



Community relations and community engagement

Discussion questions

Effective community engagement is a goal of many boards of education and district leaders. Interactive and effective communication between a school district and its community gets people involved in school or district events. We want participation from parents and residents in our information meetings, school organizations, district surveys and community focus groups. Yet, the strong involvement and participation that district leadership desires escapes many of our best efforts. What is community engagement, and how can we develop it in our district?

Community engagement discussion questions

- Does our school district/ESC have a way to determine what the public expects of our schools?
- Does our district/ESC have a way to determine the public's perception of and confidence in education?
- How extensively is the public currently involved in the development of our school vision, improvement plan or strategic goals?
- How broad is that involvement? Should it be more extensive?
- If our board convenes the community, what benefits and outcomes have we seen?
- Looking specifically at our board's effort to raise student achievement, do we see areas of vision, goal setting, implementation, accountability or advocacy where public advice, approval or assistance would be beneficial?
- In what areas do we want the public's role to be advisory, and in what areas do we want the public to share in decision making?
- Whom do we want to engage and why? What will their involvement look like?

Oregon School Boards Association, adapted from *Communities Count: A School Board Guide to Public Engagement*, National School Boards Association.

