-financial data such as new item selection compared to other menu items that day, and participation fluctuations when the item is offered. Non-financial measures to consider are improved relationships with school community stakeholders, increased community engagement, and improvements in perception of the school meals program.

Seek Feedback

After a new culturally inclusive recipe has been on the menu for four to six times or more, reach out to the students and community members who participated in the recipe development process. Ask for their feedback about the new menu item: what is their impression of the item? Is the quality acceptable? Does it need any tweaks or changes? Do they think it is a good fit as a regular menu item, or should it be seasonal? Also consider a survey for all students to provide feedback on menu items as a standard practice. Review the feedback when building, updating, and adjusting school menus.

Adapt as Needed

Adaptation is an important part of the menu innovation cycle. After reviewing the data and feedback from students, it may become clear that some changes to the new recipe are needed. Examples of changes include updates to the standardized recipe; adjustments to the preparation or serving of the item; a flavor or texture substitution; culinary training with staff to improve product quality; or cultural training to increase cultural competence and humility for nutrition staff.

Explore and Expand

As the cycle of incorporating a new culturally inclusive recipe in the school meals program comes to completion, it is time to begin again. Consider the following:

- Are there students from other cultures in your school community who could be invited to participate in this process?
- Have your student demographics changed in the past year?
- Are there opportunities to continue to expand or strengthen community partnerships?