Agenda

Overview and Outcomes

A Tale of Two Approaches to Engagement

Coming to Common Understandings
   The Engagement Spectrum
   Effective Engagement

Exploring Entry Points for Engagement
Outcomes

To build a shared understanding of authentic school-community engagement
Outcomes

To articulate the rationale for community engagement in schools and districts
Outcomes

To identify principles of effective engagement
Outcomes

Explore entry points for engagement work and planning in districts and schools.
A Tale of Two Approaches to Engagement
City school board takes heat for graduation requirements at low-turnout hearing

Two parents don't think students should be forced to apply to a higher-ed school in order to get a diploma.

Only two people attended the first of two public hearings Tuesday night on proposed changes to Portland’s high school graduation requirements, and both criticized a provision requiring all students to apply to college, a vocational or technical program or the military in order to get a diploma.

“I was surprised to see this (requirement,)” said Pandika Pleqi, who has an eighth-grader and a graduating senior in the district.
Portland School Board adopts diploma standards, with changes

High schools will require students to have a post-graduation plan, but a pro-college emphasis has been dropped and more options added.

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The Portland School Board dropped a plan that would have required every high school student to apply to college, a vocational or technical program or the military to get a diploma.
Coming to Common Understandings
QUESTION 1 (5 min)
What does authentic community engagement mean to us?

QUESTION 2 (5 min)
Why do you think community engagement is important for school districts?
Principles of Successful Engagement

1. Inclusive and equitable
2. Intentional
3. Connected to decision-making and change
What Do People Want?

1. To belong
2. To have a legitimate voice
3. To have an impact
Stronger and more trusting relationships

Positive Outcomes
Positive Outcomes

New youth, family, and community leaders
Positive Outcomes

Innovative solutions to vexing problems
Positive Outcomes

Greater community support for change
Engagement = Inclusion
Engagement → Decision Making

Action

Organizing

Change

Engagement
Engagement Spectrum

Informing | Seeking Input | Deciding Together

**More** school directed

**Less** community involvement

**Less** school directed

**More** community involvement
Critical Considerations

• What is the intent of the selected strategy?

• To what extent is it scaffolding the schools and community toward a larger goal for engagement?

• How well do the strategy, the goal, and the communications align with one another?
Mapping
Entry Points
Defining “Entry Point”

An existing policy, program, or practice that can be modified to amplify stakeholder voice and involvement in district/school decision-making, enhance understanding of the principles and value of authentic engagement, and help people see the transformative potential of larger engagement driven systems change.
Defining “Entry Point”

*Quick wins: Small “winnable” successes that can be achieved relatively quickly and cheaply to help people see the transformative potential of larger investments in authentic engagement.
Examples

• Parent-teacher conferences
• Exhibitions of learning
• Student governance
• Surveys (parent, teacher, student, community)
• Open houses + orientation programs
• Community-based/service learning projects
• School board meetings
Conditions to look for:

• It intersects with and impacts teachers, students, families, nonprofits, service providers, businesses, cultural groups, voters, etc.

• It can influence governance, authority, and decision-making
Conditions to look for:

- Impact can be achieved without significant investments of time, money, resources
- The change will be visible to and felt by people inside and outside of the school
Feasibility

• Is short-term success likely? Can success be achieved in a manageable period of time?
• Will the change be supported by school leaders, families, and the community?
Feasibility

• Can the district/school find or allocate the capacity required to coordinate the work?
• Is “a coalition of the willing” already in place? Can a coalition be assembled?
• Can community assets be leveraged to increase necessary capacity or resources?
Relevance

• Does the entry point impact multiple constituencies and stakeholders?
• Will the entry point influence governance, authority, and decision-making?
• Is there urgency? Is it enough to bring people to the table without creating a sense of crisis?
Relevance

• Is it “sacred” to educators and/or the community? Will it create tension or confusion?
• What might the consequences be if the reengineering work is unsuccessful?
Affordability

• What level of time, funding, human resources, or political capital will be required to achieve the desired impact?

• Is the investment worth the potential gain? What is the likely return on the investment?
Affordability

• Can the change be sustained with a reallocation of existing time, funding, and resources?
• Or will sustainability require new, additional, and/or permanent resourcing?
Influence

• Is the change likely to pave the way for more meaningful modifications to other policies, programs, and practices?
• Does it have the potential to shift the mindsets and overcome the biases of educators, students, families, and community members?
Influence

• Could it lead to significant changes in school culture and governance?
• Will improvements lead to positive changes in learning experiences and pedagogy?
Narrative

• Is the rationale for the change compelling and easy to understand?
• What rationale will appeal to busy educators and their needs, interests, and aspirations?
• Does the change have the potential to inspire and motivate?
Narrative

• Will it challenge and overturn entrenched narratives that stakeholders have about themselves and others?
• Will it positively impact internal and external perceptions?
Planning for Engagement:
Entry Points
Feedback on the Process
Reflection and Closing