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2016 Community Engagement Team’s

House Meeting Campaign

PURPOSE OF A HOUSE MEETING

* + To find passionate, talented people who have a burning desire to do something about an issue they care deeply about related to their school or community and,
  + To elicit the painful stories of our neighbors and connect to one another in community and common cause.

METHOD OF A HOUSE MEETING

* + A facilitated 60-75 minute conversation among 4-12 adults designed to create an environment in which ordinary people can share their story, hear the stories of others and be moved to action. (Doesn’t have to be in a home).

STRATEGIES FOR HOUSE MEETINGS

* + Cross-congregational events
  + Active recruitment of “hosts” of HM’s in actual homes (not to the exclusion of other strategies)
  + Use agitational fact sheets on current educational issues (testing, common core, class size, facilities) in all House Meeting’s to “seed” reactions, recruit new talent, etc. (Not to the exclusion of new, emerging issues.)
  + Do house meetings at “house church” events in people’s homes immediately following services
  + Utilize existing groups for house meeting conversations, Sports teams, Sunday Schools, Bible Studies, committees, social clubs, etc.
  + Create “house meeting events” after services or at other times where dozens can gather and be broken up into multiple house meetings

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Facilitator’s Agenda for House Meetings

With Parents and Community Members

Part One: Opening Business

* + Welcome – Host welcomes the guests, thanks them for coming and introduces the leader/facilitator.
  + Rounds – The leader of the meeting begins with each person saying their name and where they live.
  + Framing the meeting – (Sample framing statement)
    - As members of CTA and staff at (SCHOOL NAME) who care deeply about the success of our students, and community, we are in the process of conducting “house meetings” to hear what issues are important to our community members related to their families, children and schools.
  + The goal is to listen to people’s stories and from those stories build the (SCHOOL NAME/COMMUNITY) Issues Agenda and take action.
  + The people who will act on these issues will come from these meetings.
  + Our goal is to organize 40 house meetings and talk to 400 people through this process. The issues that emerge from these house meetings will be unveiled to the public and Administration (Insert POWER STRUCTURE i.e. Board of Education, City Council) on (INSERT DATE AND TIME) (Ex.-Monday, October 20 at 7 p.m. at Board Room in the District Office).
  + Let’s get started with our conversation.
    - First, one ground rule: Everyone gets a chance to speak, In order to enforce that I get to interrupt. Agreed?

Part Two – Eliciting stories, looking for talent and issues

* + Framing the conversation to elicit stories:
  + Our theme of the house meetings this year is “just” listening; in other words listening for justice.
  + Most of us experience injustice as a pressure or a worry that weighs on us. Those concerns become the basis for the issues that we can organize around to create a more just community.
  + Opening Question: *What are the pressures you feel in your family or your household that are of concern to you?*
  + Let folks answer and listen for stories or examples. Be prepared to give your own example to “model” a story or something specific. As people answer, be prepared to follow up with anyone who has identified a particular issue that is of concern to them to elicit more specific examples or a story with questions like:
    - *Why is that issue of concern to you?*
    - *How has that affected you?*
    - *Can you give an example or share a story of how that has affected you?*
    - *Do you know others who have had similar experiences?*
  + *Does anyone else here share this concern?*
  + *If you could wave a magic wand and change one thing about this concern what would you change and why?*
  + Tips for House Meeting Leaders: House meetings are not for problem solving, socializing, analyzing or complaining. If people want to jump to solutions or get on a “soap box” about something, invoke your right to interrupt and get the conversation back to stories, examples and experiences.
    - Don’t worry about “covering” everything. Follow the energy of the conversation. Stick with what interest’s people.
    - After about 45 – 50 minutes end the conversation and summarize the main issues that emerged or where the energy was in the meeting. Leave time for final section of meeting.

Part Three – Closing Business, Sign-Ups!

* + Next Steps: These house meetings are all building towards a major event we’re hosting on (INSERT DATE) with (INSERT GOVERNING AUTHORITY –or candidates). If you want to see something done about an issue we discussed tonight, join us on the (INSERT DATE).
  + (Pass around signup sheet for the event).
  + *Do any of you know other people who might have an interest in participating in a conversation like this one?*
  + *Would you consider hosting your own house meeting or inviting folks you know to one that is already scheduled?*
  + Let us know.
  + Closing Reflection
  + Thank people for coming and adjourn meeting.
  + **After meeting is over: Take notes immediately after while the meeting is fresh in your mind. What issues generated the most energy? Who looked interesting?**

\*Based on the Industrial Areas Foundation house meeting practice.

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House Meting Host Report (Use back if necessary)

MEETING DATE: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ HOST AND LEADER: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Names and phone numbers of those unable to attend but who should be invited to another house meeting:

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2.) General comments and reflections on the meeting:

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3.) Participants who seemed especially interested in particular issues, appropriate for follow-up contact, etc.

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*Please return this form to the leader of your house meeting Chapter Community Engagement Team Leader. Thank you!*