



# SUMMER LEADERSHIP RETREAT

 #MPA16

all materials at:  
[greatschoolspartnership.org/mpa-2016](https://greatschoolspartnership.org/mpa-2016)



# Entry Points for Effective School & Community Engagement

June 2016



# TODAY'S PRESENTER

**From the Great Schools Partnership**

Ted Hall, Senior Associate

# Agenda

Overview & Outcomes

---

A Tale of Two Approaches to Engagement

---

Coming to Common Understanding

The Engagement Spectrum

Effective Engagement

---

Exploring Entry Points for Engagement

# Outcomes

To build a shared understanding of authentic school-community engagement

# Outcomes

To articulate the rationale for community engagement in schools and districts

# Outcomes

To identify principles of effective engagement

# Outcomes

Explore entry points for engagement work and planning in districts and schools.

# Outcomes

Develop a plan for next steps in community engagement in your school or district

# Reflection

Think about a recent effort to engage the community in your school or perhaps a neighboring school that was either very successful or fell short.

What contributed to either the success or failure of that effort?

# **A Tale of Two Approaches to Engagement**



CASCO BAY HIGH SCHOOL  
FOR EXPEDITIONARY LEARNING

With  
Pride  
Seniors  
CBHS





CASCO BAY HIGH SCHOOL  
FOR EXTRAORDINARY LEARNING

CITY HALL

CASCO BAY HIGH SCHOOL  
FOR EXTRAORDINARY LEARNING

2015

# City school board takes heat for graduation requirements at low-turnout hearing

Two parents don't think students should be forced to apply to a higher-ed school in order to get a diploma.

BY NOEL K. GALLAGHER STAFF WRITER

[ngallagher@pressherald.com](mailto:ngallagher@pressherald.com) | [@noelinmaine](https://twitter.com/noelinmaine) | 207-791-6387

Share      Comment

Only two people attended the first of two public hearings Tuesday night on proposed changes to Portland's high school graduation requirements, and both criticized a provision requiring all students to apply to college, a vocational or technical program or the military in order to get a diploma.

"I was surprised to see this (requirement,)" said Pandika Pleqi, who has an eighth-grader and a graduating senior in the district.

# Portland School Board adopts diploma standards, with changes

High schools will require students to have a post-graduation plan, but a pro-college emphasis has been dropped and more options added.

BY NOEL K. GALLAGHER STAFF WRITER

[ngallagher@pressherald.com](mailto:ngallagher@pressherald.com) | [@noelinmaine](https://twitter.com/noelinmaine) | 207-791-6387

Share



Comment

The Portland School Board dropped a plan that would have required every high school student to apply to college, a vocational or technical program or the military to get a diploma.

# Coming to Common Understandings

**What does authentic community engagement mean to us?**

**Why do you think community engagement is important for schools?**



# Principles of Successful Engagement

1. Inclusive and equitable
2. Intentional
3. Connected to decision-making and change



# What Do People Want?

1. To belong
2. To have a legitimate voice
3. To have an impact

# Positive Outcomes

Stronger and more trusting relationships



# Positive Outcomes

New youth, family, and community leaders



# Positive Outcomes

Innovative solutions to vexing problems



# Positive Outcomes

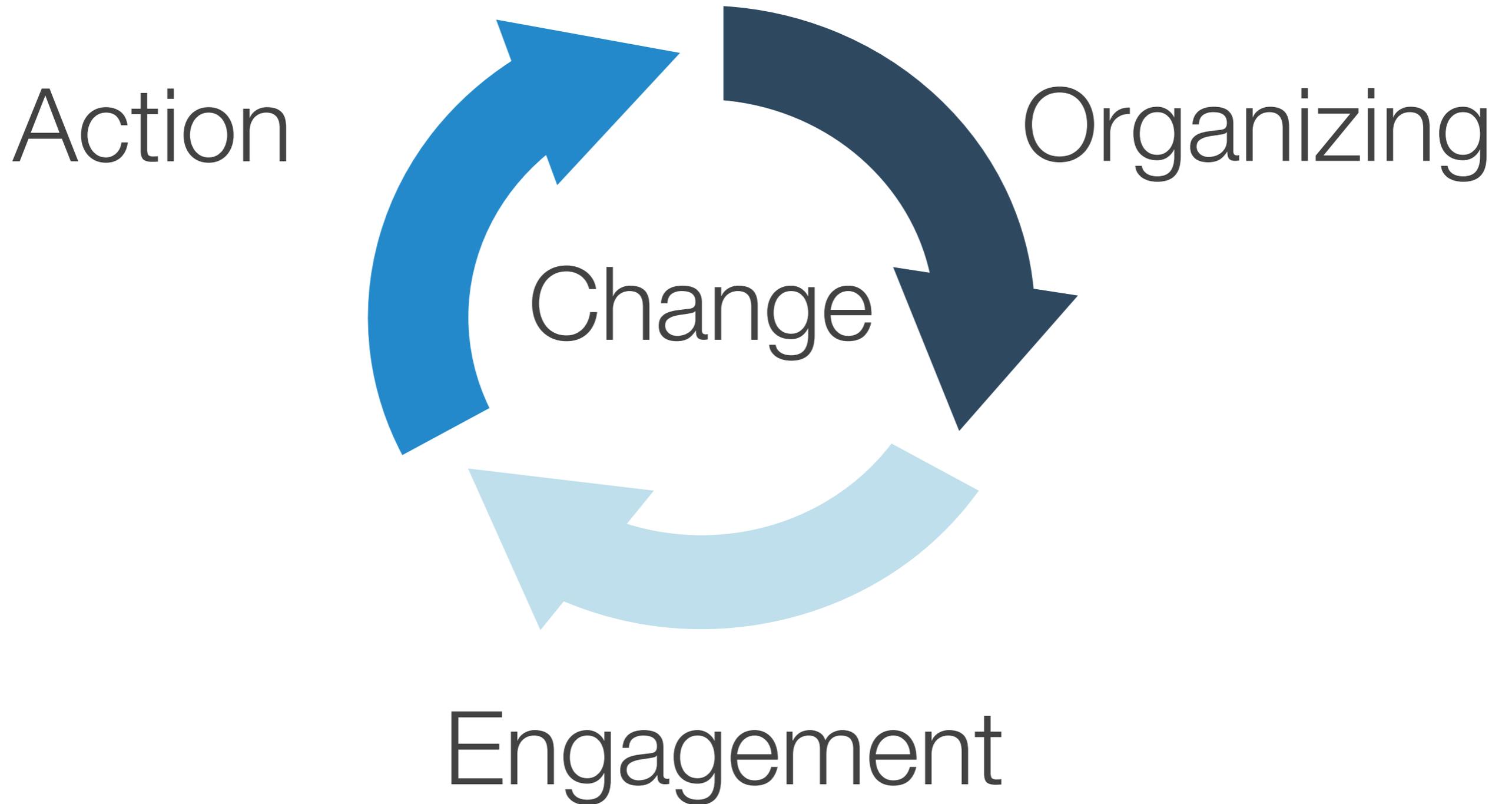
Greater community support for change



# Engagement = Inclusion



# Engagement → Decision Making



# Engagement Spectrum



Informing



Seeking Input



Deciding Together



**More** school  
directed

**Less** community  
involvement

**Less** school  
directed

**More** community  
involvement

# Critical Considerations

- What is the intent of a selected strategy?
- To what extent is it scaffolding the schools and community toward a larger goal for engagement?
- How well do the strategy, the goal, and the communications align with one another?

# Mapping Entry Points

# Entry Point for Engagement

**An existing policy, program, or practice that can be modified to:**

- Amplify stakeholder voice and involvement in District/school decision-making
- Enhance understanding of the principles and value of authentic engagement
- Help people see the transformative potential of larger engagement driven systems change.

# Entry Point for Engagement

## Quick Win

Small “winnable” success that can be achieved relatively quickly and cheaply to help people see the transformative potential of larger investments in authentic engagement.

# Examples

- Parent-teacher conferences
- Exhibitions of learning
- Student governance
- Surveys (parent, teacher, student, community)
- Open houses + orientation programs
- Community-based/service learning projects
- School board meetings

# Conditions to look for:

- It intersects with and impacts teachers, students, families, nonprofits, service providers, businesses, cultural groups, voters, etc.
- It can influence governance, authority, and decision-making

# Conditions to look for:

- Impact can be achieved without significant investments of time, money, resources
- The change will be visible to and felt by people inside and outside of the school

# Feasibility

- Is short-term success likely? Can success be achieved in a manageable period of time?
- Will the change be supported by school leaders, families, and the community?

# Feasibility

- Can the district/school find or allocate the capacity required to coordinate the work?
- Is “a coalition of the willing” already in place? Can a coalition be assembled?
- Can community assets be leveraged to increase necessary capacity or resources?

# Relevance

- Does the entry point impact multiple constituencies and stakeholders?
- Will the entry point influence governance, authority, and decision-making?
- Is there urgency? Is it enough to bring people to the table without creating a sense of crisis?

# Relevance

- Is it “sacred” to educators and/or the community? Will it create tension or confusion?
- What might the consequences be if the reengineering work is unsuccessful?

# Affordability

- What level of time, funding, human resources, or political capital will be required to achieve the desired impact?
- Is the investment worth the potential gain? What is the likely return on the investment?

# Affordability

- Can the change be sustained with a reallocation of existing time, funding, and resources?
- Or will sustainability require new, additional, and/or permanent resourcing?

# Influence

- Is the change likely to pave the way for more meaningful modifications to other policies, programs, and practices?
- Does it have the potential to shift the mindsets and overcome the biases of educators, students, families, and community members?

# Influence

- Could it lead to significant changes in school culture and governance?
- Will improvements lead to positive changes in learning experiences and pedagogy?

# Narrative

- Is the rationale for the change compelling and easy to understand?
- What rationale will appeal to busy educators and their needs, interests, and aspirations?
- Does the change have the potential to inspire and motivate?

# Narrative

- Will it challenge and overturn entrenched narratives that stakeholders have about themselves and others?
- Will it positively impact internal and external perceptions?

**Developing a Plan for  
Next Steps in Community  
Engagement in Your  
School or District**

# Feedback on the Process

# Reflection and Closing



# THANK YOU

Ted Hall  
Senior Associate  
[thall@greatschoolspartnership.org](mailto:thall@greatschoolspartnership.org)

482 Congress Street, Suite 500  
Portland, ME 04101  
207.773.0505  
[greatschoolspartnership.org](http://greatschoolspartnership.org)