

# VSUP Student Leadership Conference

## **SENIOR FACILITATORS: DIRECTIONS for SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS**

**(11:00-12:00, for groups #1 - #7) (1:00-2:00, for groups #8 - #14)**

**(See MAP for Room Locations)**

- Please REPORT to your Room at least FIVE MINUTES before the discussion is scheduled to start.
  - The room should be set up with chairs in a big circle (make sure you have the right number).
  - The goal is to have all group members sitting comfortably, in relatively close proximity, and able to see each other easily.
- Please stand at the DOOR to your room and welcome students to your discussion group.
- CHECK to be sure that each student who comes to your room has the SAME NUMBER on his/her name badge as you do. If they are not in your group, please help them find where they are supposed to be.
- Get participants into the room and seated so you can START EXACTLY ON TIME.
  
- **ONE MINUTE: INTRO:** INTRODUCE yourselves (names and schools) and EXPLAIN your ROLE: to FACILITATE a discussion among PEERS
  - You aren't a teacher; your job is just to give all students a chance to be heard.
  - Ask everyone to help you out by participating actively in the discussion.
  - Ask quiet people to make an effort to speak up and share their ideas.
  - Ask people who are more comfortable expressing their ideas to be careful not to dominate.
  - Ask people to obey the basic "rule" of listening to and RESPECTING each other.
  - Ask students to TURN OFF CELL PHONES so they can focus on the discussion. Set any other ground rules (whether or not you want people to raise hands, etc.) that you feel are appropriate.
  
- **TWO MINUTES: INTRO:** INTRODUCE the TOPIC of today's discussion: How can we RE-DESIGN SCHOOLS so they can best serve the needs of all students in the future?
  - The high schools you are going to are probably not all that different from the ones your parents and even your grandparents attended.
  - However, the WORLD has changed dramatically and continues to change very rapidly.
  - Educational leaders in the state want to make sure that schools are doing all that they can do to effectively prepare students to be successful in their future lives.
  - State leaders have come up with plan for "re-designing" high schools and they have been asking various "stake-holders" what they think about what schools should be like in the future.
  - Since YOU as students have "direct, personal experience" of school, we think YOUR feedback on these plans could help make sure that schools better serve the needs of all students in the future.
  - YOU can help SHAPE the future of education in the state and even the nation with the feedback you provide today as we discuss this topic.
  
- **SEVEN MINUTES: ICEBREAKER:** The FIRST thing we are going to do to get the "juices flowing" with a quick Ice-Breaker
  - Turn to person to one side of you in circle
  - Ask that person ABOUT whatever he/she has written on her "Ask Me About: \_\_\_\_" Badge
  - Talk to each other for ONE MINUTE, starting NOW.
    - NOTE to Co-SF: STOP them after one minute
  - NOW turn to the person on the OTHER side of you in circle
  - Talk to each other about the following question: What do students LIKE about coming to school?
  - You will be asked to SHARE some of the things you and your partner talk about with the group
  - Talk to your partner for TWO MINUTES, starting NOW.
    - NOTE to Co-SF: STOP them after TWO minutes
  - NOW we are going to go around the circle, and each person will give his/her NAME and SCHOOL, and GIVE ONE SPECIFIC THING that students LIKE about coming to school (AND it needs to be DIFFERENT from what anyone else has said before you)
    - Can be something YOU like about coming to school OR something other students like
    - NOTE to SF: Keep it moving so you get around the whole circle in less than 5 minutes!
    - NOTE to Co-SF: Create Google Doc and Title it "Discussion Notes from Group # \_\_\_\_"
    - Title this section "Icebreaker" and take NOTES of responses provided by participants

- **FIVE MINUTES: GENERAL DISCUSSION:** Now we are going to have a GENERAL DISCUSSION with the WHOLE group
  - We want to get some conversation started, and then you will have a chance to continue talking in smaller groups
  
- **QUESTION:** Based on YOUR experience, what is the purpose of school (what is school for?) AND what is currently happening in schools to accomplish that purpose?
  - NOTE to Co-SF: Title this section “General Discussion” and TAKE NOTES on responses
  - Try to capture as much of what is said as clearly as possible
  - NOTE to SF: After about TWO MINUTES, transition to the FOLLOW UP QUESTION.
  
- **FOLLOW-UP QUESTION:** What COULD or SHOULD the purpose of schools be for AND what COULD or SHOULD schools be doing to better prepare students for their futures?
  - NOTE to Co-SF: Continue to TAKE NOTES on responses (and help keep track of time)
  - NOTE to SF: THANK students for all their comments and BE SURE TO CUT OFF the discussion after FIVE MINUTES.
  - Tell students that you know they have lots to say, so they will have a chance to continue talking in small groups so they can make more comments
  
- **SEVEN MINUTES: SMALL GROUPS ON TOPICS (see separate list of TOPICS below):**
  - Ask students to go around circle and NUMBER off 1-5
  - Ask each group to go to one area (point out) and pull their chairs together into a small circle
  - Ask each small group to select a “reporter” and a “recorder”
  - Hand out the TOPIC Sheet (with questions) and NOTE-TAKING Form to each group (make sure someone in the group has a pen)
  - NOTE to Co-SF: Help distribute materials to groups so this happens quickly
  - NOTE to SF: Once small groups are set up, give the following directions to the whole group
  
- Each SMALL Group has been given ONE ASPECT of EDUCATION to discuss for the next FIVE minutes.
- Your “REPORTER” will be asked to SHARE some of your group’s comments with the whole group
- Your “RECORDER” is asked to TAKE NOTES which your Reporter can use in giving your feedback
- You will ALSO be asked to HAND IN these notes at the end (so the feedback from all 14 of the VSUP SLC discussion groups can be compiled and shared with state leaders) so be sure to MAKE THEM LEGIBLE!
  
- Take a minute to READ all of the questions on YOUR TOPIC
- SELECT 3-5 of those questions that interest you the most and DISCUSS them for the next FIVE minutes
  - NOTE to SF and to Co-SF: Move around the room, staying for a few minutes with any of the groups that seem to need assistance in keeping their discussion going and on track
  - NOTE to Co-SF: Keep track of time; STOP the discussions after FIVE minutes of actual talking
  
- **EIGHT MINUTES: SMALL GROUPS on PROFILE OF A GRADUATE:**
- NOW we are going to use all of these ideas that you have been generating in our discussion so far TODAY, and get your help in providing SPECIFIC FEEDBACK to the PLANS that educational leaders have come up with so far for re-designing schools in the future. These plans are outlined on this “Profile of a Graduate”
  - Have students STAY in the SAME small group
  - Note to Co-SF: Help quickly HAND OUT to each student a copy of the Profile of a Graduate
  - Hand to each GROUP one copy of the FEEDBACK Form for ONE STRAND of the Profile
  
- For the NEXT five minutes, we would like you to discuss TWO questions about the ONE section of the Profile of a Graduate that has been assigned to your group.
- Your Reporter will be asked to SHARE with the whole group your SPECIFIC responses to these questions
- AND your Recorder are asked to take NOTES which you will be asked to HAND IN (so the feedback from all 14 of the VSUP SLC discussion groups can be compiled and shared with state leaders)
  
- This Profile of a Graduate is something that educational leaders, business leaders, legislators, parents, and many others have been asked to give their feedback on, so NOW is OUR CHANCE to make the VOICES of STUDENTS HEARD!

- HERE are the TWO QUESTIONS for you to discuss:
  - What are SPECIFIC things that are currently ALREADY HAPPENING in school that help to develop the traits that are listed in your section of the Profile of a Graduate?
  - What are SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS you can give for other, different things that schools COULD or SHOULD do to fulfill the goal of developing these traits in students?
    - NOTE to SF and to Co-SF: Move around the room, staying for a few minutes with any of the groups that seem to need assistance with their discussion.
    - NOTE to Co-SF: Keep track of time; STOP after FIVE MINUTES of actual talking
    - NOTE to SF: When time is up, tell students to STAY with their small group, but get chairs arranged back into one big circle (so everyone can see each other)
- **TEN MINUTES: Groups Report**
- Now we want to try to pull together all of these ideas that you have been discussing today.
- Our goal is to come up with YOUR very CONCRETE, SPECIFIC FEEDBACK on the Portrait of a Graduate that the state leaders are proposing be adopted for future high school graduates.
- We are going to go around and have the REPORTER from EACH GROUP share with everyone:
  - TWO SPECIFIC EXAMPLES of things that HAPPEN NOW in schools that help develop those traits in students
  - TWO SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS of other things that schools COULD or SHOULD do that would help students to develop those traits
- Once we have heard from all five groups, then we will give EVERYONE a chance to add THEIR comments and thoughts on things that the other groups have shared.
- PLEASE make “mental notes” on the things you want to discuss more fully once we hear these five reports.
- Go around the circle, and call on each group (and ask them to IDENTIFY their SECTION on the Profile).
  - NOTE to Co-SF: It is REALLY IMPORTANT to TAKE NOTES that are as ORGANIZED, ACCURATE, and COMPLETE as possible. We need as much specific feedback as possible.
  - Be sure to INDICATE the SECTION of the Profile for each group’s report and ask them to clarify any comments that you do not understand
- **FIFTEEN MINUTES or AS MUCH TIME AS YOU HAVE LEFT: General Discussion**
- Once all groups have reported, open up the discussion for questions or clarifications or other comments from other students on ANY of the remarks that have been shared throughout the entire discussion.
  - NOTE to SF: Encourage everyone to share their thoughts and to build on each other’s ideas
  - NOTE to Co-SF: Try to include these comments in the APPROPRIATE section of earlier notes.
- **FIVE MINUTES LEFT in HOUR: CLOSURE**: Thank students for all of their contributions!
- TELL GROUP: Each discussion group is asked to make a THIRTY SECOND REPORT on stage during the Closing Ceremony (at 2:15), so we need ONE VOLUNTEER to give that report, and the rest of the group needs to HELP COME UP with what that VERY BRIEF report will be.
- QUESTION: What do YOU think are the MOST IMPORTANT THINGS that Educational Leaders and State Policy Makers could do to help make sure that schools serve the needs of all students in the future?
- What should we include in OUR Group’s QUICK “Sales Pitch” of the “BEST IDEAS” that you hope the state educational leaders and policy-makers will “buy” as they implement this re-design of high school?
- QUESTION: WHO is willing to be the “Sales Person” for our group and make this report?
  - NOTE to SF: The student giving the report must be able to STAY at the conference until 2:30 (some schools are leaving at 2 pm)
  - NOTE to SF or C-SF: You can be the one to give the report if you do not get a volunteer.
  - NOTE to SF: Give the person the CARD with the # of your Group and have them WRITE DOWN WHAT THEY ARE GOING TO SAY (on back of card) and tell them to report to the stage by 2:10.
- **NOTE TO SF and Co-SF**: Be sure to **COLLECT the TWO NOTE FORMS from EACH small group**.
- THANK all of the students for participating and RELEASE the students to the next activity on the schedule (Lunch or Closing Ceremony) EXACTLY on time (Not early! Not late!).
  - NOTE to Co-SF: SHARE Google Doc notes NOW with: [wahsleadership@gmail.com](mailto:wahsleadership@gmail.com)
  - NOTE to SF and Co-SF: BRING Note Forms to Registration Table and GET YOUR TREAT!