BUILDING A GROUNDSWELL FOR A BIG BOLD FUTURE

PRICHARD COMMITTEE PRINCIPLES FOR MOBILIZING COMMUNITIES AND INDIVIDUAL LEADERS

Since 1983, the Prichard Committee has worked to improve student outcomes by mobilizing communities, educators, students, families, and policymakers. With over 40 years of experience in engaging citizens, policy and research, and community and family leadership, we've articulated a framework and process ideal for any grassroots movement where collective action is key. Led by trusting relationships, this approach invests in both individual leaders and community teams.

Lead with Trust, Not Authority

These principles are the foundation of the Prichard Committee's approach to fostering leadership and collaboration, emphasizing trust and respect as the basis for effective partnerships rather than positional power.

1. Start small, expand through ripple effects
Small focused actions and a core team can build momentum and spread the work by bringing in more supporters and fresh ideas.

2. Distribute leadership and embrace collaboration
Successful community initiatives thrive on committed, enthusiastic leadership at all levels where all stakeholders are highly engaged at the earliest stages.

3. Leverage media and public communication channels
Communication channels build public support and awareness for the initiative, help ensure the process is transparent, and spark interest among new supporters.

4. Support effective community learning
Use culturally relevant and current adult learning best practices that are inclusive, relevant, and engaging for diverse audiences.

5. Focus on principles, not details
Keep the group aligned on the key issues, a clearly defined problem, and stages of development without micromanaging specifics.

6. Embrace non-linear progress
The Science of Muddling Through states that true collaboration is gradual and messy, requiring frequent iteration and attention to maintaining trust and momentum.

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MOBILIZATION FRAMEWORK FOR BUILDING A GROUNDSWELL 1.0

COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION

A continuum to help communities launch, progress, and sustain mobilization efforts, ensuring coordinated and lasting impact.

| Learning & Talking | Building Trust & Testing | Partnering & Measuring | Leading Together & Improving | Inspiring Action & Mobilizing Efforts |

MAKE "THE 5 BIG SHIFTS", FROM…

Doing "to"	→	Doing "with" those most impacted
More programming	→	Increased local coordination
Decisions made in silos	→	Collaborative leadership structures
Random acts of programming	→	Intentionality for high impact
Working alone	→	Ripple effect of Groundswell action

INDIVIDUAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Individual leadership development strengthens the collective efforts of community wide mobilization.

| Learning & Reflecting | Supporting & Advocating | Partnering & Measuring | Leading & Improving | Inspiring Action & Mobilizing Efforts |

Essential Learning Components:

1. In-depth knowledge and background of the subject matter (Capabilities)
2. Strong belief in the importance of the issue (Cognition)
3. Personal connections with others who are working on the issue or play key roles in driving change (Connection)
4. Leadership skills and confidence to initiate change and inspire others (Confidence)
5. Motivation to take action

MILESTONES FOR EACH LEVEL

A FRAMEWORK FOR GROUNDSWELL GROWTH

A breakdown of each stage to shape the focus of meetings, training, resources, support services and evaluation tools.

Community Mobilization Stage	Milestones
Learning and Talking: Community members hold forums and in-person conversations to share perspectives and understand data on local challenges and priorities. Leadership support is engaged to create a welcoming environment.	• Skilled and trusted facilitator • Process for investing in individual leadership development • Clearly defined problem with a shared understanding of "why" the issue exists • Process for inclusion of diverse perspectives • Engaged and supportive leadership • Local asset mapping
Building Trust and Testing: Team members deepen new relationships and commitment to the vision by trying new ideas or improving what works. This stage focuses on teamwork, quick wins, and building trust. A core, diverse team needs to emerge from this stage.	• Committed, diverse, core implementation team • Investment in individual leadership development • Experience in piloting a few strategies as a team to build trust • Multiple in person experiences as a team • Feedback indicating that members feel engaged, dedicated, and aligned with the overall purpose.
Partnering and Measuring: Community members assume more formal roles and responsibilities and begin tracking the impact of their work toward shared goals..	• Data collection and sharing process • Collaborative action planning process • Decision-making and changes to the plan or financials process • Defined roles and functions of different members • Process for measuring 5 shifts of group and leadership development of individual members
Leading Together and Improving: Leadership is distributed from the initial leader to multiple members who own different core strategies and metrics. New data is continuing to shift the work to be higher impact.	• Distributed leadership • Community and families bringing assets to the table • Agreed upon and tested local theory of action • Process for ongoing learning and improvement • Mechanism for feedback and adaptation
Inspiring Action and Mobilizing Efforts: A groundswell of new community members and partners emerge as success stories are shared and new opportunities are identified, keeping the group energized, relevant, and diverse.	• Membership and partnership numbers are growing • Successful strategies are expanding • Unsuccessful strategies are ending • Members are sharing the work broadly in different networks • Media coverage is consistently high

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PRICHARD COMMITTEE MOBILIZATION FRAMEWORK FOUNDATIONAL RESEARCH

Lead with Trust, Not Authority Principles

- Mobilizing Citizens for Better Schools (Sexton, R. F. 2004)- Details the efforts and strategies of the Prichard Committee in Kentucky to engage citizens and empower communities to advocate for and improve the quality of public education in the state.
- Fragile neighborhoods (Kaplan, S. D. 2023)- 6 steps for how you build collaborative approaches involving residents, local organizations, and policymakers to strengthen community ties.
- Harwood Institute for Public Innovation (Harwood, 2023)- Identifies stages of community life, the chain reaction of growing community faith, along with principles and mantras for guiding the work.
- The Speed of Trust (Covey, S. M. R. 2006). Core of credibility, key behaviors and characteristics of high trust individuals and organization. Trust is the foundation of relationship building.

Community Mobilization- Stages and the 5 Big Shifts

- Community: Structure of Belonging (Peter Block, 2008) How we create and nurture communities. It emphasizes connection, dialogue, and shared responsibility as the foundation for belonging and collective transformation.
- Learning Policy Institute. Community Schools Forward. (2023). 6 Essentials for community school transformation with 3 stages of development.
- Community Schools: A Guide for System-Building. (Institute for Educational Leadership, 2022). Provides a 5-stage framework to plan, implement, and scale sustainable, effective community school systems.
- Everybody Wins (Mapp, Henderson, 2023) Roundup of the latest research by a Harvard-based team on evidence-based engagement practices.
- Design Impact (Cincinnati, Ohio) A social innovation nonprofit organization that designs inclusive and creative approaches to complicated social problems.

Individual Leadership Development- Stages and Essential Learning Components

- Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979) - This theory emphasizes the influence of various environmental systems (family, school, community) on child development and learning, with collaboration across these systems enhancing student outcomes.
- Facilitating Power: The Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership (Gonzalez, 2019)- Visual for how community engagement evolves from participation to shared ownership.
- A Ladder of Citizen Participation (Gaber, J. 2019)- An analysis and updated version to the 1969 Arnstein's model for enhancing citizen engagement effectiveness.
- International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum (2018)- Widely used framework for engaging the public in decision-making processes. It outlines five levels of participation, each with increasing public influence on decisions.
- Epstein's Framework of Six Types of Involvement (Epstein, 1995) - This model outlines six key types of parental involvement—parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community—each linked to positive student outcomes.
- Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships (Mapp & Kuttner, 2013)- This framework identifies the need to build the capacities of both educators and families for effective collaboration, resulting in improved student engagement and learning.