Community Advisory Teams: Engaging with a Purpose
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Community Advisory Team

An intentional group of diverse stakeholders continuously engaged over a period of time to advise school leadership on critical issues on behalf of the school community

Critical Elements of an Effective Community Advisory Team

Ambassadorship:
Each member should serve as an ambassador by:
• Liaising with identified constituent group(s)
• Consulting their constituents on issues pertinent to the team
• Translating information given to the team back to constituent group(s)
• Representing ideas and concerns of constituents at team meetings
• Sharing and championing the team’s vision with the school community

Reflect and Connect:
• How could a structured ambassadorship help constituent groups at my school advocate for what they need?
• How could ambassadors help me communicate and enact the vision for school improvement?
**Balance:**

Team organizers should keep a balance between:

- Leaders sharing information with the team and team discussion
- Activities meant for member learning and those meant to elicit sharing
- Agenda items coming from leaders and members
- Effort of leaders and members within team meetings
- Talk time of all members and leaders

**Reflect and Connect:**

- **Which issues of school improvement should I bring to stakeholders?**
  - What would members need to know in order for that input to be helpful to me?
- **What issues of school improvement would stakeholders want to bring to me?**
  - How could I show that I am hearing these concerns?

**Clarity:**

Leaders should maintain clarity around:

- Purpose and parameters of each team discussion
- Role and authority of advisory team members
- Expectations for active participation on the team
- What question is being asked of the team at any given time

**Reflect and Connect:**

- Pick an issue from your previous response that you would want to bring to the community advisory team.
- Write a specific and clear question to be presented to the advisory team that would solicit valuable information from members around this issue.
- Then, hone your question by asking yourself – Is this what I really want to know? What specific information would be helpful to me to solve this problem?
- What expectations would you have of the team to ensure you are getting the most useful information?
Diversity:

Team organizers should ensure diversity of perspectives by:

• Inviting both champions and resistors of school initiatives to join the team
• Ensuring representation of both majority and minority groups on the team
• Welcoming talkers and thinkers through inclusive and varied discussion protocols
• Asking “what else?” frequently throughout discussions
• Including students on the team

Reflect and Connect:

• Brainstorm names or groups that you would want to be represented on the community advisory team at your school, including, but not limited to,…
  • Roles within the school community
  • Racial/ethnic groups
  • Geographic groups
  • Language groups
  • Issue-related groups
  • Champions and resistors

Launching a Strong Community Advisory Team

Write, pair, share:

If my goal is to have a strong community advisory team in place at my school by October 1...

1. What questions do I need to ask and to whom?

2. What tasks need to get done? When and by whom?

3. What ideas do I need to reflect on?