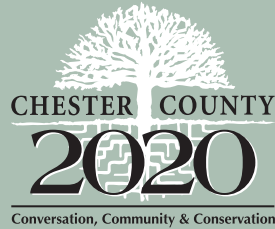


# A Community Conversation



**UCF** | Unionville-Chadds Ford  
School District

The School Board and Administration  
partnering with  
Chester County 2020  
presents  
Unionville-Chadds Ford School District

## One Community... Many Voices



February 12, 2009





## A Community Conversation

**UCF** | Unionville-Chadds Ford  
School District



# One Community... Many Voices



February 12, 2009

Community Conversations fill a unique role among Chester County 2020's programs that support effective community understanding and cooperation. Every Conversation emphasizes the importance of partnerships. Partners may include municipalities and non-profit organizations that focus upon natural resource and farmland preservation, affordable homes, transportation, education, the broad community, or any other element that is important to our daily lives. For this Conversation, our partner was the Unionville-Chadds Ford School District.

Community Conversations are CC2020's primary approach to help communities communicate more effectively, strengthen the sense of shared community, and find the common ground that always exists, but may not be easily identified. We explore the future with the participants, helping them to speak the language of understanding and cooperation – by working with respect, creativity and, honesty.

It is not surprising that few people feel they have enough hours in their days or days in each week to become community volunteers. Consequently, participation in a single evening's community conversation is a generous gift from residents to their community. The participants brought varied attitudes and experience to the task at hand as well as, in this instance, respect for the district's educational product. It is consistently predictable that by the end of a Conversation, a heightened sense of understanding will emerge and the prospect for making good things happen has increased dramatically. Initially, there were 100 registrations for the Conversation; not all were able to attend. Members of the School Board and Administration were present, not to actively participate in the discussion but rather to listen and answer resource questions.

The 80 individuals who participated were asked for an indication of their length of residency in the school district. The numbers represented an interesting mix, ranging from less than five years to more than fifty. There was greater concentration in the 10 to 20 year presence with the numbers dropping in the more recently arrived category. Five of those present had themselves graduated from the Unionville High School. Three had lived in the District their entire lives.

Over all, it would be possible to assign broad categories across the school district that included:

- Single, no children in the schools
- Married, no children in the schools
- Parents with children in school: elementary, middle school, high school
- Retirees: long time residents and those recently arrived in the district
- Business people who do not reside in the district
- Alumni (who also might have been current or past parents)



*Unionville Elementary School*

## And on to the Conversation

The rules were easy:

- ◆ Approach the Conversation with an open mind.
- ◆ Show respect for one another's ideas.
- ◆ Be willing to think far out of the box, and to listen and learn.

A preliminary list of issues was established from community input at last spring's town meetings. Several additional issues were contributed before the breakout session began, and then everyone assigned five colored dots to the issues they considered most important. The reward for completing the dot exercise was a light supper and a half hour to get to know the other members in the pre-assigned groups. The leader in each breakout group encouraged the sharing of background information and recruited a volunteer to summarize the discussion and deliver a report. While the groups were organizing, CC2020 staff counted dots to determine the top six.

## The Issues and the Ratings

The six bolded issues became the topics for discussion.

46	<b>Continued commitment to academic and co-curricular excellence</b>
43	<b>Appropriate facilities for educational needs</b>
31	<b>The increasing tax burden</b>
29	<b>Funding future improvement projects</b>
22	<b>Full community responsibility for education</b>
19	<b>At-risk student behavior</b>
18	Student values and behavior
17	Effective communication and transparency
15	Obesity and nutrition education
14	Planning for future needs
14	Safety Concerns
13	Relationship of quality schools to property values
12	Schools as the center of the community
11	5-10 year capital plan
11	Options for cutting expense
11	Teaching quality
9	Need for increased parental involvement
8	The cost of contention

8	Reducing carbon footprint
7	Student voices not being heard
6	Community access to facilities
6	Financial expertise and accountability
4	Increased operational costs
3	Preschool to college initiative for Hispanic youth
2	Enrollment
2	Salary/ Tenure trade-off
2	The school as an inclusive society
1	School district consolidation
0	Expense

### **Local and Regional Trends, Values, and What We Want In Common**

Because there was similarity in the identification of these three elements of the Conversation, under each heading they are combined without reference to the specific issue. It proved extremely interesting to observe that no matter what the issue under discussion, there was considerable consensus within these areas.

**Local and Regional Trends** are clustered by general topic.

**High Priority Values** are clustered by unidentified groups.

**What We Want In Common** supports most of the priority values.

### **LOCAL AND REGIONAL TRENDS**

#### **Funding**

Challenge of property tax funding for local education

Concern about the levels of state and federal support of education

New laws

Unfunded mandates

Fundraising as economy gets worse: will improvements be deferred?

Challenges and changes in fundraising availability

Declining economy

Economy is very bad right now.

Taxes going up everywhere

Declining real estate values

Lack of commercial tax base

Limited corporate tax base causing more reliance on community residents

Economic downturn

Busing to private schools

Budget deficits making it harder to raise money

Enrollment is increasing.

Fewer kids attend private school.

Financial burden on residents

Increased tax burden decreases public support.

Economic impact of last 12 months

#### **Challenges**

Attraction to district linked to educational excellence, property value, and reasonable tax burden

Residential development means more children in the schools.  
Taxes at all levels (Federal, state, city) will be increasing and  
the housing market is stalled.  
Current turmoil and disagreement about capital improvements

### **Demographics**

Transience of population  
Aging population  
Lack of attachment to the schools  
Only 25% of voters have kids in school  
Difficulty in accurately predicting demographics and future  
enrollment  
Aging population  
Two-income families



*Chadds Ford Elementary School*

### **Facility improvements**

Increased population requires expanded facilities.  
Other schools make physical improvements which enhance co-curricular activities, are not  
necessarily academic.  
Neighboring districts seem able to accomplish physical improvements and expansion.  
Tie-ins with Votech (Jennersville facility) and community colleges  
Other schools are ahead of UHS in making facility expenditures.  
High schools around us have renovated.  
Facilities are in need of replacement repair and are inadequate.  
We are behind the regional trend to update facilities.

### **Safety**

Increasing security issues (i.e. Coatesville fires, crime)

### **Academics and co-curricular**

More “applied” and “relevant” training for future success  
Schools that received awards do not spend more than Unionville per student. Great Valley  
spends more.  
Re-evaluation of No Child Left Behind  
The desire to keep the school district in the upper echelon it currently resides in involves  
facilities as well as education.

### **Trends people would like to see**

More parental involvement  
More teacher involvement  
More community and school involvement

### **Trends Perceived as Negative**

Lack of parental involvement  
High divorce rate  
Parents facilitating teen usage (drugs and alcohol) in their homes  
Accessibility of drugs and alcohol  
Lack of youth community leisure facilities

Pressure to achieve creating stress on students  
Money available to children without supervision  
Boredom

### **HIGH PRIORITY VALUES**

Superior teaching  
Safe environment both physically and emotionally  
Parental support

Programming  
Resources, materials, and technology  
Leadership  
Balance and develop child.  
Ensure all students are recognized at each ability level.  
Keep great teachers.  
Don't sit back and relax.

Academics  
Kid's perception of their worth as reflected by facilities  
Safe and accessible facilities for teachers and students  
Need to attract and retain quality teachers with appropriate facilities  
Accomplishing all this without breaking the community apart  
All agree on more square footage for classrooms  
Get rid of mobile units/trailers  
Quality teachers (Is level of facilities related to teacher retention?)

Education  
Capital expenditures have been deferred so we're faced with historical burdens.  
Maintaining school reputation  
Property values  
Keeping schools safe  
Keeping school as the hub of the community  
Keep tax rates and total low but consistent with current academic performance.  
Fair tax burden that generates an overall favorable return to our community

Not to be wasteful; stay within our means but be aggressive, innovative in getting the best with what we have  
Making long term investments  
Maintain safe schools.  
Lab facilities are inadequate  
Maintain property values.  
Maintain quality education.  
Attract and retain families and top teaching candidates.

Getting non-parents involved  
Complete education of children: mind, body, and soul  
Quality  
Fiscal responsibility  
Better communication from administration and board



That all of our children live responsible, happy, productive lives  
Stopping kids from engaging in risky behavior.  
Promoting healthy decisions

## **WHAT WE WANT IN COMMON**

### **Community**

Community involvement  
The community to have a heart  
Lower amount of at-risk behavior  
Good citizens  
Good choices  
Healthy students  
Support for teachers and staff  
More parent involvement



*Caption for this photo?*

### **Educational Program**

Best education for our children without negative impact on the community  
Look at success benchmarks accomplished by other schools (Manheim, Great Valley, Conestoga) and see what they do and how we can emulate.  
Invest students with pride in their school.  
Continued prestige of school district  
Top notch education  
Challenging curriculum  
Want children to learn life skills and problem solving

### **Finance**

Requires a lot more work and involves issues of measurement and degree  
Value: excellence at the best price  
Protect our investments in our school staff or community, and especially our children.  
Low taxes and quality education  
Fair taxation  
Good value for taxes (consensus)  
Get a good return and value from tax increases.  
Tax predictability  
Excellent education system at "fair burden" to the community

### **Facilities**

Get to a reasonable solution.  
Renovation of UHS and middle school  
Adequate classrooms  
Renovations are necessary: space and light.  
Move administration out of high school.  
Cafeteria capable of providing good nutritious meals  
Proper facilities (better than minimally acceptable)  
Appropriate facilities for optimal learning  
Highest quality cutting edge technology to give the highest foundation of experience  
Safe facilities

## Players

The entire community

All age groups in our population must be involved, especially anyone involved with children.

Local businesses

Senior citizens are a big factor as many value education.

Bring in wealthy residents and businesses to help pay for extras such as sports facilities and facilities for the arts.

Local and state politicians

Parents

Residents

District employees

Board and Superintendent must become more receptive to diverse input.

The taxpayers of the seven communities must be engaged.

Everyone in the community; provide cross fertilization of community members in the schools

Get senior citizens into the schools.

Holistic community involvement

Factions, parents, students, teachers

Superintendent

Non-parent leaders

Townships

Administrative staff

Existing organizations

All taxpayers

Parents

Students

School; community

## Findings and Conclusions

The Trends, Values and What We Want in Common set the scene for considering the comments and suggestions throughout each of the issue-based group reports. A complete report from each group appears as an Appendix. Findings and Conclusions are drawn directly from those reports.

1. *One Community. .. Many Voices* attracted a highly diverse community representation. People who may have thought they could not work productively with one another achieved respectful cooperation.
2. Perceived impacts of high quality education and facilities:
  - ◆ Lifetime learning skills
  - ◆ Real estate values
  - ◆ Attraction of new residents who want a good educational product for their children
  - ◆ Positive environment for learning
  - ◆ Safety
3. It was interesting that the “expense” issue did not attract a single dot. Granted there was no expanded definition, but people were more interested in finding funding solutions, looking for ways to make projects possible rather than just saying no.



4. There was evidence of a conflict between belief in academic excellence and the reality of having no children in the school district. Current economic conditions do not help.
5. The sense of community is strongest when there is direct school contact, i.e., children in schools.
6. There is little awareness of or interest in the daily life of the schools by the general population unless a specific interest area surfaces.
7. Communication is both the strongest vehicle for cooperation and the biggest challenge. There is no single, widely accepted means of contacting and educating the entire community about any given topic. Options may include:
  - ◆ Website
  - ◆ Email newsletter
  - ◆ Mailed hard copy newsletter (expensive)
  - ◆ Newsletter sent home with students (reliable?)
  - ◆ Telephone tree
8. Broad philosophical support for good schools is strong, but may weaken in the face of personal impact from school tax increases.
9. Budgets for capital project plans ideally require serious consideration by the taxpayer. In a society where so much information is pre-digested, it can be difficult to attract a high level of attention.
10. In an era of economic stress, there is decreased confidence in how money is handled in many areas, including the schools. This skepticism crosses demographic and economic lines, making nearly all budgetary decisions vulnerable to misinterpretation and challenges.
11. The desire to respond to the school's needs for program and facilities is strong in spite of recognition that the commercial tax base in the district needs to be expanded. Enrollment is increasing while, in general, real estate values are decreasing.
12. The tax questions are difficult to address. Tax reform is in the hands of the General Assembly where consensus for many years has been difficult, if not impossible, to achieve.
13. There is a suggestion about an impact fee for developers. That is not allowed under Pennsylvania law.
14. A similar suggestion surfaced about taxing Longwood Gardens. They do pay some taxes while portions of their holdings and operations are tax exempt.
15. Parental involvement is seen as a vital resource in short supply.
16. The list of negative trends centered on the issue of At Risk Behavior. They represented a desire for broader parental recognition of and commitment to dealing with drug and alcohol use from a positive, problem-solving base.
17. The format of the Conversation was well received. Its success offers an opportunity to convene this type of meeting on a regular basis with administration and board contributing to the discussions.



*Hillendale Elementary School*

### **Chester County 2020 Comments**

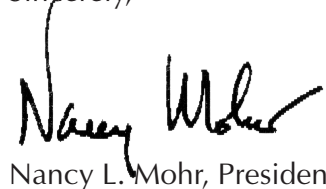
1. The general good will and concern that came through from every breakout group confirmed the value that school district residents place education high on their mutual priority list – whether they are long time residents, parents of current children or people new to the community.

2. The need for facility expansion and renovation is well accepted. It is the best “how” that is the big question.
3. Academic success and a high quality learning environment are closely related.
4. Seven municipalities with six separate zip codes (19320, 19375, 19348, 19317, 19382 and 19390) form the school district but do not automatically create a sense of community focus. It is possible to send your children to Unionville-Chadds Ford schools from homes with mailing addresses in Kennett Square, Unionville, West Chester, West Grove, Chadds Ford and Coatesville.
5. A thriving school district requires, and deserves, community support.
6. One basic way to clarify the high school project that is certainly the major item on the facility agenda for the moment may be to set up an easily read document making the case for each segment of the plan. Then show:
  - ◆ What are the positive outcomes for safety/program/finance if done now?
  - ◆ What will delay mean in the same areas?
  - ◆ How do they depend upon one another? Explain the orderly progression.
  - ◆ Accompany the case statements with a simple graphic showing the cost of each so that the reader has a visual picture and doesn’t have to struggle to compare numbers.
7. At the end of the Conversation, a number of the participants expressed satisfaction with the character of the discussions. They seemed relieved that the entire school system was the broad topic of discussion rather than focusing on the previously contentious high school project.
8. It is important to emphasize that Chester County 2020 is a convener-without-an-agenda. The fact that two of our staff live in the school district has no bearing on the substance of the report. The participating residents were extremely open in their contributions, and they have been recorded as produced.

The full breakout group reports provided in the Appendix offer a wide, supportive range of information intended to help the School Board and Administration address district plans for the future. The eighty participants went home with far better understanding of the goals and challenges facing those who are responsible for educating the district’s 4,112 students.

The board and staff of Chester County 2020 appreciate the opportunity to work with the School District in bringing the community together to actively contribute to planning for the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nancy Mohr". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Nancy L. Mohr, President  
Chester County 2020

## APPENDIX

### THE COMPLETE REPORT SUMMARY

The issues are listed in the priority established by the “dot exercise.”

#### Continued commitment to academic and co-curricular excellence

##### Preferred future

Quality facilities

Quality staff

Strive for excellence, but not at the expense of student well-being or happiness.

##### How do you get there?

Create tangible goals for school board, administration, and staff.

Keep buildings and curriculum up to date.

Invest in teachers.

Keep parents and community involved.

Is there an area of easy agreement?

We are a strong performing district.

Our school district does an excellent job of preparing our kids for post-graduate life.

##### Anticipated accomplishments/benefits

Fulfillment of our responsibility to students and society

Stable/growing real estate values

Competent, successful graduates

Perfect balance of community, teachers, and infrastructure

##### Potential barriers

Imperfect connection between needs and the taxpayers

Diverse opinions on importance

Ways to evaluate our teachers, curriculum, and textbooks

Community “in-fighting”

##### How to get around the barriers

Communication and education

Private foundation funding of certain co-curricular aspects

Community conversations such as this one

A shift in view to regard schools as the center of the community in order to overcome the lack of attachment to the schools

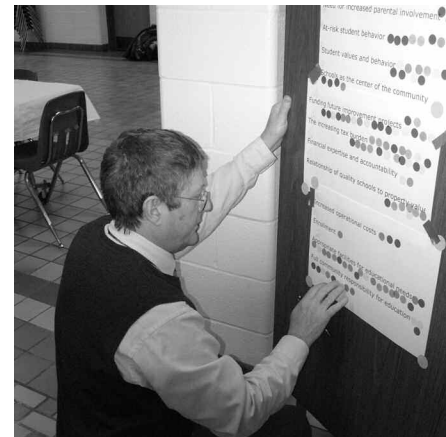
More open communication

##### Prospects for cooperation

Increased community conversations

Increased intergenerational conversations/events

Keep the community involved



*The “dot exercise”*

### **What incentives might make a difference?**

Better equipped classrooms to retain quality teachers

### **Suggested Action Items**

Communication with and education of the community about the needs of the schools

Renewal of progress on (high school) addition by subtraction

Elimination of tired and outdated programs

Most economic delivery of services

### **Ways to work together**

A role for a privation foundation

Schools as the center of the community (much more of this)

More community conversations

### **Unresolved differences**

Financial constraints

Balance between the needs and the cost

What new facilities are most important

### **Appropriate facilities for educational needs**

#### **Preferred future**

Long range plan for upkeep and refurbishing of facilities

Green buildings on campus

Effectiveness of facilities for student needs

Satisfactory conditions for staff

Community able to enjoy benefits of facilities

### **How do you get there?**

Evaluate short and long term needs and form a gradual plan.

### **Anticipated accomplishments/benefits**

Refresh the long range plan for Middle School and High School.

More green facilities and more current technology advancements

More options for students, especially at the Middle School, perhaps through more classrooms

### **Potential barriers**

Funding

Deferring demographic projections is hard to reconcile

Need community buy-in for appropriate facilities

Amount of tax increase needed and what it represents in percentage of taxes local residents pay

Average age of residents is older and a high percentage of them do not have kids in school.

Some will never support additional expenditures because they do not have (or may have never had) children in the school system.

Growing funding gap because of unfunded state mandates

### **How to get around the barriers**

Compromise; complete the plan gradually and in chunks



*Superintendent Sharon Parker and  
CC2020 President Nancy Mohr*

Improve communication  
Make informed financial decisions.  
Understand financial breakdowns of costs and renovations.  
Let people know options and find out what the community would support by providing options (30 mill, 40 mill, 50 mill). Let the people know the tax impact of each option.

### **What incentives might make a difference?**

State funding  
Private donations  
Usage fees  
Capital campaign



*Pocopson Elementary School*

### **Suggested Action Items**

Continued discussions  
True education of all parties concerning facts and needs  
Two-way communication is a priority  
Need to get the community behind the plan

### **Ways to work together**

Civil compact to support the schools when you move into a community

### **Unresolved differences**

Average standard vs. cutting edge state of the art facilities  
Types of facilities that are most important

## **Tax Burden**

### **Preferred future**

Equitable funding for education  
Taxes that are competitive with other high quality districts  
Fair and equitable tax burden against required (basic) improvements  
High visibility of base data driving the commitments for capital maintenance and operations

### **How do you get there?**

Tax Longwood Gardens  
Lobby Harrisburg  
Commercial property base  
Choices  
Cost effectiveness in everything we do  
Earned income tax for school parents  
Home builders tax fee  
Longwood Gardens tax fee  
Trademark our school district name  
Financial expertise to maximize operations  
District fundraisers  
Value on investment

Publications/ meetings  
Data available in digestible charts

**Is there an area of easy agreement?**

No

**Anticipated accomplishments/benefits**

We couldn't develop a plan for "fair" tax burden.  
Community consensus and spirit  
Looking at the big picture and looking to the future  
Board/ Supt. to start to publish and speak  
Dialogue regarding must have vs. like to have  
Separate priority between requirements and soft issues



*Charles F. Patton Middle School*

**Potential barriers**

Perspective that unfortunately isn't transparent enough or  
that is being hidden  
Taxes will have to be increased disproportionately because we've neglected our facilities.  
Educating residents  
Agreement in the community  
State laws  
Finding out precisely what is a basic required building plan  
Us and Them mentality  
Communication between diverse constituencies who view the burden differently  
Over-55 communities  
Those on fixed incomes  
Agricultural landowners  
Actively employed homeowners  
Those who do not own property

**How to get around the barriers**

Transparency  
Detail  
Cost considered; effective education process for taxpayer  
Reaching out to the community and coming to an agreement quickly  
Communication overload  
Board ought to do outreach to visit Homeowners' Associations, townships, and community groups to speak, encourage, and solicit.

**Prospects for cooperation**

Communication; transparency  
Reaching out to diverse groups to come to a consensus  
Difficult in light of the polarization of the seven UCFSD communities during last 12-18 months that will take concentrated work for several years to conciliate  
Community outreach by the board and administration demonstrating they "hear" the community and act accordingly



### **What incentives might make a difference?**

Tax credits to businesses  
Reaching out to businesses that can provide service to the school district  
UHS project scaled back to \$35-40 million

### **Suggested Action Items**

Form a group to focus on tax issues.  
Lobby Harrisburg.  
District employee fundraiser  
Reach out to corporations beyond district's boundaries whose employees live in the UCFSD.  
Community giving  
Gather more data.  
School population projections for next 5-10 years  
Capital plan for UHS/ Hillendale/ Patton  
Operating budgets for next 5-10 years  
Board and administration develop ongoing relationships and dialogue with residents and other stakeholders.



### **Ways to work together**

Communication  
Include community in all steps of planning.

### **Unresolved differences**

Whether we are spending capital on the "right" things and making sure the value/expenditure for each item is cost effective  
The tax burden is heavy for land owners who are on a fixed income.  
Specific use of money and to what degree it is used  
What constitutes minimally respectable facilities

## **Funding Future Improvement**

### **Preferred future for your group's issue**

Prevent it from being a huge ordeal and strive toward a quick resolution.  
District consensus that the school district's reputation of excellence is valued, nurtured, and worth preserving

### **How do you get there?**

Have a plan.  
Communicate better.  
Post and publicize information consistently.  
Plan with a focus.  
Increase parental involvement and homeowner investment in the district.

### **Is there an area of easy agreement?**

Standardization of communication and data on both "sides"  
Not at present with the factions



### **Anticipated accomplishments/benefits**

If you give the data to people with both groups abiding by the same rules then less will be open to interpretation.

Adequate funding to expand renovations

Maintain property values.

Maintain/ prepare for our students' future

Potential barriers

People taking time to be informed

People vote without being informed, closed off to any changes.

People from both sides need to be willing to negotiate.

Responsibility of full community for education (i.e. people with no kids in district automatically vote no)

Act 1 law, inherent PA state referendum problem

It is difficult to look at solutions for future funding when there is disagreement and financial constraint on current funding.

Community agreement

Contentious factions that waste district time and money



*Unionville High School*

### **How to get around the barriers**

Consistent communication

Figure out how to communicate beyond meetings. For instance, get local PR firm to provide pro bono, create marketing or finance committees and councils.

District newsletters: reformat into wants, needs and pictures and articles

High School paper in pdf. form

Open dialogue (coffee klatch)

Increase parental and community involvement.

### **Prospects for cooperation**

Creative fundraising

Solicit more private funding for public education.

Put financial expertise available in the district to work.

Remove or separate out portions of the expansion project.

### **What incentives might make a difference?**

Create facilities that entire community can use so that everyone feels ownership and benefits whether they have children in schools or not.

Maintain property values; return on investment

Good education for child

### **Suggested Action Items**

Get people to spend more time in schools.

Prompt residents to volunteer expertise for objective financial and marketing help.

District should seek state funding to provide improved information in support of transparency.

Independent private funding

Professional fundraisers

Establish a task force.

### **Ways to work together**

Preserve priorities and try to address top priorities of all segments of our communities.

Get objective people with expertise to collect information from both sides and present it consistently.

Perhaps start where people agree and not where they disagree.

Dialogue; communicate district to parent and neighbor to neighbor

### **Unresolved differences**

Inherent problem with referendums passing and state restrictions

Factions

How to plan for future funding when there are current dilemmas



*Unionville High School:  
Mobile Classrooms*

## **Full Community Responsibility for Education**

### **Preferred future for your group's issue**

Get non-parents to volunteer at school.

Parents and non-parents need to feel more welcome.

Enlist the 70% of taxpayers that do not have children in the school system to become involved and invested in the school community.

Hard to define

Larger group coming together to work on a solution

### **How do you get there?**

Public relations

Turn the school into a community center and haven for volunteers.

Long term planning and community buy-in

### **Is there an area of easy agreement?**

Quality. Do it once and do it right.

### **Anticipated accomplishments/benefits**

Ownership and results beneficial for all involved

Facilities geared to educational needs

Supports "good values" within the community without driving people away

### **Potential barriers**

Legal issues

Liability

Security

Scheduling

Access

Cost

Entrenched positions

Communication and transparency

Education vs. expenses vs. preferences

**How to get around the barriers**

Intergenerational book club

Partnering opportunities

Public relations

Political activity

Mutual trust throughout the stakeholders

Attempting to determine issues that will help draw people in

**Prospects for cooperation**

Human resources recognition

Very difficult

**What incentives might make a difference?**

Money

Intrinsic rewards

Making volunteers feel valued

Open issue

**Suggested Action Items**

Get everyone involved in community service.

Heal the political wounds.

Get more diverse representation and not the same people again and again.

More communication and interaction within the community

More forums and sessions for discussion

**Ways to work together**

Better communications

Newsletters

Reaching out

Seek out diverse representation.

**Unresolved differences**

Old political wounds

What is needed vs. what is desired

Resentment of newcomers

**At-risk behavior of students: drugs, alcohol, risky driving, promiscuity, cyber bullying, mental health issues, etc.****Preferred future for your group's issue**

At-risk behavior decreases.

School and community are preemptive and proactive, addressing potential problems before they become major problems.

Safe behavior

Student engagement

Accountability

More clubs and activities available for kids

**How do you get there?**

Increased parent education and involvement  
Student education  
Youth recreation facilities  
Sharing of information  
Consistency  
All agencies providing the same message  
Training sessions for parents and students  
More clubs and activities; parental involvement

**Is there an area of easy agreement?**

None of us want this for our youth (the participation in at-risk behavior).

**Anticipated accomplishments/benefits**

Students engage in healthy, positive activities and learn to act responsibly, in turn becoming responsible parents.  
More healthy and productive children

**Potential barriers**

Media influence; this behavior is promoted through the media  
Responsibility is abdicated to school, even though they have limited control over these issues.  
Reaching parents and getting them involved is difficult.  
Few people are concerned about this issue.  
Cost  
Time  
Getting people informed and involved  
School directors need to be in closer touch with their constituents and reflect the values of the community.  
Gaining correct information for a consensus

**How to get around the barriers**

Raising awareness of the problem and viewing the problem as legitimate  
Parents take responsibility.  
Provide data of student risk survey in flyers, websites.  
Cooperation of community members to promote healthy alternatives  
More community discussions that are well advertised

**Prospects for cooperation**

Hospitals to present topics

**What incentives might make a difference?**

Make it a graduation requirement for parents and students to attend workshops and make contracts for behavior.

**Suggested Action Items**

Abstinence by students

Parent education about the problem  
Student education about the consequences (drugs, alcohol, sex, reckless driving)  
Building a youth recreation facility  
Community collaboration  
Media transformation  
Communities that care move forward.  
Get more involvement from the community at large.



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