

Workbook 1.

START RETHINKING HIGH SCHOOLS IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Real change comes when high schools and community members like you work together in a strong partnership to improve our children's educational future. A partnership that's built on a strong foundation of trust, honesty, and a genuine commitment to improving student achievement. A partnership where everyone involved can freely

acknowledge the community's challenges, identify its strengths, and work hand-in-hand to improve both. What role can you play? How can you contribute? The workbook below will help you think through what you can do to help and how your high schools can strengthen the community and vice versa.

- 1. When I look at my community, what are our three most unique strengths and our three challenges? In other words, what makes our community great—and what does our community need to work on, together?**

STRENGTHS

For example: Strong community organizations, growing tech industry, engaged parents

A _____

B _____

C _____

CHALLENGES

For example: Job loss from factory closings, lack of career training, poverty and inequality

A _____

B _____

C _____

2. How can our public high schools benefit from our community's unique strengths? How can our public schools help address the challenges we face? (Where are the potential synergies in your community? Remember, strengths and challenges are often related. When businesses create internships for students, they're contributing to economic revitalization. When students design and build a community garden, they're contributing to the health and well-being of the neighborhood.)

Our public high schools can creatively leverage our community's unique strengths by:

Our public high schools can help address our community's challenges by:

3. If I focus on an area I know well, what are three concrete, simple steps I can take to turn my ideas into action? (Is there an official I can contact? A forum I can join? A like-minded partner who can help me?)

Step One

Step Two

Step Three

4. By better linking our public high schools to the community and our community to public high schools, what do we all—students and community members—stand to gain? What does “success” actually look like? Paint a picture.

When envisioning a future in which my local schools are better integrated into the community, and vice versa, I see...

5. And if I'm being totally honest with myself, what's stopping me from calling for the kinds of change I want to see in my own community, my own backyard? What do I need to do to take action, today?


