Authentic Engagement: Tools for Ensuring Student Success

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What Is It?

▸ "A highly inclusive problem-solving approach through which regular citizens deliberate and collaborate on complex public problems."
  · Public Agenda's Center for Advances in Public Engagement

What Is It?

▸ "We view citizen engagement as a commitment from government to cultivate deeper levels of knowledge among citizens generally about the issue at hand and potential solutions, and to provide opportunities for citizens to exercise that knowledge in service of policy and program development in a regular and ongoing basis."
  · *IBM Center for the Business of Government*

What Is It?

‣ Authentic engagement is achieved "through dialoguing, finding shared meaning, problem solving and relationship building." When used correctly, it give school leaders the tools to "help people listen to different perspectives, think, reach shared understanding and solve complex problems."
  • Leslie & Taccogna

Your Turn

‣ Is anyone doing something that fits those definitions?
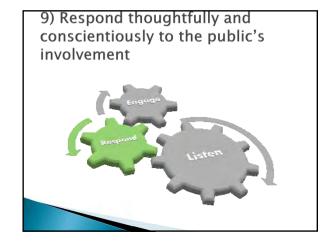
‣ Anything close?

‣ Let's talk......

Ten Core Principles of Public Engagement

1) Begin by listening

2) Attend to people's leading concerns

3) Reach beyond the "usual suspects"

4) Frame issues for deliberation

5) Provide the right type and amount of information at the right time

6) Help people move beyond wishful thinking

7) Expect obstacles and resistances

8) Create multiple, varied opportunities for deliberation and dialogue

9) Respond thoughtfully and conscientiously to the public's involvement

10) Build long-term capacity as you go

Examples of
Key Practices and Strategies

Focus Groups

Strengths	Weaknesses
▸ Efficient way to gain input	▸ Less effective than other strategies for legitimizing plans
▸ You maintain maximum control of information	▸ May require money and expertise to do well

Stakeholder Dialogues

- Targets key groups
- Relatively inexpensive
- Requires minimal special expertise, technical assistance

- Time-consuming
- Limited impact on community overall
- Can be politically tricky to include some stakeholders and not others

Strengths	Weaknesses

Community Conversations

- Engages the most people
- Generates new ideas and partnerships
- Raises general awareness through direct contact, word-of-mouth and media attention

- Usually requires technical assistance
- Labor-intensive, requires significant lead time
- Requires some level of ongoing follow-up

Strengths	Weaknesses

A Great Example

- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fa7WSvZzNcE
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_1Dz8nihS4o

TIME FOR QUESTIONS

Sources Used In This Presentation

▸ Public Engagement: A Primer from Public Agenda, 2008. Available from www.publicagenda.org

▸ A Manager's Guide to Evaluating Citizen Participation. IBM Center for the Business of Government. Available from www.businessofgovernment.org

I Particularly Recommend

▸ "The Politics of Authentic Engagement: Perspectives, Strategies and Tools for Student Success," by Kathie Leslie and Judy Taccogna, 2015.
▸ Book and companion workbook
▸ Available from the National School Public Relations Association at www.NSPRA.org.

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