

Parent Empowerment in Education

Measuring What Matters

HOUSE MEETINGS

House meetings are local community gatherings, usually of 20-25 people.

Downloadable measurement template

Below is a template of common measures organizations use in the parent empowerment space to manage house meetings.

As a reminder, your organization should ‘Goldilocks’ what it measures. You should only capture measures that help your organization make better decisions to increase impact (and are practical to collect).



[HOUSE MEETING MEASUREMENT TEMPLATE](#)

Overview of house meetings

House meetings can be valuable for all four parent empowerment strategies. House meetings can:

- Inform and organize parents about what they can do as partners in the education of their children.
- Help parents navigate the various choices they must make for and with their children.
- Support issue campaigns by developing an understanding of the issues, co-creating a campaign agenda, and building parent support for that campaign agenda.
- Support electoral campaigns by providing an opportunity to forge relationships with parents to back a candidate or ballot initiative, either as individual voters or as members of a campaign team.

How do house meetings support these strategies? House meetings build relationships and develop a common agenda by:

- Educating and raising awareness on issues you feel are important to parents and their community.
- Serving as critical opportunities to listen and learn from parents about what issues are most important to them and why.
- Identifying what actions to take to advance a common agenda, and what roles parents can and want to play in those actions.

House meetings are also opportunities to help leaders build their leadership skills.

Do house meetings have to happen in a house? No.

What should a good house meeting have? House meetings should have a clear agenda and structure. They are opportunities for people to hear and be heard, to tell their stories, to find connections and to facilitate respectful debate.

Leaders of house meetings hold an explicit responsibility to ensure that: (a) all voices are heard and respected, (b) nobody dominates a discussion (including the leader), and (c) people who hesitate to speak are invited and encouraged to contribute their voice and story.

Some tips for successful house meetings:

- Be clear on the purpose of a house meeting. Ask yourself, what will success look like?
- Invite more people than you expect to attend and follow up before the meeting to drive attendance.
- Leverage networks. If people agree to come because the purpose of your house meeting resonates with them, ask them who else they think you or they can invite.
- Remove barriers to attendance. Think about timing, location, parking, food, and child-care.
- Plan a detailed agenda in advance.
- Assign roles (e.g., leaders, speakers, break-out facilitators [if applicable] and note-taker) in advance.
- Use simple tools to achieve your purpose: sign-in sheets, hand-outs of content, note-taking template, etc.
- Plan time to debrief after a house meeting: What went well and why? What could have gone better and why? What did your organization commit to and what are the next steps? What did attendees commit to and what are next steps to follow up with them?
- Always follow up on post-meeting commitments you have made and commitments others have made.
- Thank people for attending.