

# Community Partnership

## **The Miracle of Public Education: Then and Now**

Old Goal: “Rake the geniuses from the rubbish.”

New Goal: Unfold the full potential of every child.

Old System: Selection

New System: Learning

The Old System persists despite the New Goal.

## **WE HAVE A SYSTEMS PROBLEM, NOT A PEOPLE PROBLEM**

A Cautionary Tale

FOUR AREAS THAT PROGRESSIVE DISTRICTS TRIED TO CHANGE:

- Curriculum
- Motivation
- Assessment
- Time

## **HOWEVER, THE PUBLIC IS NOT READY**

### **Prerequisites for Progress (Growth)**

- Understanding
- Trust
- Permission
- Support

1<sup>st</sup> Rule of School Restructuring: “You cannot touch a school without touching the culture of the surrounding town.”

2<sup>nd</sup> Rule of School Restructuring: “To unfold the full potential of every child, we must do more than change our school. We must change America one community at a time.”

## **The “Great Conversation” Formal Track**

Led by the School Board—with complete buy-in from teachers

On the community’s turf at the community’s convenience

Advantages:

- Expands the size of audience
- More receptive audience
- Better behavior
- Better time constraint
- Change “us” vs. “them” mentality
- Easy to track the message to the community

## **Mapping the Community**

Identify all groups

Determine when/where they meet

Organize into categories:

- Civic clubs
- Fraternal societies
- Professional associations
- Labor/Farm organizations
- Ethnic societies
- Businesses over a certain size
- Religious institutions

Also: Internal groups, Existing partners, Vendors, Ad Hoc assemblies, Virtual communities

## **Decide on the Message**

Promote success of schools

Explain the need for change

Make it personal (what is in it for them)

Always seek open/honest exchange of ideas

Parts:

- Welcome
- Explain the timing
- Share good news
- Introduce the topic of school restructuring
- Schools cannot do it alone
- Finish with one “amazing fact”
- Q & A

### **Developing Scripts**

- They help presenters stay on message
- They provide support and confidence to presenters
- They help presenters define their responsibilities
- They expose everyone in the community to the same message at approximately the same time
- They provide all staff members with an understanding of the message
- They provide a written record of what's been said as the "great conversation" evolves

Once the scripts have been finalized and reviewed, everyone on staff must be given a copy.

### **Building Teams**

Teams of 2-4 presenters

Primarily teachers and classified staff

No administrators or board members

Misgivings: Teachers are not "qualified" -- Teachers can't answer all the questions -- Teachers can't control the audience

### **Conducting a Communications Audit**

Identify communication tools to spread the word.

### **Creating a Comprehensive Schedule**

Each presentation is an ongoing series of talks focusing on increasing student success and strengthening the community. Keep track of progress by posting a visual display of all presentations (group, team, date, location).

### **The Informal Track**

5 S's:

- Shift your attention to the positive
- Stop bad-mouthing one another in public
- Share something positive within your ego networks
- Sustain your effort
- Start today

## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP BOARD COMMITTEE CHARTER

Ref: (a) Board Policy 1240, Committees  
(b) Board Policy 4122, Business and Community Partnerships  
(c) J. Vollmer, *Schools Cannot Do It Alone*

1. Purpose. In accordance with references (a) and (b), a Community Partnership Board Committee is created to continuously improve formal and informal partnerships between the District and the community, aligned with the mission of the District.

2. Scope. This charter is applicable to all community organizations and citizens within the District.

3. Membership. Two Board members will serve on the committee as appointed by the Board president. These two Board members will then select the rest of the committee from School District staff and community members.

4. Action. Reference (c) provides a framework for improving community partnership. The committee may utilize techniques of community mapping, team building, script development, and communication audits. The committee will create a comprehensive schedule of presentations to community organizations and track the progress. The script/messaging and the comprehensive schedule will be presented to and approved by a majority vote of the School Board.

5. Reporting. Progress in improving community partnership will be reported routinely at regular Board meetings.

6. Cancellation. The committee will remain in effect until July 2016 or until discontinued by Board action. The board may extend the committee by majority vote.