FROM TRADITIONAL CAMPAIGNS TO BUILDING A MOVEMENT: THE EVOLUTION OF FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT-BASED ADVOCACY BY SANDY BOYD AND MICHAEL GILLIGAN.

Family engagement efforts will be successful when the reliance on issue-focused campaigns shifts to utilizing design thinking and elevating family and community engagement.

This brief report, by Sandy Boyd and Michael Gilligan, is one of a series by the Carnegie Corporation addressing family engagement in student success. It highlights CCNY’s shift from reliance on typical issue-focused campaigns to utilize design thinking and elevating family and community engagement.

By using this approach, they found greater success in achieving long-term goals and that the work was more sustainable as well. It became clear that they could build a movement rather than engaging in episodic campaigns.

CCNY established a fund to promote these innovative practices and local and state organizations, such as Climb Higher Colorado, used the model and the funding to create significant change.

The expected result of increasing participation by parents and others was joined by other outcomes they did not anticipate: parents also realized they no longer were mere passive observers of their children’s education, educators began to see that families are their allies. They also began to see, like CCNY, that it is possible to build grassroots movements.

Now, many groups are not establishing their policy agendas through high-level committee action but through work on the ground in the field, realizing their job is not to impose ideas but to work collaboratively with communities.
