

## Engaging Partners

### Engaging Parents in the Process Facilitator

Research shows that parents play a key role in the California Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools, both in terms of fostering civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions in their children and in raising community awareness about the importance of civic education in schools. Parent support for civic education can also be translated into hands-on assistance with service-learning and co-curricular activities that support the Civic Mission of Schools.

It would be ideal to engage groups of parents in discussions about the Civic Mission of Schools and the role parents in your community 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 parents in a discussion about the role they can play at home, at school, and in the community.

If you are working with a large group of parents, 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. Parents should be provided with specifics of your school’s Campaign so that they can generate ideas about how parents can take an active role.

#### **Discussion Questions:**

1. What can parents do at home to support civic education?
2. What can parents do at school to support the Civic Mission of Schools?
3. How can parents help raise community awareness about the Campaign?

#### **After a Meeting:**

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

## Ideas for Parent Involvement

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

1. What can parents do at home to support civic education?
  - Watch the news and read the newspaper with your children.
  - Discuss current events with your children, encouraging them to state and support their opinions.
  - Model engaged citizenship: voting, jury service, working on a campaign or voter registration project, etc.
  - Model community problem-solving: contacting public officials and agencies, volunteering, working with other individuals and groups, like *Neighborhood Watch* to address community needs.
  - Encourage your children to be involved in co-curricular activities at school and other organized youth clubs in the community.
  
2. What can parents do at 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.
  - Involve organizations you are already involved with in the school's campaign (i.e. neighborhood council).
  - Do a mailing to other parents, perhaps including feeder elementary and middle schools, to introduce them to the Campaign.
  
3. How can parents 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, and elected officials 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.
  - Assist in or initiate efforts to pass school board, city council or other formal resolutions to endorse the Campaign.