

Public Engagement

Helping districts bring stakeholders together to improve their public schools.

Engaging with Communities

GSBA believes that informing and engaging stakeholders at the district level can lead to a more well-informed and supportive community. GSBA can assist the district in making strategic decisions about how to engage stakeholders at various levels of the organization, internally and externally. We can also provide assistance on matching the engagement activity to the issue so that the information and result is what you need to move the district forward. This is a fee-based service.

Services Provided

GSBA can assist with planning, coordinating and facilitating a variety of community engagement activities.

1. Surveys (online):

- School Climate – measures the perceptions of stakeholders on the environment and “customer service” at a school or at the district. It can also address overall satisfaction in programs and services.
- Surveys on particular issues – measures opinion on specific issues such as uniforms, graduation ceremonies and policies.
- GSBA can assist with designing the survey instrument, building and launching the survey, and analyzing results.

2. Focus groups on programs, services and issues:

- Focus groups are useful in gathering opinion and feelings on particular topics. These can be homogenous groups or mixed groups depending on the issue.
- GSBA can assist with designing the focus group instruments, assisting with how to set up the focus groups and running the focus groups. We also can train district staff and/or committees on how to use and conduct focus groups.

3. Community Conversations:

- Community Conversations – The following are examples of how we have used this process with school districts and boards:
 - Finance and facilities – assisted a district with community engagement around the issue of declining revenue and enrollment; engaged a diverse group of stakeholders in considering the available options.
 - Specific issues such as the decorum of graduation ceremonies – assisted with getting students, teachers, parents and the community involved in developing a plan for implementing and enforcing a new process for the ceremony.
 - Relationships between the board and county/city government – led the local board and county and city government officials and staff through a process of dialogue leading to a plan of action for how they could all work more effectively together

GSBA can assist in using this process strategically to bring stakeholders together to dialogue in small groups about issues affecting the community and the district. Contact Laura Reilly, GSBA Director of Communications for more information, lreilly@gsba.com or 770-962-6843