

Engaging Community Partners

Facilitator

Community partners, including local business organizations, service and veterans clubs, non-profit agencies, neighborhood councils, and government officials and agencies can play a key role in the California Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools in terms of raising community awareness about the importance of civic education. Community partners can also provide hands-on assistance and resources to support school-based activities such as service-learning and co-curricular projects, as well as serve as outside resource people for civic-based lessons in the classroom. It would be ideal to engage individuals or groups representing various community partners in discussions about the Civic Mission of Schools and the role they could play.

Materials Needed:

California Campaign PowerPoint Presentation
Campaign Prospectus
Summary of the research
Focus Questions

At a Meeting:

Introduce the Civic Mission of Schools and the California Campaign using the PowerPoint and other overview materials above. If time permits, consider using the “Effective Citizenship” brainstorm activity. Engage participants in a discussion about the value of civic education to the future and well-being of the community. Provide opportunities for participants to generate ideas and discuss how they might participate in and support the school Campaign.

If you are working with a large group of participants, consider breaking into small groups, with each group focusing on one question and sharing the outcome of its discussion with the larger group.

If appropriate, consider having a faculty member sit with each group to describe current and planned activities for the Campaign. Community members should be provided with specifics of your school’s Campaign so that they can generate ideas about how they can be involved.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why is the civic education of youth important to our community?
2. What can we do at the school to support the Civic Mission of Schools?
3. How can we help raise community awareness about the Campaign?

After a Meeting:

Share the outcomes from discussions with your school’s Campaign team and with CCE/CRF staff members working with your school.

Discussion: Ideas to Engage Community Partners

The following list is provided to generate ideas and discussion about the Civic Mission of Schools and what community partners might do to support and engage in the school's Campaign. It is by no means all-inclusive.

1. Why is the civic education of youth important to the well-being and future of our community?
 - Why is it important to different sectors of the community such as:
 - businesses, chambers of commerce
 - non-profit agencies
 - service and veterans organizations (Elks, Toastmasters, VFW, etc.)
 - law enforcement
 - local political representatives
 - neighborhood councils or other groups

2. What can we do at the school to support the Civic Mission of Schools?
 - Volunteer to assist with service-learning activities or co-curricular clubs/programs by donating time, supplies, or transportation.
 - Teachers need community resource people with expertise in law, government, business, non-profit, community activism, and other fields to serve as resource people during specific classroom lessons. Offer to assist teachers in identifying and contacting appropriate resource people, or serve as a resource person yourself.
 - Assist in developing a list of community resources that would support civic education activities. This list could include voter registration projects, agencies that provide opportunities for youth involvement, and a listing of public forums or meetings youth or parents could attend to become more informed about community issues. The list could be distributed to faculty or students.
 - Offer to sit on the school's Campaign team leadership committee.

3. How can we help raise community awareness about the Campaign?
 - Assist the school in making contacts with local media to publicize your school's Campaign activities and raise public awareness about the need for civic education.
 - Inform local businesses, community groups, and community leaders about the Campaign and encourage their support for school-based activities.
 - Encourage the school district to ensure civic education is a part of the K-12 program.
 - Initiate or assist with efforts to pass resolutions endorsing the Campaign with your city council, school board, etc.