



## Engaging Stakeholders



### How to Use This Guide

This discussion guide is intended to assist California educators who wish to use the QSF **Engaging Stakeholders** video in meetings or discussions.

The questions and activities can be modified to fit the chosen purpose and audience.

## Overview

Stakeholders play an important role in all school improvement activities—whether it is developing a plan, monitoring progress, or celebrating accomplishments—by sharing unique insights, resources and skills that contribute to a school environment where students learn and thrive. In turn, schools can:

- Create a welcoming environment in the school and learn about the cultures and languages spoken in the community
- Provide frequent opportunities for two-way communication to encourage parent engagement
- Reach out to community leaders to encourage others in their community to become engaged in school activities
- Provide transportation to school-based events or by providing childcare and activities for children
- Build trusting relationships among stakeholders to create a strong foundation of shared responsibility for improving school performance

## Key Topics

- Clear, welcoming communication
- All stakeholders can work and learn as a team
- Parent and community engagement is an ongoing process that pays off

## Reflection Questions

### Essential Questions for Schools

- To what extent can community involvement improve both student and school outcomes?
- What does your school do to link with community organizations?
- What is the first impression a parent would have when contacting our school?
- Is our critical information readily available in accessible formats?
- What are some barriers that stakeholders may have to engaging in meetings? What can we do to help eliminate those barriers?
- What is a welcoming school? Does our school meet these criteria?

- Does our school celebrate with parents? Could we do more?
- What data do we have about parent perceptions of our school? If we don't have that data, how can we collect it?
- What have we done to develop trusting relationships? Can we do more?

**Essential Questions for Parents**

- What dreams do you have for your child this year? By the end of high school?
- How does your child define success for herself/himself?
- How do you define success in school for your child?
- What do you need to help your child be successful in school?
- Who can you reach out to become actively involved in your child's success?

## Preparing for Stakeholder Engagement

### Inviting Stakeholders to Become Members of a Group

The invitation is the first impression of the event, and should provide useful and practical information. You want to include enough information to allow individuals to understand the context for collaboration, their role, and the degree of influence they can have as a member. In your invitation include as many of the following suggestions as possible.

1. Determine the outcome of their attendance and participation. For example, it could be gaining knowledge of a current initiative, interpreting student data, understanding school experiences, or making suggestions or providing feedback on a school or district plan. Whatever the outcome, it should be clear enough that the parent or stakeholder could determine how their contributions can support the meeting process.
2. Include the agenda as part of the invitation so that individuals feel comfortable with committing their time.
3. To remove barriers, include a calendar with the schedule of dates, times, and locations. Choose meeting venues in a variety of places throughout the community that are accessible as well as a selection of times to allow people with demanding work and family needs to attend. If possible, offer childcare and food.
4. Stress the idea that all community members are equally welcome. Examples of members are: parents, grandparents, and other family members who are engaged in the child's life, community employers, cultural leaders, and community organizations. The goal is to reflect diverse perspectives and experiences. Additionally, provide translators and interpreters so that individuals with diverse needs have opportunities to participate equally.
5. Articulate how the group and meeting outcomes will be different because of stakeholder contributions.
6. Any shared materials should be easy to understand and translated as needed.

## Gathering Stakeholder Feedback on How Students are Learning and Thriving within a Specific Initiative, Project, or Plan

The purpose of this activity is to determine the degree to which students are learning and thriving within the purview of an initiative, project, or plan. This activity provides a means for each attendee to participate and for the group to hear from all members. The use of the graphic organizer is a way to collect and visually display feedback from the group.

1. Describe the initiative, project, or plans on which the group should focus. Examples of these could be a strategic plan, local education plan, a reading initiative (e.g., to improve literacy) or a project (e.g., to improve college and career readiness).
2. Give an update to the group on what the school or district has accomplished so far in implementing the initiative, project, or plan. Have any needed documents available for the group to reference during the discussion (e.g., completed plans, current data, charters, scope of work etc.).
3. Referring to the initiative, project, or plan, have members discuss in small groups each of the indicators and then determine a rating for the degree of implementation. After discussing the indicator and rating, have each member provide evidence of this rating. Evidence can include specific milestones or activities. The charts are then discussed and shared out with the full group.

### Description Example: District Plan

Ratings	Contributes to the Achievement of High Standards for All Students	Addresses District Goals	Effectively Uses District Resources
Powerful			
Moderate			
Minimal			

**Note:** Indicators change based on the initiative, project, or plan.