raise your VOICE

STUDENT ACTION FOR CHANGE

COMMUNITY MAPPING
RESOURCE GUIDE

Community Mapping

Overview

Students from around the country are working on civic issues-- from serving in middle schools to organizing campuses around eliminating sweatshops-- to improve communities and the broader world. As a way to support those efforts and support the broader goal of helping you take action on the issues you care most deeply about, we have created this community mapping activity to help you identify the potential assets and allies that exist on your campus and also help you determine the "gaps" on your campus. After this initial mapping, you will be able to develop strategies for action and find additional resources to promote student involvement and the issues you care about. Remember, it is most often institutions that are apathetic, not students. After using this mapping tool you will be able to hold your campus accountable for providing more opportunities.

Mapping is a core community building skill that is a way of life for the best community organizers (See Historical Background section below). When you here the word "mapping" you probably think of a traditional street map that tells you where something is located and how to get there. Community mapping does the same thing, except the purpose is to evaluate your campus is regard to student voice and student civic engagement. It will also help you locate assets for getting involved and making democratic change on your campus. It can help you get started on implementing desired civic changes.   Most importantly, mapping is a tool that initiates a community building process on a campus that helps locate allies and resources so that change is possible.

The mapping tool below is layered so that it can be used for a quick analysis of your campus; or it can be used as a means of longer-term community mapping of campus-community connections. Some students will stop after the initial mapping with an assessment of campus and have recommendations for action;

others will see the initial mapping simply as the start of an intensive community mapping process on campus. Both will be valuable and useful.

We suggest organizing this activity with a group of 5 to 25 students from a single campus. Finding the right group of students depends on you and your campus: you may organize it with a group of students in a class ; a group of students in your residence hall; a student organization on campus; members of student government; or even a group of friends. You may also want to get the assistance of the community service director on your campus, or a sympathetic faculty member. These "elders" will bring an institutional memory that other students may not have. They can inform you of the history and the tradition of students voice and action on campus.

The Community Mapping Activity I through Activity V (without the interviews) can be done in less than 2 hours. If you do interviews, each interview will probably take up to 1 hour each. However, the Community Mapping activity should be thought of as a community building process, and time will vary depending on how useful it is for you on your campus.

After the initial Community Mapping there are many ways to proceed, including interviews, conversations with other students who are mapping their campus, regional conversations about your institutions, writing an article to the student newspaper, meeting with faculty and / or administrators, or presenting your maps to a group of community partners.

Historical Background: Approaches to Community Mapping

One of the first examples of community mapping was done in the 1890s by settlement house pioneers, such as Jane Addams at Hull House in Chicago, who did a sociological survey of the neighborhood and published *Hull House Maps and Papers.*

This process developed over time to include community mapping done by young people in the 1930s with support from a community-minded principal named Leonard Covello at Benjamin Franklin Community High School in East Harlem. As part of the curriculum students at Benjamin Franklin Community High School surveyed their neighborhood to find out what was there and then created giant maps to put in the school which gave information such as how many community organizations, public playgrounds, and churches existed and where they were located, but also identified things like liquor stores and bars. Covello writes:

> *The map showed that in East Harlem there were forty-one*
> *churches and missions, twenty-two political clubs, nine labor*
> *organizations, five hundred and six candy stores, two hundred*
> *sixty-two barber shops. There were twenty-eight liquor stories, one*
> *hundred fifty six bars, twenty-six junk shops, six hundred eight-five*

grocers, three hundred seventy-eight restaurants, two hundred thirty-two tailors, and sixty-three radio repair shops, as well as two hundred ninety-seven doctors, seventy-four dentists, one hundred and two furniture stores, and fourteen loan offices. Hungrily our map devoured these statistics…..It was both significant and depressing, both to students and us teachers, to realize that a community which could support forty-one religious institutions and twenty-two political clubs could boast only a few open playgrounds for its children, three public halls, [and] no neighborhood newspaper at all.

More recently, John McKnight and John Kretzmann of the Asset Based Community Development Institute at Northwestern University (http://www.northwestern.edu/ipr/abcd.html) have developed a process of using "asset mapping."   McKnight and Kretzmann have attempted to change the way professionals look at communities. Instead of seeing communities as a glass that is half empty- i.e. looking at all the problems in a community (drugs, crime, abandoned housing, etc), they argue that professionals should look at the glass as half full and map the assets in a community (schools, community centers, green space, etc.).

Finally, Harry Boyte and the Center for Democracy and Citizenship at the University of Minnesota (www.publicwork.org) helps young people to "power map;" to create a better understanding of the self-interests of stakeholders when trying to implement change on public or community issues they care about. In their youth initiative, Public Achievement (www.publicachievement.org), young people use mapping as a tool for stakeholder and power analysis, as well as relationship building to develop allies and strategies for "public work" projects.

Civic Engagement Defined

What is "civic engagement?" There are many definitions of "civic engagement." However, The Student Civic Engagement Campaign hopes to listen to student's voices about how young people define civic engagement in their own lives and work.

Here are some ways civic engagement is currently being defined:

> *"Adding ones voice to community conversations. Advocacy on behalf of others. Participation in public life. Encouraging other people to participate in public life. Joining in common work that promotes the well being of everyone."*
> - Project 540 (*www.project540.org*)

> *"Individual and collective actions designed to identify and address issues of public concern. Civic Engagement can take many forms, from individual volunteerism to organizational involvement to electoral participation. It can include efforts to directly address an issue, work with others in a community to solve a problem or interact with the institutions of representative democracy. Civic Engagement encompasses a range of activities such as working in a soup kitchen, serving on a neighborhood association, writing a letter to an elected official or voting."*
> - The Pew Charitable Trusts (*www.pewtrusts.org*)

> *By civic engagement we mean exercising personal agency in a public domain; and we assume that becoming civically engaged is a developmental process characterized by growing facility with ideas, situations, skills and awareness.*
> - The New Student Politics Curriculum Guide (*www.compact.org/students/curriculum_guide.html*)

> *"Civic engagement means an institutional commitment to public purposes and responsibilities intended to strengthen a democratic way of life in the rapidly changing Information Age of the 21st century."*
> - Task Force on Civic Engagement, University of Minnesota (*www1.umn.edu/civic/*)

How do you define civic engagement?

Community Mapping
## Activity Guide

Activity I:
Who's around*?*

Step I. Mapping Stakeholders

The first step is to identify key stakeholders. The following questions will help inform the mapping process. During this mapping activity, you may want to fill out the survey individually and then work in groups to draw the map of your campus. In this process, you may wish to start with the general (i.e. Service Learning Center), but then get **specific** and include names and contact information of people on campus (i.e. Sam Grant, Director, 555-555-5555). The more specific you can get, the better, especially as you go out to talk with people.

A "stakeholder" is any person or group that has a real interest (or "stake") in something.

- Who are key "stakeholders" (on campus and beyond) for increasing student voice and civic engagement opportunities?

- Where is student involvement and action supported (including volunteering, service learning, or political and community work)?

- What student groups are organizing on campus?

- Where do students have voice on campus (i.e. student government, forums on campus, students on advisory committees)? Who are key student leaders?

- What communities and neighborhood organizations can/do students partner with?

Community Mapping Tool

Supportive People/Places

Community Allies

Student Voice and Civic Engagement

Key Stakeholders

Student Leaders/ Groups
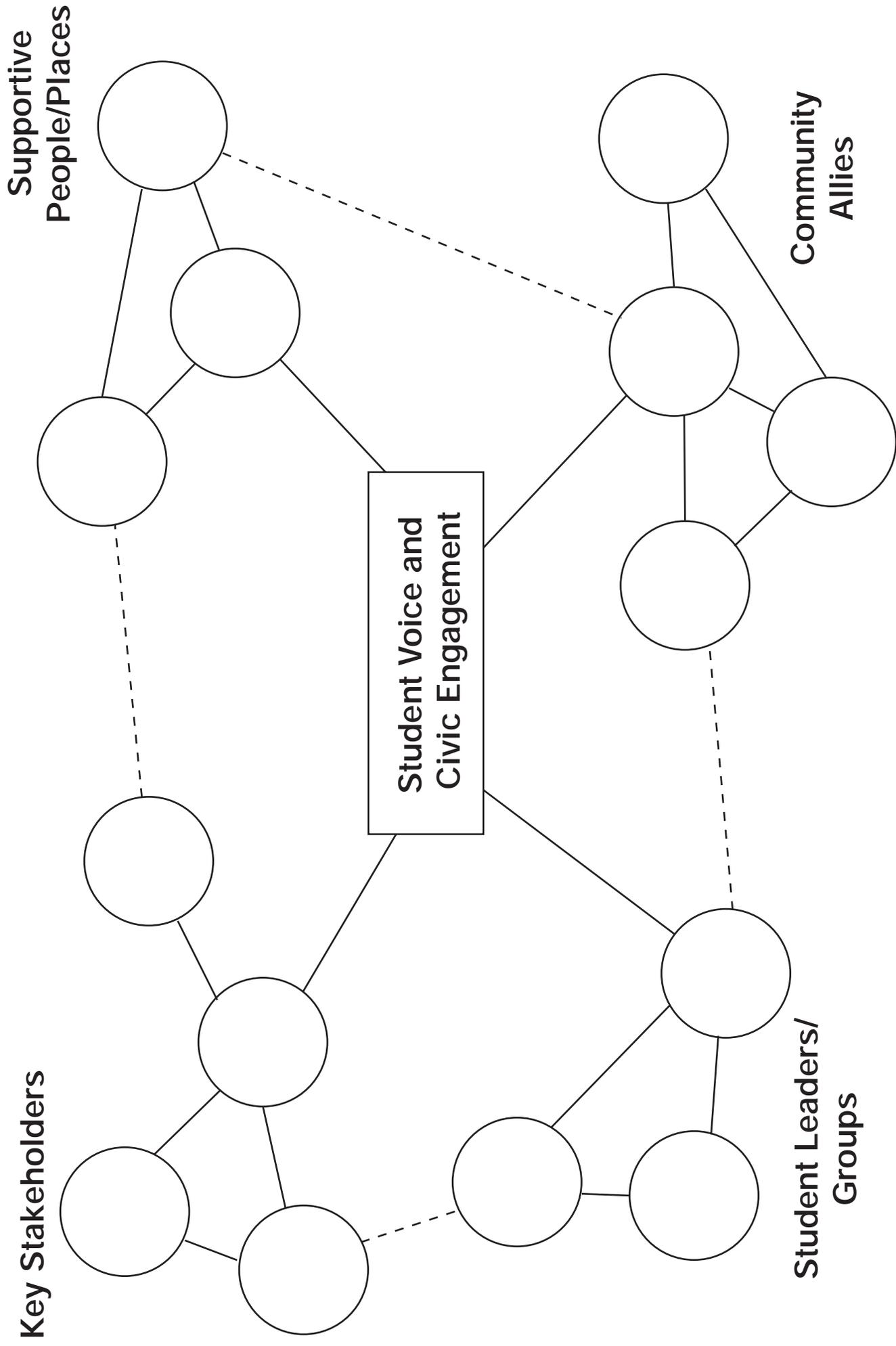
Step II. Interviews

Note: Optional- but you may want to return to this later

Doing interviews is important for building relationships with key people on campus and understanding where are the leverage points for change; but it requires much more time. Those who are simply doing a one-day mapping/assessment should skip to Activity II. You may want to return to this later as you talk with people around campus about student voice and involvement.

After the initial mapping, the next step is to do one-to-one interviews with some of the people you identified, probably 2-3 people per person This can seem intimidating, but the stakeholders you identified are most often excited to talk with people about their work, especially students. It is also an essential aspect of understanding power on campus, building allies, and seeing how to accomplish your goal (which could range from hosting a dialogue, to getting more students to join your organization, to getting your university to pay a living wage to workers on campus). The following are questions to ask your identified stakeholders:

- *How did you first become involved in your work (depending on how the person is identified as a stakeholder, this can be made more specific to the organization or civic engagement work this person is doing)?*

- *What drives you to be involved?*

- *How can we increase student involvement and voice on campus?*

- *What changes would you like to see on campus or in the broader community? Do you think change is possible?*

- *Who else do you know that is working on these issues?*

Be sure to follow-up on interesting answers and observations. Build on what your interviewee has already said, rather than following a set script of questions. An interviewee who feels listened to is likely to talk more than someone who feels ignored. People like to talk about their work, especially with students, so this activity, while sometimes scary, should be fun and meaningful. Try to get to know what motivates this person to be involved and how this person might be enlisted as an ally in your efforts on campus.

Activity II:
Helping and Hindering Student Civic Engagement

As you look at the people and places you identified (and potentially interviewed) above, think about the "strengths" and "gaps" on your campuses for fostering students voice and civic engagement. Specifically, how does your university "help support" and how does your university "hinder" student voice and student civic engagement? Use the following questions to guide your discussion in determining the strengths and the gaps on your campus.

STRENGTHS—SUPPORTING STUDENT VOICE AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

- *In what areas is your campus strong at student voice and/or civic engagement?*

- *How does your university help support student voice and/or civic engagement?*

GAPS—HINDERING STUDENT VOICE AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

- *In what areas does your campus need more opportunities for student voice and/or civic engagement?*

- *How does your university hinder student voice and/or civic engagement?*

Activity III:
Recommendations for Change- Action Steps

- *In the ideal, how could your university help support student civic engagement and foster student voice?*

- *What concrete steps need to be taken to create a more democratic culture for student voice and civic engagement on your campus?*

Activity IV
Next Steps: Action Plan

1) Follow-through on the action steps from Activity III!

2) Host dialogues on the area in your community mapping that you care most deeply about. You may want to co-sponsor the dialogue with people you interviewed (see Dialogue Resource Guide - www.actionforchange.org/dialogues/

3) Make your assessment of the campus public:

- Write a letter to the student newspaper
- Meet with faculty to present your assessment and recommendations
- Meet with administrators to present your assessment and recommendations
- Meet with students from other schools and compare notes (both regionally and with peer institutions)
- Meet with student government and ask them to sponsor your mapping and fight for your recommendations
- Discuss your assessment with students from other local campuses and peer institutions to compare notes.

Student voice and civic engagement as it is

How does your university help support/hinder student civic engagement and student voice?

Help

Hinder

Student voice and civic engagement as it should be

In the ideal, how could your university help support student civic engagement and foster student voice?

What concrete steps need to be taken to create a more democratic culture for student voice and civic engagement on your campus?

1.

2.

3.

Activity V.   Report Back

We would like to know how your mapping is going. Please report back to us by sending the following information to:
nlongo@compact.org

_____

Name:_____

College or University:_____

Who have you talked with?

Where is student voice and civic engagement on your campus strong? (Include as many specific details as possible)

What are some of the obstacles to student voice and student civic engagement on your campus?

What recommendations do you have to create more opportunities for student voice and civic engagement on your campus?

What action steps will you take / have you taken to increase student civic engagement?