



Students create and distribute suggestion boxes for their school or program’s “NEEDS” in the coming year.



Shoebboxes or other small boxes, enough for each student to have one, or for pairs or small groups of students to have one, with pre-cut slots in the tops (approx. 3 inches long); Acrylic paint; Paintbrushes; Paper towels; Cups for rinsing paintbrushes; Water; Packing tape; Art shirts or smocks (optional); 3-4 pens per box; Quart-sized ziplock bags; One laminated “School Suggestion Box” Handout per box; Copies of the “School Suggestion Box Comment Cards” for each box; Scissors or a paper cutter.

Total Prep Time: 20 mins.

Educator’s Note: Note that the term “SCHOOL” can be interchangeable with the words “program” or “campus” throughout this activity.



As this is the first Monday of the month, please consider sharing or re-sharing highlights from the Monthly Kick-Off, and if appropriate, monthly video.

4 C's	SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL LEARNING	SERVICE LEARNING
• Critical thinking	• Self-awareness	• Integrated learning
• Communication	• Self-management	• High quality service
• Collaboration	• Social-awareness	• Collaboration
• Creativity	• Relationship skills	• Student voice
	• Responsible decision-making	• Civic responsibility
		• Reflection
		• Evaluation

GOALS FOR THE WEEK

- Discover underlying “NEEDS” within our local infrastructure—such as schools, neighborhoods, and communities—through curiosity, openness, and active listening
- Identify how labeling and stereotypes create barriers to serving others, and find ways to challenge those stereotypes
- Prepare to serve our school and community by recognizing and prioritizing “NEEDS” of others
- Understand how “KNOW THE NEED” is an important part of this month’s theme, “MONDAY GETS ENGAGED”



STUDENT ACTIVITY: **“SCHOOL SUGGESTION BOX”**

1) SHARE THE NAME OF THIS ACTIVITY WITH STUDENTS: “SCHOOL SUGGESTION BOX”

2) ASK 1-3 QUESTIONS FROM THE LIST BELOW TO WARM STUDENTS UP ON THE ACTIVITY’S FOCUS:

***NOTE:** *Choose questions appropriate to your students' ages, grades, ability levels, and classroom goals. Students may share their answers in pairs, small groups, or as a large group.*

- **How would you describe your experience with “SCHOOL” this past year?**
- **Was there anything you really “NEEDED” during this “SCHOOL” year? What are some of those things?**
 - Did you get what you “NEEDED”, and if so, how were your “NEEDS” met? Who helped meet that “NEED”, and how did they “KNOW” what your “NEED” was?
 - If not, what would have helped meet your “NEED”?
- **What are some ways you can tell people what your “NEEDS” are?**
- **Based on your experiences from the past “SCHOOL” year, what are some challenges your “SCHOOL” or its students face?**
- **What are some other “NEEDS” you can think of that your “SCHOOL” has?**
- **How do you “KNOW” what the “NEEDS” of your “SCHOOL” are?**
- **What are some methods you could use to “KNOW THE NEEDS” of the students in your “SCHOOL”?**
- **In what ways does “KNOWING THE NEED” help you to better address it?**
- **Who else in your community might be able to help you discover some of the “NEEDS” your “SCHOOL” might have?**
 - How could you reach out to these people?
 - How could they assist you in meeting the “NEEDS” of your campus?
 - In what ways will their “SUGGESTIONS” help you improve your “SCHOOL”?
- **How can you get “ENGAGED” with the community to better “KNOW THE NEEDS” of your “SCHOOL”?**
- **What strengths do you have that will help you to serve your “SCHOOL” and those who attend it?**
- **How will helping your “SCHOOL” help you to understand that YOU MATTER?**

3) SET UP THE “SCHOOL SUGGESTION BOX” ACTIVITY:

- **Explain:**
 - Every “SCHOOL”, everywhere, has at least a few “NEEDS”
 - These “NEEDS” vary from “SCHOOL” to “SCHOOL”
 - Some have physical “NEEDS” like a roof that needs fixing or not enough “SCHOOL” supplies
 - Or there may be challenges for students, like bullying, unseen home troubles, or a lack of confidence with homework
 - Regardless, in order to truly help in any situation, we need to “KNOW THE NEED”
 - We also need to “KNOW” resources or people that can help with things that are out of our skill set
- **Ask:**
 - What are some “NEEDS” from our “SCHOOL” that come to mind?
 - Do you think we can effectively address them, or find people who can help us address them?

4) START PART ONE OF THE “SCHOOL SUGGESTION BOX” ACTIVITY:

- **Before beginning this activity, fill in the “SCHOOL SUGGESTION BOX Handouts” with your school’s name and laminate the full-page handouts**
- **Explain:**
 - Today we are each going to make a “SUGGESTION BOX” for our community, specifically students, their families, teachers, and local leaders
 - These “SUGGESTION BOXES” will give us an idea of what kinds of “NEEDS” our community sees for our “SCHOOL” and what resources it may have to fill those “NEEDS”

- We'll place these "BOXES" in the community in locations where there's a lot of traffic from students and their families
- Then we can use the "SUGGESTIONS" we get for next school year to really improve our campus and the lives of the students in it
- **Give each student a "BOX" with a pre-cut slot in the top and explain that each student will be making a "SUGGESTION BOX" to place in the community**
- Or, you can pair students up or put them in small groups and have them create "BOXES" together
- **Set out art supplies: Acrylic paints, paintbrushes, cups half-filled with water, paper towels, and art shirts or smocks (optional)**
- **Let students each paint a "BOX" only on the outside (Once the "BOXES" are dry, they will have packing tape placed over them to seal them)**
- **Remind them that these "BOXES" will be placed all over the community, so each "BOX" should be their very best**
- **Allow up to 10 minutes for students to decorate their "BOXES"**
- **Once all "BOXES" are completed, have students set them in an area to dry and clean up their work space**

5) START PART TWO OF THE "SCHOOL SUGGESTION BOX" ACTIVITY:

- **While their "BOXES" begin to dry, have students gather the following items to place with each "BOX": One "School Suggestion Box" Handout (laminated), a stack of "School Suggestion Box Comment Cards", 3-4 pens, and a quart-sized ziplock bag**
- Have them place the comment cards and pens in the bag, and place all items near their painted "BOX"
- **Explain:**
- Once the "BOXES" are dry, each of you will take your "BOX" and place it within our community
- You will find a high-traffic area for your "BOX", the sign that goes with it, the comment cards, and your pens
- **Note that you may choose to have students place their "SUGGESTION BOXES" around campus or out in the community**
- If they place their "BOXES" around campus, make sure a leader is present with students as they do so, and you or students get permission from any leadership necessary
- If they place their "BOXES" in the community, some good places to put them are a park, local grocery store, restaurant, or community center. Remember to get permission before placing your "BOX" somewhere in a public area out of respect for others and so it won't get removed, and to have a leader or adult present for safety as they place the "BOXES"
- **Once "BOXES" are dry (this may take a day or so), use the packing tape to seal them closed and place them in appropriate areas with students**
- **After June 8 (the stated deadline), go back with students to collect the "SUGGESTION BOXES" and together read through some of the "SUGGESTIONS" and discuss how to implement**

6) AFTER THE ACTIVITY, ASK 1-3 OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS TO HELP STUDENTS REFLECT ON WHAT THEY'VE ACCOMPLISHED AND HOW THEY CAN TAKE THIS FORWARD:

***NOTE:** *Choose questions appropriate to your students' ages, grades, ability levels, and classroom goals. Students may share their answers in pairs, small groups, or as a large group.*

- **How do you think the activity today will help us to "KNOW THE NEEDS" of our school campus?**
- **Do you think we will get a good amount of responses?**
- Why or why not?
- **Where do you think we can place our "SUGGESTION BOXES" that will lead to more success with responses?**

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- Once we have a lot of comment cards from the community, how will we use the information to make positive change?
 - What are some ways we can prioritize the “NEEDS” on the comment cards so that we deal with the most important issues first?
 - What ideas do you have for helping our “SCHOOL” right now?
 - What are some ways we can get help with meeting our “SCHOOL’S NEEDS”?
 - How will we get in touch with individuals or organizations who may be able to help us?
 - What if there are “SUGGESTIONS” on the cards that we are not able to help with or afford?
 - What could we do?
 - In what ways did making your “SUGGESTION BOX” remind you that YOU MATTER and can make a difference?
 - How did it help you to “ENGAGE” with your community and campus?
 - How could we thank our community for their input about us and the “NEEDS” our “SCHOOL” has?

7) THANK STUDENTS FOR MAKING THEIR “SUGGESTION BOXES” TODAY. REMIND THEM THAT IN ORDER TO TRULY “KNOW THE NEEDS” AROUND US, WE OFTEN NEED TO GET INPUT AND IDEAS FROM OTHERS. REMIND THEM THAT THEIR EFFORTS TO SEE AND FILL THE “NEEDS” IN THEIR COMMUNITY MAKES A HUGE DIFFERENCE LOCALLY.

8) CHALLENGE STUDENTS TO FOLLOW THROUGH WITH THE “SUGGESTIONS” THEY RECEIVE FROM COMMUNITY MEMBERS, AND TO PREPARE TO MAKE REAL CHANGES WITHIN THEIR CAMPUS.

9) CONTINUE EXPLORING HOW TO “KNOW THE NEED” BY LEADING ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING EXTENSION IDEAS.



EXTENSION IDEAS:

DO ONE OR MORE OF THESE EXTENSION IDEAS TO BRING THE LESSON FROM 15 MINUTES TO 30 MINUTES OR MORE.

- 1) **Farmer's Market:** If possible, prepare a booth based around this activity for use at a gardener's or farmer's market. Or, have students place "BOXES" at a local farmer's market to collect later, or be present to discuss with shoppers about their "NEEDS" and ideas.
- 2) **Brainstorm Together:** Read <https://schoolleadersnow.weareteachers.com/supporting-vulnerable-students/> to kickstart a brainstorming session with students about some changes that could be made in your "SCHOOL". Remind them that changes in the "SCHOOL" should not put additional strains on staff or families, and should be beneficial for everyone. Talk with students about cost and benefit for each of these plans and put it in a more practical framework to see if each plan is "NEEDED" and worth pursuing.
- 3) **Ask Teachers and Staff:** In addition to placing "BOXES" in the community, collaborate with teachers and other staff to see what "NEEDS" they see within the "SCHOOL". This can be done through interviews, making videos with staff, or making a page where staff and students can participate on social media. Because teachers and other staff see the day-to-day lives of students, they are an invaluable asset into recognizing and making change.
- 4) **School Needs Around the World:** To help students gain more of a global mindset, find out more about school systems in other countries. Find out what students like or don't like about these systems, and what some "NEEDS" might be for those schools (Some "SCHOOLS" may have a lot in common with our current system and some will be entirely different. Use both!).

“LET US REMEMBER: ONE BOOK, ONE PEN, ONE CHILD, AND ONE TEACHER CAN CHANGE THE WORLD.”

- MALALA YOUSAFZAI



**YOUR
SCHOOL
NAME HERE**

**We are looking for ways
to improve our school!
Please help us out by
filling out a comment card
and placing it in the box
by JUNE 8. Thank you!
You matter to us!**

An Every Monday Matters activity
Find out more at www.everymondymatters.org

STUDENT SUGGESTION BOX



KNOW THE NEED

Make enough copies for each "SUGGESTION BOX" to have a stack of comment cards.

Suggestions for our school, _____

Are you a:

- Student
- Teacher

- Parent/guardian of a student

- Community leader
- Other: _____

What are some needs that our school has, in your opinion?

Do you have resources to meet this need?

- I have resources to meet this need
- I know someone who has resources to meet this need

Other comments/suggestions:

Name (optional): _____

Contact information (optional): _____

Suggestions for our school, _____

Are you a:

- Student
- Teacher

- Parent/guardian of a student

- Community leader
- Other: _____

What are some needs that our school has, in your opinion?

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