

# COMMUNITY COLLABORATION FOR SCHOOL INNOVATION TOOLKIT





# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The driving principle behind the Community Collaboration for School Innovation toolkit is that over time, community engagement has become a one-way mechanism for districts to push out information about initiatives and programs into the local community. Along the way, a small but widening gap has formed, separating the community from the school, often to the detriment of students and innovation.

The community collaboration model, outlined in this toolkit, provides a framework by which districts can shift away from a community engagement model that centers around the district pushing information out, to a new model that instead encourages the district to pull in guidance and directives from the community, and leverage that input to drive innovations in service of all students graduating ready for college and career. Community collaboration provides a process for districts to clearly understand what the local community expects of its schools, so it can then align activities and initiatives.

This new model is critical as school districts look for innovative and effective ways to meet the growing challenges facing public education in the 21st century. Districts need to understand their community's perspective on questions like these:

- What do graduates from this school district need in the 21st century to be successful?
- How do we prepare the students in this district for a rapidly changing economy?
- How do we ensure that all students are being well served in our district?
- What do you hope and expect students in this district will know and be able to do?
- What could learning environments in this district look like to ensure that students are prepared for the world once they graduate?

The input districts receive from the community will influence future, developing, and existing initiatives and innovations. The Community Collaboration for School Innovation toolkit will assist district staff and board members as they move through the process of adopting the community collaboration model in their local communities.



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# INTRODUCTION

Public education in the 21st century is evolving in remarkable ways in Colorado, the United States, and around the world. As schools transition from the industrial to the information age, students are experiencing a diversification in the pathways to college and careers unlike anything in history. New opportunities for students, new challenges, and requirements for new skills are developing in a matter of months rather than decades, making this a transformative time for public education.

In this more dynamic environment, the question of how to prepare students for independent adult life becomes more complex. There are powerful new educational tools and promising new teaching strategies for districts to consider. More than ever, learning is happening beyond the school day and outside the classroom walls, and students are benefiting from the wisdom, experiences, and perspectives of their entire community.

Districts and communities need to come together in meaningful ways to encourage and support new learning opportunities, and collaborate to ensure innovative school practices and policies reflect community values and realities.

The Community Collaboration for School Innovation toolkit was created for districts as they begin the

important work of shifting away from a community engagement model that centers around the district pushing information out, to a new community collaboration model that instead encourages the district to pull in guidance and directives from the community, and leverage that input to drive innovations. This new model provides a process for districts to clearly understand what the local community expects from its schools, so districts can then align activities and initiatives in service of all students graduating ready for college and career.

In early 2015, the Colorado Department of Education, the Colorado Education Initiative, and The Learning Accelerator invited two Colorado districts to try this new model in their local communities — Archuleta #50 JT in Pagosa Springs and District 51 in Mesa County. The early lessons from these two pilot districts are the basis for the Community Collaboration for School Innovation toolkit, a resource that will continue to evolve as districts are able to use, own, and adapt it to meet the needs of their unique communities. The toolkit is intended to be useful for all districts, regardless of size or resources, and outlines the basic steps districts can take to make this powerful shift. The toolkit provides useful case study material and template resources districts can leverage to begin the process as soon as possible.

*“We believe the current education system, built on the industrial model, is obsolete and needs to be reinvented. So we have been trying to work with our community to understand ‘what does that look like, and what does that mean?’”*

*—Steve Schultz, Superintendent, District 51*

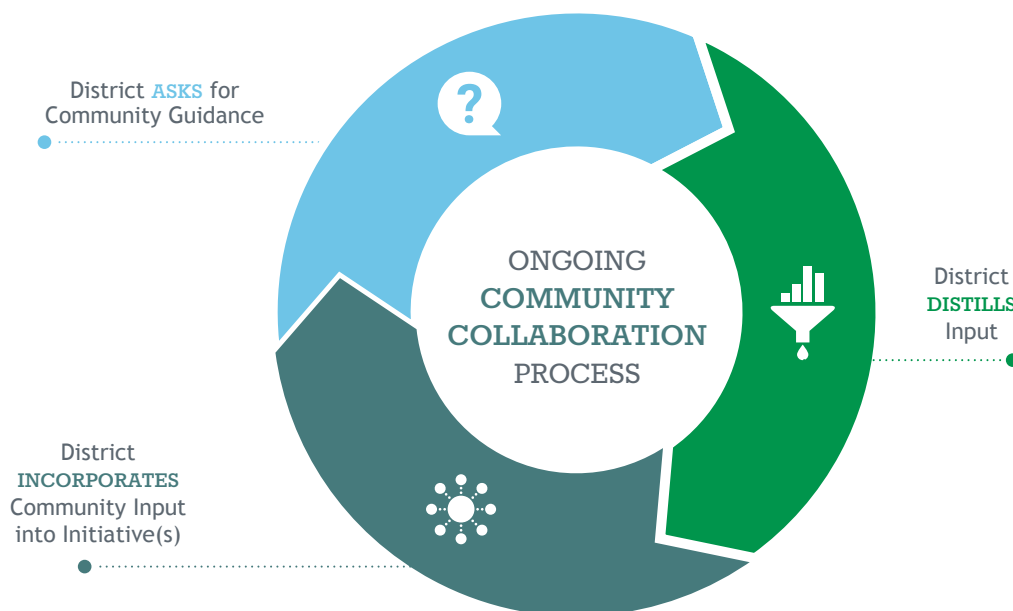
### WHAT IS COMMUNITY COLLABORATION?

Community collaboration moves beyond community engagement. It empowers community members to have greater ownership of their schools and encourages them to provide directive to school leaders about the vision and mission of local schools. It is a fundamental shift meant to evolve the way schools are currently engaging their communities, particularly in this time of rapidly shifting demands on public education. Rather than bringing the community in at the end of an initiative to seek buy-in, districts should be having important conversations with the community early and often to seek the directive that will inform initiatives and innovations, and ensure what happens in the school is reflective of the community’s values and needs.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	COMMUNITY COLLABORATION
Builds consensus	Shares values
Answers questions	Asks questions
District speaks	District listens
Solicits feedback	Solicits direction



The community collaboration process is meant to be continuous, and transcendent of individual initiatives, as outlined in the graphic below:



## DISTRICT 51 PROFILE

**Enrollment:** 21,742

**School sites:** 45

**Grand Junction  
population:** 59,778

**Communications staff:**  
3 full-time employees

**OVERVIEW:** District 51 embraced the community collaboration pilot in an effort to shift away from the manner in which they typically had undertaken community engagement activities. The district has plans to transform into a 21st century district, which would involve modernizing instruction, curriculum, technology, and facilities. “We believe the current education system, built on the industrial model, is obsolete and needs to be reinvented,” said Superintendent Steve Schultz. “So we have been trying to work with our community to understand ‘what does that look like, and what does that mean?’”

Using the graduation guidelines policy update as an entry point into these larger conversations, District 51 wanted to bring the community into the decision-making process, to make sure that district and school leaders were developing guidelines that were aligned with the community values of Grand Junction.

“We recognized that updating the graduation guidelines had implications for current instructional practices, and we were also curious if the community had begun to consider if new instructional innovations—like blended learning and competency-based education—might have a greater role in the future of District 51 schools,” noted Schultz. By collaborating with the community on the updated graduation guidelines, the district was excited to hear what the community felt was the best next step to ensure the local schools were meeting the needs of students.

## ARCHULETA #50 JT SCHOOL DISTRICT PROFILE

**Enrollment:** 1,326

**School sites:** 3

**Pagosa Springs  
population:** 1,719

**Communications staff:**  
None

**OVERVIEW:** The town of Pagosa Springs is a destination for a largely retiree population, with 60 percent of area private property owned by non-residents. In recent years, district outreach to the community had largely been around bond measures, which were often unsuccessful.

When Linda Reed became superintendent, she wanted to reintroduce the district to the community. “Because so many residents weren’t originally from our community, or because they didn’t have children or grandchildren currently in our school system, there was a big disconnect,” explained Reed. “When a recent bond measure failed to pass, we realized that the community hadn’t recognized the needs of our schools because we hadn’t done a good job of communicating that. So we knew that part of our strategic framework needed to address communication and community collaboration.”

The district sought to invite residents into the schools, allowing the community to see first hand what the district had been able to accomplish, but also to provide guidance to help the district realize their future potential.

The Archuleta PROUD campaign was launched in early 2016, with the goal of encouraging the community to re-engage with the school. “We are essentially starting from scratch with our community collaboration,” said Reed. “Our hope is that the PROUD campaign will serve as an entry point into the larger conversation of ‘what should the district be doing to prepare our students for the future?’”



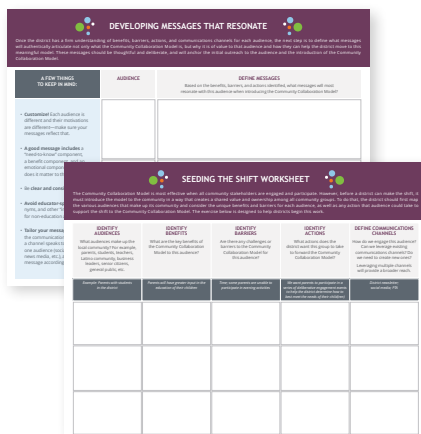
## MAKING THE SHIFT TO COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

The driving principle behind this important shift is that over time community engagement has become a mechanism for districts to push out information on initiatives and programs into the community. Along the way, a small but widening gap has formed, separating the community from the school, often to the detriment of students and innovation. When community guidance is solicited and leveraged in a more deliberate and authentic way—as with community collaboration—districts often receive permission to innovate where they otherwise wouldn't have considered the possibility, so students can achieve the goals that the community has set.

This community collaboration process helps districts ask what outcomes the community would like to see the district explore, expand, or prioritize, particularly in this time of shifting demands on public education. The toolkit recognizes every district is in a different place when it comes to current efforts and initiatives, and allows for flexibility in the process so that districts can begin to implement as early as they are able.

*“When a recent bond measure failed to pass, we realized that the community hadn’t recognized the needs of our schools because we hadn’t done a good job of communicating that. So we knew that part of our strategic framework needed to address communication and community collaboration.”*

**—Linda Reed, Superintendent, Archuleta #50 JT School District**



## SEEDING THE SHIFT WORKSHEETS



The following worksheets will help districts begin to identify the various audiences within their community, what opportunities and challenges the community collaboration model presents for each audience, as well as what communications channels the district either has in place or needs to establish in order to reach these audiences. Additionally, based on these factors, the worksheets provide guidance to help district staff develop messages that will resonate with each audience for outreach efforts.



# SEEDING THE SHIFT WORKSHEET

The Community Collaboration Model is most effective when all community stakeholders are engaged and participate. However, before a district can make the shift, it must introduce the model to the community in a way that creates a shared value and ownership among all community groups. To do that, the district should first map the various audiences that make up its community and consider the unique benefits and barriers for each audience, as well as any action that audience could take to support the shift to the Community Collaboration Model. The exercise below is designed to help districts begin this work.

<b>IDENTIFY AUDIENCES</b> What audiences make up the local community? For example, parents, students, teachers, Latino community, business leaders, senior citizens, general public, etc.	<b>IDENTIFY BENEFITS</b> What are the key benefits of the Community Collaboration Model to this audience?	<b>IDENTIFY BARRIERS</b> Are there any challenges or barriers to the Community Collaboration Model for this audience?	<b>IDENTIFY ACTIONS</b> What actions does the district want this group to take to forward the Community Collaboration Model?	<b>DEFINE COMMUNICATIONS CHANNELS</b> How do we engage this audience? Can we leverage existing communications channels? Do we need to create new ones? Leveraging multiple channels will provide a broader reach.
<i>Example: Parents with students in the district</i>	<i>Parents will have greater input in the education of their children</i>	<i>Time; some parents are unable to participate in evening activities</i>	<i>We want parents to participate in a series of deliberative engagement events to help the district determine how to best meet the needs of their child(ren)</i>	<i>District newsletter; PTA social media; PTA</i>





# DEVELOPING MESSAGES THAT RESONATE



Once the district has a firm understanding of benefits, barriers, actions, and communications channels for each audience, the next step is to define what messages will authentically articulate not only what the Community Collaboration Model is, but why it is of value to that audience and how they can help the district move to this meaningful model. These messages should be thoughtful and deliberate, and will anchor the initial outreach to the audience and the introduction of the Community Collaboration Model.

<p><b>A FEW THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Customize!</b> Each audience is different and their motivations are different—make sure your messages reflect that.</li> <li>• <b>A good message includes</b> a “need-to-know” component, a benefit component, and an emotional component (<i>why</i> does it matter to them?).</li> <li>• Be <b>clear and consistent.</b></li> <li>• <b>Avoid educator-speak</b>, acronyms, and other “insider” lingo for non-education audiences.</li> <li>• <b>Tailor your message</b> based on the communications channel; if a channel speaks to more than one audience (social media, news media, etc.), adjust your message accordingly.</li> </ul>	<p><b>AUDIENCE</b></p>	<p><b>DEFINE MESSAGES</b></p> <p>Based on the benefits, barriers, and actions identified, what messages will most resonate with this audience when introducing the Community Collaboration Model?</p>



# THERE ARE FOUR MAJOR STAGES IN THE COMMUNITY COLLABORATION MODEL:



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## STAGE 1: CREATE A FORUM FOR COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

Once the district has identified the appropriate community audiences, the next step is to create a forum where community members have adequate time and opportunity to listen to one another and provide thoughtful insights. This baseline of input will help districts prioritize goals and rethink planned initiatives through the lens of what the community deems valuable, so it is important that the community and district staff have high-quality interaction.

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### THE DELIBERATIVE ENGAGEMENT FORMAT

Deliberative engagement is the ideal approach to involving the community in district priority setting, and closely aligns with the principles of the community collaboration model, because it focuses on giving participants time to consider and discuss an issue in depth before they come to a considered view. Like true community collaboration, deliberative engagement includes: interactive discussion to weigh implications of multiple points of view; a heterogeneous mix of participants that can offer different perspectives, backgrounds, and interests; and a clear task and purpose.

Because deliberative engagement events require enough time to allow participants to process a good deal of information, perspective, and opinion, events should be long enough to encourage productive dialogue. Depending on the size of the district and of the group, this can be anywhere from one to three hours. While district staff may be familiar with town hall or discussion group formats, deliberative engagement will likely require additional training, specifically around facilitation techniques.

### STEPS FOR HOSTING A DELIBERATIVE ENGAGEMENT EVENT

The steps outlined below will help districts think through the various activities necessary to create a valuable event. Additionally, there is a “How to Host a Deliberative Engagement” checklist at the end of this section.

## LESSONS FROM ARCHULETA

Rather than host their own deliberative engagement event, Archuleta school district instead chose to go out into the Pagosa Springs community and meet with various community groups (i.e. Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club, Community Development Committee, PTA, etc.) during those groups' regularly scheduled meetings. Capitalizing on these opportunities required far less planning work on behalf of the district, which can be ideal for small districts with limited support staff, like Archuleta.

However, when scheduling time during another group's meeting, there is often only a small window of time that districts are allotted to speak with the membership, which is not always an adequate amount of time to have meaningful interactions. Also, district staff is at the scheduling discretion of the group, and for the Archuleta district, this meant postponing conversations that the district would have liked to have started much sooner. "When we tried to get in front of our Community Development Committee, they agreed to allocate some time during their November meeting for us to discuss the Archuleta PROUD campaign," explained superintendent Linda Reed. "But when the day finally arrived, there was a huge snow storm and only a handful of people actually showed up, so we were forced to reschedule."

Another lesson Archuleta learned from this strategy was that in order to reach a sample audience that mirrored the diversity of the community as a whole, the district would need to meet with a wide array of community organizations. "You have to really think through the segments of your community you want to ensure are included in these conversations, and you have to meet them where they are," said Reed. "And then you have to reconcile that disparate and, at times, conflicting input, which can eat up a good deal of time not originally built into the timeline. Overall it was still an effective strategy for us, because we have very little internal communications support, but that may not be the case for other districts."

### Step #1: Identify conversation prompt that will surface the community's values

To accomplish the vision of the community collaboration model, districts must first identify what they expect from the community and determine what larger question(s) they want the community to consider. The input the district receives from the community will influence all future, developing, and existing initiatives and innovations, so it is critical that the correct questions are asked up front to spark community direction.

Examples of collaborative community conversation prompts:

- What do graduates from this school district need in the 21st century to be successful?
- How do we prepare the students in this district for a rapidly changing economy?
- How do we ensure that all students are being well served in our district?
- What do you hope and expect students in this district will know and be able to do?
- What could learning environments in this district look like to ensure that students are prepared for the world once they graduate?

## Step #2: Recruit and Train Facilitators

Good facilitation is critical for getting the most out of deliberative engagement. A facilitator does not provide any new information or give an opinion on a situation but focuses on enabling the meeting to succeed. So what makes a good facilitator?

### AN EFFECTIVE FACILITATOR:

- Is an engaged listener
- Is flexible vs. rigid
- Acknowledges participants and makes them feel valued
- Is neutral on the issue
- Stimulates interaction and conversation
- Understands the issue well enough to help participants connect ideas

When recruiting facilitators, first use the selection criteria above to sort applicants. It is better to have a high-quality, smaller applicant pool than to accept a greater number of applicants who meet fewer of the effective facilitator criteria. Once the applicant pool has been narrowed, it is critical that all candidates understand their role and expectations of their time. *(See Appendix A for a facilitation training process document; See Appendix B for a facilitator recruitment process document and sample invitation language.)*

### LESSONS FROM DISTRICT 51

District 51 in Mesa County was able to partner with Colorado Mesa University (CMU), located in Grand Junction, to establish a cadre of discussion facilitators from the local community, train them on the proper techniques to facilitate meaningful discussions, and hold a series of community deliberative engagement events where participants were encouraged to provide input and direction for the district's planned update of high school graduation guidelines. For the first community forum, CMU facilitators led the discussions while the facilitator cadre observed. During the second event, the cadre of facilitators led the discussion while the CMU staff observed and provided feedback after the event had concluded. For all subsequent community events, the cadre of facilitators will be in charge of leading the discussion.

The district recruited the cadre of facilitators through a campaign using media coverage, district communications channels (parent newsletters and social media properties), and word of mouth. The cadre, made up of 25 community members, was made aware of the time commitment required, expectations of a discussion facilitator, and the goals of the discussions up front, so that only qualified and interested candidates applied.

## FACILITATOR TRAINING VIDEO TUTORIALS



As part of the work to create the Community Collaboration for School Innovation toolkit, it became apparent that districts, especially those lacking communications support staff, would benefit from additional training on how to facilitate deliberative engagement discussions specifically. In addition to the Facilitation Training Process Document (*see Appendix A*), below is a list of modular videos districts can use to train their community facilitators. **Click on each of the titles below to access the corresponding instructional video.**

### [Deliberative Engagement: The Basics: “What is Deliberative Engagement?”](#)

#### Key takeaways:

- The key to deliberative engagement is getting people to interact.
- People typically pick one value that is most important to them and speak from that.
- Rather than just allowing people to provide input, deliberative engagement facilitates conversations about how these different perspectives cause tensions and how to negotiate those tensions.
- The goal is to reframe issues so that individuals understand that others have similar values, but may rank them differently.

### [Deliberative Engagement: The Basics: “Group Decision Making”](#)

#### Key takeaways:

- Participatory decision making allows everyone who is affected by a potential decision to take part in the conversation.
- There are three obstacles to overcome before making a decision:
  1. Divergent thinking – facilitators need to make sure that all perspectives are given a voice, including those who disagree with the majority.
  2. Once perspectives are voiced, facilitators need an established process that helps all stakeholders come to a mutual understanding.
  3. Having the majority is not enough to enact change.
- Those who disagree still have power to derail things.
- Once stakeholders understand that everyone has a piece of the answer, it's easy to get stuck at that point. As a result, the group may never reach a final decision.
- The beginning of the process for decision making should be open-minded, and become more close-minded by the end of the process (as the group hones in on what is most important).
- Participatory decision making gives stakeholders ownership of changes that are made, which in turn, makes it more likely that they will change their behavior.

### [Deliberative Engagement: The Basics: “Characteristics of an Effective Facilitator”](#)

#### Key takeaways:

- Because these types of conversations don't usually occur naturally, facilitators need to be active in the deliberative engagement process so meaningful conversations occur.
- There's not one right way to facilitate.
- However, there are 10 general responsibilities that an effective facilitator should keep in mind:
  1. Remain impartial
  2. Let participants control the conversation
  3. Keep conversations on track
  4. Manage the group effectively, bring out all of the voices
  5. Model democratic behavior (ask good questions, etc.)
  6. Honor good information
  7. Identify underlying values of participants
  8. Spark interaction (get people to respond to each other)
  9. Surface tensions (and help people work through them)
  10. Create balance

### [Deliberative Engagement: The Basics: “Five Basic Facilitator Moves”](#)

#### Key takeaways:

- The facilitator's role is to intervene in order to spark interactions and move the conversation forward.
- Five moves (links to individual videos below):
  1. **Move on** – After the first person responds to a question, the facilitator must decide whether to move on to the next person who raised their hand, or stick with the topic raised by the first speaker.
  2. **Paraphrasing** – Restating a point made by a group member to help the group understand the concept better.
  3. **Probing question** – Ask the speaker to dig deeper into something they've just shared with the group.
  4. **Reaction question** – Prompt other group members to react to what the speaker said.
  5. **Transition question** – Guide the group to move on to the next topic to keep the conversation on track.

### Step #3: Develop a discussion guide and stimulus materials

It is recommended that the facilitator prepare a discussion guide ahead of the event to help keep discussion moving in a productive direction. However, depending on the flow of the conversation or group dynamic, the facilitator may choose not to use the document. The steps below will help districts begin to craft a discussion guide relevant to their audience and topic. All the facilitators leading discussions at an event will use the same discussion guide. (See Appendix C for a sample discussion guide about graduation guidelines.)

#### BEST PRACTICES FOR CREATING A DISCUSSION GUIDE

- Create an agenda to serve as a general structure for the meeting. Doing so informs participants of what topics will be discussed, while creating a flow for how the meeting will progress.
- Begin with an introduction that outlines the objectives of the meeting and addresses each stakeholder so that everyone feels like they are a welcome part of the conversation.
- The discussion guide should not be a script, but rather a tool to facilitate natural conversations. The facilitator's role is to keep the discussion going by probing participants' responses, moving the conversation forward so that each topic is addressed, and intervening when the conversation goes off track. Be sure to include probing questions throughout the document as a trigger to dig deeper into participants' intentions. For example:
  - That's interesting, can you provide a little more context to your response?
  - Can you talk to us a bit more about how you arrived at that conclusion?
- Start with broad topics and questions, working your way toward more specific issues.
- Use open-ended questions to ensure that participants have room to raise the issues that are most important to them.
- Don't be beholden to the discussion guide. While it is important to keep the meeting on track, if an important issue is raised, make sure that it is thoroughly explored and that all voices are heard on the matter before moving on to another topic.

In addition to the discussion guide, make sure the community has all relevant materials and information to help have a more directed and productive conversation. These materials can include a short video, a handout, a PowerPoint slide—just remember, materials should only be used to stimulate conversation, not direct it. (See Appendix D for sample stimulus materials for a conversation on graduation guidelines.)

#### Step #4: Publicize the event

As the deliberative engagement event begins to take shape, it is important to get the word out early, and across as many communications channels as possible to invite the community to participate and ensure a more diverse turnout. Leverage the district's current communications channels—website, newsletters, social media—but also consider sharing the information with local media, community groups, churches, area businesses, etc. (See *Appendix E for a community forum participant recruitment process document and sample invitation language.*)

Equally as important as providing information to external audiences is to arm internal staff with the appropriate information about the event—what will be discussed, why it is important, why community participation is key. Because district administrators are not privy to all the conversations happening inside schools, let alone out in the community, providing all staff with the necessary information about the event will empower them to have those conversations with parents and community members and field questions with confidence, as well as encourage them to attend and participate.

#### LESSONS FROM ARCHULETA

To encourage participation from a larger section of the community, Archuleta was very proactive in their communications about the event, employing the following strategies:

- The invitation was extended to parents through already established district channels—social media and parent newsletters.
- The district also took advantage of earned media opportunities to promote the event, using newspaper articles to get the word out to the larger community.

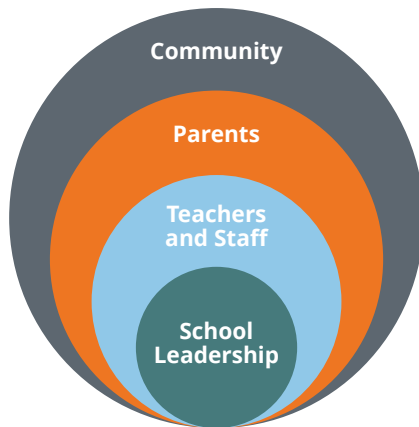
*"I penned a letter to the editor and an OpEd in the local paper," noted Brooks Lindner, a member of the Archuleta school board. "We also asked that members of the board and district staff each reach out to at least one person in the community to extend the invitation to attend and participate."*

As a result of their efforts, nearly 60 citizens turned out to discuss the role of the local business community in supporting, and helping to define, student success, with nearly all local businesses represented.

## LESSONS FROM DISTRICT 51

Prior to inviting the community to the forum, the district communications staff deployed an “inside-out” communication strategy, arming internal staff with event details so that they could serve as the messengers to parents and other community members outside of the school.

*“We wanted to make sure teachers and principals and anyone who interfaces with the community could talk with parents and the community about why the district was looking to engage, so they felt informed and included in the larger process,” explained Superintendent Shultz. “So a certain level of information sharing would be required so that staff felt comfortable and knowledgeable about this shift in our engagement strategy.”*



The district first hosted a webinar for all principals, to share the information about the impetus and timeline for updating the graduation guidelines, as well as to field any questions from teachers and school staff about the changes. Those principals then took the information back to their schools, and hosted a teacher in-service, using district-developed informational toolkits so that everyone felt comfortable answering questions from parents and the community at large.

District 51 staff responded very well to the “inside-out” strategy for information sharing—noting that it gave them the confidence to have conversations about the topic, both because they had sufficient information, but also because they were given the authority to be a primary messenger and listener out in the community.

### Step #5: Host the Forum

Capturing what the community is saying during a community forum is an important part of the community collaboration model. Note-taking is a vital method for engaging people during the event as well as an important data point for analyzing the discussion afterward. Note-takers should be as thorough as possible and, if possible, display notes publicly. The following charts will help facilitators capture important conversations during the deliberative engagement event.

### Incorporate Community Collaboration into Current Engagement Activities

While deliberative engagement is the ideal approach to community collaboration, making the shift does not have to be a “deliberative engagement or nothing” scenario. The cornerstone of community collaboration is intent—the intention to foster meaningful and authentic conversations with the community to solicit insights and direction that then informs the district’s way forward. This can be achieved in all forums, regardless if it is a deliberative engagement event, a town hall, community meeting, or small group conversation. If a district already has a community event planned, it can easily become a community collaboration event by having an effective facilitator lead the meeting with the purpose of pulling in guidance and directives from the community—which may mean abandoning the original intent of the meeting in favor of a shift to this new model.





# DOCUMENT COMMUNITY INPUT WORKSHEET



Capturing what the community is saying during a community forum is an important part of the community collaboration model. Note-taking is a vital method for engaging people during the event as well as an important data point for analyzing the discussion afterward. Use the grid below to collect input. Note-takers should be as thorough as they can and as possible and appropriate display notes publicly.

DISCUSSION

PARKING LOT

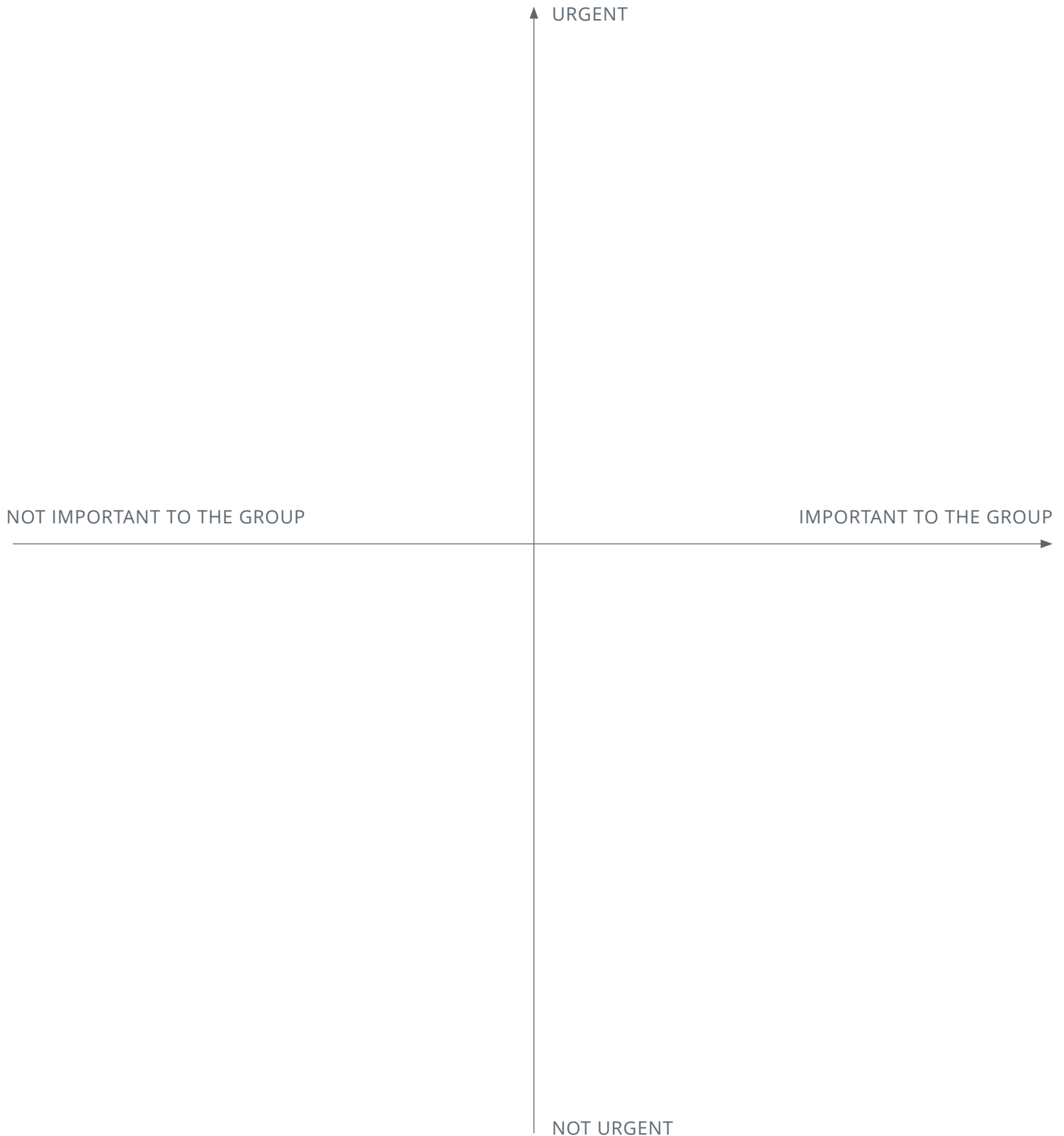
QUESTIONS RAISED



# DOCUMENT COMMUNITY INPUT WORKSHEET



Facilitators should spend 30 minutes at the end of the forum going over the notes from the discussion with community members to identify key themes and prioritize them. Pose the question “Which topics were most important to the group?” to begin the conversation and make a list of the themes. Then place each theme on the axis below to prioritize.



## Two Months Before Event

- Identify a topic** (see page 11 for more information)
- Recruit facilitators** (see Appendix B for a recruitment process document)
- Communicate details to internal staff** so they are able to respond to inquiries from parents and other community members

## One Month Before Event

- Train facilitators** (see Appendix A for a Facilitation Training Process Document; additional information on page 12)
- Set a date and time**
- Identify a location for the forum**
  - ▶ **Things to consider:**
    - How many people can it accommodate?
    - Are there enough tables and chairs?
    - Is there ample parking?
    - Is public transportation to the venue available?
    - Is the venue accessible for people with disabilities?
- Invite participants**
  - ▶ **Things to consider:**
    - If you require registration, make sure that information is available in the invitation copy
    - Make sure you are using the appropriate channels to reach your target audiences (see Seeding the Shift worksheet on page 8)
    - Include date, time, and focus of discussion

## Two Weeks Before Event

- Develop discussion guide** (see page 14 for best practices; sample discussion guide can be found in Appendix C)
- Compile/create stimulus materials** (see Appendix D for sample stimulus material for a discussion on updating graduation guidelines)

## One Week Before Event

- Send reminder to participants** (via original outreach channels)
- Distribute discussion guide** to facilitators so that they can prepare

## Day of Event

- Prep the meeting space**
  - Hang signage as appropriate to direct participants to the meeting space
  - Check to make sure all AV equipment is powered on and working
  - Rearrange the room to encourage small group discussions
  - Arrange refreshments (if provided)
- Make sure “Documenting Community Input” worksheets are available** to each moderator (and displayed for the group when possible)
- Make sure each moderator has access** to several writing utensils
- Welcome participants**
  - To encourage participants to form more diverse groups, count off 1 through the total number of small groups planned, and as newcomers arrive tell them their number and direct them to the corresponding table
  - Communicate restroom and other facilities locations to participants
  - Review ground rules that have been outlined in the discussion guide (See page 17 for more information)
- Invite participants to share their contact information** to be invited to subsequent events

## Day after Event

- Following the event facilitators and/or note-takers should **collect and organize feedback** to distill important points and takeaways from the forum
- If possible, **thank community members** for their participation

## STAGE 2: ACT ON COMMUNITY DIRECTIVE

Once the community has given the directive for which values they want to see reflected in district policies and initiatives, it is imperative that district staff use this information immediately and with purpose to inform all work that is currently happening in the district, as well as all planned work in the pipeline.

The relationship between innovation and community values has to be based on what the community wants for their children. In an ideal scenario, the community would deliver that mandate prior to planning or developing any initiatives, illustrated by district A in the example below. However, recognizing that many districts may have several initiatives currently underway when the transition to community collaboration takes place, the toolkit allows for additional entry points so that all districts can begin this work immediately.

### CONSIDER THESE EXAMPLES:

After hosting their community collaboration events, both district A and B know that the top priorities in their respective communities are: a focus on equity, student-directed learning, and personalized learning. District A has begun the switch to the community collaboration model with fidelity and currently has no planned initiatives in the works - all future district work will be directly aligned with the mandate given during the community collaboration event. District B, however, already had work in progress at the time that they transitioned to the community collaboration model, and now must reassess how that work aligns with the mandate from their community. What are the districts' next steps?

#### District A

Taking into account the community values surfaced during the community collaboration event, the district internalizes what the community shared and begins work on evaluating whether a blended learning initiative—which would address all three community values—could positively affect student outcomes.

<b>Blended Learning is the strategic integration of in-person learning and technology enabling:</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Value 1: Promotes equity</b>	<b>Value 2: Student-directed</b>	<b>Value 3: Promotes personalized learning</b>
1) Use of real time data				
2) Personalization				
3) Competency-based progression				

**District B**

Prior to engaging with their community, the district had planned to roll out the following initiatives:

- A Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) initiative
- A Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) speaker series
- A student-created art exhibit at the local senior center
- A new maker space
- Additional foreign language offerings

Based on what they learned from the community about the work they feel needs to happen in the district, the district should map out all initiatives and re-evaluate based on the values expressed by the community. Here is a sample evaluation rubric:

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Value 1: Promotes equity</b>	<b>Value 2: Student-directed</b>	<b>Value 3: Promotes personalized learning</b>
BYOD initiative				
STEM speaker series				
Student-created art exhibit				
Maker space				
Foreign language				

It can be difficult to synthesize community directives and apply them to current and ongoing initiatives, but the district is responsible to its community and must ensure that school initiatives and programs reflect community values and direction.



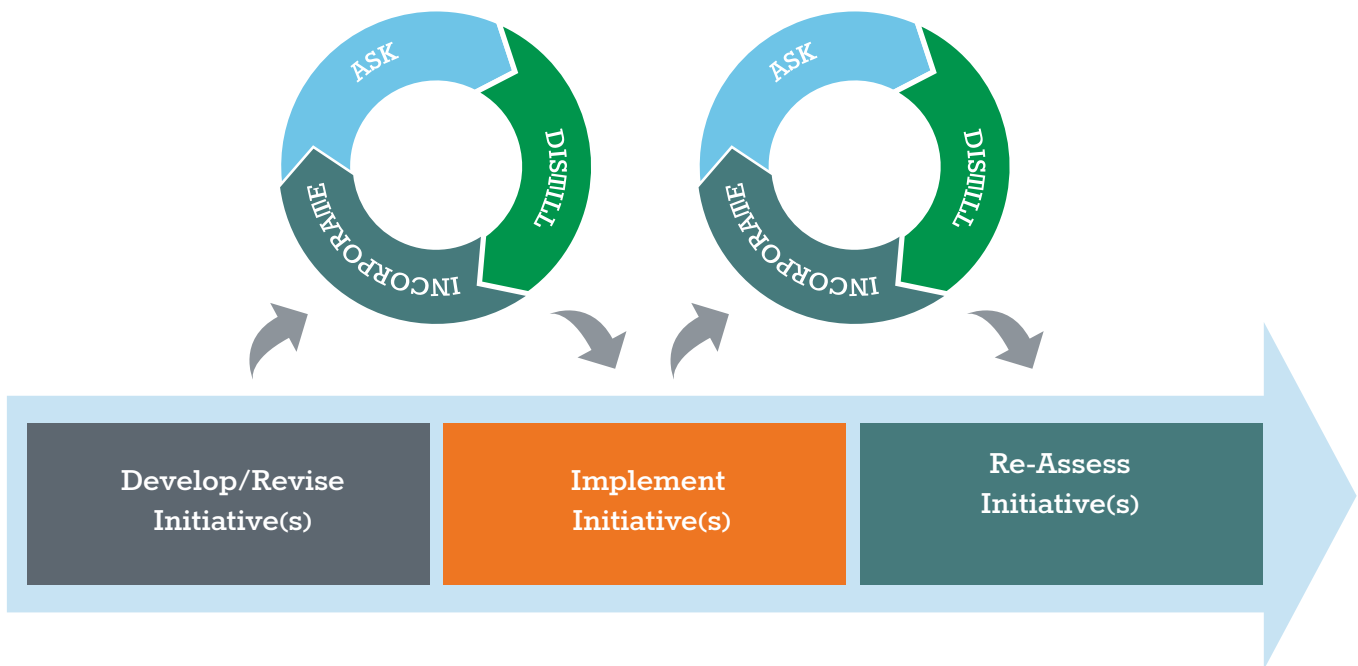
# COMMUNITY COLLABORATION FOR SCHOOL INNOVATION TOOLKIT



<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Value 1:</b>	<b>Value 2:</b>	<b>Value 3:</b>

### STAGE 3: REPORT PROGRESS

The community shares their values and priorities about what the school district needs to focus on to ensure that all students leave K-12 prepared for their next steps, and the districts are then tasked with coming back to tell the community about how they have interpreted the community directive into school and district programs. This means that once initiatives have begun to take shape, the district should establish multiple touch points on the collaboration continuum to ensure that what has been imagined aligns with community directive. The district needs to be accountable to the community and demonstrate that they've taken the community's priorities and used them to create an educational system that reflects the community's values and wishes as well as ensures student success.



Having this mechanism in place for the community to provide additional guidance not only increases transparency, but also the community is able to see that their input and insight is valued and is being incorporated into immediate and future initiatives, making it a truly collaborative interaction.

## STAGE 4: CONTINUOUS COLLABORATION

The process of maintaining communication and collaboration with the community should be ongoing. When fully implemented, the “push” model of community engagement should be completely eliminated and every interaction with the community should be treated as an opportunity to “pull” in community guidance, as well as reaffirm that the work of the district is reflective of the community’s values and is on track to fulfilling the community’s vision for its schools.

Like any major change, the shift to community collaboration will not be without challenges, but realizing this powerful model and the positive impact it can have on the district and student learning is paramount and worth the commitment and effort.

### LESSONS FROM DISTRICT 51

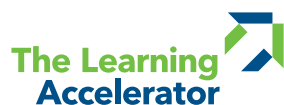
Based on their recent deliberative engagement event, District 51 is currently evaluating how they will go about leveraging the input from the community to develop the new graduation guidelines. *“We intentionally chose graduation guidelines—which we hoped would be a low flash point topic on our first foray into the community collaboration model,” explained superintendent Schultz. “We always intended for this to be an ongoing process, so we look forward to the next collaboration.”*

When selecting a community collaboration discussion topic, remember that narrow topics may not translate to other future initiatives and innovations. Districts should evaluate whether it makes sense to ask broader questions to spark deeper discussions about student success and public education in the 21st century.

*“We wanted to begin a process that is ongoing and forever—when we engage our community, we are not ‘selling an idea,’ we want our interactions with the community to be authentic.”*

*—Steve Schultz, Superintendent, District 51*





## THE LEARNING ACCELERATOR

The Learning Accelerator is the catalyst to transform American K-12 education through blended learning on a national scale. Both architect and investor: we cultivate solutions to overcome the barriers to implementing blended learning in schools and work directly with districts and states to develop strategies and resources which can be shared nationwide.

Follow us @LearningAccel



## THE COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

As a dynamic service agency, the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) provides leadership, resources, support, and accountability to the state's 178 school districts, 1,836 schools, and over 56,000 educators to help them build capacity to meet the needs of the state's over 889,000 public school students.

CDE also provides services and support to boards of cooperative educational services (BOCES), early learning centers, state correctional schools, facility schools, the state's libraries, adult/family literacy centers, and the Colorado Talking Book Library. In addition, CDE provides structural and administrative support to the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind and the Charter School Institute.



## THE COLORADO EDUCATION INITIATIVE

The Colorado Education Initiative (CEI) is an independent non-profit that collaborates with the Colorado Department of Education (CDE), schools and districts across the state to accelerate achievement for all Colorado students. CEI believes every student can reach his or her full potential with the right set of supports. This means that every student in Colorado is prepared and unafraid to succeed in school, work, and life, and to take on the challenges of today, tomorrow, and beyond. CEI's innovative partnership with CDE and schools and districts in communities across Colorado helps uncover innovative ways to reach every learner, every day.



# APPENDICES

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## APPENDIX A: HOW TO BE AN EFFECTIVE FACILITATOR PROCESS DOCUMENT

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### HOW TO BE AN EFFECTIVE FACILITATOR

The facilitator's role in a meeting is not to lead the discussion, but to spark interactions among participants and move the conversation forward.

### GUIDING GROUP DECISION MAKING

#### Step 1: Introduce the Topic

As a facilitator, it's important to make sure everyone has a shared understanding of the goals of the meeting before discussion begins. Doing so will ensure that the conversation is more meaningful and productive.

#### Step 2: Establish Ground Rules

Provide structure to the meeting by establishing ground rules, both for the facilitator and meeting participants. Some basic guidelines that can be included are:

#### **Facilitator:**

- Remain neutral but focus dialogue—keep on-topic.
- Avoid having participants vote, plan, or reach consensus—assess individual input.
- Cultivate a permissive atmosphere promoting participant self-disclosure.
- Respect, nurture, and do not discourage differing viewpoints.
- Accurately record ideas on flip charts.
- Stop anyone who attempts to block another's views.

#### **Participants:**

- Listen, contribute, and stay focused on the subject at hand.
- Feel free to express your ideas and opinions in the small groups and keep or change those opinions in response to what you hear.
- Respect others' right to share their thoughts; do not interrupt.
- Feel free to get up, obtain refreshments, or visit the restroom.
- Clarify your comments as needed if you want to.
- Do not engage in separate, private discussions.

### Step 3: Invite Everyone into the Conversation

Because the purpose of deliberative engagement is to include voices from a diverse audience, it is important to remember that not everyone in the group will have the same experiences and familiarity with the topic. Be sure to include questions that provide a relatable access point to the conversation.

#### For example:

- What do you wish you had learned in school that would make you more successful now?
- What is one thing you do daily that you didn't do 10 years ago?

### Step 4: Facilitate Conversation

While the facilitator should never exert his/her views onto the group, it is often necessary to help guide the conversation and help the group overcome obstacles to have a more productive conversation. Common obstacles to overcome during a group discussion could include:

- **Divergent thinking:** Facilitators need to make sure that all perspectives are given a voice, including those who disagree with the majority.
- **Finding common ground:** Once perspectives are voiced, facilitators need to help group members identify shared values (while there may be no consensus or solution, there should be understanding of different perspectives).

Occasionally, the discussion will evolve beyond what was originally planned. Sometimes this can lead to a much richer and informative discussion; other times these derailments are detrimental to the conversation. Below are some interventions the facilitator can employ to help guide conversations more effectively.

1. **Move on:** After the first person responds to a question, the facilitator must decide whether to move on to the next person who asked to speak, or stick with the topic raised by the first speaker. It's important to "honor the queue" while not letting it get in the way of interaction between participants.
  - a. "I see your hand is raised and I will get right back to you, but I am interested to hear if anyone has a reaction to the point that was just raised?"
  - b. "Thanks for pointing that out. We'll be addressing that issue a bit more later in the agenda, so we'll get back to it."
2. **Paraphrasing:** Restate a point made by a participant to help the group understand the concept better.
  - a. "So, I'm hearing that the concern that you have is..."
  - b. "So, I think what you're saying is..."
3. **Probing question:** Ask the speaker and/or other participants to dig deeper into something that has just been shared with the group.
  - a. "So could someone make the case for that strategy?"
  - b. "Could you give an example of how what that might look like in practice?"

4. **Reaction question:** Prompt other participants to react to what the speaker said.
  - a. “[Name] makes an interesting point. Do you all agree with that?”
  - b. “To what degree do you think that affects this issue?”
5. **Transition question:** Guide the group to move on to the next topic to keep the conversation on track.
  - a. “If we can look at the next point on the agenda—what do you think about [issue]?”

### Step 5: Watch for Non-Verbal Cues

In addition to being an active listener, the facilitator should also look for non-verbal cues from participants who may not feel comfortable joining the conversation. By identifying these cues, the facilitator can find a way to engage participants so that everyone’s voice is heard.

#### Some cues to watch for might include:

- Crossed arms: The participant may be feeling upset or defensive.
- Checking his/her watch: The participant may be disengaged from the discussion.
- Talking under his/her breath: The participant may be struggling to find a way to speak up.

### Step 6: Be Mindful of Time

It’s important for the facilitator to let discussions unfold naturally, while also being mindful of the agenda that has been set. To keep things on track, the facilitator should keep time and alert participants as milestones approach (e.g. “We are nearing the halfway point of the meeting”). Doing so will ensure that important topics get addressed in the time allotted.

## APPENDIX B: SAMPLE COMMUNITY FORUM FACILITATOR RECRUITMENT PROCESS AND INVITATION LANGUAGE

### COMMUNITY FORUM FACILITATOR RECRUITMENT PROCESS

The facilitator cohort is most effective when their involvement extends beyond just one particular initiative, so it will be important to recruit high-quality, engaged community members. Look for candidates who can offer strong partnerships through their professional or civic involvements. To leverage this group to grow forum attendance, identify facilitators who can strengthen the partnership between the organizations to which they belong and the forum event. Be clear about the terms of commitment when recruiting a facilitator cohort. Terms may range from six months to three years with an average of one to two community forums per year.

#### Who should you recruit to facilitate?

- Leverage those engaged in your local school board
  - ▶ Ask board members to send personal invites to their networks
  - ▶ Make announcements at board meetings
- Tap your local PTA leaders
- Recruit business leaders through your local Chamber of Commerce
- Other groups to consider:
  - ▶ Faith-based groups
  - ▶ Neighborhood Associations
  - ▶ Racial, ethnic, or cultural groups
  - ▶ Local community and volunteer groups
  - ▶ Retiree community

**NOTE:** *Participants of the Community Forum may not feel comfortable voicing their concerns if key stakeholders serve as facilitators (school board members, school administrators, or teachers); however, it may be necessary to leverage this group to serve in these roles. Regardless of whether they will become facilitators, it may be useful to have this key stakeholder audience participate in the Facilitation Training to have a greater understanding of the process.*

### SAMPLE “ASK” LANGUAGE FOR FACILITATOR COHORT OUTREACH

As a local community leader, <NAME> School District values your insight and guidance, and would like to invite you to join our cohort of community engagement facilitators. The main purpose of building a local cohort of facilitators is to ensure that the district develops an ongoing collaboration with our community to ensure current and future school initiatives reflect the values and voice of our local community. Please let us know if you are interested in this opportunity. We will be holding the training <DATE, TIME> at <ADDRESS>. You can RSVP by contacting <NAME> at <CONTACT INFO>.

We believe that when citizens deliberate about an issue and when a community is given the ability to help make choices, the directions that are chosen often are better, more innovative, and have a legitimacy that simply doesn't exist otherwise. We will be providing training to our cohort on the practice of leading small group deliberation to better understand how to navigate the various perspectives and insights from our local community members in a constructive and positive way. We hope that this cohort will be as invested as we are in the process and will continue to help the district engage with the community for years to come.

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## APPENDIX C: SAMPLE GRADUATION GUIDELINES FACILITATOR DISCUSSION GUIDE

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### INTRODUCTIONS:

Good evening,

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ I am a trained volunteer facilitator for the local school district and I will be coordinating the effort of a team of trained volunteer facilitators as we engage the public in a dialogue with the school district about the education and safety of the students of in our area. Tonight we will be asking for your ideas and opinions about the skills our students will need in the 21st century and how they relate to the new Colorado State Graduation Requirements. Although the district will ultimately have to comply with the new state requirements (and in many cases they already are); how that is done and what skills this community thinks are important to know in addition to the standards are the reason you have been invited here tonight to share your ideas. The task of our team tonight is to help you articulate those ideas AND to hear the ideas of your fellow community members. This public engagement meeting is designed to guide you through a series of questions to consider and respond to in small groups, even as you hear the responses of other groups to those same questions. The meeting should last about 90 minutes and your participation is entirely voluntary, so if you do not want to respond to a question or stay through the entire conversation, you are welcome to choose not to participate at that time. The results of this conversation will be shared with district staff, the School Board, and others who will be responsible for helping in some way to educate the students of this county.

Let me introduce the team of facilitators. My assistant facilitator is \_\_\_\_\_ he/she will be assisting me in recording your responses and will make sure you have the materials you need to participate fully in the conversation. Our small group facilitators are \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_. They will work most closely with you in the small groups to ensure that you are heard and your ideas are represented accurately back to the large group. Finally, our team's ideas advocate is \_\_\_\_\_. It will be his/her job to follow up with the school district staff and others on the ideas we generate here tonight, to ensure that they are heard and considered by those who might benefit our students by hearing those ideas. We are also joined by several members of the district staff who are here in a listening capacity to hear your comments and ideas. Finally, we are joined by other volunteer facilitation teams as part of our on-going training to enhance our facilitation skills.

## GROUND RULES

Each of us have a role to play in the process tonight, let's go over some of the ground rules for those roles: *(show slides and read each to large group)*

- **Moderators and Small Group Facilitators:**

- ✓ Remain neutral but focus dialogue—keep on-topic
- ✓ Avoid having participants vote, plan, or reach consensus—assess individual input
- ✓ Cultivate a permissive atmosphere promoting participant self-disclosure
- ✓ Respect, nurture, and do not discourage differing viewpoints
- ✓ Accurately record your ideas on flip charts
- ✓ Facilitators will report back to larger group on ideas generated in the small group
- ✓ The moderator or small group facilitators will stop anyone who attempts to block another's views

- **Participants:**

- ✓ Listen, contribute, and stay focused on the subject at hand
- ✓ Feel free to express your ideas and opinions in the small groups and keep or change those opinions in response to what you hear
- ✓ Respect others' right to share their thoughts; do not interrupt
- ✓ Feel free to get up, obtain refreshments, or visit the restroom
- ✓ Clarify your comments as needed if you want to
- ✓ Do not engage in separate, private discussions

## PROCESS:

The conversation and discussion you engage in tonight is part of a larger commitment the school district has undertaken to develop better public policy by engaging communities in a process of collaborative democracy in which the public listens to one another and articulates their ideas about educational matters that affect their community. This is part of a long tradition in democracy from Greek forums to New England town hall meetings where public policy has been well served by opening up the conversation on policies to the larger community. This is NOT a decision-making exercise, but an important decision-informing process. Democratic theory suggests that democratic decision-making requires and informed public and benefits from hearing a diversity of perspectives on the issues at hand. If the process is successful, the participants will see evidence of their deliberations in the final decisions that are made by the School Board and the district staff. Certainly, the participants in these community engagement meetings, after hearing others and expressing their own ideas, will walk away from this process with a greater understanding of the complexities of the decisions that need to be made, and the policies that will be enacted.

## QUESTIONS?

Are there any questions so far about why we are here, what we want to get done tonight, or the ground rules and roles we all have here tonight? If not, let us begin....

### Content 1: Changes:

Life is a lot different after high school than it used to be. Here are some telling projections from the CDE [show CDE stat slide and discuss briefly]

Clearly, high school is no longer the end of learning and beginning of work, but a springboard into specialized training or college that leads to work.

### Content 2: Skills:

*(Skip if they are already seated in groups)* We would like you to go to your “color” group table set up around the room.

Now, please turn to your group and briefly introduce yourself to someone you don’t know in the group.

Your small group facilitator has a few markers and a flip chart to record the group’s ideas and responses to the questions we will be raising here on the front screen/projection.

The first set of questions revolves around the kinds of skills we think our students need to develop or acquire in school. *(Questions are asked one at a time as moderator advances through the slide. Give about 3-5 minutes for each question)*

- So, what skills do students in our community need to be successful in the 21st Century?
- What skills do our graduates need to be successful in the workplace?
- What skills do our graduates need to succeed in college or vocational training?
- Are there similarities or common skills that apply to each of these questions?
  - o *(The responses for this last question are the set of responses that the facilitators report back on to large group. The three earlier questions set up this response which acts as a synthesis of the earlier conversation).*

*[Each group reports back to the meeting as a whole and hangs their flip chart page on the last question up on the wall after their presentation]*

Experts who have done extensive research with industry on a global scale indicate these skills are what they’re looking for. In this short video, educator Tony Garner talks about some of these skills

*(Large group question with small group skills on the wall)*

- o How do the skills we have identified on the wall here relate to the video’s discussion of skills needed?



### Content 3: Preparing Our Students:

Many of the skills we have identified here this evening in our small groups and through the video are similar to the skills identified by the Colorado Department of Education. Those CDE skills are found on the handout our assistant moderator will be handing out now. [hand out CDE handout graphic]

Do these skills identified by CDE encompass the skills we have identified tonight? Are there any surprises or ah-ha moments you have considering the CDE skills in light of our conversation so far?

Let's get back to our small groups so that we can work through another series of questions trying to get at how to prepare our students to acquire and develop these skills we and CDE have identified. *[Questions are asked one at a time as moderator advances through the slide. Give about 3-5 minutes for each question]*

- How well are we preparing our students now?
- What else should we be doing?
- How can the community support the success of all students?
- What are three take-aways from the last 15 minutes of your conversation that we should keep in mind as we move forward?
  - *(The responses for this last question are the set of responses that the facilitators report back to the large group. The three earlier questions set up this response which acts as a synthesis of the earlier conversation).*

*[Moderator will direct the presentations by small group facilitators and the questions or discussion that conversation raises]*

### Content 4: New Graduation Requirements:

The CDE is changing the graduation guidelines to adjust to the changing economic conditions and skills students need. Let's review the new graduation guidelines from the CDE.

*[Moderator or district staff member will walk participants through the Graduation Requirements that will be available for all to see through a power point slide at this time]*

One final time, we are going to ask you to get back into your small groups so we can discuss these new guidelines with a few questions to spark the conversation.

- Are we addressing these new requirements with our current programs now?
  - What can we do for example, to incorporate the state's civic requirement?
- Are there requirements beyond what has been established by these new CDE graduation guidelines that we should add to our local requirements based on our earlier conversations about skills needed by our students?
- Are there options for students that you would like to see, that the district currently doesn't offer?
- Do the guidelines and options available adequately measure and encourage some of the "soft skills" (such as hygiene, interpersonal communications, self-confidence, etc.) that we think our students need?

*[Facilitators will need to clearly label which of the questions a particular flip chart set of answers is responding to – If there is time, we can report back to large group. Facilitator may ask group to identify one or two ideas in each question response that they think the larger group would benefit from hearing and considering]*

## CONCLUSIONS:

We have come to the end of our meeting tonight but before we go, let's briefly review what we have accomplished here tonight. We collectively agreed that the economy is changing and students need several well-developed skills to capitalize on and apply the knowledge they gain in school. We agreed the key skills to be: *(point to flip chart pages from Skills section)*. We identified several challenges and opportunities to prepare our students to acquire and develop these skills *(point to the flip chart pages from the "Preparing our students" section)*. And, we identified the graduation guideline options that these best fit our community *(point to the flip charts completed for the graduation requirement section)*. Look around you. You are literally surrounded by the ideas we generated tonight in response to the challenges and opportunities we face preparing the students of this school district for participation in our society and our workforce in the 21st Century.

This is really good work, but the conversation doesn't end tonight. We will talk with a few other groups of your fellow community members in similar community engagement meetings to this one. If you know someone you think offers an interesting perspective on these matters, or that the district should hear from, please encourage them to attend these other meetings *(offer dates and times if possible)*.

We will need to also come together again to discuss some of the approaches that might help us to achieve our goals identified here. Approaches such as performance-based learning will be the subject of future community engagement meetings such as this one. We hope you will stay engaged in the process, and join us in future meetings. \_\_\_\_\_ our information advocate on the facilitation team will take these great ideas and make sure they get to the right people in the district and on the school board with the ability to act on these ideas.

On behalf of the school district and our entire facilitation team, I would like to sincerely thank you for your time and your participation this evening. We look forward to visiting with you again in the future on other topics in these community engagement meetings. Have a good evening and a safe journey home.

## APPENDIX D: SAMPLE STIMULUS MATERIALS: GRADUATION GUIDELINES



## PREPARING STUDENTS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

### **Why do we need new graduation requirements?**

Life beyond high school is different from what it used to be. Most jobs require education beyond high school. These new graduation requirements provide a road map to help students and their families plan for success after high school. The graduation requirements take effect with ninth graders in fall 2017.

### **Most jobs in Colorado will require additional training or education beyond high school.**

- Jobs that require training beyond high school are growing three times as fast as jobs that require only a high school diploma.
- By 2020, three out of four jobs in Colorado will require education or training beyond high school. That adds up to 3 million jobs.
- Already, Colorado employers cannot find enough workers to fill jobs in some manufacturing, health, technology, and science-based industries. They say that students are not prepared to be successful in thousands of available jobs in our state.
- Additionally, nearly 40 percent of students entering college are unprepared for college-level work.
- Our state ranks in the bottom three nationwide for jobs open to dropouts— or high school graduates with no additional training or education.

### **Middle and high school is the time when students should start planning for life after high school—which may include jobs, military service, or college.**

It is essential for students to talk with their families about their passions and interests, to think about their careers, and to understand the world of work.

### **Early results are promising.**

For example:

- More than one-third of Colorado high school students enroll in career and technical education courses that translate to real-world skills—and nearly 90 percent of those students get jobs in their field within one year.
- One in five 11th graders and graduating seniors in Colorado takes college courses in high school—at no cost if they are earning a passing grade.
- More than one-third of Colorado high school students take an Advanced Placement exam, often earning college credit.



## COLORADO BY THE NUMBERS

### Few jobs will require only a high school education.

Colorado ranks 48th in available jobs for high school graduates or dropouts.

### Many jobs will require additional training beyond high school.

Colorado ranks third in the proportion of 2020 jobs that will require a bachelor's degree.

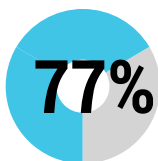
### Between 2010 and 2020, new Colorado jobs requiring post secondary education and training will grow by 716,000 – compared to only 268,000 new jobs for high school graduates who have no additional training.

This means that jobs requiring additional training beyond high school are growing three times as fast as jobs requiring only a high school diploma.

### In 2020, 74 percent of all jobs in Colorado – 3 million jobs – will require education beyond high school.

- 26 percent will require a high school diploma or less.
- 32 percent will require some college, an associate's degree, or certificate.
- 29 percent will require a bachelor's degree.
- 12 percent will require a master's degree or higher.

Source: Georgetown University, Job Growth and Education Requirements, 2013



Three quarters of high school students graduate.  
(\*2014 graduation statistics, CDE)

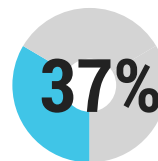


More than half of District 51 graduates enroll in college (53.6%).

(\*2013 Legislative Report on the Postsecondary Progress and Success of HS Graduates)



Combined cost to the state and students in 2012-13 for remedial courses was \$56.1 million.  
(\*2013 Legislative Report on Remedial Education, CDHE)



More than one third of graduates need remedial classes in college.

(\*2013 Legislative Report on Remedial Education, CDHE)



## MENU OF COLLEGE AND CAREER-READY DEMONSTRATIONS

### GRADUATION REQUIREMENT CHANGES



A new state law requires school districts to meet or exceed new Colorado graduation guidelines starting with ninth graders in the 2017-18 school year. Using the state menu of college and career-ready demonstrations below we will begin to develop our own college graduation requirements. Following the new requirements, students will demonstrate competency in four subjects that reflect Colorado standards and 21st century skills in order to graduate from high school in one of four ways:

Earn minimum scores on state and national tests

Complete challenging learning projects guided by a faculty mentor

Pass college-level courses taken during high school

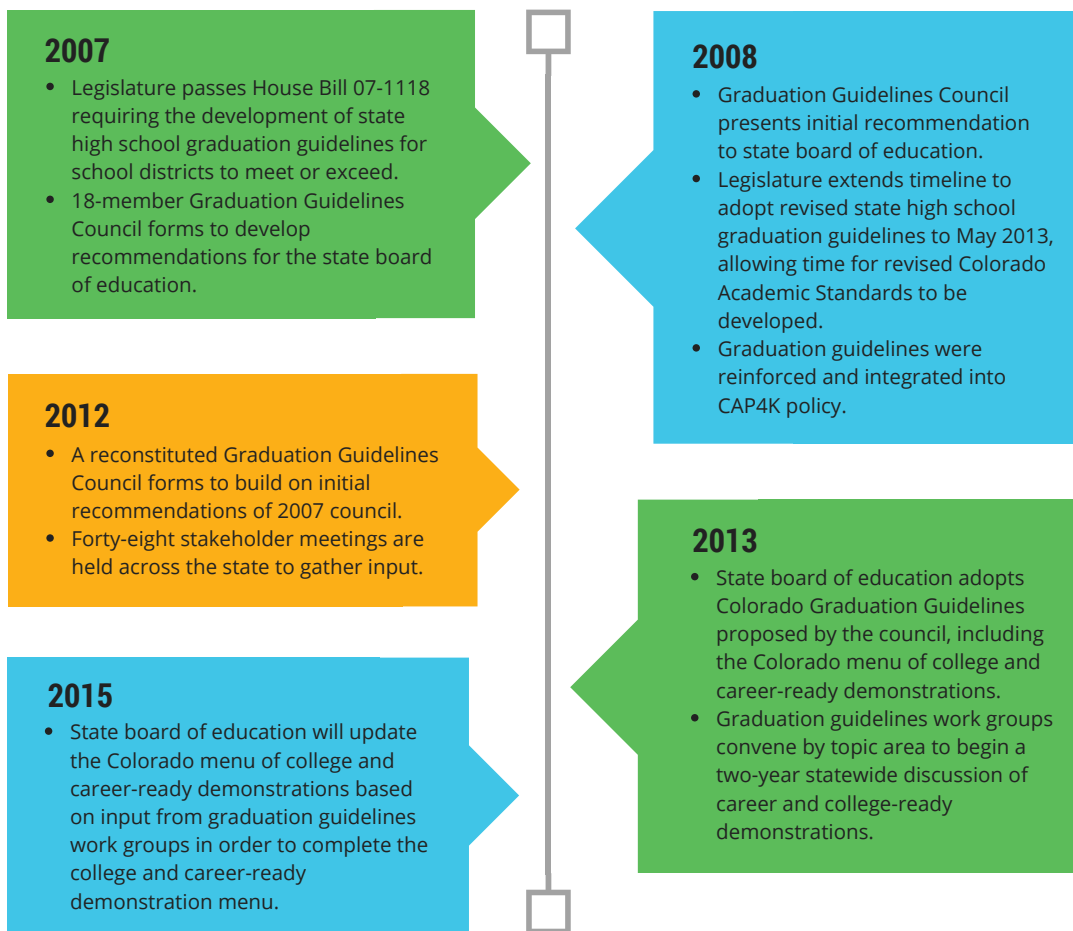
Earn professional certifications

DEMONSTRATION	 ENGLISH	 MATH
Accuplacer	62 on Reading Comprehension	61 on Elementary Algebra
ACT	≥18	≥19
ACT Compass	79	63
ACT WorkKeys	≥Bronze	≥Bronze
AP	≥2	≥2
ASVAB	≥31	≥31
Collaboratively-Developed, Standards-Based Performance Assessment	State-wide scoring criteria	State-wide scoring criteria
Concurrent Enrollment	Passing Grade	Passing Grade
District Capstone	Individualized	Individualized
Industry Certificate	Individualized	Individualized
IB	≥4	≥4
SAT	430	460



## HOW WE GOT HERE

The state's graduation guidelines have been in development since 2007. They reflect Colorado's updated expectations for students and education, and were informed by considerable input from stakeholders – a process that included nearly 50 in-person stakeholder meetings across the state and in-depth conversations with nearly all of Colorado's 178 superintendents.



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## APPENDIX E: SAMPLE COMMUNITY FORUM PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT PROCESS AND INVITATION LANGUAGE

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### INVITING COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE FORUM

Once you have established your facilitator cohort and scheduled the forum, it will be important to get the word out to the local community. Here are some suggested ways to promote your event:

- Post event to your local newspaper's Community Events section
- Include a note to parents and staff in your district newsletter and/or all staff email
- Tap local media outlets
- Promote on all social media channels
- Request that local community groups announce the invitation via their own communications platforms (*Chamber newsletter, Rotary email blast, neighborhood associations' Facebook pages, etc.*)

## SAMPLE INVITATION LANGUAGE FOR COMMUNITY FORUM

Please join us from <TIME> to <TIME> on <DAY, DATE> at <LOCATION> for an opportunity to provide community input into current and future initiatives as our school district looks for innovative and effective ways to meet the growing challenges facing public education in the 21st century.

While we will take this opportunity to discuss <SPECIFIC TOPIC IF APPROPRIATE>, this meeting reflects our ongoing commitment to ensuring that our district programs reflect the values and wisdom of our local community. As we look to prepare our students for college and career, we want to be sure we understand our community's perspectives on questions like these:

- What do graduates from this school district need in the 21st century to be successful?
- How do we prepare the students in this district for a rapidly changing economy?
- How do we ensure that all students are being well served in our district?
- What do you hope and expect students in this district will know and be able to do?
- What could learning environments in this district look like to ensure that students are prepared for the world once they graduate?

The input we receive from the community will influence all future, developing, and existing initiatives and innovations. We believe that when citizens deliberate about an issue and when a community is given the ability to help make choices, the directions that are chosen often are better. We would very much appreciate your input, and hope you are able to attend.

Please let us know by <DATE> whether you will be able to attend. Call us at <PHONE NUMBER> or email us at <EMAIL> with your response or any questions.

Thanks in advance for your participation.

Sincerely,

<NAME>

Superintendent



