

Changing Faces, Changing Community

An Action-Based Community
Conversation Addressing the Opportunities
and Challenges of Latino Immigration
in our Schools, Jobs, and Community

A guide for public dialogue and problem solving

Adapted from a Study Circle Resource Center guide

Sponsored by:

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FOREWORD

Why should we talk about the effects of Latino immigration on jobs, schools and our community?

New immigrants can help a community's economy and bring many cultural benefits to the community. People who are newcomers to this country however are often in the middle of community tension.

Elsewhere in the US, to make their communities work better, people said they wanted:

- safe settings to talk with diverse people about common concerns,
- chances to get rid of stereotypes about each other,
- chances to make a difference, and to work with others to do something positive,
- ways to be heard by public officials and other community leaders.

This guide will help you as you participate in this process that convenes a group of community members to talk about and take action concerning community changes brought about by Latino immigration. Action can happen at the individual, group and/or institutional level.

How will we talk together?

This small group conversation is based on the model of a study circle. A study circle is a group of 10 to 15 people who come together to talk to each other about complex public issues. (To find out more about study circles and how they are used to address a range of issues, check their website: www.studycircles.org.) In study circles, people try their best to understand other's views. There is no pressure in a study circle for everyone to agree to everything. People do not have to give up things that are important to them for the study circle to be a success. By sharing common concerns and looking for ideas for action, people often can work together to improve their community. Study circles work best when there are many going on at the same time in a community. They need the support of a number of key groups and leaders in town.

Local issues about immigration are important to everyone, yet talking about immigration can be difficult. We need to decide what to do about such issues as:

- Effect of immigration on jobs and schools
- Language differences
- Prejudice against immigrants

This project will help deal with those issues.

The group is led by a facilitator who is not an expert on the issue, but is there to help the meeting go well. The facilitator and the discussion materials will help you stay focused and look at many different views.

What sort of problem-solving process is this?

The organizers of this project have made a concerted effort to recruit a diverse group of participants to this conversation. By bringing together a broad group, we are trying to ensure that we have the range of perspectives on this issue that will make the process most valuable. We know that people see this issue differently and are dealing with different impacts. We also know that each person in your group has different life experiences and that understanding each other can be difficult. So, don't worry if by talking together the issue appears even more complicated.

We don't want you to work through your differences or compromise to reach some middle ground. You aren't going to persuade an employer to change her business model or a neighbor to adopt different values. Just try to understand and acknowledge that there are other ways to see this issue. For this process to be productive, we simply ask you to:

- listen to others,
- accept differences but don't focus on them, and
- put a priority on finding common ground.

The goal of your group is to find the widest common ground that all your members can stand on. Even if the common ground is modest, it will be genuine and can be the base on which action can be built by people who can support positive movements.

This is not a strategic planning process or a task force. You are not asked to do research, master piles of data, learn new concepts and skills or listen to experts. You already have the skills and energy to make a change in this community. By simply sitting down and sharing your thoughts with your neighbors and listening to each other, you have an opportunity to build commitment that can make a difference

This conversation leads to an action forum, where your small group will report your ideas, learn what other small groups did and have a chance to proceed with some action steps if you choose.

Thank you for your willingness to take the time to participate in this project. We know that if a group of constructive residents listens to each other and works together to identify options for action, our community will benefit.

TIPS ON HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF THIS CONVERSATION

To be most productive, remember that the way people talk with one another is an important as what they talk about.

- Come to all the meetings. It takes time to build trust. The process is organized as a succession of meetings that build on each other. If you have been part of the whole conversation, you will understand how it has produced the final action steps.
- Arrive a few minutes early, so the meetings can start promptly. It will take the full two hours for the group to get through the topics for each meeting, so it is very important that discussion begins on time.
- Help keep the discussion focused. Make sure what you say is concise and on topic.
- Seek first to understand, then to be understood.
- Help develop one another's ideas. Listen well, and ask good questions.
- Be open to changing some of your beliefs. This will help you to listen to others' views.
- If people disagree with you, don't take it personally. Look to see what ideas are in conflict. Look at the ideas and see what the underlying concerns are.
- Think about how you might work together to act on common concerns.

COMPARISON OF DEBATE AND DIALOGUE

Debate

Assuming that there is a right answer and you have it.

Combative: participants attempt to prove the other side wrong.

About winning.

Listening to find flaws and make counter-arguments.

Defending assumptions as truth.

Critiquing the other side's position.

Defending ones' own views against those of others.

Searching for flaws and weaknesses in others' positions.

Seeking a conclusion or vote that ratifies your position.

Dialogue

Assuming that many people have pieces of the answer and that together they can craft a solution.

Collaborative: participants work together toward common understanding.

About exploring common ground.

Listening to understand, finding meaning and agreement.

Revealing assumptions for re-evaluation.

Re-examining all positions.

Admitting that others' thinking can improve on one's own.

Searching for strengths and value in others' positions.

Discovering new options, not seeking closure.

SESSION 1

Who are we?

The many faces of our community.

Changes are making the places we live more complex. In many communities in the US, immigration is a big part of these changes.

People have many ideas about immigration. Some say that when we talk about it, we also need to talk about:

prejudice,
jobs, money and where we work,
schools and neighborhoods.

GOALS FOR THIS SESSION

- Get to know each other.
- Talk about how we are all connected to the immigration issue in our community.
- Begin to look at the issue of Latino immigration here.

Before we try to do something to address the changes, we need to listen with respect to each other's ideas and concerns. The purpose of the first session is to:

share stories and views,
listen with respect, and
talk about what we have lived through and seen.

The facilitator, who will help run these discussions, is not a teacher or an expert on immigration. The facilitator and this discussion guide will help your group stay focused and look at many different views. The facilitator will *not* take part in the discussion or share any personal opinions. Please do not ask the facilitator questions about immigration.

PART I (40 minutes)

Introductions

Here are some sample questions to talk about to get started. Choose the ones you think are best for your group.

- Introduce and describe yourself to the group? Why have you described yourself this way?
- How are you like others in the group? How are you different?
- Describe the community where you grew up. How did growing up there affect the way you see yourself?
- How are things different for you now, as compared to a few years ago?
- Why do you want to participate in this conversation?
What are you hoping for? What concerns do you have?

PART 2 (15 minutes)**Setting Ground Rules**

In order to provide the safe and respectful place that everyone is seeking for this dialogue, you need to create some ground rules to make sure your conversation is productive. Setting ground rules is a very important step for the group. Ground rules help everyone manage the discussions, even if they become difficult. Typically, ground rules address the issues of openness, commitment, respect and fairness.

The facilitator will begin by offering suggestions to get the group started, then ask members to add your own. Be sure to talk about how the group will handle conflict and disagreement, as well as confidentiality. The ground rules will be posted where everyone can see them. Your group can always add to the list during later meetings.

PART 3 (5 minutes)**Overview of conversation**

Your facilitator will review the structure of this project, so you will know what to expect.

PART 4 (45 minutes)**Stories to discuss**

(Read over and pick a few)

- ❑ A white mother worries about the schooling her children are getting. Many of the other students are new immigrants and demand a lot of the teacher's time.
- ❑ A young white couple sees that there is government money available to help low-income immigrants with maternity expenses. The young couple is angry because they do not qualify for these funds and must pay off the expenses of the birth of their child. That will take them three years.
- ❑ An illegal immigrant is working for a local construction company. After several weeks of work, the boss refuses to pay him. He is afraid to speak up because he doesn't want to be deported.
- ❑ A white man is looking for a job at a public agency that offers excellent benefits. The job states a preference for applicants who can speak Spanish. He is annoyed, as he speaks only English.
- ❑ Other?

QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT WHEN DISCUSSING THESE STORIES

- What is your first response to any of these stories?
- Do you have stories like this? What about stories of your friends or family? Why are they important?

FINAL QUESTIONS (Use these questions to summarize your discussion.)
(15 minutes)

- ❖ Do you have any comments about this conversation so far?
- ❖ What are your feelings about it?

For next time:

- How have Latino immigrants affected jobs and schools? What does this look like?
- When it comes to Latino immigration, schools, and language differences, what challenges and opportunities are we facing?

SESSION 2

How is our community changing?

People here often say “This valley is changing so much.” Newcomers from Mexico and other Latin American countries are part of the change in our community.

How can we use what we know about these changes to build a better community?

GOALS FOR THIS SESSION

- Talk about what changes and opportunities have occurred as a result of Latino immigration.

Community Overview (20 minutes)

Your group will have a chance to review some community information.

- What do you notice? Why is it important?

Sharing Views (60 minutes)

Each of the following views is written in the voice of a person who holds that view. Use these views to start talking about issues and to come up with your own thinking.

VIEW 1

People are coming here just to make money, not to become part of this community or this country.

The reasons people come to America are changing. The more recent newcomers seem to be mostly interested in making money. They want the benefits of America, but do not want to be part of the community. Many of them want to return to their own country some day.

If people just want to make money, keep their own culture, and remain separate from everyone, we end up with communities with no common bonds. We need to insist that people who want to move and work here must also want to become Americans.

QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT WHEN DISCUSSING THE VIEWS

- Which view is closest to your own? Why? What are the beliefs or things you have done or seen that help form your ideas?
- Think about a view you don't agree with. What might lead someone else to agree with that view?
- What other views would you add? What points of view are missing?

VIEW 2

Immigrants are coming here to work; we need a workforce that wants to work.

Business people are always saying, "Nobody wants to work anymore." Immigrants do. That's why they left their homes behind and came to this community. They see their job, even an entry-level job, as an opportunity to get ahead and make a better life for their children. They are hard workers. Latino immigrants have added a great deal to our work force and economy.

VIEW 3

Having so many school children from other countries is a problem.

It is harder to teach people who are new to this country, who aren't used to being here, and who may not speak English. Schools need a lot more help if we expect them to do their job. Parents of immigrants don't get as involved. American parents don't want their children in these schools, because their child doesn't get as good an education. That raises the percentage of immigrant children in the school. It's a divisive issue.

VIEW 4

Our community is struggling with immigration by people who look different and don't speak English, but all communities that attract first-generation immigrants have similar issues. These will be resolved over time.

America has always been a land of opportunity that attracted people who are willing to improve their situation. Our community has not had to deal with this issue until recently. If you look back through history, many different ethnic groups came to this county, struggled with a new language, took entry level jobs, endured hardships and offered their children a more secure future. The next generation did not have these problems. That will hold true for Latinos as well.

VIEW 5

We have a lot of low-paying jobs because many immigrants will work for lower wages.

People here need to earn a decent wage and feel secure about the future. We have some new jobs that pay well, but generally wages here aren't what they should be because immigrants agree to work for less as janitors, construction workers, housekeepers and kitchen workers. Employers are paying less than they could if there weren't so many immigrant workers.

VIEW 6

We have a more interesting community because it is more diverse.

Each new group of people coming here brings a new culture. Immigrants bring new music, foods, languages, and ideas. This is great for our community. It makes us more diverse and exciting. People should not have to give up their culture just to be like other Americans.

VIEW 7

Our community is more divided because many people don't speak English.

When you shop or go to work and some people there don't speak English, it's a problem. People who speak another language make you feel like you are not part of the same community or even the same country. It is difficult to work with or have a relationship with people you can't talk to.

VIEW 8

Employers can take more advantage of immigrant workers.

Employers can pay Latinos less than they pay citizens for doing the same work, and can get around paying overtime because Latinos are not likely to complain.

VIEW 9

There is a great burden on our social services.

With more and more people in need, our social services and schools have a hard time keeping up. It costs money to support immigrants who earn low wages, do not know our culture and can't speak English. Many immigrants are coming from countries that have social programs that provide a lot of services, so the workers expect them. Our community ends up making sacrifices to fund the programs that immigrants need.

VIEW 10

Because the immigration process does not work well, we have undocumented workers here. That creates several problems.

Because the immigration processes are so complex, keep changing and set low limits for the number of workers, there are many people living and working here illegally who live in fear of being deported. This divides our community even further. Immigrants who are here legally are confused with undocumented workers and are not treated with respect. Law-abiding people are frustrated.

VIEW 11

Because of immigrants, we have too many people living here.

This valley has sustainable limits. Low wages allow businesses to flourish that wouldn't otherwise be able to operate. The more employees you have here, the more traffic there is on the roads, the more housing is required, and the more public services are needed.

VIEW 12

Prejudice is an issue here.

People still judge others by the color of their skin. Immigrants from Europe are accepted more easily than people from Latin America. We need to bring issues of race and ethnicity out into the open, so we can deal with them

FINAL QUESTIONS (Use these questions to summarize your discussion.)
(40 minutes)

- ❖ What are the common concerns?
- ❖ Name 3 - 4 of the most important benefits our community has gotten with the coming of Latino immigrants.
- ❖ What are the 3 - 4 biggest challenges we face in our community around immigration, language and schools? Why are these problems so important?

For next time:

- What approaches can we take to increase the benefits and address the challenges of immigration?
- How can groups in our community help make the changes we want?
- What can each of us do to help?

SESSION 3

What can we do about immigration and community change?

What approaches can we take to deal with our common concerns about immigration, jobs, schools and language differences?

How can we best enhance the benefits and address our challenges?

The goals of this session are to:

- create a vision for our community,
- “try on” some of the approaches listed below and learn from each others’ ideas,
- think about actions each of us can take to address how newcomers have changed our community.

PART I (30 minutes)

A vision for our community

Imagine a place on the Town Square that visitors see and school buses drive past. Imagine we will build something there (an archway, monument or statue) and that we will carve words into it to describe our community—words of hope. There is only room for four or five words. Our group has to come up with these words.

Look at the box to the right for some ideas of words that might go on a monument.

Think about the words you would choose and the words that you would like to add. As a group we will brainstorm some additional words, then after talking about what the words mean, we will try to come up with 4 or 5 that your group can agree on.

- What do these words mean to you?
- Which ones matter most?
- Are there words missing?

GOALS FOR THIS SESSION

- Talk about our vision for our community.
- Talk about approaches to address impacts of Latino immigration.
- Start to think about actions you want to take to address the challenges and opportunities.

Ideas for the Words Stating a Community Vision

Opportunity—Everyone has an equal chance to succeed.

Respect—People treat each other fairly. They allow others to live the way they want to.

Order—Laws are obeyed. People do what they are supposed to do.

Safety—People feel secure.

Prosperity—The economy is strong. Businesses are successful; there are good jobs that pay enough.

Diversity—There are all kinds of people in the community. They can all work together.

Pride—People are proud of their community and their part in it.

PART II (75 minutes)

Each of the following approaches is written in the voice of a person who believes in that approach. Use these views to start talking about issues and to discuss actions related to that view. After reading all 6 approaches, discuss some of these questions:

- Which approach(es) is closest to your own? Why? What beliefs or things you have done have helped form your ideas?
- Think about an approach you don't agree with. Why might someone else agree with that approach?
- What other approach would you add? What approaches are missing?
- What if anything does the US owe people who are living in deep poverty?
- What if anything does the US owe people who are here legally but are not citizens?
- What are our hopes and concerns for the community when it comes to immigration?
- What questions or doubts do we have about these ideas?

APPROACH 1

We should help all people who want to live here.

Immigration has been good for the US. Immigrants have filled our country with jobs, cultural diversity, hope and new ideas. America should give a home to those who are fleeing adversity and are ambitious. We should make it easier for people living in poor countries to move here.

Once someone comes here through legal channels, we should protect their rights and help them live here. Everyone should be treated fairly in finding a job, a place to live, and schooling. Even those who come here through illegal channels should be offered basic human rights until the government decides if they can stay.

Policies and actions that someone who agrees with Approach #1 might support:

- *Hold community discussions between people of different ethnic groups to build trust.*
- *Increase funding for social services and schools that serve immigrants.*
- *Help teachers in school learn how to teach students about different cultures, how to respect each other and how to welcome new people.*
- *Expand ESL (English as a Second Language) programs. Lend a hand by teaching English to someone.*
- *Create services for new people that offer job training, job placement and housing advice.*
- *Give stiffer penalties to those who mistreat newcomers in housing, jobs, or schools.*
- *Write to elected officials to support policies allowing more people to immigrate to the US.*
- **Others?:**

APPROACH 2

We should first help people who are already here get better jobs.

We already have too many poor and working class people who need good jobs. Current immigration policy gives businesses lots of low-cost workers. What about poor and low-income people who are already here, or people who need entry-level jobs?

Maybe we should look at who we allow into the US. Many entry-level jobs go to new immigrants and not to US citizens. Newcomers who are skilled workers can help the economy. Poorly educated and low-skilled workers only cause more problems. We should keep everyone but the most skilled workers out.

Policies and actions that someone who agrees with Approach #2 might support:

- *Create more job training and schooling for American citizens.*
- *Stop supporting any business that knowingly hires workers who are here illegally.*
- *Support the growth of unions so people are able to get better paying jobs.*
- *Enforce labor laws to punish bosses who exploit immigrants. This will make businesses improve working conditions and raise wages for everyone.*
- *Create programs that give small loans to people who want to start a business.*
- *Confront or report people who break the immigration laws.*
- *Write to elected officials to encourage immigration policies that admit only skilled and educated immigrants*
- **Others?**

APPROACH 3

We should adopt policies that don't require or allow this community to depend on immigrant labor.

Businesses should stop exploiting people who are willing to work for wages that are below a "living wage." Housing should be more attainable for Wyoming families who want to work and live here.

Policies and actions that someone who agrees with Approach #3 might support:

- *Increase local affordable housing options.*
- *Support government grants for job-training.*
- *Support a statewide policy that Wyoming is not looking for any jobs, just jobs that pay a living wage.*
- *Write elected officials to discourage immigration of unskilled guest workers.*
- **Others?**

APPROACH 4

We should recognize that we are living through a cycle of immigration that is and has been typical of American communities for hundreds of years.

The US is a nation of immigrants. Accept that we will outgrow these current concerns the longer these Latino families remain here and their children become adults.

Policies and actions that someone who agrees with Approach #4 might support:

- *Focus on the children and optimizing their acculturation to this community.*
- *Support government grants for job-training*
- *Strengthen our ESL programs.*
- *Print official documents in English, and teach only English in schools so newcomers have to learn the language and fit in.*
- *Support the path to citizenship for immigrants who want to remain in the US*
- **Others?**

APPROACH 5

We should allow fewer people to move here.

It is not fair to long-term residents to let more people move here. There are so many newcomers that the need for housing, health care and schooling has become too much. Local communities get stuck with the bill for services, whether through public programs or non-profits that must raise funds from citizens. Trying to meet immigrants' needs means the needs of local residents are not being met. Some schools are already too full of immigrants.

We can't afford to provide a "safety net" for those who come in search of a free ride.

Policies and actions that someone who agrees with Approach #5 might support:

- *Enforce housing codes to limit the number of people who can live in single-family homes and apartments. This will help protect school and public services from having to serve too many people.*
- *Write elected officials to support policies that reduce the number of people allowed to come the US every year.*
- **Others?**

APPROACH 6

We should push employers to carry more of the real cost of immigrant workers they need.

Employers are the ones who profit the most from low-wage immigrant labor. They need to take on a greater share of the cost of addressing the needs of immigrants.

Policies and actions that someone who agrees with Approach #6 might support:

- *Get commitment to increase time spent at work to gain English language skills.*
- *Get commitment of employers to help cover more health care expenses.*
- *Ask employers to increase their financial support of community groups that address immigrant needs.*
- *Increase employee housing requirements.*
- *Enforce labor laws to punish bosses who exploit immigrants. This will make businesses improve working conditions and raise wages for everyone.*
- **Others?**

FINAL QUESTIONS (Use these questions to summarize your discussion.)
(10 minutes)

- ❖ What are we doing right? Can we build on those things?
- ❖ What are the common concerns?

For next time:

Between now and the final meeting:

- Read the “Action Ideas from Other Communities” on pages 17-19 in Session 4. They provide examples of things other people around the country are doing to work on these issues; and
- Think about what you can do **on your own** and **with others** to move toward the kind of future you want for your community.

SESSION 4

Moving to action: How can we make a difference in our community?

As we try to take on issues of immigration, jobs, schools and language differences, we need to involve everyone to best address our challenges.

GOALS FOR THIS SESSION

- List action ideas for several level of action.
- Talk about how to make our best ideas happen.

Coming together these past three weeks to learn from each other and share ideas is a form of action. Finding ways to keep talking and include more people from the community is another positive step. This conversation will lead to action groups in which some people decide to put their ideas from the conversation into action. The following questions help you think about actions you want to take to address the issues you discussed in earlier sessions.

PART I

Thinking together how we can make a difference (45 minutes)

Use the following questions to come up with ideas for action steps. As you discuss the questions below, keep track of the ideas that emerge by writing them on newsprint.

Make 3 different lists of the types of actions that can be taken by:

- Individuals,
- small groups, and
- institutions (churches, schools, business, government).

- Think back to the issues and common concerns discussed in your group. What thing would you most like to see people in our community work on? What can each of us do to make a difference?
- How have other communities like ours faced these issues and changed things for the better? What ideas in the list of “Action ideas from other communities” seem promising? What other action ideas would you like to see put into use in our community?
- What efforts are already going on in our community to address these issues? What groups or institutions (private and public) are trying to do something and make changes? What other groups could help and how can we reach them?

PART 2

Setting priorities for action (45 minutes)

Use the following questions to decide what needs to be done to begin organizing for action, and to help you prepare for the action forum:

- What 2 or 3 ideas seem most practical and useful?
- What would it take to turn these ideas into reality? What kinds of support or help do we need in order to take these steps?
- What resources are already in place that could help us move ahead? Where is our community already strong?
- What is our next step? What other group should we link up with?
- Which ideas shall we present at the Action Forum?

PART 3

Final questions (30 minutes)

You will be asked to fill out a questionnaire about your experience in this project. Please take time to complete it and hand it in to your facilitator at the end of the session.

You will also have time to share your thoughts with your group about the time you have spent together. Here are some sample questions your group might address:

- How has your participation affected that way you think about immigration and its impacts? How will it affect your involvement in the community?
- How will you continue to make a difference on these issues in the community?

* * * * *

Action Ideas from Other Communities

The ideas for action listed below reflect many different views about the issues of Latino immigration. Use them to jumpstart your own thinking. People with very different opinions about these issues can all find action ideas that match their views. Which action steps best fit your views about immigration and the effect it is having on our community?

What can each of us do?

- Take leadership. You don't have to be a public official or well-known person to lead. Join an action group and seek responsibilities.
- Help immigrants, even long-time community members, go through naturalization (the process of becoming a citizen).
- Don't do business with companies that hire workers who came here illegally.

- Learn about Latino cultures and traditions.
- Learn basic Spanish or English or help someone to do so.
- Keep a file on local immigration stories. Note the ones that talk about costs to the community. Use these stories to talk with public officials about options to address the situation.
- Read a book about the experience of immigrant families.
- Be an informed voter. Vote for candidates who support your group's action ideas.
- Teach immigrants their basic rights.
- Confront or report people who break immigration laws.
- Volunteer in school classes in which Latino students are a high percentage.
- Write your elected officials to support policies that make it harder for employers to accept forged legal documents.
- Ask yourself some basic questions: do you know or are you close to people from a different culture? Why or why not?

What can we do with our neighbors or in small groups?

- Reach out and welcome immigrant neighbors or workers.
- Start programs to teach poor and working people better-paying job skills, financial management and more. Immigrants are not the only people who need help.
- Work with the Chamber of Commerce to explore how businesses can carry more of their fair share of the community's cost to support the immigrant workforce.
- Hold classes on being a good citizen. Share US history and culture.
- Work with Latino leaders to develop more involvement of Latinos in the community.
- Research what other communities are doing to prevent the hiring of undocumented workers.
- Start an ESL class for your immigrant neighbors.
- Help prepare local people to deal with different cultures.
- Volunteer in classrooms where teachers are burdened by high numbers of students who do not speak English.
- Join your local PTO/PTA (Parent-Teacher group)

What can we do in our community?

- If there are ongoing tensions between groups in a community, leaders could form an alliance to talk about what to do.
- Boycott employers that hire illegal employees; force them to pay wages that locals will work for.
- People from different faiths could hold joint services, or work together on a common problem.
- Create a task force to study whether employers are doing their fair share to help with the burden on community services to address the needs of immigrant working families.
- Hold a citizenship drive to help those who want to become citizens. Teach them where to get help.
- Ask school officials to discuss the concern of American parents about schools with the highest percentage of Latino students and options to address the issue.
- Work with public officials to understand the limits of growth for the community, to establish a cap on development and its impacts.
- Help employers lobby for job training program assistance that helps them to promote workers to higher paying jobs.
- Offer workshops to local officials and other public servants on cultural diversity.
- Ask national policy makers to address the need to crack down on the hiring of undocumented workers.
- Encourage immigrants to start businesses that will enable them to earn more.
- Insist that public officials, agencies and the Chamber of Commerce make businesses hire only legal immigrants.
- Work with local employers to lobby for immigrant worker policies that make it easier for legal immigrants to work in the US.
- Create a Task Force to study how Latino immigrants have affected job and wage opportunities for American workers in this community.
- Start a community art project. Use the arts and the media for groups to express their cultures and beliefs. Some examples are: a cultural festival; a photo show; painting a mural.

The Action Forum

Our Action Forum is scheduled for March 13th at Snow King, so please save the date!

Action-based community conversations lead to action and change in many ways. One way to do this is through an Action Forum. This is a large-group meeting at the end of a round of small group discussions. People who were not part of the conversations and community leaders are invited to attend.

Ideas for all the small groups are presented at the action forum. There are usually several action ideas that many people support. To move these ideas forward, people form action groups or task forces. Some people may join these action groups. Some may choose to help in other ways

This is an example of how an Action Forum is organized:

Sample Action Forum Agenda (2 hours)

A. Social Time

Refreshments, a gallery walk (time to read summaries from each small group posted around the room)

B. Welcome and Introductions

C. Reports from the Small Groups

A representative from each group summarizes key issues or concerns, and highest priority ideas for action

D. Moving to Action

A moderator identifies the most common themes for action from all circles, and invites participants to sign up for an action group or task force.

People who want to join action groups sign up.

A leader for each action group collects names and sets a date for the first meeting.

E. Closing Remarks

Next steps

Thanks to all