

### What is an Individual Relational Meeting?

A face-to-face meeting, usually lasting 30-60 minutes, with the purpose of establishing or deepening a public relationship that can lead to working together effectively.

### Why do Individual Relational Meetings in Schools?

- Build an internal relational culture that reduces tension and increases collaboration.
- Establish relationships with students, parents, and educators in a positive, reciprocal context that allows for partnership in the education of their children.
- Understand the environment where students spend most of their day.
- Identify student, educator, and parent leaders who can improve the school and the community.
- Identify classroom or school based issues that can be solved with the classroom as a base for change.

### With Whom?

- Teachers and school professionals
- Parents
- Students
- Community leaders (Pastors, directors of community centers, etc.)

### General Format (varying depending upon context)

1. **Opening credential:** who you are, why you want to meet, and a bit about yourself that helps explain the context of the meeting.
2. **Breaking the ice:** Start with context-appropriate questions like: “How long have you lived here? What’s the neighborhood been like for you? What made you want to become a teacher?”
3. **Discover the person’s interests and leadership potential:** **Ask** “What is the one thing you would want to shift in this classroom/school that would help children in this classroom/school get a better education? If you were sitting down with the school administration/ classroom teacher/policy-maker who had power to make this shift, what story would you tell that explains why it is so important that this shift be made?” **Write this issue down after the IRM on the IRM campaign template.**
  - a. What are the person’s top priorities and concerns that shape how they spend their time and energy, both in action and thought? What steps have they taken to solve these concerns? Getting at these issues requires both thoughtful questions based on active listening as well as reciprocal sharing of stories that model the type of answers you are curious to hear.
4. **Closing and Proposal of Next Steps:** Based on what you heard, are there any common interests that can be acted upon together? If so, propose them. These might include a follow-up meeting on a particular topic, connecting you to other people, or hosting/attending a house meeting. If not, thank the person and agree to stay in touch.
5. **Evaluation:** Is this person a leader with a following? Which stories did the person share that indicate this? What is the person’s top interest? Is there anyone you can connect this person to that can help him/her act more effectively on this issue? Can this person connect you with someone who can help you act on your interests? **Invite and confirm this person’s attendance at the House Meeting/Issue Assembly. If they are a leader, invite them to join your Classroom Organizing Team.**

### Tips:

- Be interested. Be interesting.
- Practice and prepare stories that will be compelling and will illustrate the type of community action you might do together.
- Listen attentively, but also interrupt to ask questions or help shape a story.