



CHAPTER 10: Activities for Parent Groups

Are you interested in starting a parent group or are you part of a parent group already? Consider sharing the information you have learned in this manual and exploring educational issues in your community further with other interested parents!

A. How to engage other parents in the community

Oftentimes, getting more support from other parents to support your cause is a difficult task, but you should not let this discourage you. If you have a clear vision and goals, then you can use the one-to-one strategy to get support for that vision and those goals. All you need is time, persistence, and dedication.

A one-to-one is exactly what it sounds like, it is a purposeful, informative, and persuasive conversation that you have with someone you would like to invite to join your cause or to connect you to others who may support your cause. There are seven main components to a successful one-to-one conversation:

Components

1. Welcome (thank your guest for making time to meet)
2. Credential (explain who you represent, what parent group you come from etc.)
3. Sharing your purpose and your story (why you are talking to them and why you care about the community)
4. Ice breaker questions (to listen to their story and explore their self-interest). Ask what they are doing (coping or addressing causes of their concerns).

5. Deep listening / dialogue
6. Probing the person's leadership networks
7. Invitation (negotiation) to take action

You can use the above components as a guideline for any one-to-one conversation; in the Appendix you will find a sample on how to hold a one-to-one conversation about using school funding (LCFF/LCAP) to improve alternative education programs and schools.

Remember there is power in numbers! If you are concerned about any issues affecting your child and other children in your local schools, other parents are likely to be concerned about them too. Parents and community members play a critical role in ensuring that public schools serve children well and that all children have an equal opportunity to succeed. You can use the information in this manual to help identify areas where schools may be doing well, as well as areas for improvement.

As explained throughout this manual, you may raise any concerns you and other parents have directly with your children's schools, the district superintendent, and/or the school board. You may file written complaints. You may participate in school and district-wide decision-making including how school funding will be spent by providing input regarding the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP). You can also participate in parent advisory committees such as the school site council, migrant parent advisory committee, English learner advisory committee, LCAP advisory committee, and much more. And of course, you can start your own group! In the Appendix you will find some sample activities to help get you started. ■