

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS ABOUT EDUCATION: Application Guidelines

Community Mediation and our partners invite you to apply for a grant to hold a Community Conversation about Education. Community-wide local conversations examine issues affecting children from birth through high school. All Connecticut communities are encouraged to apply.

Our goal is to improve outcomes for children and youth by involving more citizens in defining and supporting community priorities. Community Conversations About Education bring together approximately 100 diverse community members. A PowerPoint or video introduces the topic and sets the stage for discussion. Participants break out into small discussion groups led by trained local moderators. The small group discussions are the heart of the conversation. Together participants examine issues affecting children, youth, and families. The structure allows all participants to contribute to a constructive dialogue and for diverse experiences and perspectives to be shared in an open, "safe" environment. Trained local recorders capture the essence of the conversation on flip chart notes. The discussions generate ideas and action steps. Findings from the Conversation are used to continue the work in various ways.

Our 21 partner organizations review applications and select the winners. Grants are evaluated independently and judged entirely on merit. Community Mediation awards up to \$2,500 grants to sponsor a conversation for a single or small group of communities and up to \$1,250 for alumni communities. The money covers refreshments, printing, postage, childcare and other costs. Consultants from Community Mediation provide a planning guide, a video or PowerPoint conversation starter, printed materials and moderator and recorder training. They offer guidance and technical assistance.

Your Conversation will be planned and carried out by a local planning committee made up of representatives from a broad cross-section of the community. The objective is to reflect the concerns and interests of diverse constituencies. Your application should demonstrate the capacity to reach out to individuals who do not usually participate in educational forums or who are underrepresented in other forms of public debate. An ultimate goal is to have an impact on local priorities and to stimulate action projects with broad-based support. Your application should show clearly that information gathered from the Conversation will be used to refine on-going projects or to start meaningful new initiatives.

Winners will be announced in September 2009. Planning begins then for conversations to be held from October through May.

Questions about this application may be directed to: Nancy Polk (203) 397-2799, NPolk@aol.com or Mary Broderick (860) 739-7866, mary-broderick@att.net.

THE DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS IS 4 PM, July 15, 2009.

Submit your application electronically to Nancy or Mary or mail two copies of the completed application to: Community Conversations, Community Mediation, 32 Elm Street, New Haven, CT 06510.

_____ Date

Community Conversations About Education Application Form

This application is for: (circle one) **PK-12** **Early Care and Education** **Alumni**

Town Applying: _____ Organization: _____

Your Name: _____ Title: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: Office _____ Home: _____ E-mail _____

***Nonprofit Organization Serving as Fiduciary:** _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

**Please include with the application an Internal Revenue Service Letter of Determination for this organization.*

1. Please list up to six organizations, agencies, community groups or individuals that have agreed to co-sponsor the Community Conversation about Education and who will participate in the planning process. Please indicate those people/organizations that are also involved in the Discovery process (if applicable). (Use additional sheets as needed)

Organization Name	Contact Person	Telephone	Fax	Email
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2. What other people/organizations will you invite to participate in the planning process? (Use additional sheets as needed)

Organization Name	Contact Person	Telephone	Fax	Email
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3. What experience (none is required) has the sponsoring organization(s) had 1) in working with collaborations or partnerships, and with whom, or 2) in supporting this type of community-wide project? (Alumni applicants, please comment on your previous Community Conversation.)

4. What are the critical educational or childcare/early learning issues in your community/region?

5a. Community Conversations seek to engage participants from diverse segments of the community. Comment on aspects of diversity in your community and describe your strategies for attracting diverse participants to your event.

5b. Is there a non-English speaking population in your community? If so, how will you accommodate their participation in your Community Conversation?

6. Why do you want to host a Community Conversation? How do you think your community might benefit? How will your community plan next steps from the findings of the conversation?

7. If your community receives a William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund Discovery Grant, please tell us how this proposal relates to the community's Discovery process?

Completed applications are due by 4 PM, July 15, 2009. You may submit them electronically to Nancy or Mary or send two copies to
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