



LOCAL STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Why do we need a stakeholder engagement process?

Effective continuous improvement requires stakeholder engagement. This applies to all schools, not only those with an identification.¹ For stakeholder engagement to be meaningful and impactful, we must continuously reach out to and involve families and community members in ways that are systemic, collaborative, strength-based, and outcome-driven.

What exactly is effective stakeholder engagement?

Effective stakeholder engagement includes the crucial components of building trust with families and community members; connecting families and community members to knowledge, information, and tools that support learning outside of school; supporting educators with time and skills to connect with stakeholders; and collaborating consistently with families and community partners — across programs, grade levels, and buildings.

What does an effective stakeholder engagement process look like?

Evidence from national organizations and the US Department of Education indicate that best practices in stakeholder engagement involve four key steps, adapted from the [Reform Support Network](#):

Inform. Inform key audiences about the work ahead, potential changes in key practices, expectations and systems, and in what ways stakeholders can provide input. Use a range of communications tools (digital, print, video, meetings) to provide timely, accurate, and actionable information to a wide range of stakeholders. This builds a common understanding of the shared work.

Inquire. Ask your stakeholders what their needs are, listen to feedback closely, and respond to stakeholders' questions. Create outreach strategies that feature effective feedback loops, so that stakeholders know they have been heard and understood. Ask if you've understood their input correctly. This builds trust and transparency.

Involve. Involve key audiences with diverse perspectives in your continuous improvement work as active co-creators of policies and programs. Key audiences should always include the families of students who are most at-risk, historically marginalized, and furthest behind academically. Community groups and organizations serving families are often excellent stakeholder partners, as they have well-established, trusting relationships and channels of communication with families. Also, routinely invite local businesses and representatives

¹ Schools/districts with an identification have specific requirements for stakeholder engagement. More information about these requirements is available [here](#).

from higher education (technical colleges, universities, trade schools) into the process. This builds positive relationships.

Inspire. Effective engagement is not just listening to stakeholders but proactively enlisting them in the shared continuous improvement work. Your stakeholders will be inspired to act and be an active participant in school improvement efforts when they have help play a role in the development of policies, programs and perspectives. This creates enthusiasm.

What resources on stakeholder engagement are available?

Engaging with Families (DPI)

<https://dpi.wi.gov/engaging-families>

Empowering Families and Communities (Data Quality Campaign)

<https://dataqualitycampaign.org/topic/empowering-families-and-communities/>

Educator and Stakeholder Engagement Resources (CCSSO)

<https://ccsso.org/taxonomy/term/148>

Leading by Convening (National Association of State Directors of Special Education)

<http://www.ideapartnership.org/documents/NovUploads/Blueprint%20USB/NASDSE%20Leading%20by%20Convening%20Book.pdf>

Meaningful Local Engagement Under ESSA (CCSSO)

<https://ccsso.org/resource-library/meaningful-local-engagement-under-essa>

Reference

Reform Support Network. n.d. *From “Inform” to “Inspire”: A Framework for Communications and Engagement*. Accessed February 5, 2019.

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/implementation-supportunit/tech-assist/framework-communications-engagement.pdf>



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