

# MEETING FACILITATION GUIDE

The goal of partner planning meetings is to transform community partner participation from **involvement to engagement to empowerment**.

**INVOLVEMENT** is defined as participating in meetings.

**ENGAGEMENT** is defined as actively learning more about the school, asking questions, and engaging volunteers in events and other activities.

**EMPOWERMENT** is defined as the partner having enough institutional knowledge about the school and a strong enough relationship with school personnel to feel comfortable initiating ideas that align with the school's goals during collaborative planning sessions.

This guide on the following pages will help you facilitate a church and school partner planning meeting that will achieve this goal. **You will find a checklist of tasks to accomplish prior to your meeting, questions to answer in preparation for your meeting, and items to address during your meeting.** You will also find a template for meeting notes you may choose to utilize.

United4Hope is here to equip you to facilitate productive and meaningful discussions so church and school partners can collaborate around common goals. Each time you meet, revisit the school's goals to ensure that the church is helping the school address its individual goals through volunteerism.

Your role as a facilitator is to keep the meeting on track, make sure you cover all necessary items, and take steps towards closer collaboration between the church and school partners

All participants should leave the meeting with a clear understanding of goals, action steps, and any necessary follow-up.

## VOLUNTEERISM TOPICS AND QUESTIONS TO *COVER DURING MEETING*

- What time commitment does the school expect?
- What time commitment can the church offer?
- What specific volunteer opportunities are there?
  - » Churches should choose a few opportunities that they have the resources to excel at supporting. Be strategic in choosing which volunteer opportunities to promote to volunteers. If there is too large of a menu of opportunities, volunteers can become overwhelmed.
  - » Outline a job description for each
    - Include the length of time and frequency
  - » Which opportunities require a background check?
- How does each volunteer opportunity support the school improvement plan?
- What is the volunteerism absentee protocol for if a volunteer cannot make the commitment or a student is absent?
- Who should the volunteer's point of contact be? What is the preferred method of contact?

## MEETING *LOGISTICS* PREPARATION

- Create an agenda
  - » Include specifics about the meeting - Location, Date, Time, Name and Contact Information of Facilitator(s), and Meeting Purpose
  - » Include the volunteerism information outlined above
  - » Designate a section to review the school's goals - what items on the plan are top priorities, what steps need to be taken to accomplish this, etc.
- Create an invitation list
- Send invitation and attach the agenda
- Send reminders and updates as the meeting approaches

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### FOR PARTNERS TO *PREPARE IN ADVANCE*

- What major updates do I have to share? What has my school/church accomplished since the last meeting?
- What events do we have coming up?
- What needs does my school have that my church partner can fill? (See Volunteerism Topics and Questions to Cover During Meeting) / What skill sets and schedules do my church volunteers have that can be used to fill school needs?
- How can our church and school strengthen our partnership and foster collaboration?
- What joys have you experienced through your partnership? Do you have any success stories to share?
  - » Ex: reading partner growth, enthusiastic students, meaningful staff appreciation, etc.
- What challenges has your school or church faced through this partnership, or what challenges can the partnership address?
  - » Ex: insufficient volunteers, how COVID-19 restrictions are limiting partner capabilities, poor communication, etc.

## ACTION STEPS

### *FOLLOWING MEETING COMPLETION*

- Identify everyone's responsibilities and next steps
- Create a menu of volunteer opportunities for volunteers
  - » Can be organized by pillars of impact, time commitment, needed availability
- Communicate volunteer absentee policy to volunteers
- Set timeline for updates on volunteer recruitment
- Set the next planning meeting date if applicable
- Send meeting notes to all participants and anyone who was unable to attend