A GUIDE TO

Community Informed Annual School Planning

2022-2023

TEA | Texas Education Agency® | **COSPERO** CONSULTING

Table of Contents

Introduction

This workbook seeks to support school districts and their partners in identifying the school options communities want and need through an effective community engagement process called "Vision Week." **Vision Week is a week-long targeted community engagement effort to gather input from diverse stakeholders to support annual school planning and inform school action selection.**

Family and community voice is an essential data point to include alongside QSA data in the Annual School Planning process (Essential Action 1 in the SGS Roadmap), traditionally in the spring semester to help define school actions for the following school year. Vision Week has been used successfully by districts to uplift family voices into their SGS strategy.

4	**6000**	**2000**	**1200**	**250**
districts	parents	students	community members	district staff

Vision Week is designed to promote the best practices of effective community engagement and while this targeted engagement sprint will provide valuable insights to inform your SGS strategy, it is supplemental to other district districtwide family and community engagement efforts.

Three pillars of effecctive community engagement:

Equitable	**Authentic**	**Frequent**
Many, diverse voices invited in to share their hopes, experiences, needs, etc.	Not performative but done with the explicit purpose to influence strategy	Ongoing, continuous engagement built-in to the culture of the whole district

Phase 1: Planning

00 ———————— **Current Engagement Audit**

Set engagement questions based on what is most flexible.

01 ———————— **Define WHAT to ask**

Set engagement questions based on what is most flexible.

02 ———————— **Identify WHO to ask**

Set engagement targets based on whose voices are missing yet critical.

03 ———————— **Determine HOW to ask**

a) Be thoughtful about messaging and perception.

b) Select equitable engagement & outreach methods.

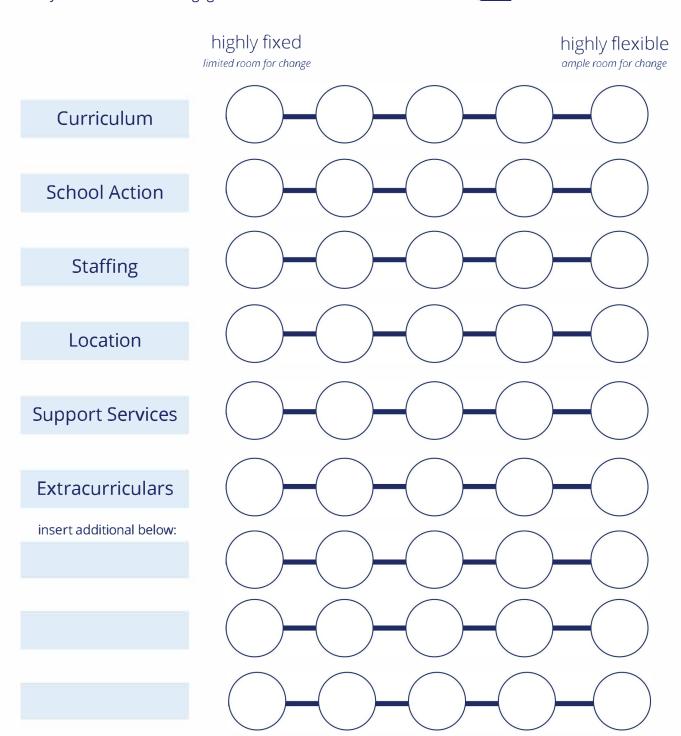c) Design accessible questions for diverse audiences.

TEA | COSPERO CONSULTING

Phase 1: Planning

00 ——————— Current Engagement Audit

Directions: Consider your current engagement strategies and determine how effective these current strategies are in reaching your target population.

DATE	METHOD	WHO WE HEARD FROM	WHAT WE HEARD	HOW WE ACTED
Ex. Fall 2021	District-wide Survey	• 1200 Parents; • overrepresented White students; • underrepresented comprehensive high schools	• desire more extracurricular options; • appreciate 1:1 tech initiative; • parents want more info about post-secondary options	• after school clubs added at some ES • post-secondary nights offered at some HS

Phase 1: Planning

——————— **Define WHAT to ask**

Directions: Place an "X" in the circle that best represents how fixed or flexible each resource/activity is for your school/district. Engagement should occur around areas that are <u>most</u> flexible.

highly fixed
limited room for change

highly flexible
ample room for change

Curriculum ○—○—○—○—○

School Action ○—○—○—○—○

Staffing ○—○—○—○—○

Location ○—○—○—○—○

Support Services ○—○—○—○—○

Extracurriculars ○—○—○—○—○

insert additional below:

○—○—○—○—○

○—○—○—○—○

○—○—○—○—○

02 ———————— Identify WHO to ask

Directions: Using the Stakeholder Matrix below, set specific goals for how many people to hear from, naming different perspectives/demographics of those who will be most directly impacted by a decision.

Various indicators of diversity to consider:

- Gender
- Socioeconomic status
- Race/Ethnicity
- Community influence
- Previous engagement

- Native language
- Neighborhood
- Age + age of children
- Differently abled/neuro-diverse

DIRECTLY IMPACTED

Focus Families *The specific students and parents who aren't heard from often but who will be impacted by a decision.*	**Known Quantity** *The students and parents who will be impacted by a decision but have already shared their perspectives.*
Observers *External stakeholders who may have an interest in a decision, but not be impacted by it.*	**Squeaky Wheels** *Community members who frequently share their opinions but who aren't directly impacted by a decision.*

SPORADIC ENGAGEMENT

RECURRENT ENGAGEMENT

INDIRECTLY IMPACTED

Phase 1: Planning

03 ——————— Determine HOW to ask:
a) Messaging & Perception

Directions: Fill in each section of the Message Box below from the named perspective in order to think through how you will talk about the need for and opportunity of SGS.

What do we say about us?	What does the community say about us?
What do we say about the community?	**What does the community say about themselves?**

Phase 1: Planning

03 ——————— Determine HOW to ask:
b) Equitable Engagement

Directions: Determine which engagement methods are the most feasible and accessible for your team and families. Place a checkmark next to the strategies you choose to implement.

METHOD	OVERVIEW	PROS	CONS	USE?
Surveys	A short series of targeted questions that can be taken via phone, computer, or paper.	Broad reach; Limited staff capacity	May struggle with response rates; Sometimes limited context	
Pop-Up Visioning	Engaging and interactive staffed exhibitions/booths hosted at open houses or existing community events where stakeholders can leave brief responses to targeted prompts.	Accessible; Minimum time commitment from stakeholders	Limited context; Location logistics	
Focus Groups	Small groups of stakeholders representing diverse perspectives who are invited together to share informal, guided dialogue about a specific topic (often focused on better understanding a challenge).	Issue-specific; Easy to replicate for multiple groups	Limited sample size; Detailed note taking needed; Location logistics; Staff capacity	
Design Day	A day or half-day experience with diverse stakeholders using facilitated activities mainly focused on brainstorming and testing solutions to previously identified challenges.	Solutions-oriented; Engaging & collaborative	Time commitment; Possible power dynamics	
Design Team	Diverse stakeholders, similar to focus groups or design days, but who commit to participating in a series of facilitated workshops using the design-thinking process to focus on a specific goal or target solution.	Solutions-oriented; Engaging & collaborative	Time commitment; Possible power dynamics	
Push-In Events	Table, speak, or jump on the agenda of an event already on the books in your community to engage directly with stakeholders or increase participation in the survey.	Built in audience; Can select trusted messengers	Dependent on another organization; event logistics	
Empathy Interviews	One-to-one conversations using open-ended questions to elicit stories about specific experiences that help identify pain points, unpack root causes, and inspire new, community-driven ideas.	In-depth insights	Limited sample size; Detailed note taking needed; Time commitment	

Phase 1: Planning

03 ——— Determine HOW to ask:
b) Equitable Outreach

Directions: Determine which outreach strategies are the most feasible and accessible for your team and families. Place a checkmark next to the strategies you choose to implement.

METHOD	OVERVIEW	PROS	CONS	USE?
Social Media	Create eye-catching posts for Facebook, Instagram, and/or Twitter with clear dates and calls to action to complete the survey or attend an event.	Cost and time efficient	Not everyone uses social media consistently; Lots of competing messages	
Car Line Signs	Printed poster boards with a QR code to have families complete a survey as they wait to pick their student up.	Cost and time efficient; Built in audience	Requires people power; Misses bus riders	
Email/ Newsletter	Include a message in existing newsletters to drive traffic to a survey or event.	Cost and time efficient; Built-in audience	Competing inbox traffic	
Text Messaging	Use an SMS platform to send out survey links and reminders about engagement events to existing contacts.	Cost and time efficient; Built-in audience; High read rates	May cost money; Phone numbers might change frequently	
Community Marketing	Mail and/or post flyers to homes or popular locations around town to engage harder to reach families.	Cuts across the digital divide; Reaches people where they are	Printing can be expensive; Requires people power for distribution	
Campus Marketing	Send and/or post home creative materials that make it out of the backpack (send a large poster home, magnet, stickers, etc)	Built-in audience	Printing can be expensive; Requires campus effort to distribute	

03 ——————— Determine HOW to ask:
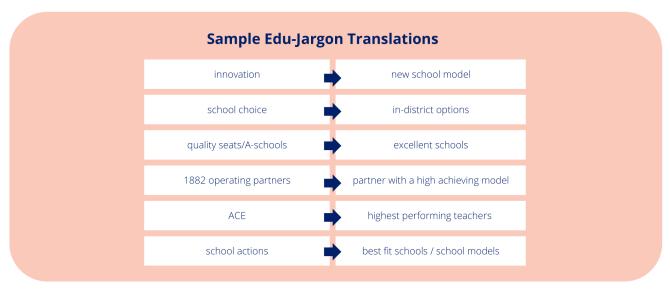### c) Accessible Engagement

Directions: Once you know whom you plan to engage & how you can begin planning the content of the engagements. Use the checklists below to ensure you are planning with equity in mind.

Considerations for equitable in-person engagements:

- Vary the time of day and consider hours for those without flexible work schedules
- Provide transportation and childcare support
- Host engagements at trusted community locations and/or consider virtual options
- Provide community members with a stipend for their time
- Ensure multi-language translation is available
- Take time at each engagement to build relationships between participants & facilitators
- Include background information or training as necessary to bridge knowledge gaps

Considerations for equitable engagement language:

- Remove any edu-jargon (see sample jargon translations below)
  - *"What school factors are most important to you when selecting where to send your child(ren)?"*
- Include a clear headline naming audience + purpose
  - *"We want to hear from parents at Transformation HS! Help us choose the next school model."*
- Include a specific call to action with link, date, and time commitment
  - *"Survey closes on 10.15.23. Please take 4 minutes to share your ideas via the link below."*
- When appropriate, clearly state the value proposition of a school model
  - *"The Montessori model allows students to select from age-appropriate learning activities and receive 1-on-1 instruction on bite-sized lessons."*
- Edit all messaging for clarity and brevity. Having a parent and/or student reviewer is a great practice.
- Ensure multi-language translation is available

Sample Edu-Jargon Translations

innovation	new school model
school choice	in-district options
quality seats/A-schools	excellent schools
1882 operating partners	partner with a high achieving model
ACE	highest performing teachers
school actions	best fit schools / school models

Phase 1: Planning

03 ———————— **Determine HOW to ask: Engagement Plan**

Directions: Summarize your Phase 1 planning notes into this engagement plan to keep everyone on the same page leading into implementation.

Learning Objectives	
Target Audience(s) + Engagement Goals	
Engagement Method(s)	Surveys ☐ Design Team ☐ Pop-Up Visioning ☐ Push-In Events ☐ Focus Groups ☐ Empathy Interviews ☐ Design Day ☐ Other ☐
Outreach Tactics	Social Media ☐ Text Messaging ☐ Car Line Signs ☐ Community Marketing ☐ Email/ Newsletter ☐ Campus Marketing ☐
Potential Engagement Questions	1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7.

Phase 2: Implementing

01 ————————— **Build a Team**

Create a collaborative team that includes multiple stakeholders.

02 ————————— **Launch Engagement Strategies**

Ensure you've prepared for an efficient and effective Vision Week launch.

03 ————————— **Monitor Engagement**

Track how the engagement and outreach strategies are being implemented and received.

01 ———————— Build a Team

Directions: Use the chart to brainstorm a small Vision Week Task Force. Then discuss your options and decide together who to include on the team.

CATEGORY	SPECIFIC ROLES	POTENTIAL MEMBERS
e.g. School Leadership Team	*principal, community liaison, teacher*	*Susan Lee* *Catherine Go* *Paul Donovan*
Communications Department		
School Leadership Team		
Family Engagement Department		
Community Partners		

02 ——————— Launch Engagement Strategies

Directions: Work through the checklist below to ensure you've prepared each element for an efficient and effective Vision Week launch.

- [ ] Vision Week Taskforce has clear shared timeline with action items & owners

- [ ] Campuses have been informed of the effort and their (potential) role

- [ ] All physical collateral has been printed and distributed as needed

- [ ] Supplies for any in-person focus groups or design days are prepped and ready to use

- [ ] All digital collateral is designed and prepared to share

- [ ] Data collection methods have been determined for all engagement options

- [ ] Your team is excited to hear what community has to say!

03 —————— Monitor Engagement

Directions: Make time for regular check-ins of how engagement is going against your targets and spend a few minutes brainstorming how to adjust strategies as needed.

CHECKPOINT	WHAT CHANNELS ARE WORKING BEST?	WHAT DEMOGRAPHICS ARE WE FURTHEST FROM OUR TARGETS?	WHAT IDEAS DO WE HAVE TO BOOST ENGAGEMENT?
Ex. Day 3	*social media; car line posters*	• *Charger Middle School* • *All HS parents* • *3rd-grade students*	• *pop-up visioning at Charger* • *Parent portal message* • *Teacher reminder*
Day 3			
Day 5			
Day 7			
Day 9			
Final Push			

Phase 3: Sharing

01 ——————— **Synthesize Findings**

Determine the most consistent areas for celebration and improvement based on all community feedback.

02 ——————— **Share Back Out**

Always share back with the community the key insights garnered and the next steps that will be taken with them.

04 ——————— **Keep Listening**

Continue embedding opportunities for community engagement across the SGS planning cycle.

Phase 3: Sharing

01 ——— Synthesize Findings

Directions: Use this note-taking template to capture stakeholder discussions during your community engagement efforts. After speaking with stakeholders, look through the responses and highlight important findings.

SUBPOPS	BRIGHT SPOTS	PAIN POINTS	KEY QUOTES	ALIGNMENT W/ QUANTITATIVE DATA
Ex. Spanish-speaking parents	• *enjoy teachers* • *dual-language program* • *1:1 devices*	• *lacking translation at PTA events* • *more info on post-secondary*	*"My daughter is doing well. I want to make sure we can help her get into the best high school program."*	*89% of dual language students excel in literacy by 5th-grade; but only 45% enroll in 4-year college*

Phase 3: Sharing

02 —————— Share Back Out

Directions: Follow the prompts to brainstorm key messages to share back out with the community about how Vision Week insights are informing district decisions.

Based on evidence (data)	
and experience (stories)	
we were trying to answer the question (key learning objective)	
So we engaged our community (how)	
and heard from (who)	
Which helped us understand (key findings)	
So we are going to (action commitments)	
Here's how you can stay engaged (ongoing opportunities)	

Phase 3: Sharing

03 ——————— Keep Listening

Directions: For each essential action of the SGS roadmap, brainstorm possible engagement methods and/or outreach strategies that could be used to strengthen decision-making.

Essential Action 1: Set a North Star Goal and conduct an Annual School Planning process	*Ex. Vision Week Survey*
Essential Action 2: Create, expand, and replicate high-quality, high-demand school models and programs.	*Ex. Authorizing Review Committee*
Essential Action 3: Empower families to select a school that best fits their students' needs and provide comprehensive support to understand and access options.	*Ex. Design sprint with families to co-create enrollment campaign and marketing materials*
Essential Action 4: Develop collaborative and sustainable central office structures to drive school model innovation and access	*Ex. NPS polls to gauge pain points with systems*