

## Background and Summary

The National Association for Community Mediation (NAFCM) and Living Room Conversations (LRC) have deep experience working with communities to build connection, engage trusted voices, and develop positive changes. They co-created a School Community Toolbox (currently in a pilot phase) designed for community anchored organizations led by trusted voices with skills in conflict resolution, restorative facilitation, and community dialogues.

**If you see the need for better connectivity and constructive conversation in your school community, we have tips and resources to help you make a difference right now!**

## Identify the need and capacity in your community



Gather with partners  
and identify  
stakeholders



Assess your readiness  
and current capacity



Try out a community  
conversation to start building  
trust and understanding

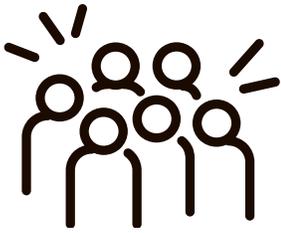
### **Please take note!**

This process is not one-size-fits-all. Timelines and resources used will vary as communities co-design the process together.

If you want more support, contact LRC and NAFCM or consider applying to be a pilot location

### **Apply to be one of our five pilot locations!**

- Each pilot location will receive \$15,000 to join the process and to implement the tools that fit best with the needs and capacity of the community.
- Your application should reflect a committed partnership between a school district/school board, a community education advocacy group, and an organization that practices conflict resolution/facilitation skills.
- Interested communities can apply [HERE](#).



## Identifying stakeholders

*Community work involves a lot of people, organizations, and relationships. Discussing who you need to involve and how is a critical.*

- ① Determine the scope of your analysis (ex. Help the school community talk about how to teach history)
- ② Involve people who can provide different perspectives
- ③ Be specific – not groups of people, but rather individuals within those groups
- ④ Meet with stakeholders to learn more about their motivations and influence
- ⑤ Create a strategy to engage stakeholders, whether to collaborate, just keep them informed, or turn opponents into allies or neutral parties

## Assess your capacity

*Once you've gotten everyone at the table, take some time to consider your readiness to convene your community and start taking action.*



- Do you know your own goal for engagement?
- Do you know your capacity for engagement? Does your group have -- or can get -- the time, skills, relationships, information?
- Do you have potential allies and ways to reach out to them? Are you able and willing to engage with those who are opposed to your ideas?
- Do you have thoughts of initial steps or can you find an advisor?



## Community Conversations

Living Room Conversations has 150+ conversation guides ready to plug and play. They are a great starting point for skill building and engagement centered around our Conversation Agreements.

### Conversation Agreements

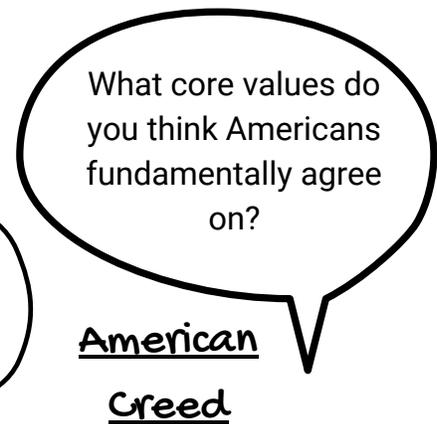
- Be curious and listen to understand.
- Show respect and suspend judgment.
- Note any common ground as well as any differences.
- Be authentic and welcome that from others.
- Be purposeful and to the point.
- Own and guide the conversation.

### Conversation tips



1. Trust the design of the conversation guide and agreements
2. This is a practice, ask people to choose an agreement they want to work on in the conversation
3. Stay grounded in sharing personal experiences over opinion

### Conversations to start with:



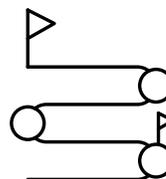
### What does it look like?



Gather groups of 4-6 people to talk about a chosen topic



Follow the conversation guide and agreements



Answer questions based on experience with the topic, not opinion



Walk away with more understanding and connection



**Get started!** What conversations do you wish you were having in your school community?