



An introduction for schools and districts

Make every voice a catalyst.

Polaris transforms student conversations into **instant, actionable insights**. It's data that drives **real change** instead of sitting in spreadsheets.

❑ The problem

Schools have more data than ever. It still can't answer "why?"

Surveys are good at telling you what's happening. The natural next question is **why**, and a rating can't answer it.

- ❑ A survey at the end of the year is **not working**.
- ❑ A student council made up of the same six kids is **not working**.

Four years of climate survey data247 responses				
Question	2021	2022	2023	2024
How engaged are you at school?	3.2	3.4	3.1	3.2
Do you feel safe at school?	4.1	4.0	4.2	4.1
How supported do you feel?	3.5	3.3	3.6	3.4
Rate your school lunch quality	2.8	2.7	2.9	2.8
Are your classes challenging?	3.9	4.0	3.8	3.9
Do teachers care about you?	4.3	4.1	4.2	4.3

3.2 / 5

Average score

247

Responses



Now what?

Polaris starts here

Did you know?

Quantitative data is genuinely valuable. But without an explanation of *why* the numbers look the way they do, we fill the gap with our own assumptions, and read the data to confirm what we already believed.

[Coburn & Turner, 2011. See our white paper.](#)

❑ The idea

Numbers give you a starting point. Conversations tell you **what to do.**

"The projects we do are cool, but sometimes we're just doing busy work. I wanna actually do stuff that matters."

7th grader

Real-world connections

"Nobody really asks us what we think. The teachers decide everything and we just follow instructions."

8th grader

Student voice

"You get four things due Thursday and you just kind of shut down. It's easier to take the zero."

9th grader

Pacing & workload

"When we got to pick our own topics, it was way better. I actually wanted to come to class."

7th grader

Motivation

"When the counselor asked how the science fair went the next week, that's when I knew she actually cared about me, not just my grades."

7th grader

Teacher trust

"Doing well means being proud of who you are, not just what grade you got."

6th grader

Belonging

... and **241 more conversations** from the same week, every quote still linked to the audio it came from.



Polaris Education makes it possible to listen and learn from conversations at scale. An organization can hold hundreds of empathy interviews in a single week, and read what came back while it still matters.

■ What Polaris is

It starts with an empathy interview, not a questionnaire.

Brainstorm questions of your school community and have young people and their peers discuss on our Polaris recording platform. Adults can run the same session with other staff members, families, or the wider community.



Brainstorm what
questions you want
answered



Students or adults talk in
small groups



Polaris does the rest



Listen and learn about anything in your community

"What is one word you'd use to describe our school? Why did you pick it?"

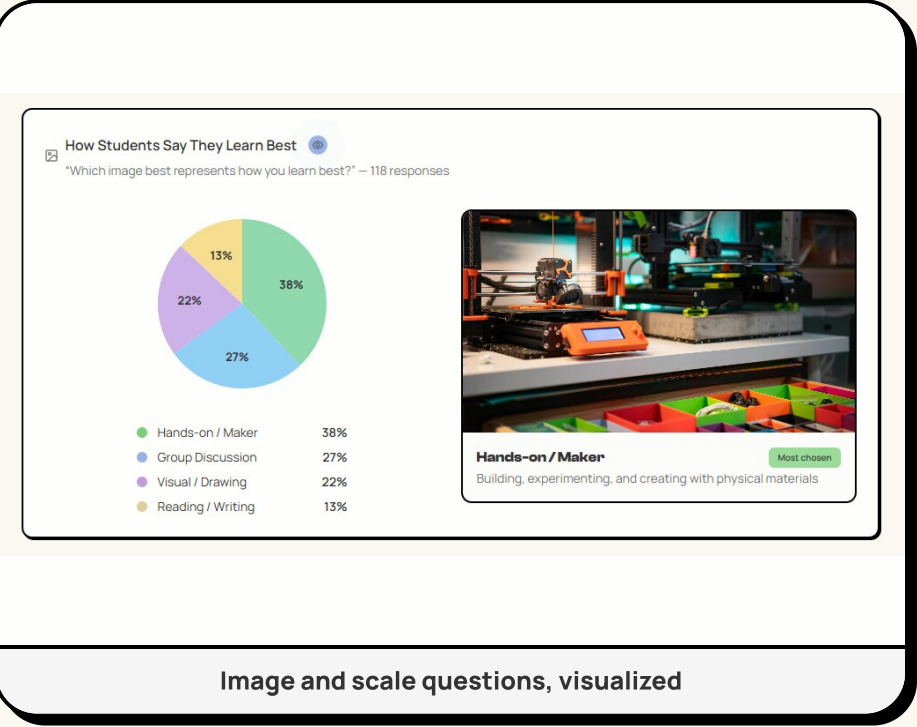
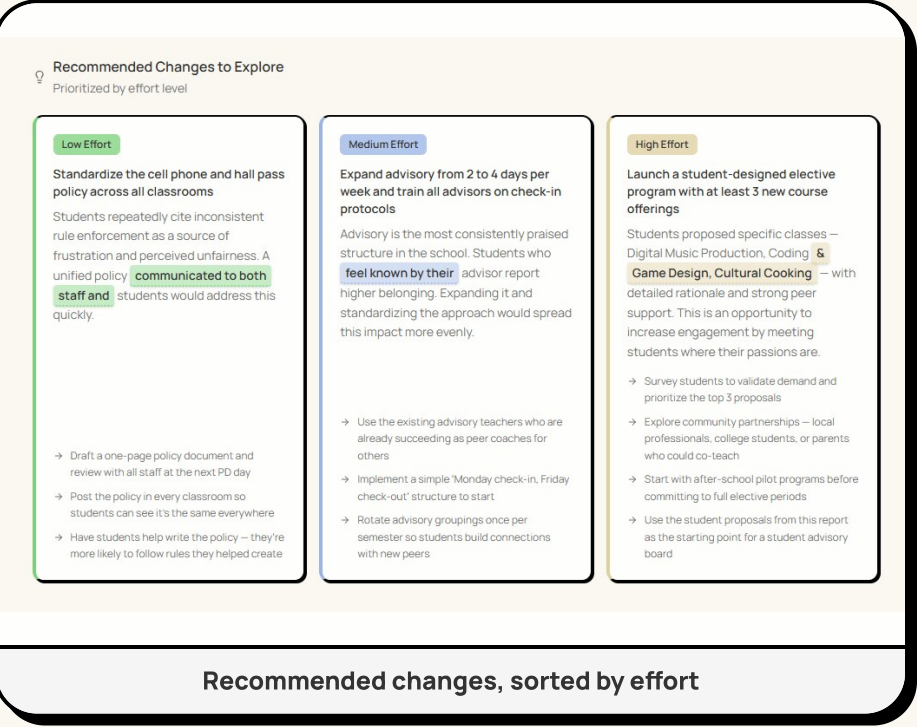
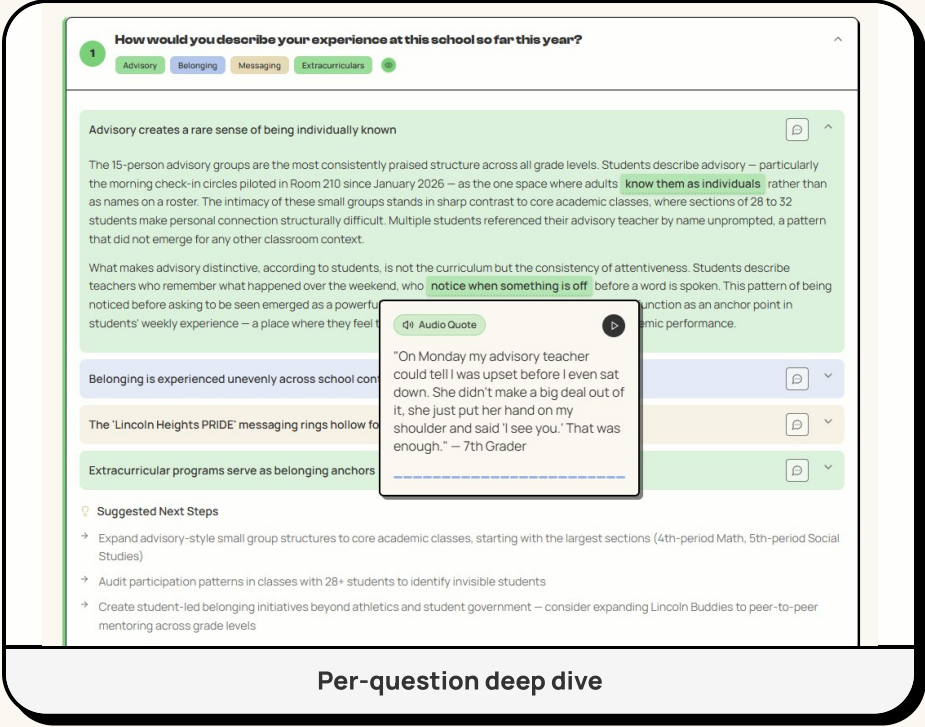
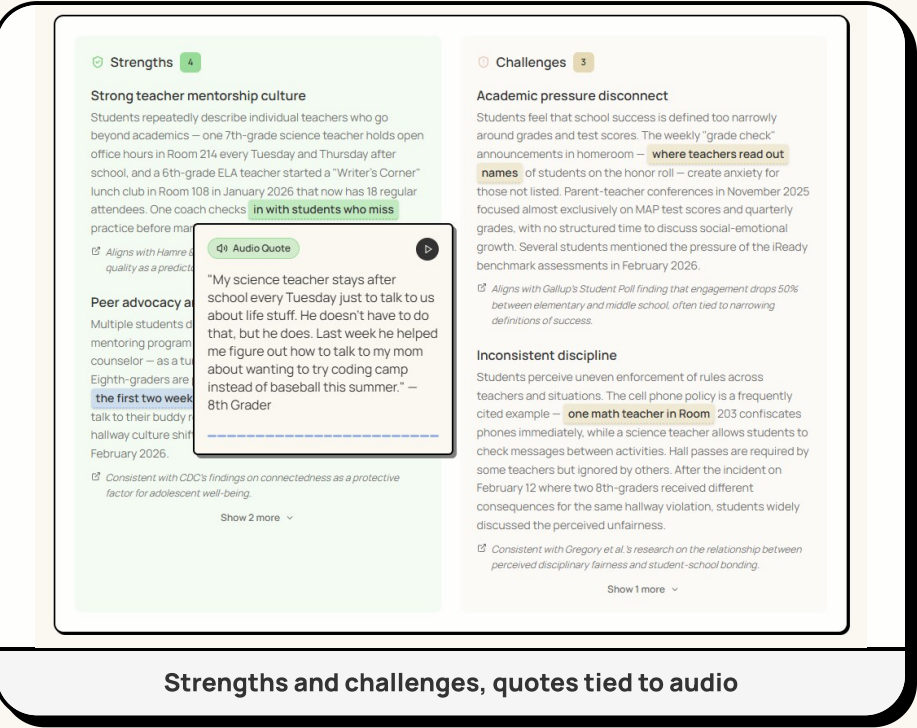
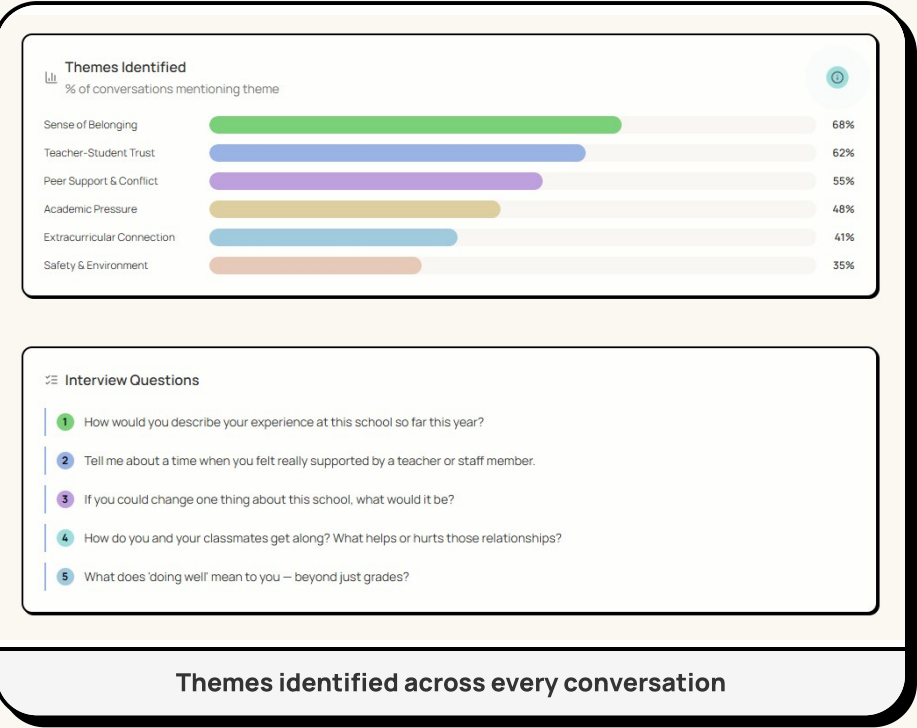
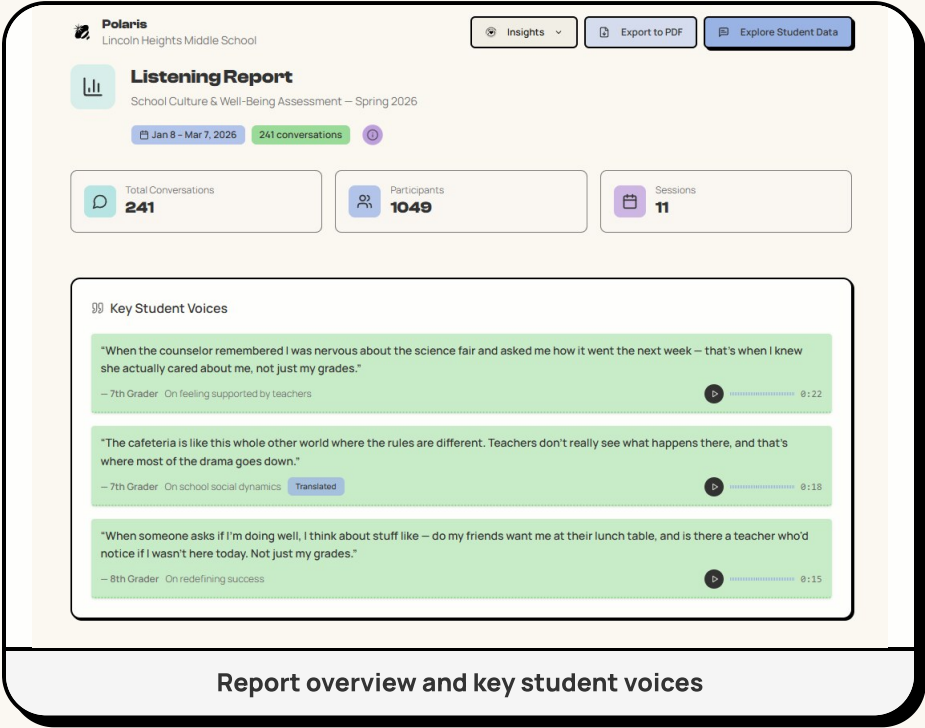
"Tell me about a time you felt like you really belonged at our school. What was happening around you?"

"What motivates you to learn? What makes you actually want to try?"

"What is one action, no matter how small or large, our school should take to make school feel better for everyone?"

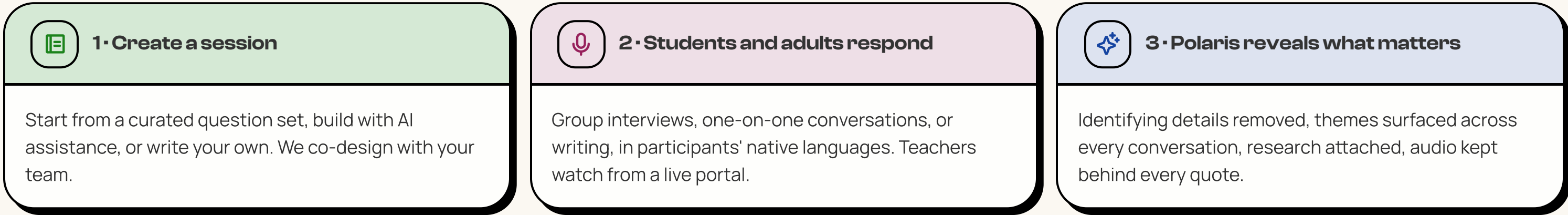
A listening report, back in 2 to 3 business days.

Read a full
example report

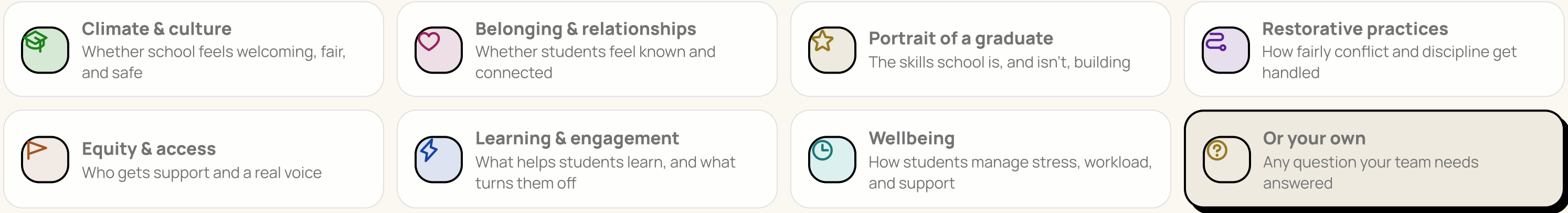


How it works

Three phases, and a question set for whatever you need to know.



Question sets a school can run today



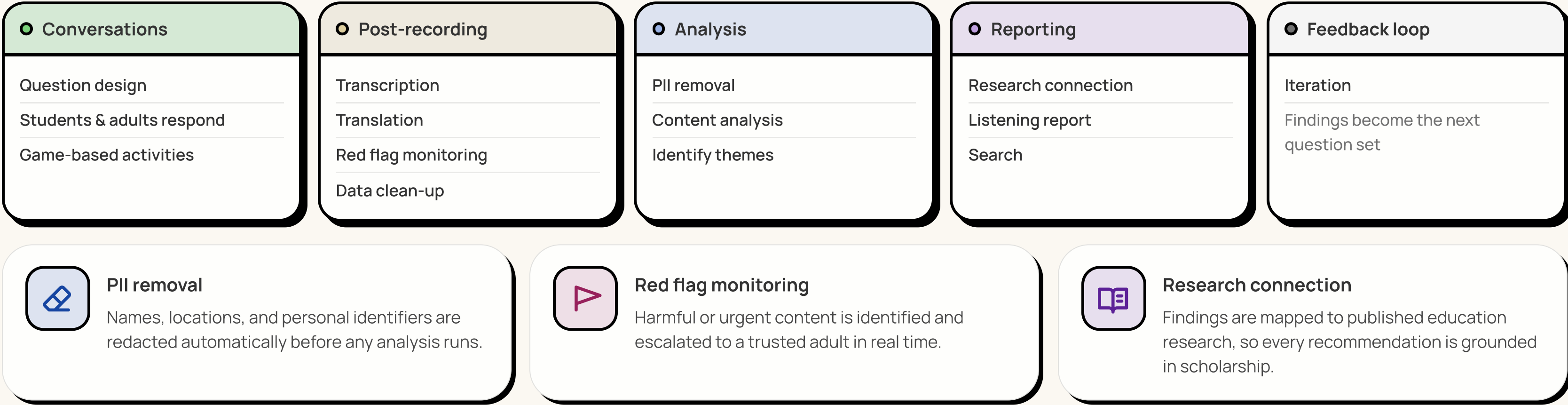
Up to 20,000 participants recording at one time. Sessions run 20 to 60 minutes. Full school or district analysis, students and adults alike.

Under the hood

The data pipeline

[Learn more about our features](#) →

Every recording passes through a multi-step process, from raw audio to a report you can question. Our team reviews before anything is published.



Search across Polaris

Ask hundreds of conversations a question. Get an answer with the receipts.



What did students say about engagement?

Ask Polaris



Polaris analysis

4 sources

- ✓ Searched 247 conversations for "engagement"
- ✓ Read 34 interview transcripts
- ✓ Analyzed themes
- ✓ Searched research for "student engagement"

Engagement runs highest during **interactive formats** like group discussions and hands-on projects, named in 68% of conversations. The most common barrier is pacing: students describe **multiple deadlines in the same week** as the point where they stop trying rather than ask for help.

Every claim opens to a student voice

"When we got to pick our own topics, it was way better. I actually wanted to come to class."

Audio quote · voice anonymized



"You get four things due Thursday and you just kind of shut down. It's easier to take the zero."

Audio quote · translated



Pilot

8,000+ students heard in the spring 2026 pilot.

8,000+

Students heard

11

Districts

42,000+

Quotes and key data points

FERPA, COPPA
and CIPA

Certified

Students at MIT's Youth Listening Lab, hosted by Cortico

Warren Local Schools

Vincent, OH

A small student leadership team held focus groups with **nearly every student in the district**, plus staff. The work led to **changes to the master schedule**, a new **Flex Friday** period, and **students leading professional development** several times through the year, presenting and learning from this data themselves.

District teams reading what students told them

Ottawa Area ISD

West Michigan

Multiple districts partnered to learn about 504 and IEP needs, asking students direct questions about **full inclusion** and examining district policy on grading, homework, and pedagogy, with a heavy emphasis on **universal design for learning**. Students partnered directly in the work and **presented to multiple school boards and superintendents**.

Holland · Hudsonville · West Ottawa · Winchester · Olentangy · Westerville · Mount Vernon · Marysville · Granville · Union Local · Warren Local · Riverside · Orchard View · Tacoma Public Schools

■ Privacy & ethics

Student data that **can't be sold.**



Compliant by design

FERPA, COPPA, and CIPA certified. Member of A4L's Student Data Privacy Consortium, with customizable data privacy agreements.



Anonymized automatically

Names, places, and identifying details are removed before analysis. Voices can be anonymized before playback.



Never used for training

Student responses are never used to train AI models, and never touch an open-internet chatbot.



Never for sale

Our nonprofit charter permanently prohibits selling or transferring student data. It survives dissolution, merger, or acquisition.



Automation drafts, humans publish

Six human review checkpoints, from question authorship through final report sign-off.



Low footprint

Compute runs on servers matched with renewable energy, and scales to zero between jobs.



95%

Privacy rating

Ranked by Common Sense Privacy

[View the full evaluation](#)

Built by educators inside a nonprofit, not a data broker. Read more: [our white paper](#) · [polariseducation.ai/ai-ethics](#)

□ Pricing

\$1.50 per student, per year.

\$ \$1.50 / student / year \$2,000 annual minimum, which covers report servicing for smaller schools.

- ☐ Four listening reports a year
- ☐ Every educator and family included, no per-seat fees
- ☐ Unlimited searching and data exports

	 Polaris	Typical vendors
Per-student annual cost	\$1.50	\$5 to \$15+
Pricing	Published up front	Quote after a sales call
Contract	Annual	Multi-year lock-in
Data exports	Included	Premium tier

We're a nonprofit. There are no investors and no shareholders. Licensing revenue covers infrastructure, and the rest goes back into the platform. Optional services (facilitator training, student sense-making, staff onboarding) are \$1,500 per 2.5-hour session, virtual or in person. Self-serve guides are free.



Next steps

Find your North Star.

polariseducation.ai/sign-up →

[Read the white paper](#)

Coming next: community dashboards, design challenges, and career-technical education integration.

