

# STUDENT LISTENING CIRCLE

Galt Joint Elementary Unified School District  
Valley Oak Elementary School

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# WHY STUDENT LISTENING CIRCLES?

- What is LCAP?
- Why do these things matter to the district?
- The importance of listening to students in Galt



# WHY CONDUCT A LISTENING CIRCLE?

- Gives students a meaningful opportunity to contribute to school decision-making
- Contributes to positive relationships between students and staff
- Adults learn that students really value adults who listen to them
- Students learn that young people from different backgrounds have very similar perspectives and develop a greater respect for similarities and differences across groups and cultures
- Contributes to improved school climate

*Guide to a Student–Family–School–Community Partnership: Using A Student & Data Driven Process to Improve School Environments & Promote Student Succ* Created by Bonnie Bernard, MSW and Carol Burgoa; Written by Carol Burgoa and Jo Ann Izu, PhD with Jamie Hillenberg. November 2010



# Who are we, What we do

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Quality experiences for youth,  
Wherever they are.

# Our Values

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Relationships  
Change  
Social Responsibility  
Fun

Introductions....

# WHAT IS THE STUDENT LISTENING CIRCLE PROCESS?

A four-part focus group process that examines:

- positive caring relationships,
- high expectations,
- opportunities for meaningful participation, and
- other areas of improvement in school climate (LCAP)
- Gallup Student Poll Feedback



# STUDENT LISTENING CIRCLES

The Student Listening Circle is meant to:

- Be recorded by at least one note-taker;
- Be discussed in a dialogue between adults and students; and
- Inform possible next steps.





## PART 2: STUDENT ORIENTATION (90 MINS)

### What we'll be doing with the students:

- Describing the purpose and process of the listening circle
- Explaining the “Agreements”
- Helping students feel comfortable with speaking out
- Helping students reframe complaints, criticism, and negative comments as positive examples, ideas, and suggestions



# STUDENT AGREEMENTS

- Turn off cell phones and refrain from texting.
- Focus on what you do like, want, or need (not on what you don't).
- Only use people's names when making positive comments.
- Be respectful of each other.
- Pay attention to the timekeeper.
- Speak your truth!



## Part 3: Listening Circle (60 MINS)

- Students sit in a circle facing each other.
- Adults sit in a concentric circle around the students.
- Questions will be asked one at a time and each student will have the opportunity to answer without interruption.
- Students will be asked in the order they are sitting, so they will always know when their turn to respond is coming up.
- Adults listen.



## Questions that students will be answering...

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1. Every student at your school has a personalized learning plan with goals. How else can you be supported at school to achieve your personal learning goals and future dreams?
2. At your school there are different opportunities to learn and grow, like using technology, the Bright Future Learning Clubs, and service learning projects. What other things would you like to see in those programs?

Follow up Question: What other opportunities would you like to see in school? How should the school buildings be changed to help with what you want to see?

3. Would you like to have more choice in what you're being taught? How would you like to be included in making decisions about what you're learning?
4. Give us 3 things that would make this school safer.  
What are 2 ways to make this school the healthiest school in Galt?
5. Do you have ideas and energy for your future in school? How do your teachers support your hopes for the future?
6. Do you feel like you're involved in and enthusiastic about school? Explain.

# ADULTS AGREE TO

- Turn off cell phones and refrain from texting.
- Stay for the entire listening circle.
- Be silent during the student voice (response) portion, i.e. listen attentively.
- Commit to next steps that reflect the students' perspectives.



## PART 4: DIALOGUE

1. Everyone will move their chairs to form one large circle.
2. A note taker will capture the main ideas and supporting details during the discussion.
3. The facilitator will ask the whole group what were the main ideas expressed by students.
4. The facilitator will ask the adults and students to suggest actions that can be taken to address the ideas expressed by students.



# TIME TO TALK

- Questions
- Comments
- Ideas
- Thoughts



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