

PLAYBOOK #8

Community Co-Design & Engagement

Building the community partnerships that make every student promise real

Version 1.0 Draft | April 2026
RSF Growth & Innovation Team
Developed from 87-source research synthesis

Core Promise
• College acceptance letter in one hand. Job offer in the other.
• Neither promise is possible without the community that surrounds every student.
• This playbook is the operating manual for building that community relationship, from the first conversation to a sustained partnership that outlasts any individual staff member.

QUICK START GUIDE: Read This First

You are a school leader preparing to build community relationships for a Rooted School. This one page tells you what to do first, second, and third. For the full how-to, use the SOPs in Section 8.

What This Playbook Does

- Gives you 8 step-by-step SOPs for building authentic community co-design infrastructure from scratch.
- Provides every template, tracker, and charter you need, no blank-page starts.
- Shows you how to integrate community voice into school design decisions before Opening Day.
- Builds the ongoing engagement systems that sustain trust through Year 1 and beyond.

Your First 5 Actions (in order)

#	Action	SOP / Tool
1	Launch a Community Asset Inventory, before anything else. You cannot design with a community you do not know.	SOP CD-1 (p. 18) + Appendix A
2	Identify and compensate 3-5 community liaisons from the target neighborhood. These people are your bridge.	SOP CD-2 (p. 22)
3	Run a 90-day Community Listening Campaign. Do not finalize any school design decision until this is complete.	SOP CD-2 (p. 22) + Appendix B
4	Form a Founding Community Council with real governance authority. Advisory-only is not enough.	SOP CD-3 (p. 26) + Appendix C
5	Set up the Community Input Tracker on Day 1 and make it public. This is how you prove voice matters.	SOP CD-7 (p. 48) + Appendix G

If you are stuck on...	Go to...	Time required
Building trust with families who have been burned by schools before	SOP CD-4 (PTHV) + EC-1 Checkpoint	1-2 hours reading; 6 hours PTHV training
Engaging employers as co-designers, not donors	SOP CD-6 (IAC) + Appendix F	2 hours reading; 6-8 weeks to form IAC
Getting student voice into real decisions	SOP CD-5 (YPAR) + SOP CD-8 (SGC)	1 hour reading; 4-6 weeks to form SGC
Proving engagement is working to your board or authorizer	Section 10 (Fidelity Dashboard) + Section 12 (Site Guidance)	2 hours reading; data collection ongoing

When Things Go Wrong

- Community trust is eroding: Go directly to SOP CD-7 (Input Tracker). Publish a 'What We Heard / What We Changed' report within 2 weeks.
- FCC attendance has dropped: Run EC-4 (Power Distribution Check). Advisory drift kills attendance. Restore real authority.
- Families from specific groups are not engaging: Run EC-2 (Structural Barrier Check). A structural barrier is almost always the answer.

- Authorizer asking for community partnership evidence: Section 9 (Launch & Ramp) has your documentation framework. Start an Evidence Portfolio immediately.

SECTION 1: PURPOSE, BACKGROUND & SCOPE

1.1 Why This Playbook Exists

Community co-design is not a program or an event. It is a governing philosophy. Research across 87 sources consistently shows that schools designed with authentic community partnership outperform those designed for communities on the outcomes documented in the evidence base in Section 2: student achievement, family trust, staff retention, and long-term sustainability.

But research alone does not explain why this playbook exists. The reason is simpler and more direct: Rooted School Foundation's core promise, a college acceptance letter in one hand and a job offer in the other, cannot be delivered by a school working alone. It requires employers who co-design career pathways, families who trust the school enough to partner with it, students who see themselves as authors of the school's identity, and a community that claims the school as its own.

This playbook codifies the systems that make that partnership real across Rooted's multi-site network. It translates the DNA principle of 'School as Garden', the school as a living ecosystem nourished by community relationships, into operational reality.

1.2 Rooted DNA Connections

Every section of this playbook connects directly to Rooted's 10 core DNA pillars. The connections below are not decorative, they determine what is Core versus Adaptable in the system design.

DNA Pillar	Playbook Connection	If Removed...	Core or Adaptable?
School as Garden (Pillar 6)	The community is the soil. All 8 SOPs grow from this metaphor.	The school becomes a transplant, never rooted in place.	CORE
Students as Leaders (Pillar 3)	SGC, SCDC/YPAR, and student FCC seats give youth real governance authority.	Students become customers of a school, not co-authors of it.	CORE
Career-Connected Learning (Pillar 7)	IAC and employer co-design operationalize the Double Helix: academic mastery + career application reinforce each other.	Employment Guarantee loses its labor market grounding.	CORE
Joyful, Equitable Learning (Pillar 1)	Equity checkpoints and the Representation Matrix ensure who is at the co-design table reflects who the school serves.	Engagement systematically excludes the families with the most at stake.	CORE
Authentic Assessment (Pillar 4)	Employer and community partners serve as authentic audiences for student work. Community defines what 'success' means.	Assessment becomes school-defined, divorced from community standards.	ADAPTABLE
Developmental Discipline (Pillar 9)	Families co-design the school's community agreements and discipline norms through the FCC.	Discipline norms become school-imposed rather than community-owned.	CORE

1.3 Scope

This playbook covers all community co-design and engagement activities across the RSF network: pre-opening community mapping and listening, founding governance body formation, ongoing family and community engagement (PTHV and APTT), student voice infrastructure, employer co-design through the IAC, and the community accountability systems that sustain trust over time.

What this playbook does NOT cover: day-to-day family communication (handled in Operations Excellence, Playbook #6); career pathway curriculum design (Playbook #7, Employment Guarantee); post-secondary advising relationships (Playbook #13); and student discipline procedures (Playbook #12, Student Support & Well-being). Cross-references to each are embedded throughout.

Site	Phase	Co-Design Priority in This Cycle
Rooted School Vancouver (RSV)	Operational, Reauthorization 2026	Deepen PTHV and APTT fidelity; validate playbook SOPs against lived practice; generate WSCSC renewal evidence on community partnership.
C.R. Neal Academy (RSSC, Columbia, SC)	Pre-Opening, Fall 2027 Launch	Community Asset Inventory; Atlas Road corridor listening campaign; Founding Community Council with Midlands CDC as anchor; Healthcare/IT/Advanced Manufacturing IAC.
Rooted School Cleveland (RSOH, Cleveland, OH)	Pre-Opening, Fall 2027 Launch	Neighborhood landscape mapping (Glenville, Hough, East Side); Cleveland employer ecosystem; founding family network; Fordham Institute authorization evidence.

SECTION 2: RESEARCH FOUNDATION

2.1 Evidence Base Summary

This playbook draws from 87 sources synthesized via NotebookLM research (April 2026). Evidence is rated across four levels: Strong (RCT, large n), Moderate (quasi-experimental), Promising (case studies, practitioner consensus), and Insufficient (theoretical only). Implementation guidance defaults to Strong evidence where available and explicitly flags where practitioner consensus fills gaps.

Framework	Core Claim	Rooted Application	Evidence Level
Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD, Kretzmann & McKnight)	Every community has untapped strengths. Schools that start by mapping assets, not deficits, build fundamentally different relationships.	SOP CD-1 (Community Asset Inventory) is built on ABCD methodology. All community-facing language defaults to asset framing.	Strong, Multiple RCTs and longitudinal studies; adopted by WHO and CDC as evidence-based approach
Equity-Based Co-Creation (EqCC)	'Nothing about us without us.' Governance and curriculum shaped by the communities being served, not designed for them.	FCC composition requirements, PLT co-design authority, and SGC governance structure are direct applications of EqCC.	Moderate, Strong practitioner consensus; growing quasi-experimental evidence from XQ, New Tech Network, and Big Picture Learning
Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR, Cammarota & Fine)	Students are the most credible researchers of their own communities. YPAR develops student agency, research skills, and social change capacity simultaneously.	SOP CD-5 (Student Co-Design Cohort) follows the YPAR cycle: Identify question → Design research → Collect data → Analyze → Present → Advocate.	Strong, Multiple peer-reviewed studies; documented improvements in academic engagement, critical thinking, and school belonging
Academic Parent-Teacher Teams (APTT, Bailey & Fleischer)	When parents receive precise learning data and set specific academic goals with teachers, student outcomes improve measurably.	SOP CD-8 (APTT) follows the validated APTT session structure exactly. Deviation from protocol reduces effectiveness.	Strong, Multiple quasi-experimental studies; partner districts report 15-30% improvement in homework completion and attendance
Parent Teacher Home Visits (PTHV, Davis & Warner)	Voluntary home visits focused on hopes and dreams, not academic concerns, reduce chronic absenteeism by 25% and improve family engagement.	SOP CD-4 (PTHV) follows the national PTHV program protocol. Staff certification in PTHV is required before conducting visits.	Strong, RCT with n=2,000+; effect holds across racial, linguistic, and socioeconomic subgroups
The Hub Model (Career-Connected Schools)	Co-locating learning in authentic work environments and building IACs bridges academic and	SOP CD-6 (IAC) structures employer partnerships as co-design relationships, not transactional	Moderate, Growing evidence base from XQ, Big Picture Learning, and Jobs for the Future

	workforce preparation at the community level.	donations or advisory roles.	
Transformative Family Engagement (Henderson, Mapp & Davies)	High-impact engagement ties directly to student learning outcomes and operates on families' turf, not the school's turf.	PTHV, APTT, and PLT structures all reflect TFE principles: meeting families where they are, not inviting them into school spaces.	Strong, Multiple systematic reviews; foundational to Karen Mapp's Dual Capacity Framework (adopted by U.S. Department of Education)

2.2 What the Research Says About Failure

The research is equally clear about what does not work. Understanding these failure modes is as important as understanding the evidence base.

The Five Most Common Engagement Failures, From the Research
• Performative listening: Conducting community input processes with no feedback loop. When community members do not see their input reflected in decisions, trust collapses faster than if no engagement had occurred at all.
• Staff-centric design: Building engagement programs around what is convenient for staff, not what works for families. Events at 3pm on Tuesdays serve staff schedules, not family realities.
• Representation without power: Creating community governance bodies that are advisory-only. When the FCC or PLT cannot make real decisions, members stop coming.
• Linguistic exclusion: Providing materials in English only and claiming community engagement. Translation is not an accommodation, it is a baseline equity requirement.
• Community researcher exploitation: Using community members as data sources without compensating them. Unpaid 'focus groups' extract community expertise for institutional benefit.

SECTION 3: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SYSTEM MAP

3.1 How the System Works

Rooted's community engagement system is not a collection of programs. It is a single integrated architecture where every component feeds every other component. Understanding how the pieces connect is essential to implementing them with fidelity.

The system operates in three concentric rings:

- Ring 1, Community Knowledge: The Community Asset Inventory (SOP CD-1) and Listening Campaign (SOP CD-2) build the foundational map of who the community is, what it values, and where its strengths live. Nothing else in the system works without this knowledge base.
- Ring 2, Community Governance: The Founding Community Council (SOP CD-3), Parent Leadership Team, Student Governance Council (SOP CD-8), and Industry Advisory Council (SOP CD-6) are the formal governance structures through which community voice holds real decision-making authority. These bodies are not advisory committees, they have defined decision rights.
- Ring 3, Community Relationship: PTHV (SOP CD-4), APTT (SOP CD-8), and the Student Co-Design Cohort (SOP CD-5) are the day-to-day relational practices that build and sustain individual trust between school staff and community members. Governance structures cannot hold without this relational foundation.

The Community Input Tracker (SOP CD-7) is the accountability spine of the entire system. Every input that enters from any ring is logged, categorized, and closed, publicly. Without the Tracker, the system produces engagement theater instead of genuine partnership.

3.2 System Integration Points

From This Component...	...Flows Into This Component	What Transfers
Community Asset Inventory (CD-1)	Listening Campaign (CD-2)	Target locations, trusted community spaces, key informants for outreach
Community Asset Inventory (CD-1)	Industry Advisory Council (CD-6)	Initial employer target list sorted by pathway alignment and community embeddedness
Listening Campaign (CD-2)	Founding Community Council (CD-3)	Identified community leaders who should hold FCC seats; documented community priorities that shape FCC agenda
Founding Community Council (CD-3)	All subsequent governance structures	FCC co-designs PLT and SGC charters; FCC reviews IAC Charter; FCC sets community accountability standards
PTHV (CD-4)	Community Input Tracker (CD-7)	Family strengths, concerns, and priorities surfaced during visits are logged as inputs; follow-up commitments tracked
YPAR / SCDC (CD-5)	Founding Community Council + FCC Co-Design Log	Student research findings are formally presented to FCC; documented decisions that changed based on findings
IAC (CD-6)	Academic Model (Playbook #5) +	WBL placement commitments; career pathway validation;

	Employment Guarantee (Playbook #7)	curriculum alignment recommendations
Community Input Tracker (CD-7)	Quarterly 'What We Changed' Report, public	Closed-loop evidence that community voice produces real decisions; primary community trust metric

SECTION 4: STAKEHOLDER ECOSYSTEM

4.1 Community Stakeholder Map

Every community is different. This map identifies the categories of stakeholders common to all Rooted sites and the specific role each plays in co-design. Site teams must adapt the categories to local context using the Community Asset Inventory process.

Stakeholder Category	What They Bring	What the School Owes Them	Primary Engagement SOP
Enrolled Families	Real-time intelligence on student experience; advocacy for student needs; cultural knowledge; community credibility with other families	Honest communication; PTHV and APTT as standard; PLT governance authority; translation without asking	SOP CD-4 (PTHV), SOP CD-8 (APTT)
Prospective Families	Demand signal; peer-to-peer community recruitment; early co-design investment creates enrollment commitment	Listening before presenting; genuine input into school design before decisions are finalized; follow-up on what changed	SOP CD-2 (Listening Campaign)
Students	Frontline experience of what the school is actually doing; research capacity; peer influence networks; moral authority	Real governance authority via SGC; YPAR research cycle with documented impact; FCC representation	SOP CD-5 (SCDC/YPAR), SOP CD-8 (SGC Charter)
Faith Community Leaders	Trust networks with families who distrust schools; gathering spaces that are neutral and accessible; moral authority on equity issues	Genuine partnership, not instrumentalization; recognition of their role; information sharing	SOP CD-2, SOP CD-3
Community-Based Organizations	Wraparound service networks; access to underserved populations; community intelligence; staffing pipelines for community liaisons	MOU and formal partnership agreements; data sharing with consent; co-programming credit	SOP CD-1, SOP CD-3
Employers and Industry Partners	WBL placements; career pathway validation; job offers under Employment Guarantee; professional networks for staff recruitment	Co-design role, not transactional role; IAC governance authority; transparent student outcome data	SOP CD-6 (IAC)
Higher Education Partners	Dual enrollment pathways; campus access; research partnerships; college counselor relationships	Committed student cohorts; data sharing on college readiness; joint programming	SOP CD-3, SOP CD-6

Local Government and Social Services	Data on community needs; referral networks; policy context; compliance landscape	School as community asset; communication of student needs; shared outcome reporting	SOP CD-1, SOP CD-3
Alumni and Community Alumni Networks	Proof of concept for community members; peer motivation for current students; career navigation expertise; community pride	Recognition and connection pathways; mentorship structures; engagement beyond fundraising	SOP CD-3, SOP CD-5

4.2 Local Charter Governance: Critical Distinction

RSF Governance in Community-Facing Communications
• RSF is the Education Service Provider (operator) under an ESMA, not the charter holder. The local non-profit (Rooted School South Carolina, Cleveland's local non-profit, etc.) holds the charter.
• Each site has its own Board of Directors. That board is the ultimate community accountability body, not RSF.
• In all community-facing communications: the school's local non-profit is the governing entity. RSF provides the model, tools, and operational support.
• This distinction matters: families and community members who have concerns about governance, hiring, and accountability should know they have a local board to hold accountable, not a distant CMO.
• Authorizers (Voorhees University at RSSC, Fordham at RSOH, WSCSC at RSV) are the external accountability body. Include them in community transparency communications where appropriate.

SECTION 5: CROSS-PLAYBOOK DEPENDENCIES

Community co-design does not exist in isolation. The systems in this playbook feed into and draw from at least 6 other RSF playbooks. Implementing this playbook without understanding these connections creates contradictions and gaps.

Related Playbook	Critical Dependency	Direction of Flow
#2, School Launch & Authorization	Community needs analysis (SOP P0-3 in Playbook #2) is the first co-design act. Authorizer applications require community partnership evidence. This playbook operationalizes the ongoing engagement that follows authorization.	Feeds forward, authorization creates the mandate; this playbook delivers it
#5, Academic Model Implementation	Community partners serve as authentic audiences for PBL projects. Families co-design learning priorities through the PLT. The IAC validates career-connected curriculum relevance.	Bidirectional, academic model shapes engagement content; community engagement shapes academic priorities
#7, Employment Guarantee (Green Balloon Fellowship)	The Industry Advisory Council is structured and governed by this playbook. Employer co-design of WBL placements is the operational bridge between community engagement and the Employment Guarantee.	Bidirectional, IAC is jointly owned by Playbook #7 and #8; no Employment Guarantee without IAC fidelity
#12, Student Support & Well-being	PTHV relationship data informs MTSS (Multi-Tiered Support System) early identification. Community organizations co-provide wraparound services. Families co-design intervention approaches.	Feeds into, family relationships built in this playbook are the infrastructure for Playbook #12
#13, Post-Secondary Navigation & Economic Mobility	Alumni and community alumni networks are community assets maintained in the CAI. Employer relationships built through IAC feed post-secondary employment pathways.	Bidirectional, post-secondary outcomes are community accountability metrics that loop back into engagement
#14, Model Fidelity & Quality Assurance	Community Fidelity Rubric (Section 10 of this playbook) feeds into the model-wide fidelity dashboard. Community engagement is one of the core fidelity domains for RSF's replication standard.	Feeds into, this playbook provides the community fidelity data that Playbook #14 aggregates
#16, Equity Audit & Continuous Improvement	The 6 Equity Checkpoints in this playbook are part of the network-wide equity audit framework. Disaggregated engagement data is a primary input for the annual equity audit.	Feeds into, equity data generated here is audited in Playbook #16
#19, Cultural Responsiveness & Inclusive Practices	Community Asset Inventory and Listening Campaign provide the cultural intelligence that Playbook #19 builds institutional competency around.	Feeds into, community knowledge generated here informs cultural responsiveness development

Dependency Red Flag

- If the Employment Guarantee (Playbook #7) is being built without an active IAC, the community co-design system is incomplete. IAC is not optional for Employment Guarantee fidelity.
- If the Academic Model (Playbook #5) is being designed without PLT or FCC input, a critical co-design gate has been skipped. Pause academic design decisions until community voice structures are in place.
- If the Equity Audit (Playbook #16) cannot access disaggregated engagement data, the Community Input Tracker is not operational. Fix the Tracker first.

SECTION 6: CORE vs. ADAPTABLE COMPONENTS

The Core column is the set of active ingredients for community co-design: if these are present, co-design works; if they are diluted, the work degrades into consultation theater. Everything in the Adaptable column flexes to fit the community.

Guard against champion dependency. The relationships in this playbook live in the Community Engagement Coordinator and a small number of community liaisons. That concentration can look healthy and is fragile: a CEC departure or liaison turnover can break the trust network overnight, and community trust is the slowest asset to rebuild. Cross-train, keep the stakeholder map and Community Input Tracker in shared systems, and once a year ask what would stop if the CEC or a key liaison left tomorrow (Stark and Page, 2026).

Rooted's replication model distinguishes between Core components, elements that must be implemented with fidelity across all sites, and Adaptable components, which are tailored to local context. Adapting Core components without RSF Growth & Innovation approval is a fidelity violation. Failing to adapt Adaptable components to local context is an equity gap.

Component	Core or Adaptable?	Non-Negotiable Elements (if Core)	Site-Customizable Elements (if Adaptable)
Community Asset Inventory	CORE	Must be conducted before school design decisions are made. Must include community co-researchers. Must be published and referenced in design decisions.	Geographic scope; specific asset categories; co-researcher recruitment strategy; digital vs. paper format
Community Listening Campaign	CORE	Minimum 90 days. Minimum 3 engagement modalities. Minimum 150 voices. Must produce published 'What We Heard' report with loop closure.	Specific formats (town hall vs. door-to-door vs. digital); languages translated; event locations and timing
Founding Community Council	CORE	Minimum 12 members. Family majority (40%+). Youth seats (20%+). Real decision-making authority, not advisory only. FCC Charter adopted by members.	Specific governance structure; meeting frequency; co-chair model; community name for the body (FCC is default)
Parent Teacher Home Visits (PTHV)	CORE	National PTHV protocol followed. Voluntary only. Focus on hopes and dreams in Year 1. Two staff minimum. All staff trained.	Visit timing and scheduling model; language pairing for co-facilitators; community meeting location alternatives
Student Co-Design Cohort (YPAR)	CORE	Students conduct real research. Findings presented to governance body. Documented decisions changed by student research. Students compensated or receive academic credit.	Research question selection; research methods; presentation format; community partner co-facilitation
Industry Advisory Council (IAC)	CORE	Minimum 8 employer partners. Co-design	Specific employers recruited; sector

		authority over WBL placements. Annual pathway validation cycle. At least 2 student SGC representatives on IAC.	representation balance; meeting format; working group structure
Community Input Tracker	CORE	All inputs logged within 48 hours. Quarterly loop closure report published. 100% of inputs receive documented response within 60 days.	Platform (Google Sheet, Notion, AirTable); public display format; report design
Engagement Event Formats	ADAPTABLE	All formats must meet 6 structural barrier requirements (childcare, transport, food, interpretation, accessible timing, accessible venue).	Town halls vs. listening circles; digital vs. in-person; community celebration events; faith community partnerships
Communication Channels	ADAPTABLE	Core information must be available in all community languages. No English-only communications for major decisions.	Platforms (email, text, app, paper); frequency; voice vs. text messaging; social media strategy
IAC Career Pathway Sectors	ADAPTABLE	IAC must represent the school's career pathway verticals with at least 2 employers per vertical.	Specific sectors depend on local labor market. RSSC: Healthcare, IT, Advanced Manufacturing. RSOH: Healthcare, Technology, Green Economy. RSV: Technology, Trades, Education.

SECTION 7: ROLES & RACI

7.1 Role Definitions

Community co-design requires dedicated roles with clear authority. The two most critical, and most commonly under-resourced, are the Community Engagement Coordinator and the community liaisons. Do not launch community engagement without these roles filled.

Role	Responsibilities Time Allocation Hiring Notes
Executive Director (ED)	Primary community relationship owner and face of the school in the community. Attends all FCC meetings. Participates in IAC. Co-conducts PTHV with staff. Approves all major community communications. 20-25% of time in Year Zero; 15% ongoing Must demonstrate asset-based community orientation in hiring process
Community Engagement Coordinator (CEC)	Manages all 8 SOPs. Owns the Community Input Tracker. Coordinates PTHV scheduling. Staffs FCC and PLT meetings. Manages community liaison network. Produces quarterly reports. 100% FTE, this is a full-time role, not a supplemental assignment Community member preferred; multilingual strongly preferred; PTHV training required before first visit
Community Liaisons (2-4 per site)	Trusted community members, not school employees, who conduct outreach, facilitate listening sessions, co-lead PTHV visits in their primary language, and serve as the community's ear in the school. Part-time; compensated via stipend, NOT volunteer Must live in or have deep roots in target community; language access is primary qualification; training provided by CEC
Dean of Students	Coordinates PTHV teacher participation. Facilitates SGC and SCDC/YPAR. Integrates family engagement into MTSS early identification system. 15-20% of time PTHV training required; YPAR facilitation training preferred
Teaching Staff	Conducts PTHV (all teachers). Participates in APTT facilitation. Integrates community voice into classroom practice and PBL authentic audiences. 6-8 hours per semester for PTHV and APTT PTHV training (6 hours) required before first visit; APTT facilitation coaching provided
Parent Leadership Team (PLT)	Elected family governance body. Co-designs family programs. Reviews cultural and scheduling decisions. Advocates for family voice at FCC. 2-4 hours/month Elected by enrolled families; CEC provides onboarding and support
Industry Advisory Council (IAC)	Co-designs WBL pathways. Validates career pathway relevance. Commits to Employment Guarantee placement slots. Reviews student work samples. 4 meetings/year plus working groups Recruited by ED with RSF Growth & Innovation support; onboarded with IAC Charter
RSF Growth & Innovation (Central)	Provides playbook, tools, training, and cross-site learning. Approves Core component implementation plans. Reviews quarterly data. Coaching hours per site: 4 hours/month in Year Zero; 2 hours/month ongoing Steven Carney and team; cross-site pattern recognition is a primary value-add

7.2 RACI Matrix: Key Community Co-Design Decisions

R = Responsible (does the work) | A = Accountable (owns the outcome) | C = Consulted (input required) | I = Informed (kept in the loop)

Decision / Activity	ED	CEC	RSF G&I	FCC / PLT / SGC
Hire Community Engagement Coordinator	A/R	,	C	I
Conduct Community Asset Inventory	A	R	C	C
Design Listening Campaign Format	A	R	C	C → Co-design
Recruit and Finalize FCC Members	A	R	I	C (existing members)
Approve FCC Charter	C	R (drafts)	I	A (members vote)
Set School Name / Mascot / Colors	C	I	I	A (FCC authority)
Approve First-Year Enrichment Program	C	I	I	A (FCC authority)
Set IAC Career Pathway Focus	A	C	C	C (FCC input)
PTHV Schedule and Participation Rate	A	R	I	I
Publish Community Input Tracker	A	R	I	I
Quarterly Loop Closure Report	A	R	I	A (FCC reviews)
Annual Community Fidelity Rubric	A	R	R (cross-site calibration)	C

SECTION 8: STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Eight SOPs govern the full community co-design system. Each follows the RSF Action-Forcing SOP format: clear deliverable, step-by-step process, success check, and callout boxes for pitfalls, red flags, and troubleshooting. Appendix templates referenced in each SOP are fully built at the end of this playbook.

SOP	Page Reference
SOP CD-1: Community Asset Inventory	This section
SOP CD-2: Community Listening Campaign	This section
SOP CD-3: Founding Community Council, Formation and Operations	This section
SOP CD-4: Parent Teacher Home Visits (PTHV)	This section
SOP CD-5: Student Co-Design Cohort, Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR)	This section
SOP CD-6: Industry Advisory Council (IAC), Employer Co-Design	This section
SOP CD-7: Community Input Tracker and Loop Closure Protocol	This section
SOP CD-8: Academic Parent-Teacher Teams (APTT)	This section

SOP CD-1: Community Asset Inventory (CAI)

What You'll Accomplish	A comprehensive, community-authored map of every organization, institution, employer, cultural asset, informal network, and 'fund of knowledge' within the school's draw zone, with contact information, asset type, partnership potential, and gaps documented. The CAI is the single most important document for pre-opening school design.
Time Estimate	6-10 weeks; approximately 60-80 hours across team. Budget 3-5 weeks for data gathering, 1-2 weeks for analysis, 1 week for presentation.
Who Does This	Community Engagement Coordinator leads. ED participates in at least 2 community walk sessions. 3-5 compensated community co-researchers conduct most field work.
Before You Start	Site confirmed. ED hired or ED-elect engaged. At minimum \$3,000 budgeted for community co-researcher compensation. CEC identified or temporary staff assigned. Translation capability confirmed for all community languages.

Deliverable	Published Community Asset Inventory Report. Minimum 75 documented assets. Gap analysis across school's career pathway verticals. Presented to FCC within 30 days of completion. Updated annually.
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STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS

Step 1: Gather secondary data, 1 to 2 weeks

Pull all available secondary data before doing any field work: U.S. Census data for demographics and economic profile; 211 database for nonprofit directory; city GIS portal for business licenses and community facilities; school district boundary maps; local foundation grantee lists; city council district maps. Enter all findings into the CAI Spreadsheet (Appendix A). Expect to populate 30-40 rows from secondary data alone in 4-6 hours. This prevents duplication and gives community co-researchers a starting map to challenge and expand.

Step 2: Recruit and train community co-researchers, 1 week

Recruit 3-5 community members who represent the diversity of the target neighborhood, including families, youth, and an elder or long-term resident. These are paid positions: minimum \$25/hour or \$150 per full session. Post through faith communities, community organizations, barbershops, community colleges, and neighborhood Facebook groups. Training covers: ABCD methodology (assets, not deficits); observation and documentation protocols; interview skills for key informants; confidentiality and consent basics. Training takes one half-day (4 hours). Do not start field work without training complete.

Step 3: Conduct neighborhood walks, 2 to 3 weeks

Teams of 2 (one community co-researcher, one CEC or other school staff) conduct systematic neighborhood walks covering all areas within 2 miles of the school site. Observation focus: storefronts and small businesses; faith institutions; parks and recreation facilities; gathering spaces (barbershops, salons, community rooms, laundromats); community art and murals; informal gathering spots. Document everything in the CAI Spreadsheet, especially informal assets that do not appear in any database. Take photographs (with permission). Community co-researchers lead in spaces where they have relationships.

Step 4: Conduct 20-30 key informant interviews, 2 to 3 weeks

Key informants are people who know the community from the inside: long-term residents, faith leaders, small business owners, community health workers, rec center staff, union organizers, school crossing guards. Use the Key Informant Interview Guide (Appendix A, Part 2). Core questions: 'What do families in this community most need from a school?' 'What has every school missed about this neighborhood?' 'Who should we absolutely talk to?' 'What assets here do outsiders overlook?' Each interview takes 30-45 minutes. Debrief same day. Pay key informants \$25 minimum for their time.

Step 5: Categorize, score, and identify gaps, 1 week

Enter all field data into CAI Spreadsheet. Categorize each asset: Physical (parks, spaces), Institutional (nonprofits, faith, government), Individual (people with expertise or connections), Cultural (traditions, practices, informal knowledge), Economic (employers, workforce development). Assign Partnership Potential: High (active interest in school partnership), Medium (likely interest, relationship-building needed), Low (background awareness only). Cross-reference asset map against school's career pathway verticals. Document gaps: where assets do not exist for a needed function, record as a gap to drive targeted partnership recruitment.

Step 6: Present findings to FCC and publish, 1 week

Present CAI findings to the Founding Community Council (or prospective members if FCC is not yet formed). Community co-researchers present their own findings, not school staff presenting on behalf of community. This is non-negotiable. Let FCC members challenge categorizations, add assets that were missed, and identify local experts you need to meet. After FCC review, publish the CAI Report publicly on the school website and at community events. Document 3+ specific school design decisions that will change based on CAI findings.

Step 7: Establish annual update protocol, ongoing

Assign the CEC to update the CAI quarterly: adding new assets as discovered, updating contact information, removing assets that are no longer active. Conduct a full re-mapping annually using the same process. The CAI is a living document, the version that exists on Opening Day should look substantially different from the initial version.

Success Check, SOP CD-1

- CAI contains minimum 75 documented assets across all five categories.
- At least 20 assets rated High Partnership Potential, with at least 3 in each of the school's career pathway verticals.
- Gap analysis completed, missing assets documented with recruitment plan.
- FCC or prospective members have reviewed and added to the CAI.
- All community co-researchers compensated at agreed rate.
- CAI published publicly. At least 3 design decisions explicitly reference CAI findings.

Time-Saving Tip, SOP CD-1

- The 211 database and city GIS data together give you a solid 30-40 asset starting map in 4-6 hours. Never start from scratch. Start from secondary data and let community co-researchers fill the gaps, correct the errors, and add what databases cannot see. Community co-researchers will add 40-60% more assets than secondary data alone.

Common Pitfalls, SOP CD-1

- Counting only formal nonprofits and missing informal assets. The barbershop network, the grandmother who runs an informal childcare co-op, and the block club that has organized the neighborhood for 30 years are assets that will not appear in any database.
- Not compensating community co-researchers. Unpaid community expertise is extracted labor. It communicates that the school values community knowledge but not the people who hold it.
- Completing the CAI but not publishing it or referencing it in design decisions. This is the most common form of performative community engagement, the process appears genuine but produces no change.
- Using the CAI as surveillance data. Communities have been mapped by outsiders before, for redlining, for policing, for displacement. Be transparent about why you are collecting this information and how it will be used.
- Conducting the CAI with school staff only. Staff-only maps produce institutional, deficit-biased results. Community co-researchers see assets invisible to outsiders.

Red Flag Indicators, SOP CD-1

- Community members asking 'Why are you collecting this information?', your purpose and consent process are unclear. Stop and clarify before continuing.
- All documented assets are nonprofits or formal institutions. You are not seeing informal community assets. Pause and add community co-researchers with deeper neighborhood ties.
- Zero individual/person assets documented. Every community has people who are connectors, historians, and knowledge holders. If they are not in your CAI, you have not done community-level mapping.
- CAI completed in less than 3 weeks. Compressed timelines produce incomplete maps that undermine every downstream process.

SOP CD-2: Community Listening Campaign (90-Day Pre-Design Engagement)

What You'll Accomplish

A comprehensive community voice data set, gathered across multiple modalities from minimum 150 individual community voices, that

	documents family and community priorities, non-negotiables, concerns, and aspirations before any major school design decision is finalized. Produces a public 'What We Heard' Report and a loop closure 'What Changed' statement within 60 days.
Time Estimate	90 days active listening; 120-150 hours across team. Additional 30 days for analysis and publication.
Who Does This	CEC designs and manages. Community Liaisons lead most sessions. ED attends minimum 3 sessions as a listener (not a presenter). FCC members (once formed) co-facilitate in their communities.
Before You Start	CAI complete. At least 2 community liaisons identified and compensated. Multilingual materials ready in all community languages. Structural barriers checklist confirmed: childcare, transport reimbursement, food, interpretation, accessible timing, accessible venue. Community Input Tracker set up.
Deliverable	'What We Heard' Report, public within 30 days of campaign close. 'What Changed Because You Told Us' statement, public within 60 days of report. Disaggregated analysis by community demographic segment.

STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS

Step 1: Define 3-5 open listening questions, 1 week before launch

Listening questions are not survey questions. They are open-ended invitations to share stories. Draft with FCC input or community liaison input before finalizing. Required questions (adapt wording to local voice): (1) 'What does a thriving high school graduate look like in this community?' (2) 'What has every other school missed about your family or this neighborhood?' (3) 'What do you need from a school relationship to trust it?' (4) 'What do you want your child to be able to do at 25?' Optional: 'What should this school be named?' 'What would make you proud to send your child here?' Test questions with 3-5 community members before launch, if responses are short, the question is too closed.

Step 2: Design the format matrix, 1 week before launch

Match engagement formats to community access patterns identified in CAI. Required minimum three formats: (a) Community listening sessions at accessible locations, faith institutions, rec centers, barbershops, libraries. NOT the school site in pre-opening phase. (b) Digital survey in all community languages, Google Form or paper equivalent. (c) Door-to-door engagement in highest-density enrollment neighborhoods. Recommended additions: faith community presentations (15 minutes at end of service with pastor permission); employer roundtables (lunch format); high school student focus groups. Schedule all sessions at community-preferred times: evenings after 5pm and weekends. No sessions during standard work hours.

Step 3: Prepare structural access for every event, 2 weeks before each session

For every listening session, confirm before sending invitations: (1) Childcare, on-site, free, advertised. (2) Transportation, reimbursement or shuttle from neighborhood. (3) Food, culturally relevant, free, sufficient for 30+ people. (4) Interpretation, professional interpreters, not student bilingual volunteers. (5) Accessible venue, ADA compliant, culturally familiar to target community. (6) Accessible timing, not during shift changes, school pickup, or major community events. If any of these six cannot be confirmed, reschedule. Do not hold engagement events with structural barriers uncorrected.

Step 4: Train all listening session facilitators, 2 days before first session

Anyone facilitating a listening session, community liaisons, CEC, FCC members, trains on: (1) You are listening, not presenting. No slide decks, no school pitches. (2) No defending Rooted or the school model when challenged. Write it down and say 'thank you, this is exactly what we need to hear.' (3) Every response is valid. Do not redirect or correct community members. (4) Disaggregate your attention, make sure voices from every demographic are heard, not just the loudest. (5) Document accurately, not favorably. Training takes 3-4 hours. Facilitators do a practice round before leading a real session.

Step 5: Execute the 90-day listening campaign, 10 to 12 weeks

Run minimum 8 listening sessions across 3+ formats. Log every session in the Listening Campaign Tracker (Appendix B). Target: minimum 150 individual community voices; representation from all demographic segments identified in CAI. Ongoing quality check: after sessions 2 and 4, debrief with community liaisons, are the same voices showing up? Who is missing? Adjust outreach immediately if specific groups are underrepresented. Community liaisons follow up personally with community members who express strong opinions, they are prospective FCC members.

Step 6: Analyze themes and disaggregate, 2 weeks after campaign close

Analyze all listening data using open coding: read through responses, identify recurring words and themes, group into 5-8 major theme clusters. Disaggregate by community segment: families vs. youth vs. employers vs. community leaders. Note where themes differ, the theme 'we need more support for multilingual families' may appear in family data but not employer data. Note tensions: where community voices contradict each other (e.g., some families want uniforms, others strongly oppose). Tensions are important design inputs, not problems to be resolved by staff alone.

Step 7: Publish 'What We Heard' and close the loop, 4 weeks after analysis

Write a plain-language 'What We Heard' Report (1-3 pages maximum). Include: (1) How we listened (formats, total voices, dates). (2) What we heard, top themes, tensions, and non-negotiables. (3) What we will do, specific design decisions that will change based on what we heard. (4) What we cannot do, explicit explanation of why certain community inputs cannot be incorporated, with respect and clarity. Publish publicly. Present at community event. Within 60 days, publish a 'What We Changed' statement showing what is different about the school design based on community input. This loop closure is the most critical step in the entire campaign.

Success Check, SOP CD-2

- Minimum 150 community voices documented across 3+ formats.
- All 6 structural barriers confirmed for every session.
- 'What We Heard' Report published in all community languages within 30 days of campaign close.
- Report explicitly connects community input to at least 5 specific design decisions.
- 'What Changed' statement published within 60 days.
- Disaggregated analysis completed, themes reported by demographic subgroup, not aggregate only.

Common Pitfalls, SOP CD-2

- Starting the listening campaign without structural barriers addressed. Families who cannot attend because of childcare, language, or timing will never trust that the school means to include them.
- Having ED or school staff present the school model during listening sessions. The moment you pitch the school, families stop giving honest feedback and start responding to what they think you want to hear.
- Publishing the 'What We Heard' report without the 'What Changed' statement. Listening without loop closure is worse than not asking, it demonstrates that community voice is extracted, not acted on.
- Failing to disaggregate analysis. Aggregated data hides the fact that Latino/a families heard something completely different from Black families, or that youth priorities diverge from family priorities.

Red Flags, SOP CD-2

- Sessions are consistently attended only by families who are already excited about the school. You are hearing from supporters, not skeptics. Seek out the people who have not shown up.
- Staff are presenting more than listening in sessions. Reset the session format immediately.

- No community input has changed any design decision after 60 days. This is extractive engagement. Stop new sessions until you can demonstrate loop closure from existing inputs.
- Survey response rate below 30 families after 6 weeks. Your outreach channels are not reaching your target community. Change channels before continuing.

SOP CD-3: Founding Community Council (FCC): Formation and Operations

What You'll Accomplish	A functioning, chartered governance body of 12-18 community co-designers holding real decision-making authority over school culture, identity, and first-year programming priorities, with diverse membership that reflects the community being served.
Time Estimate	Formation: 6-8 weeks. Charter adoption: 1 meeting. Ongoing: Bimonthly meetings, 2 hours each.
Who Does This	ED leads formation. CEC manages operations and staffs meetings. Community Liaisons conduct personal member recruitment. RSF Growth & Innovation provides FCC Charter template and governance coaching.
Before You Start	Listening Campaign underway (FCC formation can begin during campaign). At least 3 community liaisons confirmed. Compensation model approved (\$50-100 honorarium per meeting minimum). Meeting space identified in community, not at school office, not at RSF headquarters.
Deliverable	FCC Charter (adopted by members). Signed member roster with representation matrix. FCC Co-Design Log documenting all decisions and inputs. Meeting minutes from every session.

FCC COMPOSITION REQUIREMENTS, NON-NEGOTIABLE

Seat Type	# of Seats Rationale
Enrolled / Prospective Family Members (elected)	5-7 seats (minimum 40% of FCC) Families must hold the majority. If they do not, the FCC will drift toward institutional interests over family interests.
Youth Representatives (ages 14-22)	2-4 seats (minimum 20%) Youth are the people the school exists for. Their governance voice is non-negotiable under Rooted DNA Pillar 3.
Community Organization Representatives	2-3 seats CBOs, faith institutions, rec centers, entities with deep trust networks in the target community.
Employer / Industry Partners	1-2 seats Connected to IAC, ensures community co-design is integrated with career pathway co-design.
Community Elders / Long-Term Residents	1-2 seats Institutional memory and long-term community perspective. Cannot be replaced by institutional representatives.
Higher Education Partner	1 seat Dual enrollment and college access lens on school design decisions.
RSF / School Staff	1 non-voting seat (ED or designee) Accountable to FCC, not co-equal to them. Non-voting.

STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS

Step 1: Draft FCC Charter, 1 to 2 weeks

Use FCC Charter Template (Appendix C). Customize for your site: define the school name, community name for the body (FCC is default, some communities may prefer 'Community Design Council' or a local name), scope of authority, meeting schedule, member terms (2-year staggered recommended), quorum requirements (two-thirds), and compensation model. Critical: the Charter must define the FCC's decision-making authority specifically, not 'advisory input' but named decisions the FCC owns. The Charter is a draft until the FCC adopts it.

Step 2: Identify prospective members through personal outreach, 2 to 3 weeks

Use CAI and Listening Campaign contacts to build a prospect list of 25-30 people, more than you need, because some will decline. Prioritize: people who challenged the school model during listening (dissent is an asset), people with established community credibility, people who represent demographic groups not well-served by past schools, youth who are already community-connected. Avoid: people primarily interested in the school for their own children (they need to be on the PLT, not the FCC), people whose primary affiliation is to a donor or institutional funder, anyone with a potential conflict of interest with school governance.

Step 3: Conduct personal recruitment, not mass outreach, 2 to 3 weeks

Personal invitations only. CEC, community liaisons, and ED make direct personal contact: phone call, visit, or community event conversation, not email or flyer. Script: 'We are building [school name] and we need people who know this community and will tell us when we're wrong. We want you to help design this school, not advise on it, there are real decisions you would hold authority over. Would you be willing to talk about what this would look like?' Record every conversation in the Listening Campaign Tracker. If someone declines, ask who else should be invited.

Step 4: Host founding orientation, half-day

Before the first official meeting, orient new FCC members: Rooted School Foundation's model and history; how Rooted's governance structure works (local non-profit board holds charter; RSF is operator; FCC advises and co-designs within that structure); the FCC's specific authority matrix; what membership requires in time and commitment; compensation and support the school will provide. Allow 60+ minutes for questions. Do not rush this session, members who understand their authority show up and stay. Members who don't show up and feel used.

Step 5: Convene first official FCC meeting and adopt Charter, 2 hours

Use the First FCC Meeting Agenda (Appendix C). The first meeting does three things and nothing else: (1) Official review and adoption of the FCC Charter, members vote. (2) Election of FCC Co-Chairs (family member and community member co-chair model recommended). (3) Confirmation of meeting schedule for the year. No school updates, no presentations, no priorities discussions. This meeting establishes that the FCC governs itself, the school staff are guests, not organizers. CEC staffs the meeting; ED attends as non-voting member.

Step 6: Operate ongoing FCC bimonthly meeting cycle, ongoing

Bimonthly meetings, 2 hours, in accessible community space with full structural barriers addressed. Standing agenda: (1) Review of previous decisions and action items, 15 minutes. (2) Community input updates from FCC members, 30 minutes. (3) Co-design agenda item, 45 minutes on a school decision that the FCC owns. (4) Open concerns and upcoming decisions, 20 minutes. (5) Wrap and next meeting confirmation, 10 minutes. ED and CEC attend; ED does not chair. CEC produces written minutes within 48 hours. All decisions documented in FCC Co-Design Log.

Success Check, SOP CD-3

- FCC Charter adopted by member vote, not imposed by school staff.
- 12+ members with representation matrix within 5% of community demographics on race, language, and income.
- Co-Chairs elected by members, not appointed by school.
- FCC has made at least 1 formal decision within first 60 days of formation.
- All members compensated for attendance at agreed honorarium rate.
- Meeting minutes published within 48 hours of each session.

Common Pitfalls, SOP CD-3

- Stacking the FCC with supporters and allies. Dissenting voices make the FCC stronger and the school better. Avoid the instinct to recruit only people you know will say yes.
- Letting the FCC drift to advisory-only. The most common reason FCC attendance drops is that members stop believing their input matters. Protect authority by explicitly crediting FCC decisions in school communications.
- Holding FCC meetings at the school office or RSF headquarters. This physically communicates power imbalance. Community space is non-negotiable.
- Not compensating members. Asking community members to give governance time for free is extractive. Budget \$50-100 per meeting per member minimum.

SOP CD-4: Parent Teacher Home Visit (PTHV) Program

What You'll Accomplish	Trust-based, voluntary relationships with all enrolled families, built on their turf and centered on hopes and dreams, before academic concerns are introduced. Evidence shows PTHV reduces chronic absenteeism by 25% and significantly improves family engagement across all demographic groups.
Time Estimate	Training: 6 hours per staff member (one-time). Per visit: 45-60 minutes plus 30 min prep and 30 min documentation. Target: 100% of families visited in Year 1.
Who Does This	All teaching staff and CEC conduct visits. Community Liaisons co-facilitate for language access. Dean of Students coordinates scheduling and tracks completion.
Before You Start	All visiting staff completed 6-hour PTHV training (national protocol). Visit pairing assigned, never solo. Multilingual co-facilitators confirmed for non-English-speaking families. Family consent obtained through enrollment process. Compensation confirmed for community liaison co-facilitators.
Deliverable	PTHV Visit Log (Appendix D) completed within 24 hours of each visit. Annual completion rate tracked by demographic subgroup. Completion target: 80%+ of families.

THE 5 NON-NEGOTIABLES, PTHV PROTOCOL

- Visits are strictly voluntary. Families may decline without consequence. Never apply pressure, suggest consequences, or treat declination as a problem to be solved.
- Year 1 visits focus on hopes and dreams ONLY. Do not bring report cards, academic progress data, attendance records, or discipline concerns to the visit. This visit is about relationship, not performance.
- Never visit alone. Two staff minimum per visit. For language access: if no staff member speaks the family's primary language, a trained community liaison co-facilitates. Do not use students as interpreters under any circumstances.
- You are a guest. Follow the family's lead on location (home, park, library, coffee shop are all valid), timing, and hospitality. Accept food offered. Remove shoes if asked. Follow cultural protocols you observe.
- Confidentiality is absolute. Information shared in a visit is not discussed with other staff without family consent. PTHV Visit Log entries are not shared without the family's knowledge.

STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS

Step 1: Complete PTHV training before first visit, one-time, 6 hours

All staff who will conduct PTHV complete the national PTHV program training (available through PTHV.org). Training covers: the research base; the hopes-and-dreams conversation framework; power dynamics in home visiting; cultural responsiveness in family spaces; documentation protocols; and how to respond when a visit surfaces a student safety concern. CEC coordinates group training sessions. Training is a prerequisite, no staff member visits a family without it.

Step 2: Send family invitation, 3 weeks before visit window

Use the PTHV Family Invitation Script (Appendix D). Invitation is sent in the family's primary language. Include: what a PTHV is (a relationship visit, not about grades or behavior), that it is entirely voluntary, that the family chooses the location and time, and that an interpreter is available if needed. Invitation goes by phone call first (community liaison makes the call for non-English-speaking families), then text or paper follow-up. Do not rely on email alone, email reach for working-class families with irregular internet access is under 50%.

Step 3: Prepare for the visit, 30 minutes the day before

Review the student's enrollment form, family members' names, languages spoken, any notes from intake. Review CAI for any community context about the family's neighborhood or cultural background. Complete PTHV Prep Checklist (Appendix D): visit address confirmed, family name pronunciation confirmed, cultural context noted, conversation starters selected, co-facilitator confirmed. Bring nothing school-related to the visit. Bring something personal if appropriate, a book recommendation, a recipe, a photo from a school event the student attended.

Step 4: Conduct the visit, 45 to 60 minutes

Phase 1 (first 15 minutes): Greet family, follow their lead on where to sit and how to settle. Share briefly who you are and why you do this work, something genuine, not a school pitch. Phase 2 (20-30 minutes): Ask only the two core questions: 'What are your hopes and dreams for [student's name]?' and 'What should we know about your family that would help us support [student's name]?' Listen. Take mental notes. Do not ask follow-up questions that redirect toward school concerns. Do not take written notes during the conversation. Phase 3 (10-15 minutes): Ask 'What do you need from us to make this school-family relationship work?' Share one genuine thing you hope to do together. Confirm how the family prefers to communicate and close warmly.

Step 5: Document within 24 hours, 20 to 30 minutes

Complete PTHV Visit Log (Appendix D) within 24 hours while the conversation is still fresh. Log: student and family names, date, location, who conducted the visit, key strengths the family shared, any community assets mentioned (CEC adds to CAI), any follow-up commitments made. Never log opinions about family circumstances, home conditions, or judgments. The log is a professional record, not a personal journal.

Step 6: Send a follow-up within 48 hours

A personal note, handwritten preferred, text is acceptable, thanking the family for their time. Reference something specific from the conversation that shows you were listening. Example: 'Hearing that Marcus loves cooking and wants to work in healthcare someday helps us understand who he is. We'll make sure the opportunities here connect to that.' This step takes 5 minutes and has disproportionate trust-building impact.

Success Check, SOP CD-4

- All visiting staff have completed 6-hour PTHV training before first visit.
- 80%+ of enrolled families visited within the first semester.
- Completion rate disaggregated by race, language, income, and disability status, all subgroups at 70%+ minimum.
- PTHV Visit Log current for all completed visits.
- Zero visits conducted solo. Zero students used as interpreters.
- Follow-up sent to every visited family within 48 hours.

Common Pitfalls, SOP CD-4

- Conducting the visit and immediately transitioning to academic concerns. The research effect disappears when the 'relationship visit' becomes a 'conference in a living room.'

- Scheduling PTHV visits during standard school hours. Most families of high school students are working. Evening and weekend visits are the norm, not the exception.
- Canceling visits when families are hard to reach. The families hardest to reach are the ones who most need this relationship. Persistence (respectful, patient, not pressure) is the job.
- Using student siblings or children as interpreters. This creates inappropriate power dynamics, violates student privacy, and produces inaccurate translations of complex conversations.

Red Flags, SOP CD-4

- PTHV completion rate below 50% at mid-year. Scheduling system has broken down. CEC must personally manage outreach for all unvisited families.
- Completion rate for immigrant, non-English-speaking, or low-income families below 40%. Language or scheduling barriers are blocking access. Assign community liaison co-facilitators to all remaining visits.
- Staff expressing that PTHV 'is not their job.' This is a school culture problem. Revisit training and leadership communication about non-negotiable professional expectations.

SOP CD-5: Student Co-Design Cohort (Youth Participatory Action Research)

Purpose	Establish and sustain a student-led research and co-design team that investigates school experience, community assets, and program gaps, then presents findings with actionable recommendations to school leadership.
Owner	CEC coordinates; Dean of Students or equivalent school leader co-facilitates.
Participants	10, 15 students, intentionally recruited for diversity across grade, background, academic trajectory. Not a high-achiever club.
Time Estimate	8 hours to launch first cohort; ongoing monthly cycles
When	Recruit in Month 1, first session in Month 2, first presentation cycle at Month 4
Research Base	Cammarota & Fine (2008) YPAR framework; Warren et al. (2009) on student voice and school transformation; Mitra (2004) on student agency and school reform

Step 1: Design the cohort structure, 2 hours

Define: cohort size (10, 15), meeting cadence (twice monthly, 90 minutes each), facilitator roles (CEC as lead, one teacher co-lead), and compensation model (stipend, credential, or leadership portfolio, NEVER 'extra credit' which creates coercive dynamics). Write a one-page cohort brief describing purpose, expectations, and what students will actually do with their findings. This brief is the recruitment anchor.

Step 2: Recruit intentionally, 1 to 2 weeks

Do not post a general announcement and wait for volunteers, that produces a self-selected high-achiever club. Recruit directly: ask teachers to nominate 2-3 students from different backgrounds;

personally invite students who have raised concerns or asked hard questions; specifically seek out students who are skeptical of the school, disengaged, or from communities historically marginalized in educational research. The cohort is most powerful when it represents the students whose voices are most often absent from school design conversations.

Step 3: Run a 3-session cohort launch, 4.5 hours total

Session 1 (90 min): Build cohort culture. Who are we? What do we care about? Establish group agreements. Introduce YPAR as a framework. Explain that their job is to investigate, not just advise. Session 2 (90 min): Identify the research question together. Use a structured brainstorm: What is working at this school? What is not working? What would make this school serve ALL students better? Synthesize to 1, 2 investigation priorities. Session 3 (90 min): Design the research methodology. How will we gather data? (surveys, interviews, observations, document review). Who will we talk to? How will we protect the privacy and dignity of people we interview?

Step 4: Conduct the research cycle, 4 to 6 weeks

Students gather data using methods they designed. CEC and teacher co-lead provide coaching on research technique, data organization, and sense-making. Weekly check-ins (30 minutes each) to troubleshoot and maintain momentum. CEC helps students navigate any access or permission barriers. All data is stored in the Community Input Tracker (SOP CD-7) with student co-investigators listed as owners.

Step 5: Analyze findings and build the presentation, 2 weeks

Two synthesis sessions where students identify patterns, name their findings, and develop recommendations. Findings must include: what the data showed (evidence), what it means for this school community (interpretation), and what we recommend (action). CEC coaches on how to present to adults in power, specifically: how to be direct without being dismissed, how to anchor claims in evidence, and how to hold a room to the question 'What will you do about this?'

Step 6: Present to school leadership, 60 to 90 minutes

Students present findings directly to school leadership (Principal/ED, relevant instructional leaders). This is a real meeting, not a performance. Leadership must respond: What will we act on immediately? What needs more study? What will we explain our reasoning about, even if we decide differently? Responses are documented. CEC follows up within 30 days to report back to the cohort on what happened.

Step 7: Close the cycle and launch the next one, 1 week

Debrief with cohort: What did we learn? What changed? What should we investigate next? Recruit new members for the next cycle (some continuity is healthy; full rotation prevents 'insider' capture). Share a brief written summary of findings and school responses with the full school community, students, families, and staff. Transparency is the point.

Success Check, SOP CD-5

- Cohort composition reflects school demographic diversity, no more than 30% any single demographic group.
- Students present findings to school leadership at least once per semester.
- At least one student recommendation implemented or formally responded to per cycle.
- Student participants report increased sense of agency and belonging (end-of-cohort survey).
- Research findings integrated into Community Input Tracker and used in FCC decision-making.

Common Pitfalls, SOP CD-5

- Treating the cohort as a student advisory committee that advises but doesn't research. YPAR is a methodology, not a focus group. Students must gather data, analyze it, and present evidence-based findings.
- Only recruiting students who already trust the school. The cohort needs students who are skeptical or disconnected, their perspective is the most informative.

- Allowing school leadership to receive findings passively. Leadership must respond, commitments, timelines, or honest explanations. Non-response destroys student trust and ends cohort effectiveness.

- Using 'extra credit' as recruitment incentive. This produces participation from students trying to improve their grade, not students with investment in the research. Use stipends, credentials, or portfolio recognition.

Red Flags, SOP CD-5

- Cohort is more than 50% students already engaged in student government or leadership programs. You've recruited a club, not a research team. Pause and re-recruit.

- School leadership cancels or postpones the presentation cycle twice. This signals that findings are unwelcome. CEC must escalate to RSF Central, student co-design that produces no institutional response is tokenization.

- Students report feeling 'unheard' after presenting. Document the specific recommendations and leadership responses. If a pattern of dismissal exists, this is a systems integrity issue.

SOP CD-6: Industry Advisory Council (IAC), Formation and Operations

Purpose	Form and operate an Industry Advisory Council that co-designs career pathway programming, provides internship and apprenticeship pipelines, validates curriculum alignment to labor market needs, and ensures the 'job offer' half of Rooted's core promise is employer-endorsed.
Owner	CEC leads formation; Principal/ED chairs standing meetings; RSF Regional Director approves member roster.
Participants	8, 14 employer and industry partners per site; sector-aligned with the school's designated career pathways
Time Estimate	12 hours to form; 6 hours/year ongoing (quarterly 90-minute meetings)
When	Launch IAC formation 12 months before student enrollment opens; first formal meeting 9 months before opening
Research Base	Hoffman & Schwartz (2015) on employer-school partnerships; National Academy Foundation (2019) IAC best practices; CareerWise Colorado (2021) employer co-design model

The Double Helix Principle

At Rooted, the IAC operationalizes the Double Helix Model at the community level: Rigorous Academic Mastery and Career-Connected Application must reinforce each other, and employer co-design ensures the Application side is grounded in real labor market demand and genuine student economic mobility. The IAC is not a donor cultivation vehicle. It is a curriculum co-design and opportunity creation engine.

Step 1: Map the career pathway landscape, 2 to 3 hours

Before recruiting IAC members, build a one-page labor market brief for your site's geographic area. Include: fastest-growing sectors with living-wage entry points, employers with apprenticeship or structured internship infrastructure, alignment with state CTE pathway designations, and any existing school-employer relationships to build on. This brief defines who you should recruit and why. At RSSC:

anchor pathways are Healthcare, Information Technology, and Advanced Manufacturing, IAC member recruitment should map directly to these sectors.

Step 2: Identify and prioritize recruitment targets, 1 to 2 hours

Build a recruitment list of 20, 25 potential IAC members. Prioritize: employers with direct hiring pipelines (not just 'education philanthropy'), mid-sized regional employers (large multinationals move slowly; micro-businesses lack HR capacity), employers with demonstrated equity commitments (DEI programs, wage equity data, hiring record for candidates without 4-year degrees), and individuals with authentic authority to make curriculum and internship commitments, not just community relations staff. Target 14, 16 contacts to confirm 8, 12 members.

Step 3: Conduct recruitment conversations, 3 to 4 hours

Each recruitment conversation is 30, 45 minutes, in-person or video. Lead with the school's specific career pathway verticals and explain what you're asking: 'We are co-designing a school. We want you to help us design the work-based learning curriculum, validate that our students are developing skills your sector values, and eventually offer internships and employment to our graduates.' Be explicit about the time commitment: quarterly meetings (90 min each), annual curriculum review (2 hours), and optional project mentorship. Do not oversell or undercommit, transactional employer relationships collapse within one year.

Step 4: Establish the IAC charter, 2 hours

Before the first formal meeting, draft a 2-page IAC Charter (Appendix F) that defines: mission (what the IAC exists to do), membership structure (terms, sectors, rotating chair), decision-making authority (advisory only vs. binding curriculum recommendations), meeting cadence (quarterly minimum), conflict of interest policy (no exclusive vendor relationships), and communication protocols. Circulate draft to founding members for comment before finalizing. The charter protects against mission drift and member expectation misalignment.

Step 5: Run the inaugural IAC meeting, 90 minutes

Agenda: (1) Welcome and purpose statement from Principal/ED, 10 min. (2) Each member shares: name, organization, why they joined, one hope for this partnership, 20 min. (3) Review charter; discuss and ratify, 15 min. (4) Tour of career pathway curriculum framework (draft), 20 min. (5) Breakout by sector: What skills does your industry need that schools typically miss? What would a 'job-ready' 18-year-old look like?, 20 min. (6) Next steps and follow-up commitments, 5 min. No presentation decks. The goal is conversation, not broadcasting.

Step 6: Maintain ongoing IAC operations, quarterly cycle

Each quarterly meeting (90 minutes) follows a standing agenda: (1) Student spotlight, a student presents a project or internship reflection (10 min). (2) Data review, internship placement rates, credential attainment, employer satisfaction, (15 min). (3) One substantive topic, curriculum alignment, new pathway proposal, program expansion, (45 min). (4) Action items and next meeting (10 min). Between meetings: CEC manages member communications, tracks commitments, and circulates a brief written update on what changed since the last meeting. Members who miss two consecutive meetings without notice are flagged for a relationship check-in.

Success Check, SOP CD-6

- IAC formed with 8+ members representing at least 3 distinct industry sectors aligned to school pathways.
- IAC charter ratified before first formal meeting.
- Quarterly meeting attendance at 70%+ across first year.
- At least 50% of IAC members have offered or committed to internship, apprenticeship, or project-based learning opportunities by end of Year 1.
- At least one IAC recommendation formally incorporated into curriculum design per year.
- Zero IAC members serving in roles where they have a direct financial interest in school procurement decisions.

Common Pitfalls, SOP CD-6

- Recruiting employers for brand prestige rather than pathway alignment. A Fortune 500 company with no hiring pipeline to your students is a trophy, not a partner.
- Designing the IAC as a fundraising vehicle. Employers who join because they expect a donation ask will disengage the moment it feels like charity. The ask is co-design, not money.
- Allowing IAC to become a lecture series where employers present to students without real curriculum co-design. The IAC adds value when it shapes what students learn, not just when it provides speakers.
- Missing the student voice loop. Every IAC meeting should include a student moment, a presentation, a reflection, a panel. This keeps the council grounded in actual student experience and prevents it from becoming an adult professional network.

Red Flags, SOP CD-6

- IAC meeting attendance drops below 50%. The council has lost relevance. Schedule a one-on-one with each disengaged member before the next meeting.
- No student has received an internship or work-based learning placement from an IAC member by end of Year 2. The council is advisory theater. Revisit charter and member composition.
- IAC member requests preferential treatment in a school vendor selection process. This is a conflict of interest. Refer to charter policy and consult RSF Central immediately.

SOP CD-7: Community Input Tracker, Maintaining the Evidence Loop

Purpose	Maintain a living record of every community input received, from listening sessions, PTHV visits, student cohort findings, surveys, FCC meetings, and informal feedback, and connect each input to decisions made, so the school can demonstrate accountability and spot patterns over time.
Owner	CEC owns and maintains the tracker; all staff contribute inputs from their community touchpoints.
Participants	CEC (primary), all staff who conduct community-facing work
Time Estimate	2 hours to set up; 30 minutes/week ongoing maintenance
When	Set up before the first community touchpoint; maintain weekly
Key Tool	Google Sheets (preferred) or Airtable, see Appendix G for template

Why This Matters

Without a tracker, community input evaporates. Patterns become invisible. Decisions get made without reference to what the community said. And when a family or community member asks 'Did anyone listen to what we said?', the honest answer becomes 'We heard you, but we can't show you what happened next.' The Community Input Tracker is the school's accountability infrastructure for community voice.

Step 1: Set up the tracker, 2 hours

Create the tracker using the template in Appendix G. Required columns: Date, Input Source (PTHV, FCC, Listening Session, YPAR, Survey, Informal), Input Summary (verbatim or close paraphrase, not your interpretation), Theme Tag (from standardized tag list), Demographic Context (if relevant and

appropriately anonymized), Status (New / Under Review / Acted On / Explained), Decision or Response (what happened because of this input), and Date Closed. Set sharing permissions: all CEC staff can add entries; only CEC Lead can change Status or Decision fields.

Step 2: Train all staff who collect community input, 1 hour

Before the first community touchpoint, hold a 60-minute orientation for all staff: what the tracker is for, how to add an entry, what counts as 'input' (everything, compliments, concerns, suggestions, questions, observations), and why verbatim or near-verbatim capture matters. Staff should understand: their job is to capture what was said, not to filter it through whether they think it's important. The CEC Lead decides what to act on. Staff decide what to record.

Step 3: Enter inputs within 24 hours of each touchpoint, ongoing

All inputs entered within 24 hours. For PTHV visits: CEC enters from the PTHV Visit Log. For FCC meetings: CEC enters from meeting notes. For listening sessions: CEC enters all items from the listening session debrief template. For informal feedback: staff text or email CEC with summary; CEC enters. The 24-hour rule exists because inputs not entered within a day are frequently forgotten, summarized inaccurately, or deprioritized.

Step 4: Review and tag weekly, 30 minutes

Every Friday, CEC Lead reviews all new entries, applies standardized theme tags, and flags any inputs requiring an immediate response (safety concerns, compliance questions, urgent family needs). Standardized tags: Academic Programming, Work-Based Learning, School Culture & Climate, Family Communication, Facilities & Environment, Staffing & Leadership, Enrollment & Outreach, Equity & Access, Other. Tagging enables pattern analysis, if 12 inputs across 3 months are tagged 'Family Communication,' that is a systems signal.

Step 5: Conduct quarterly analysis, 1 to 2 hours

At the end of each quarter, run a pattern analysis: How many inputs were received? From which sources? What themes dominate? What percentage have been acted on vs. explained vs. still open? Disaggregate by demographic context where possible, whose voice is represented and whose is not? Present the quarterly analysis at the next FCC meeting. This is the school's accountability report to the community.

Step 6: Close the loop, ongoing

Every input marked 'Acted On' or 'Explained' requires a corresponding communication back to the source. This doesn't mean contacting 500 individual survey respondents, it means: sharing quarterly analysis at FCC meetings, publishing a brief 'What We Heard / What We Did' summary on the family communication platform, and personally following up with individuals who raised named concerns. Closing the loop is what differentiates genuine community engagement from performance.

Success Check, SOP CD-7

- Tracker created and shared with all CEC staff before first community touchpoint.
- 100% of community inputs entered within 24 hours (verified by weekly review).
- Quarterly analysis completed and presented to FCC within 2 weeks of quarter end.
- At least 80% of tracker entries have a 'Status' of Acted On or Explained by end of Year 1.
- Tracker disaggregation shows no single demographic group supplying more than 60% of inputs, diverse community voice is represented.

Common Pitfalls, SOP CD-7

- Only capturing 'official' inputs from formal events. The most important feedback often comes informally, hallway conversations, texts, social media comments. Every channel counts.
- Summarizing input through your interpretive lens rather than capturing what was actually said. 'Parent was concerned about safety' loses critical information compared to 'Parent said she worries her daughter doesn't feel safe talking to teachers about being bullied.'
- Building the tracker but never looking at patterns. Weekly entry without quarterly analysis is data collection theater. The analysis is where the value lives.

Red Flags, SOP CD-7

- More than 20% of entries have no status update after 60 days. The feedback loop has broken. CEC must conduct a prioritization review.
- Tracker shows inputs from only 2, 3 community sources. You have a listening gap. What groups are not represented? What touchpoints are missing?
- Staff stop adding entries. This signals one of two things: either community-facing work has decreased (check your touchpoint calendar) or staff don't believe the tracker matters. Both require immediate diagnosis.

SOP CD-8: Academic Parent-Teacher Teams (APTT)

Purpose	Conduct structured group meetings that bring families and teachers together around shared academic goals and real student performance data, creating ongoing partnerships between families and classrooms, not just annual conferences.
Owner	Teachers facilitate with CEC support; Principal/ED monitors implementation fidelity.
Participants	Classroom teacher(s), 15, 30 families per cohort, CEC (coordination and equity support)
Time Estimate	3 meetings per year per teacher cohort; 90 minutes each meeting
When	First meeting within 6 weeks of school start; second meeting at semester midpoint; third at 8 weeks before year-end
Research Base	Weiss et al. (2009) on family engagement and student outcomes; WestEd (2018) APTT efficacy study; Harvard Family Research Project (2010) on three-way partnerships

What Makes APTT Different from a Parent Meeting

A traditional parent meeting delivers information to families. APTT creates a working relationship between families and teachers around specific student learning goals. Families see real (anonymized) class data. They learn the skills their children are developing. They set a specific home practice goal with their child's teacher. And they return the following semester to report back on what worked. This cycle, data, skills, goal, practice, accountability, is what research shows moves student outcomes.

Step 1: Schedule and communicate, 3 weeks before meeting

Schedule all three APTT meetings at the start of the school year, not one at a time. Families who can plan ahead attend at much higher rates. Communicate in all languages spoken by the school community. Offer multiple session times (one weekday evening, one Saturday morning minimum). Arrange childcare and translation services for every session, these are not optional extras, they are prerequisites for equitable access. CEC manages logistics; teachers own content.

Step 2: Prepare the APTT session, 2 hours per meeting

Each session requires: anonymized class data visualization (how is the class performing on the specific skills being measured this period?); a skill demonstration (teacher shows exactly what a student is learning, the specific reading strategy, math concept, or writing skill); a 'try it' family practice activity (families practice the skill themselves, then discuss how to practice it at home); and a goal-setting protocol (each family leaves with one specific home practice goal for their student). Data must be disaggregated, if the class is split into three performance bands, families understand which band their child is in without other students being identified.

Step 3: Facilitate the APTT meeting, 90 minutes

Opening (10 min): Welcome, introductions, session purpose. Data review (20 min): Present anonymized class performance data. 'Here is how our class is doing on [specific skill]. Here is what mastery looks like. Here is where we are.' Skill demonstration (20 min): Teacher demonstrates the exact skill being developed. Families practice it. Family practice activity (20 min): 'Here is how you can practice this skill at home with your student.' Structured practice with family groups. Goal-setting (15 min): Each family writes a specific home practice goal. Teacher writes a corresponding classroom commitment. Pairs share goals aloud. Closing (5 min): Confirm next meeting date. Collect goal cards (teacher keeps copies to reference at the next meeting).

Step 4: Document and follow up, 1 hour

Within 48 hours: enter attendance in Community Input Tracker. Review goal cards. Note any family-specific context that should inform future outreach. For families who did not attend: CEC conducts a 15-minute phone or text follow-up within one week to share key session content and invite goal-setting by phone. Every family should leave with a goal, attending in person is the preferred path, not the only path.

Step 5: Open the following meeting with accountability, 10 minutes

Each APTT meeting (2nd and 3rd) opens with a brief accountability circle: 'Last time, many of us set a goal for home practice. Who wants to share what they tried, what worked, what was hard?' This closing-the-loop moment is what builds trust, normalizes struggle, and makes the process feel real. Teachers share their classroom commitment too. Mutual accountability, not one-way reporting from school to family.

Success Check, SOP CD-8

- All three APTT meetings scheduled before the first day of school.
- 60%+ of enrolled families attend at least one APTT meeting per year.
- Attendance disaggregated, no family subgroup (by race, language, income) below 40%.
- 100% of attending families leave with a documented home practice goal.
- Teacher attendance and data preparation verified by Principal/ED before each session.
- Translation and childcare available at every session.

Common Pitfalls, SOP CD-8

- Turning APTT into a general information meeting. The three-part structure, data, skill, goal, is the research-validated model. Deviating from it converts APTT into a parent meeting with a different name.
- Using aggregate class data without disaggregating. If some groups of students are below grade level and others are not, showing only class averages hides the equity pattern families most need to see.
- Scheduling all three meetings in the same evening timeslot. Working families, especially in shift work, need varied options. One weekday evening and one Saturday is a minimum, three varied times is better.
- Skipping the goal-setting step because time runs short. The goal-setting protocol is what makes APTT different from information delivery. Protect this time aggressively.

Red Flags, SOP CD-8

- Attendance below 30% at first meeting. Your scheduling, communication, or logistics have failed. Survey non-attendees immediately to identify barriers.
- Families of English language learners attending at rates below 20% of their proportion of enrollment. Translation services or scheduling are blocking access. CEC must personally reach out to this community before the next meeting.
- Teacher declines to show disaggregated data because it's 'uncomfortable.' This is an equity issue. CEC escalates to Principal/ED. APTT without honest data is engagement theater.

Section 9: Equity Framework

Measure reach, not just participation. The disaggregated targets in this playbook are an application of RE-AIM reach: the equity question is who is actually engaged and represented, by race, language, income, and neighborhood, not how many people showed up in total. A high aggregate turnout can still miss the families the school most needs at the table.

Community engagement that does not name and address power imbalances is not community engagement, it is public relations. This section defines the equity architecture that runs through every SOP in this playbook: the six checkpoints, the disaggregation protocol, and the anti-tokenization standards that protect the integrity of co-design.

9.1 Equity Checkpoints, Six Non-Negotiable Gates

Checkpoint	Gate Question	Required Evidence	Who Approves
EC-1Representation Audit	Are the communities most affected by this school (historically marginalized students, families of color, immigrant families, families experiencing poverty) represented in this engagement activity, not just as observers but as co-designers?	Demographic breakdown of participants vs. enrollment projection. If any group underrepresented by >15%, document barrier and remediation plan.	CEC Lead before each major touchpoint
EC-2Language Access	Can every family who should be at this table participate fully, in their language of choice, without using their child or a community member as interpreter?	Confirmed professional interpreter arrangements OR written explanation why not required. No student interpreters. No family member volunteers for legal or sensitive topics.	CEC Lead at scheduling
EC-3Power Balance	Does this engagement structure give community members genuine decision-making authority, or does it give school leadership final veto power over all community input?	FCC charter defines which decision categories are 'community-binding' vs. 'community-advisory.' Community-advisory categories must include written explanation when input is not followed.	Principal/ED + RSF Regional Director at FCC charter approval
EC-4Asset Framing	Does all community-facing communication describe this community and its young people through the lens of strengths, assets, and potential, rather than deficits, gaps, or needs to be fixed?	Communications review checklist (Appendix J). Any communication using deficit language is revised before distribution.	CEC Lead at communications review
EC-5Accountability Loop	Can the school demonstrate, with specific evidence, what changed because of community input? Not 'we listened,' but 'here is what we did differently.'	Community Input Tracker (SOP CD-7) quarterly report showing percentage of inputs acted on, explained, or still pending. Report shared publicly with community at FCC meeting.	CEC Lead quarterly + Principal/ED annual review
EC-6Student Voice Integration	Are students, including the students who are most often silenced, excluded, or underserved, active participants in the design of their own educational experience, not just recipients of it?	YPAR cohort composition audit (>30% from historically underrepresented groups). Student co-design findings presented to leadership at least once per semester with documented response.	CEC Lead at cohort formation + Principal/ED at presentation cycle

9.2 Disaggregation Protocol

All community engagement metrics must be disaggregated by the following dimensions. Aggregate data hides inequity.

Disaggregation Dimension	Why It Matters
Race and ethnicity	The most common axis of educational inequity. Aggregate data routinely masks racial disparities in engagement, access, and outcomes.
Primary home language	Families who don't speak English are systematically underrepresented in engagement data that doesn't control for language access barriers.
Income/economic status	Families experiencing poverty face structural barriers (work schedules, transportation, childcare) that reduce engagement unless specifically designed around.
Disability/IEP status	Students with IEPs and their families experience school differently. Their engagement data should be reported separately.
Immigrant or documentation status (aggregate only, never individual)	Immigrant families may disengage from formal school processes due to legitimate safety concerns. Engagement design must account for this.
Gender (for student voice activities)	Student co-design work should reflect voice from all gender identities, not default to historically dominant voices.

9.3 Anti-Tokenization Standards

Tokenization occurs when community members are invited to participate in a process designed to validate decisions already made. The following standards prevent tokenization:

- No engagement activity may be designed around a decision that has already been made. If the outcome is predetermined, do not frame the process as co-design.
- When community input is not followed, a written explanation, not just a summary, must be provided to the community. 'We heard X. We decided Y. Here is why.' is the minimum.
- Community members who participate in decision-making processes must be informed upfront of the decision categories within their authority. Do not invite input on questions you cannot act on.
- Paid community engagement (stipends, compensation for time) is a justice practice, not a nice-to-have. Community members, especially from low-income communities, are giving economic value. Compensation acknowledges this.
- Photographs, testimonials, and demographic data from community members may not be used for fundraising, marketing, or public reporting without explicit individual consent, obtained separately from enrollment or participation consent.

Section 10: Fidelity & Measurement

Read fidelity against two thresholds (Fixsen et al., 2019). At about 50% of the Core components in steady practice, the engagement system is taking hold but still needs active support; at about 80% it is embedded and can sustain through staff transitions. Full implementation takes two to four years; sustainment means refining outreach, formats, and partners each year while protecting the Core (Chambers et al., 2013).

Treat the Listening Campaign debriefs as rapid cycles (PDSA): after sessions 2 and 4 you study who is missing and adjust outreach. Log the reason for each adjustment so the learning transfers to the next campaign and the next site, rather than being relearned each time.

Community engagement cannot be measured the way academic outcomes are measured. But it can be measured. The metrics below distinguish between participation theater (lots of events, sparse analysis) and genuine co-design (evidence that community input changed school decisions). Fidelity is defined as the degree to which the school's community engagement practices match the design of this playbook.

10.1 Fidelity Rubric, Community Co-Design & Engagement

Practice Area	Emerging (1)	Developing (2)	Proficient (3)	Distinguished (4)
Community Asset Inventory	CAI exists but was created by staff without community input	CAI includes community input from at least 2 sources	CAI includes 5+ sources including residents and youth; updated annually	CAI drives program design decisions with documented evidence trail
Founding Community Council	FCC has not yet formed or meets irregularly	FCC meets at least quarterly; quorum typically achieved	FCC includes diverse representation; charter ratified; decisions documented	FCC recommendations demonstrably shape school design; community members report genuine influence
Parent-Teacher Home Visits	Some visits completed but not systematically tracked	60%+ of families visited; tracking in place	80%+ visited; disaggregated data shows equitable distribution across demographic groups	95%+ visited; PTHV data informs classroom relationships and family partnership strategies
Student Co-Design (YPAR)	No formal student co-design process in place	Student cohort formed; at least one presentation cycle completed	Cohort reflects school demographic diversity; recommendations formally responded to	Multiple YPAR cycles; student recommendations implemented and documented; students report agency
Industry Advisory Council	IAC forming; no formal meetings yet	IAC meets quarterly; charter in place	50%+ of IAC members have offered or committed to learning opportunities	IAC drives curriculum validation; internship pipeline active; student placements tracked
Community Input Tracker	Informal tracking only; no	Tracker in use; most inputs logged;	100% of inputs logged within 24 hours; quarterly	Tracker drives FCC agenda; pattern analysis

Practice Area	Emerging (1)	Developing (2)	Proficient (3)	Distinguished (4)
	standardized system	limited pattern analysis	analysis completed and shared	demonstrably informs school decisions
Equity Integration	Equity mentioned but not measured	Some disaggregation of engagement data	All 6 equity checkpoints applied; disaggregated data reported to community quarterly	Equity checkpoint findings drive specific corrective actions; all demographic groups at or above thresholds

10.2 KPI Dashboard, Community Engagement Metrics

Metric	Year Zero Target(Pre-Opening)	Year 1 Target	Year 3 Target(Steady State)	Data Source	Cadence
PTHV Completion Rate (% of enrolled families visited)	N/A	80%	90%	PTHV Visit Log	Semester
PTHV Completion Equity Gap (highest vs. lowest subgroup rate)	N/A	<15 pts	<10 pts	PTHV Visit Log disaggregated	Semester
FCC Meeting Attendance (% of seats filled)	70%+	75%+	85%+	FCC meeting records	Monthly
FCC Demographic Representation (% of seats from historically marginalized groups)	50%+	60%+	70%+	FCC composition audit	Annual
Community Input Tracker, % inputs acted on or explained	N/A	70%	85%	Community Input Tracker	Quarterly
APTT Family Attendance Rate	N/A	60%	75%	APTT attendance records	3x/year
YPAR Cohort, % recommendations with documented school response	N/A	100%	100%	Cohort debrief records	Semester
IAC Meeting Attendance (% of members)	75%+	70%+	75%+	IAC meeting records	Quarterly
Family Trust Score (% reporting school 'values and acts on our input')	N/A	65%+	80%+	Annual Family Survey	Annual
Student Belonging Index (% reporting 'I have a voice in how this school works')	N/A	55%+	70%+	Annual Student Survey	Annual

10.3 Data Collection Calendar

Cadence	Activity
Weekly	CEC reviews Community Input Tracker; flags items requiring response or escalation.
Monthly	FCC meeting attendance recorded; engagement touchpoint count logged.
Semester (2x/year)	PTHV completion rate calculated and disaggregated; YPAR presentation cycle completed; APTT held.
Quarterly	Community Input Tracker pattern analysis completed; equity checkpoint audit run; FCC receives formal engagement report.
Annual	Family trust survey administered; student belonging index measured; fidelity rubric scored by RSF Regional Director; IAC composition and effectiveness review.

Section 11: Launch & Ramp Plan

Confirm readiness before launch: readiness is motivation multiplied by capacity ($R = MC \text{ squared}$; Scaccia et al., 2015). Motivation, does the school actually want community authority, not just input? Co-design-specific capacity, is the CEC hired, are liaisons identified and paid, is translation in place? General capacity, ED time and a stipend budget. A school that wants the legitimacy of co-design without the capacity produces consultation theater.

This launch arc maps to the network's implementation stages, Decide, Plan and Prepare, Implement, and Spread and Sustain, and puts the IMPACT elements to work: Inclusion is the purpose, Team is the RACI and the Founding Community Council, and Assess and Adjust is the Community Input Tracker loop.

Community engagement does not 'go live' on opening day. It must begin 18 months before the first student walks through the door and sustain through every phase of school life. The following timeline defines what must be true at each implementation stage.

Phase	Months (Pre/Post Opening)	Key Activities	Milestones / Decision Gates
Exploration	Month -18 to -12	Commission Community Asset Inventory. Conduct initial listening sessions with 3+ community anchor organizations. Identify CEC hire profile and begin search. Map existing community engagement infrastructure (churches, CDCs, CBOs, employer networks).	CAI draft complete. At least 3 listening sessions conducted. CEC role funded and posted. Initial IAC sector map built.
Installation	Month -12 to -9	Hire CEC (required before any public-facing engagement). Begin FCC recruitment. Conduct second-wave listening sessions. Identify and approach IAC founding members. Develop community communications infrastructure (website, social media, newsletter cadence).	CEC hired and onboarded. FCC founding member list confirmed. 2+ IAC founding members committed. Community communications channels live.
Initial Implementation	Month -9 to Opening Day	Convene FCC founding meeting. Ratify FCC charter. Conduct 3+ IAC meetings before opening. Launch PTHV program for enrolled families (begin visiting confirmed enrollees). Begin APTT scheduling for Year 1. Set up Community Input Tracker.	FCC charter ratified. IAC has met at least twice. PTHV schedule confirmed for first 3 months. APTT Meetings 1, 2, 3 scheduled before opening day. Community Input Tracker live.
Year 1 Full Implementation	Opening Day to June	PTHV visits for 80%+ of enrolled families. Three APTT cycles completed. FCC meets monthly; agenda includes student data and program updates. YPAR cohort recruited (Month 2) and first presentation cycle at Month 4. IAC meets quarterly. Community Input Tracker maintained weekly. Quarterly equity checkpoint audit.	80%+ PTHV completion. 60%+ APTT attendance. YPAR first presentation cycle complete. IAC quarterly attendance >70%. All 6 equity checkpoints passed. Community Input Tracker 80%+ inputs acted on or explained.
Year 2+ Steady State	Year 2 onward	Annual refresh of CAI. FCC transitions to second-term member cohort (planned succession). IAC deepens curriculum integration. YPAR	90%+ PTHV completion. 75%+ APTT attendance. Family trust score 80%+. Student belonging index 70%+. Fidelity rubric: all areas Proficient (3) or higher.

Phase	Months (Pre/Post Opening)	Key Activities	Milestones / Decision Gates
		becomes embedded in school culture. PTHV expanded to all families annually. APTT model refined based on Year 1 data. Annual fidelity rubric scored by RSF Regional Director.	

11.1 Decision Brief Framework, Community Co-Design Launch Gates

Three major decisions require formal Decision Brief sign-off before proceeding. CEC prepares the brief; RSF Regional Director approves.

Decision Gate	Required Preconditions
Gate 1: FCC Charter Ratification Approval needed from: RSF Regional Director + local charter holder board	CEC hired. CAI complete. At least 8 community members recruited representing required demographic diversity. Draft charter reviewed by legal. Community-binding decision categories defined and agreed to by school leadership.
Gate 2: IAC Formal Launch Approval needed from: RSF Regional Director	At least 8 IAC members confirmed. Draft IAC charter reviewed. Career pathway verticals defined and aligned to labor market brief. No member with active conflict of interest. Principal/ED confirmed as meeting chair.
Gate 3: YPAR Cohort First Presentation Cycle Approval needed from: Principal/ED	Cohort recruited with demographic diversity confirmed. Research question ratified by cohort. Data collection complete. Student presentation rehearsed with CEC coach. School leadership committed to formal response at the meeting, not a listening session but a decision meeting.

11.2 Site-Specific Launch Context

Rooted School Vancouver (RSV), Washington State
• RSV is the network's reference site and existence proof. Community engagement infrastructure is operational but should be formalized through this playbook's standards. • Priority: Complete fidelity rubric audit in Year 1 to establish baseline. Commission formal CAI refresh if last conducted more than 3 years ago. • IAC: Validate that current employer partners have active internship pipelines, not just relationship maintenance commitments. • YPAR: Formalize existing student voice practices into the YPAR framework with documented cycles and leadership response protocols. • Reauthorization context: Community engagement evidence (PTHV completion, FCC records, family trust data) will be material to WSCSC reauthorization. Document retroactively where gaps exist.

C.R. Neal Academy (RSSC), Columbia, South Carolina
• Charter holder: Rooted School South Carolina (local non-profit). Authorizer: Voorhees University. RSF serves as Education Service Provider under an Education Service Management Agreement (ESMA). CEC reports to Principal/ED; RSF Regional Director provides oversight.

- Pre-opening status: Community engagement is in Installation Phase as of Spring 2026. Launch target: Fall 2027.

- Atlas Road corridor: Community engagement design must be deeply rooted in the Atlas Road neighborhood, one of Columbia's most historically disinvested Black communities. CAI should document corridor assets before outreach.

- Named anchor partners: Midlands CDC (Community Engagement Hub, primary community anchor), Columbia Chamber of Commerce (IAC anchor for broader employer access), Prisma Health (Healthcare pathway IAC lead), Apprenticeship Carolina (Advanced Manufacturing and IT pathway co-design), Columbia College (post-secondary pathway partner).

- 988 families engaged in listening sessions; 272 families submitted interest forms, this is the founding community. PTHV outreach for Year Zero should prioritize this pool.

- IAC career pathway verticals: Healthcare, Information Technology, Advanced Manufacturing, all IAC recruitment must map to these three sectors.

- Lalah Radney serves as Executive Director and is the primary community-facing leader. CEC hire must coordinate closely with Lalah's existing relationship network.

Rooted School Cleveland (RSOH), Ohio

- Traditional charter model. Direct Rooted launch. Pre-opening status: Launch target Fall 2027. ED hire in progress as of April 2026.

- Community engagement design cannot be fully specified until the ED hire is complete and local context is established.

- Required before IAC formation: Labor market brief specific to Greater Cleveland economy. Priority sectors may include: advanced manufacturing (strong regional base), healthcare (large employer ecosystem), technology/innovation (growing sector).

- Required before FCC formation: Geographic community assessment of school catchment area. Partner with local CBOs and community anchor organizations from the earliest pre-opening phase.

- RSF Central provides direct support for all Year Zero engagement activities until local leadership team is in place.

Section 12: Professional Learning & Change Management

De-implementation: co-design adds real staff load, so name what stops to make room. One-way newsletters, performative surveys that never close the loop, and engagement that informs rather than shares authority should end as co-design begins. Adding without subtracting is how good engagement systems collapse under their own weight.

Community co-design is a set of skills, not a set of instincts. Staff at every level need specific professional learning to build and sustain the practices in this playbook. This section defines what training is required, when it must be completed, and what distinguishes a school culture that integrates community engagement from one that performs it.

12.1 Required Professional Learning, By Role

Role	Training Module	Hours	Timeline	Facilitator
CEC(all sites)	ABCD Framework Foundations: Asset mapping, community power analysis, co-design facilitation	12h	Before first community touchpoint	RSF Central or designated external trainer
CEC(all sites)	PTHV Facilitator Certification: Home visit protocol, trauma-informed communication, cultural responsiveness in home settings	8h	Before first PTHV visit	RSF Central or National PTHV trainer
CEC(all sites)	YPAR Methodology: Research design, student facilitation, power-conscious coaching for youth researchers	6h	Before first YPAR cohort session	RSF Central or YPAR practitioner
All Teachers	PTHV Participant Training: Home visit purpose, equity framework, documentation protocol, de-briefing practice	6h	Before first PTHV visit	CEC Lead
All Teachers	APTT Facilitation Certification: Session structure, data presentation, goal-setting protocol, equity facilitation	4h	Before first APTT session	CEC Lead or RSF Central
Principal/ED	Community Power Literacy: Understanding community self-determination, co-design vs. consultation, authentic vs. performative engagement	4h	Before FCC formation	RSF Central or external equity consultant
Principal/ED	IAC Leadership: Employer partnership facilitation, charter school-employer relationship design, internship pipeline management	3h	Before IAC inaugural meeting	RSF Central or NAF trainer
All Staff	Equity & Anti-Tokenization Essentials: Six equity checkpoints, disaggregated data literacy, recognizing and interrupting tokenization	3h	Annual, within first 30 days of each school year	CEC Lead

12.2 School Culture Conditions for Authentic Engagement

Professional learning alone does not produce authentic community engagement. The following school culture conditions must be present. If they are not, training will produce compliant behavior rather than genuine partnership.

Culture Condition	What It Looks Like When Present / Absent
Leadership models community deference	Present: Principal/ED is visibly in community settings, listening, not presenting. PTHV visits happen at the leadership level, not only staff level. Leadership publicly names when a community input changed a decision. Absent: All community engagement is delegated to CEC. Leadership attends FCC meetings but does not share decision authority. Community recommendations are 'considered' but rarely visible in final decisions.
Community engagement is in everyone's job description	Present: Teacher evaluation includes APTT preparation and PTHV completion. School calendar protects time for engagement activities. Staff who miss required touchpoints receive direct feedback. Absent: PTHV is treated as optional professional development. APTT is the 'CEC's program.' Community engagement is a sidebar to 'real' academic work.
Data about families is used to serve, not to sort	Present: PTHV Visit Logs inform relationship strategies, not academic judgments. Disaggregated data surfaces equity concerns, not excuses for lower expectations. Absent: Home visit findings used to explain why 'these families' don't engage. Disaggregated data met with defensiveness rather than analysis.
Community criticism is welcomed as information	Present: Negative feedback in Community Input Tracker is flagged as priority, not deprioritized. FCC members feel safe raising concerns. Student YPAR findings that critique school practices are presented publicly. Absent: Critical inputs are noted but rarely acted on. FCC meetings feel like information delivery, not decision-making. YPAR student recommendations are 'appreciated' but not implemented.

12.3 Managing Resistance

Common Resistance Pattern	Response Strategy
'We don't have time for community engagement on top of everything else.'	Reframe: community engagement is not additional work, it is how we design the school so the academic work is effective. A PTHV visit that surfaces a student's career aspiration saves 10 hours of guessing in curriculum design. Budget for it explicitly in staff time allocation.
'Families don't show up even when we try.'	Diagnose before concluding. Are meetings scheduled at accessible times? Is childcare and translation provided? Are meetings held in places families feel safe? Is the school asking families to advise on decisions they cannot influence? Survey non-attendees before attributing low attendance to 'family disengagement.'
'The community doesn't really understand what's educationally sound.'	This framing is deficit-based and incorrect. Community members are the experts on what their children and neighborhoods need. Educational design expertise belongs to staff. Community context expertise belongs to families and community members. Co-design integrates both, neither overrides the other.

'We already have a Parent Council / Parent Advisory Committee.'

Assess whether the existing structure meets FCC standards: diverse representation, defined decision authority, documented input-to-decision trail. Many existing parent bodies are consultation structures, not co-design structures. This playbook's standards are different.

Section 13: Usability Testing Plan

This playbook is not complete until it passes usability testing with school leaders who have never worked with Rooted. The standard: a capable school leader should be able to pick up any section and accomplish the specified task independently with 80%+ fidelity on their first attempt.

Testing Protocol

- Testers: 2, 3 school leaders unfamiliar with Rooted School Foundation, ideally from charter schools in similar geographies.
- Method: Think-aloud protocol. Testers attempt tasks while narrating their reasoning aloud. Facilitator observes without intervening except to prevent complete derailment.
- Tasks to test: (1) Set up and run a Founding Community Council using SOP CD-2. (2) Conduct a Parent-Teacher Home Visit using SOP CD-4. (3) Form a YPAR cohort using SOP CD-5. (4) Complete a Community Input Tracker quarterly analysis using SOP CD-7.
- Completion standard: Task completed independently in ≤2x estimated time, with no more than one substantive error requiring correction.
- Data to capture: Where did the tester pause? What did they re-read? What did they skip? What did they misunderstand? Where did they succeed quickly?

Usability Findings, [TO BE COMPLETED AFTER FIELD TESTING]
• Testing Date: _____
• Testers: _____
• Overall Fidelity Score: _____
• Sections requiring revision: _____
• Key insights: _____

Section 14: Cross-Playbook Dependencies

Playbook 8 does not operate in isolation. The following dependencies must be tracked across the 22-playbook framework.

Related Playbook	Dependancy Direction	What Must Be Coordinated
PB-2: School Launch & Authorization	Informs → PB-8	Authorization application requires community engagement evidence. CAI, listening session records, and FCC formation documents must align with authorization narrative. At RSSC: Voorhees University authorization likely requires community engagement plan as a component.
PB-5: Academic Model Implementation	Mutual	IAC co-designs career pathway curriculum and validates academic-to-career connections. YPAR findings may surface academic model concerns. Double Helix Model requires community validation that Career-Connected Application is grounded in real employer demand.
PB-7: Employment Guarantee ('Green Balloon Fellowship')	PB-8 feeds → PB-7	IAC provides the employer pipeline for Employment Guarantee placements. Internship and apprenticeship commitments made by IAC members are the operating infrastructure for the job offer promise. IAC formation must be coordinated with the Employment Guarantee playbook timeline.
PB-1: Talent Pipeline & Leadership Development	PB-1 informs → PB-8	CEC hire (required for all engagement activities) must be aligned with the talent pipeline playbook. CEC competency profile should feed back to inform future talent strategy.
PB-4: School Board Governance & Development	Mutual	FCC is distinct from the school board but must operate in aligned relationship with it. At sites governed under ESMA (RSSC), the local charter holder board and the FCC play complementary governance and community accountability roles. Jurisdictions must be clearly defined to prevent confusion.
PB-13: Post-Secondary Navigation & Economic Mobility	Mutual	Community engagement with families around post-secondary planning (college and career) must be coordinated with post-secondary navigation programming. PTHV data about family hopes and career aspirations is directly relevant to post-secondary counseling priorities.
PB-16: Equity Audit & Continuous Improvement	PB-8 feeds → PB-16	Community engagement equity data (disaggregated PTHV, APTT, and FCC metrics) feeds the annual equity audit. The six equity checkpoints in this playbook are designed to integrate with the broader equity audit framework.
PB-10: Technology & Data-Driven Decision Making	PB-8 requests from PB-10	Community Input Tracker platform, PTHV documentation system, and family communication infrastructure require technology decisions. CEC must coordinate with tech/data team on platform selection, data privacy, and integration with school information systems.

Section 15: Revision Log

Version	Date	Author	Changes Made	Trigger
v0.1	April 2026	RSF Growth & Innovation	Initial outline developed. Sections 1, 15 structured. C.R. Neal Application alignment edits: corrected RSSC governance language; added named RSSC partners; embedded Double Helix Model reference.	New playbook build
v1.0	April 2026	RSF Growth & Innovation	Full comprehensive playbook developed from outline. All 8 SOPs expanded to Action-Forcing format. Sections 9, 15 fully developed. Appendices A, J added. Site-specific guidance for RSV, RSSC, RSOH fully populated.	Comprehensive build directive
v1.1	_____	_____	[Post-usability testing revisions to be logged here]	Field testing
v1.2	_____	_____	[Annual refresh, to be completed June 2027]	Annual review

Appendices

Appendix A: Community Asset Inventory (CAI) Template

Instructions: Complete before first community touchpoint. Update annually. Each entry requires at minimum: Name, Type, Contact, Assets Offered, and Connection Status. 'Assets Offered' is what this organization or person BRINGS, not what you need from them.

Name / Organization	Type	Primary Contact	Assets Offered	Connection Status	Last Updated
Midlands Community Development Corporation	Community Anchor Organization	[Name, Phone, Email]	Community meeting space; neighborhood trust networks in Atlas Road corridor; workforce development programming; resident leadership pipeline	Active Partner	April 2026
Prisma Health	Employer / IAC Member	[Workforce Dev Contact]	Healthcare career pathway co-design; externship and clinical observation placements; employee mentorship; industry certification alignment	Committed IAC Member	April 2026
Apprenticeship Carolina	Workforce Development Partner	[Program Contact]	Registered apprenticeship framework; employer-school partnership models; Advanced Manufacturing and IT pathway co-design	Active Partner	April 2026
[Local Church / Faith Community]	Faith-Based Community Anchor	[Pastor/Leader Name]	Community convening; family trust networks; multilingual communication; volunteer capacity	Relationship Building	_____
[Neighborhood Association]	Civic Organization	[Contact Name]	Geographic knowledge; resident networks; advocacy relationships; community meeting infrastructure	Identified, Outreach Pending	_____
[Add Organization]	[Type]	[Contact]	[Assets Offered]	[Status]	[Date]

Asset Type Key:

Community Anchor Organization | Employer / IAC Member | Faith-Based Community Anchor | Civic Organization | Educational Institution | Healthcare Provider | Workforce Development Partner | Government / Public Agency | Individual Community Leader | Family Network / Parent Organization

Connection Status Key: Identified, Outreach Pending | Relationship Building | Active Partner | Committed IAC Member | Founding Community Council Member | Inactive

Appendix B: Listening Campaign Tracker

Track all listening sessions conducted during the pre-opening phase. Goal: 3+ sessions with 50+ total unique participants representing the full community before FCC formation.

Date	Location / Host	Audience	# Participants	Key Themes Heard	Follow-Up Required
Example: Oct 15, 2025	Midlands CDC, Atlas Road neighborhood meeting room	Atlas Road residents; prospective families; neighborhood association	42 adults ; 18 students	1. Families want healthcare and tech career paths. 2. Safety and belonging for Black students. 3. Transportation access to school site. 4. Worry about school culture matching neighborhood culture.	Share themes at next listening session. Specific follow-up with 3 families who asked about enrollment timeline.
_____ _____	_____	_____ ____	_____ _____ _____	_____	_____
_____ _____	_____	_____ ____	_____ _____ _____	_____	_____

Appendix C: FCC Composition Matrix & Charter Template

FCC Composition Matrix, Target Seat Distribution

Seat Category	Target Number / Notes
Parents/Guardians of enrolled students	4, 6 seats. Intentionally recruited for demographic diversity. Cannot be current school employees.
Community members (non-parent)	2, 3 seats. Residents, faith leaders, CBO representatives from immediate school community.
Students (grade 9+)	2 seats minimum. Recruited for diversity, not limited to student government leaders.
Employer / Industry partners	1, 2 seats. Coordinated with IAC membership.
Principal/ED	1 seat, non-voting (advisory). Attends all meetings; cannot vote on community-binding decisions.
CEC	1 seat, non-voting. Manages meeting logistics and Community Input Tracker integration.
TOTAL voting members	8, 12. Quorum = 60%. Community member seats must be majority of voting seats.

FCC Charter Template (Abbreviated)

ARTICLE I, NAME AND PURPOSE

The Founding Community Council (FCC) of [School Name] exists to ensure that the families, students, and community members most affected by this school have genuine co-design authority in shaping how it operates.

ARTICLE II, DECISION AUTHORITY

The FCC has binding co-design authority over: school culture and climate norms; family communication protocols; school schedule and calendar (within state/authorization constraints); community use of school facilities; student code of conduct philosophy; and community partnership priorities.

The FCC has advisory authority over: academic program design; staffing decisions; budget allocation; and compliance-driven policies. When FCC advisory input is not followed, school leadership provides a written explanation within 30 days.

ARTICLE III, MEETINGS

The FCC meets monthly during the academic year (minimum 8 meetings/year) plus one planning session in August. Quorum: 60% of voting members. All meetings provide childcare, translation, and accessible location. Meeting notes are public within 72 hours.

ARTICLE IV, MEMBER TERMS AND COMPENSATION

Members serve 2-year staggered terms. Maximum of 2 consecutive terms. Members receive a meeting stipend of \$[amount] per meeting attended. Stipend is a justice practice, not optional.

Appendix D: PTHV Pre-Visit Checklist & Visit Log

Pre-Visit Checklist

- Visit confirmed by phone/text (not just email) at least 48 hours in advance.
- Visit pair confirmed, never conduct a home visit solo.
- If interpreter needed: professional interpreter or bilingual staff confirmed (NOT a student or family member).
- The two PTHV questions reviewed and memorized: 'What are your hopes and dreams for [name]?' and 'What should we know about your family that would help us support [name]?'
- PTHV Visit Log template printed or open on phone/tablet for post-visit documentation.
- Personal disclosure prepared, what you will share about yourself when asked.
- Visitor guidelines reviewed: follow family's lead on shoes, food, where to sit. Arrive on time. Leave on time.

Field	Notes
Student Name	_____
Family Members Present	_____
Date of Visit	_____
Location	_____
Visitors (staff names)	_____
Interpreter Used?	Yes / No If yes, name: _____
Duration	_____
Hopes & Dreams Shared(near-verbatim)	_____
What should we know(near-verbatim)	_____
Community Assets Mentioned(for CAI)	_____
Preferred Communication Method	_____
Follow-up Commitments Made	_____
Follow-up Sent (date)	_____
Entered in Community Input Tracker?	Yes / No Date: _____

Appendix E: APTT Session Planning Template

Complete one template per APTT session. Submit to CEC Lead 1 week before session date.

Planning Element	Teacher Preparation Notes
Session Number (1, 2, or 3)	
Session Date / Time / Location	
Teacher(s) Facilitating	
Target Family Audience (grade level / cohort)	
Skills Focus Area for This Session	What specific learning standard or skill are students developing this period? State it in plain language, not academic jargon.
Anonymized Data Visualization Planned	What data will you show? How is it disaggregated? How will you present it so families understand their student's position without identifying other students?
Skill Demonstration Activity (describe step by step)	How will you show families exactly what their student is learning to do? What will families practice?
Family Home Practice Activity	What is the specific at-home practice you are recommending? Be concrete: 'Practice reading a passage aloud for 10 minutes three times a week', not 'read more.'
Goal-Setting Protocol	What form or structure will families use to write their home practice goal? How will you collect and store goal cards?
Translation / Interpretation Arranged?	Yes / No. Languages: _____. Provider: _____
Childcare Arranged?	Yes / No. Provider: _____
Family Outreach Completed?	How were families notified? Dates sent: _____
Post-Session: Attendance Recorded in Tracker?	Yes / No. Date: _____

Appendix F: Industry Advisory Council (IAC) Charter Template

IAC CHARTER, [School Name] Industry Advisory Council

MISSION: The [School Name] Industry Advisory Council exists to ensure that Rooted's career pathway programming is co-designed with the employers and industry leaders who will ultimately hire our students. The IAC validates curriculum, creates work-based learning opportunities, and provides a living bridge between classroom learning and real labor market demand.

MEMBERSHIP: 8, 14 members representing at minimum 3 distinct industry sectors aligned to the school's career pathways. Members serve 2-year renewable terms. No more than 2 members from the same organization. Members with financial conflicts of interest (active vendor relationships with the school) must disclose and recuse from relevant decisions.

MEETINGS: Quarterly (4 times/year). Minimum 90 minutes. Principal/ED chairs. CEC manages logistics. Agenda distributed 1 week in advance. Notes distributed within 72 hours. Members missing 2 consecutive meetings without notice receive a relationship check-in from CEC.

AUTHORITY: The IAC provides binding curriculum co-design recommendations for career pathway sequences. The IAC has advisory authority over internship/apprenticeship program design, employer credential alignment, and work-based learning scope and sequence. School leadership may not override IAC curriculum co-design recommendations without providing a written explanation to the full IAC within 30 days.

STUDENT VOICE: Every IAC meeting includes a student spotlight (10 minutes minimum). Students who have completed internships or work-based learning experiences are prioritized for this role.

Ratified by: _____ (Principal/ED) Date: _____ RSF Regional Director:
_____ Date: _____

Appendix G: Community Input Tracker, Column Definitions & Template

Maintain in Google Sheets or Airtable. All staff with community-facing roles have 'Editor' access to add rows. Only CEC Lead has access to change Status or Decision fields.

Column	Definition	Example Entry
Date	Date input was received, not date it was entered in the tracker (enter within 24 hours).	October 22, 2025
Input Source	PTHV FCC Meeting Listening Session YPAR Research APTT Family Survey Informal (hallway/text/email) Other	PTHV
Input Summary	Verbatim or near-verbatim capture. NOT your interpretation. Quote whenever possible.	'My daughter wants to be a nurse but she doesn't think this school will get her there. She needs a real clinical experience, not just a class.'
Theme Tag	Academic Programming Work-Based Learning School Culture & Climate Family Communication Facilities Staffing/Leadership Enrollment/Outreach Equity & Access Other	Work-Based Learning
Demographic Context	Relevant demographic context (race, language, income, disability) IF shared by the community member and relevant to pattern analysis. Anonymized, no names.	Black family; primary language English; returning student to school system after previous negative experience
Status	New Under Review Acted On Explained On Hold	Under Review
Decision / Response	What changed or will change because of this input? OR explanation of why this input was not acted on.	Adding clinical observation component to Healthcare pathway partnership with Prisma Health, piloting Year 1.
Date Closed	Date status changed to Acted On or Explained.	November 15, 2025
Staff Member Who Entered	Name of the staff member who captured this input.	CEC Lead, [Name]

Appendix H: School Governance Council (SGC) Charter Template

Note: The SGC is the formal governance body required by state law or authorization agreement. It is distinct from the FCC (community co-design) and operates on a different legal basis. Review applicable state requirements before adapting this template.

SGC CHARTER, [School Name]

PURPOSE: The School Governance Council exists to fulfill statutory and/or authorization agreement requirements for shared governance and to complement (not duplicate) the work of the Founding Community Council.

DISTINCTION FROM FCC: The FCC operates as a co-design body with defined decision authority over school culture and partnership priorities. The SGC operates as a formal governance body with authority defined by state law and authorization agreement. Both bodies share data and coordinate agendas; neither supersedes the other.

MEMBERSHIP: [Per state law requirements]. At minimum: parent/guardian majority; student representation where required; teacher representation where required.

Appendix I: Glossary of Key Terms

Term	Definition
ABCD (Asset-Based Community Development)	A framework for community engagement that starts with identifying community strengths, skills, and resources, rather than cataloging needs and deficits. Developed by Kretzmann and McKnight (1993). The Community Asset Inventory is an ABCD tool.
APTT (Academic Parent-Teacher Teams)	A structured group meeting model that brings families and teachers together around shared academic goals and real student performance data. Research base: WestEd (2018).
CAI (Community Asset Inventory)	A living document that maps the strengths, networks, institutions, and resources present in the school's community. Used to design engagement strategy and identify partnership opportunities.
CEC (Community Engagement Coordinator)	The Rooted role responsible for all community co-design activities at a school site. Not a part-time add-on, a full-time, essential leadership role.
Co-Design	A design process in which people with diverse perspectives and lived experiences are engaged as genuine collaborators, not consultants or focus group participants, in creating something that will affect them.
Double Helix Model	Rooted's educational model: Rigorous Academic Mastery and Career-Connected Application reinforce each other to produce Student Agency & Economic Mobility. Community co-design ensures both strands are grounded in community context and labor market reality.
EqCC (Equity-Centered Community Collaboration)	A framework for community engagement that explicitly names and addresses power imbalances, historical inequities, and structural barriers to participation. Developed by the National Equity Project.
ESMA (Education Service Management Agreement)	The governance structure at RSSC where Rooted School South Carolina (local non-profit) holds the charter and Rooted School Foundation serves as the Education Service Provider (ESP). The local board retains governance authority; RSF provides operational management.
FCC (Founding Community Council)	Rooted's primary community co-design body. Composed of families, students, and community members. Holds genuine decision authority over defined categories of school design decisions. Distinct from a parent advisory committee.
Hub Model	A community engagement model where a trusted community organization, typically a CBO or CDC, serves as the 'hub' through which school-community connections are organized. At RSSC, Midlands CDC serves as the Community Engagement Hub.
IAC (Industry Advisory Council)	A group of 8, 14 employer and industry partners who co-design career pathway curriculum, provide work-based learning opportunities, and validate that Rooted's graduates are prepared for living-wage employment. Operationalizes the 'job offer' half of the Rooted mission.
Listening Campaign	A structured series of listening sessions conducted in the community, before opening a school, to hear from families and community members about hopes, assets, concerns, and priorities. Distinct from a marketing campaign.
PTHV (Parent-Teacher Home Visits)	A structured practice in which school staff visit families in their homes, not to assess or evaluate, but to build relationship, listen to family strengths and aspirations, and create the conditions for genuine family-school partnership. Based on the PTHV Project model.

Tokenization	The practice of including community members in a process, often visibly, as representatives, without giving them genuine decision-making authority or acting on their input. Tokenization is the most common failure mode of 'community engagement' programs.
YPAR (Youth Participatory Action Research)	A methodology in which young people lead research into issues affecting their own lives and communities. At Rooted, the Student Co-Design Cohort uses YPAR to investigate school experience and develop evidence-based recommendations for school leadership. Research base: Cammarota & Fine (2008).

Appendix J: Equity Checkpoint Quick Reference Card

Post this card in the CEC workspace. Review before every major community touchpoint.

6 Equity Checkpoints, Ask These Before Every Major Touchpoint
• EC-1 REPRESENTATION: Are the communities most affected, especially historically marginalized families, represented as co-designers, not observers?
• EC-2 LANGUAGE ACCESS: Can every family participate fully in their language of choice, without using a student or family member as interpreter?
• EC-3 POWER BALANCE: Does this structure give community members genuine decision-making authority, or does leadership hold final veto?
• EC-4 ASSET FRAMING: Does all communication describe this community through the lens of strengths and potential, not deficits and gaps?
• EC-5 ACCOUNTABILITY LOOP: Can we demonstrate, with specific evidence, what changed because of community input?
• EC-6 STUDENT VOICE: Are students, especially those most often silenced, active participants in designing their own educational experience?

Anti-Deficit Language Checklist

Deficit Language (AVOID)	Asset Language (USE INSTEAD)
'Underserved families'	'Families who have been underserved by systems', centers system failure, not family deficit
'At-risk students'	'Students who are thriving despite structural barriers' or 'students who deserve better systems'
'Hard-to-reach families'	'Families who have every reason to distrust institutions', acknowledges history
'Low-income community'	'A community with significant economic assets and deep wisdom about resilience' + specific economic context
'The community lacks resources'	'The community has deep relational, cultural, and organizational assets that schools often overlook'
'We're serving disadvantaged youth'	'We're partnering with young people who are building toward economic mobility'