



MESSAGING ARCHITECTURE: Practice Exercise

WHAT IS THIS RESOURCE FOR? This one-pager provides an overview of an exercise to help educators practice crafting and delivering a narrative when speaking on a divisive topic.

In this exercise, participants will take turns acting as the speaker and delivering their message to the group. Another person will act as the audience, while the rest of the group observes and provides feedback.

PART I: PROACTIVE STATEMENT

Chooses a specific issue you might address at a community forum. Use the objectives below to craft your narrative and deliver it to the group.

MESSAGING ARCHITECTURE

1. **Align with shared values.** Parents want their children to feel accepted and valued and to learn skills to prepare them for the future. Schools should work with families to achieve these goals.
2. **Define the impact.** When we censor ourselves, practice exclusion, or prevent students from learning the true history of the US, we undermine the education we all want for our children.
3. **Highlight the benefits of honest and inclusive education.** An honest and inclusive education benefits every student, not just by making them feel value and accepted, but also by helping them build critical skills – like communicating across differences and understanding how others feel – that will prepare them for future success.
4. **Call to action.** Let's work together to give our kids what they need and deserve: a truthful learning environment that affirms all kids, so that they can learn freely and develop the important life skills they need to build toward a brighter future for all of us.

PART II: TOUGH Q&A

Choose one of the prompts below to answer. Use the messaging architecture to craft how you would respond:

1. In a conversation on school curriculum, someone asks you why students should learn about racism and “divisive topics.” **How would you respond?**
2. At a public forum, a group of parents provide a list of books they'd like to be banned from public schools. **How would you respond?**
3. A local reporter approaches you and claims parents want their student to learn basic math, reading, and writing skills, nothing more. **How would you refute this claim and explain the importance of other skills?**