



# Keeping In Touch?

It always bears repeating: To be a thriving school system, you need a strategy for developing strong, passionate advocates. After all, what you say about your schools matters much less than what others say about them.


## Discussion Guide

 *“With support for public education at a cultural and political flashpoint, it may be time to consider not only how you’re growing advocates for your district, but also how you’ll maintain them.”*


- If you were to see your district’s “quilt” who would make up your patches?
- Which of these advocates do you interact with most?

 *“Your first and most important goal should be to consistently and systematically develop advocates who will sing your district’s praises.”*

- What are your district’s stories worth telling?
- How do you keep your district’s advocates connected, informed, and enthusiastic?

 *“We are intentional about finding ways to maintain engagement with those who have historically been very supportive of our schools. We think carefully about how to engage with parents, community members, and business folks.”*

- What insights did you gain from Carlsbad Unified School District’s partnerships?
- What partnerships would be mutually beneficial in your community?
- How could your district involve businesses in learning paths for your students?

 *“But while keeping alumni updated is good, getting them to talk positively about your schools is even better.”*

- How might you adapt some of the strategies that Southside ISD uses when engaging alumni?
- In what ways can your district reach alumni through providing opportunities or services?
- Have you thought about how to engage alumni who are now parents in your district?



*“There are myriad ways to connect and stay connected to your district’s stakeholders. But the best and arguably easiest strategy is to serve them with empathy and kindness.”*

- How does your district create a hospitable environment for your students, families, staff, and community?
- How can you use Kelly E. Middleton’s story as inspiration for providing a more empathetic response to students’ experience?



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