
Enhancing stakeholders' positive involvement at a school:

Establish a Concerned Stakeholder Discussion Club

Every school needs as much support as it can mobilize to effectively address the many concerns that regularly arise.

The need is even greater when disasters and other crisis events occur.

A critical facet of this is the *positive* involvement of as many stakeholders as feasible. (We emphasize *positive* involvement because in too many instances key stakeholders have become adversarial rather than supportive.)

Many schools currently are striving to change this.

We suggest that another mechanism to develop at this time is what we dub
>a Concerned Stakeholder Discussion and Problem-Solving Club.

Note the term discussion and problem-solving club – not a meeting. Think in terms of a neighborhood get together where a group of friends convene regularly to share their perspectives.

What might it look like?

The principal sends out a message indicating the onset of ***a Concerned Stakeholder Discussion and Problem-Solving Club***. It can be described as open *problem-solving* sessions for all who are interested in helping the school do its best given current circumstances (e.g., school and district staff members, family members, students, community stakeholders, school board members, etc.).

The agenda for each club session can be described as encompassing finding better ways to address 1-2 current major shared concerns about students' well-being.*

The club should meet as often as the participants indicate is needed at the school if feasible or some other convenient neighborhood venue.

As the club grows, discussions can be pursued in small subgroups (6-8) with group suggestions shared at the end of the evening and on a website.

To sustain the mechanism, the principal should maintain leadership of the club and facilitate the discussions.

If other schools in the same locale (e.g., feeder schools) decide to join in, the club can be established as a joint enterprise. (The more stakeholders involved, the better, and for families who have children at several schools, this makes attendance more feasible.)

*Note: As discussion aids, each week our Center highlights such concerns along with resources to facilitate discussions and possible ways to address the concerns. These materials are conveyed to all 130,000+ on our listserv. For example, see:

>the community of practice *Practitioner* <https://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/practitioner.htm>

>the *ENEWS* <https://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/enews.htm>

>the *ejournal* <https://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/news.htm>

We hope to feature concerns and suggestions raised by stakeholder discussion and problem-solving clubs and elicit additional responses from listserv participants.

Best wishes and be well,

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