

School Governance: A Course for Parents



School Governance : Module 7 School Site Council (SSC) *Community Engagement*

Helping parents and educators become partners in improving student achievement.

Parents for Public Schools - SF



- a nonprofit organization
- funded by donations from parents and organizations
- supporting public education.

PPS-SF is a parent to parent network building and ensuring quality public schools for all children in San Francisco.

PPS -- Parent to Parent Network



- Changing perceptions of public schools
- Helping parents enroll in public schools
- Developing and supporting parent leaders
- Advocating for quality public school education.

This Module Covers:



- **Community Engagement and the Balanced Scorecard**
 - Purpose of community engagement
 - Surveys and Community meetings
 - Getting more people involved!

Purpose of Community Engagement



- “Listening to families is more than a favor to parents; it is essential to children thriving as learners.”
- When parents are partners in education, students are more likely to show increased academic performance and college attendance.

Surveys Vs. Community Meetings



Surveys: Not required

- **Pros:**
 - Easier for *more* parents to share feedback
 - Give SSC a broader view of community needs
- **Cons:**
 - Forfeits partnership building
 - Limits discussion
- **Requirements:**
 - Design, distribute, & collect surveys.
 - Tabulate & analyze results
 - Translation

Community Meetings: Required

- **Pros:**
 - Build trust & knowledge in community
 - Forum for deeper communication
- **Cons:**
 - Difficulty finding common times & places
 - A few vocal participants can dominate floor
- **Requirements:**
 - Skilled facilitator to keep meeting on track.
 - Translation

Purpose of a Survey



- To collect broad community input for the BSC/SPSA
- To evaluate school climate/culture
- To identify priorities
 - And start creating a “Wish List”
- To create community awareness



Developing Survey Questions



- Each question should help you set priorities at your school.
 - Wording should be simple, and easy to translate.
 - Limit the number of questions.
- *Short & simple surveys get better response rates.*

Developing Survey Questions



- Where possible, set up responses that:
 - Are quantifiable (ex: scale of 1 to 5)
 - Force participants to make choices (ex: rank 10 different spending options)
- In addition, provide an opportunity for writing in comments.
 - Written comments are incredibly valuable – they will always uncover things you had not anticipated.

Sample Questions: Quantifiable



	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I believe my child has a good (positive) relationship with his or her teacher.			✓		
2. My child's teacher encourages me to ask questions and express my concerns.			✓		
3. I believe I am well-informed about what is going on in the classroom.		✓			

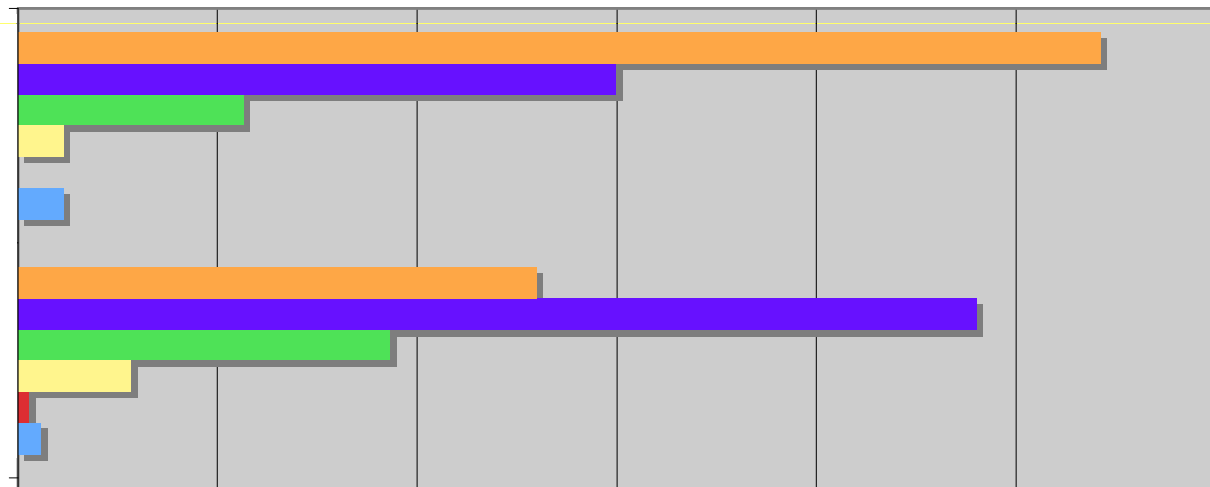
Sample Results: Quantifiable



Communication

2. My child's teacher encourages me to ask questions and express my concerns.

3. I believe I am well-informed about what is going on in the classroom.



- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Decline to state

Sample Question: Forced Ranking



4. To help the SSC set priorities, please rank the following items from 1-10 (with 1 being the most important item for the school to fund). <i>Use each number only once.</i>	Rank
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assemblies – A school-wide educational opportunity where students are exposed to enriching presentations (plays, cultural performances, scientific lectures, etc.) 	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Computer Skills Program – A program that provides computer lab instruction (keyboard skills, desktop organization, photo editing, etc.) to students on a weekly basis. 	7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field Trips - School-sponsored and school-chaperoned activities that provide an effective means of accomplishing the stated objectives of the instructional program. Field trips are a method of instruction and are planned with definite objectives determined in advance. 	8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gardening Program - A consultant that provides gardening instruction for each classroom on a weekly basis in the educational garden 	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> G.A.T.E. (Gifted & Talented Education) Program - A program for students in 3rd -5th grade who are classified as gifted and talented through a number of different factors. 	6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Library – Purchasing books and educating students in library arts (Dewey Decimal System, checking out materials, finding subject materials, etc.) 	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literary Specialist/Tutor - A teacher that provides intervention instruction to students who do not qualify for special education, but are considerably behind in reading/language arts or mathematics. 	9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SF Arts Education Project - A program that provides weekly enrichment to all students in dance, percussions/rhythms, and performance and visual arts. 	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sports 4 Kids/P.E. coach - Provides sports programming both during school, lunch recess, and after school. 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Tribes Program (including teacher training workshops, behavior coach) - A program that focuses on building a positive school community through mutual respect. 	2

Adapted from Miraloma ES survey

Sample Results: Forced Ranking



Across all results, clear priorities tend to emerge:

1. SF Arts Education Project
2. Sports 4 Kids
3. Library
4. TRIBES
5. Field Trips
6. Literacy Specialist/Tutor
7. GATE
8. Assemblies
9. Computer Skills
10. Gardening

** Adapted from Miraloma ES survey*

Sample Question: Open-Ended



5. In general, I believe my child is safe at school.

Agree Disagree Neutral

If you believe your child is not safe, please explain:

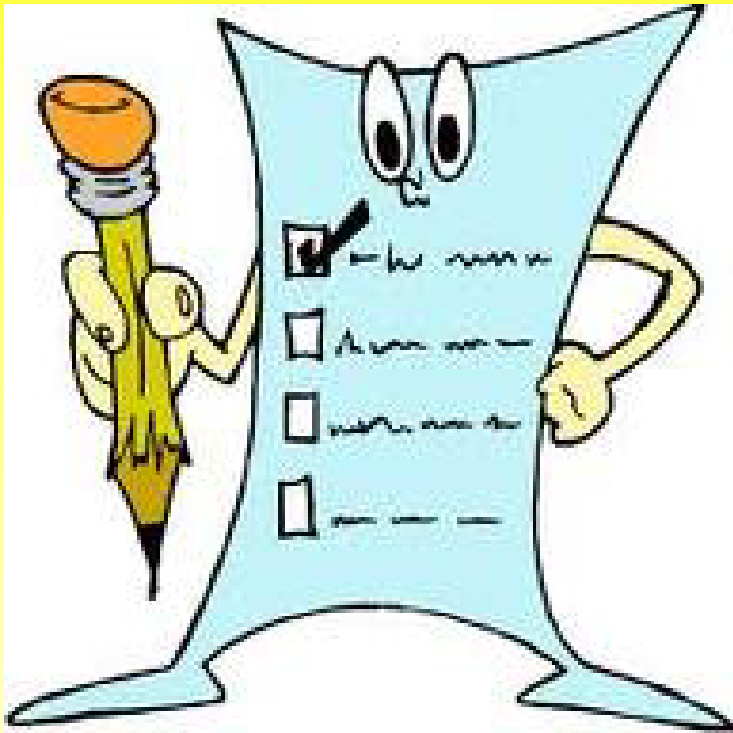
I don't think there's enough supervision on the yard during lunch recess.

Create Your Own Survey



Divide into 3 groups to create a survey of 3 questions

- What is your priority?
 - Decide what your group wants to find out.
- What are three questions that will help you obtain the information that you need to make a decision?
- How will you disseminate this survey?



Purpose of Community Meetings



- Two meetings are mandatory at every school
 - **Meeting 1:** Present data and solicit input *from the community.*
 - **Meeting 2:** Present feedback and results of input, and show plan *to the community.*



Planning a Successful Community Meeting



Agenda:

- Icebreakers
- Goals and Outcomes
- Surveys/Evals
- Q & A



Accommodations:

- Childcare
- Food
- Central location
- Proximity to public transportation

What Do Successful Community Meetings Look Like?



Well Attended

- Broad representation of school community parents
- Focused on topic
- Provide context & data for authentic discussion
- Keep people active & engaged
 - Ice breakers
 - Small groups



What Do Successful Community Meetings Look Like?



Solutions Oriented

- Focus on student academic performance & how to best advance it
- Bring experts from district:
 - data specialists, budget people, etc



What Do Successful Community Meetings Look Like?



Well Facilitated: How to increase clarity at information sharing meetings

- Present information in multiple formats to address multiple learning styles
- Explain all educational jargon/acronyms; constantly check for understanding.
- Allow equitable time for people to ask questions in both small and large groups; specify time per topic
- Ask for written and/or verbal feedback, or issues/solutions they have that they still feel still needed to be recorded.
- Monitor turn-taking

Planning a Successful Community Meeting



Effective Outreach:

- Flyers/Posters
- Letters home
- Newsletters
- *Translation
- Autodial
- Phone, text
- Email
- ASP, parent liaisons
- Partner with other school governing bodies
- CBOs, community leaders



Planning a Successful Community Meeting



Incentives

- Raffles
- Movie tickets
- Popcorn or pizza parties for classes with the most parents represented
- Clipper cards
- Homework passes



Target Audience



The WHOLE School community!

Families

Teachers/Staff



Chronicle / Mark Costantini



and Students



Create a Flyer For A Community Meeting



Consider:

- What is on the agenda?
- What is location?
- What accommodations will you provide?
- What incentives can you offer?
- Where will you place the flyer?



Survey

- Collect broad community input for BSC/SPSA
- Evaluate school climate and culture
- Limit discussion & partnership building



Community Meeting

- Mandatory
- Collect input from community
- Present feedback and results from input
- Show plan to community

Questions



Thank You



For more information, please contact:

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