# Designing Effective Opportunities that Make Parent Input Count!

***2014 GCEL Conference***

***Inspire, Ignite, Innovate!***

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# Session Expectations

1. Understand the purpose and reasons for parent input in education
2. Provide steps to developing a campaign for parent input
3. Walk away with helpful strategies to effectively gather meaningful parent input

## How to Gather and Make Parent Input Count

If we want to teach parents, we must first listen to what they have to teach us.
Catherine Compton-Lilly in Education Week Teacher

# Parent Input and The Law

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) requires that parents are to be ***"afforded substantial and meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children."***



*Title I, Sec. 1001 (12), ESEA of 1965*

# Parent Input and The Law

***There are over ten different roles described in law:***

| | |
|---|---|
| "advice and recommendation" | "school district shall work with" |
| "evaluation and review of [plans]" | "input being sought" |
| "in participation with" | "in partnership with" |
| "in consultation with"* | "opportunity to submit comments"* |



** Denotes more than one similar phrase*

# Parent Input and The Law

***All parents of eligible Title I children must be provided the opportunity to provide feedback and input into and on the:***

- District Parental Involvement Policy
- School Parental Involvement Policy
- Title I Targeted Assistance Plan
- Title I Schoolwide Plan
- School Improvement Plan
- Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP)
- Title I Funds/Parental Involvement Set-Aside
- Annual Assessment/Evaluation of Title I Program



*Title I, Sec. 1118, ESEA of 1965*

# Why Parent Input Matters

Parents Work More Closely With Their Children Than Other Adults Can

Involved parents not only help their own child, but all children in a school

Parents provide critical input that only they can bring; They know their child better than anyone else

Parents are the only adults in the educational process who have been and will continue to be deeply involved throughout the child's school career

While parents may not be educators themselves, they bring their years of experience in other professions and aspects of life to the process

# Parent Input and You

WITH A PARTNER DISCUSS

- How does your school or district gather parent input?
- Do many parents participate and provide input?
- How is that input used?

# When You Ask Though, What Happens?

- Little to No Participation
- No Input Received
- No Changes Needed
- Low Survey Response Rate

## WHY?
## WHAT CAN BE DONE?

# Campaigning for Parent Input!

## *Inform*

- Simplify
- Personalize

## *Consult*

- Mobilize
- Actualize

## *Involve*

- Implement

# Campaigning for Parent Input: Inform

## *Inform*

**Simplify**

**Personalize**

Provide information to parents - hook them with a problem in which they are the answer

Select an issue of relevancy and urgency to parents

Explain why parents are needed, what their role is and what is in it for them

# Campaigning for Parent Input: Inform

## *School – Parent Compact Example*

The students in our school are struggling with mathematics and ***your child needs your help*** to succeed this year.

Come learn about what you can do to ensure your child ***graduates on time*** in the Class of 2025 as we discuss the ***School-Parent Compact***.

Your child needs your help and your child's school needs your input. ***You matter***.

# Campaigning for Parent Input: Inform

## *School Parental Involvement Policy Example*

Family engagement is one of the most powerful influences on ***children's success in school.***

Come help ***your child succeed*** this year at school by reviewing the ***school's parental involvement policy*** and giving input into how the school spends its ***Title I Parental Involvement money.***

***You know best what your child needs to succeed,*** come share that information with us!

# Campaigning for Parent Input: Consult

*Consult*

Mobilize

Actualize

Seek parent reaction, input and review – listen and discuss

Utilize conventional and unconventional methods to reach parents

Seek strategies that engage parents in meaningful, interactive discussion that matters

# Campaigning for Parent Input: Consult

## *Mobilize*

To recruit the most parent input, consider:

- ✓ Time of meeting
- ✓ Place of meeting
- ✓ Advance notice of meeting
- ✓ Marketing of meeting
- ✓ Structure of meeting
- ✓ Advertisement of meeting
- ✓ Childcare, transportation or food at meeting
- ✓ Type of meeting

# Campaigning for Parent Input: Consult

## *Actualize*

AVOID

# Campaigning for Parent Input: Consult

## *Actualize*

Traditional with a Twist

Parent Cafes

Parent Surveys

**Pick one or use a combination for best results!**

# Campaigning for Parent Input: Consult

## *Actualize: Traditional with a Twist*

- Share information in a ***family-friendly context***
- Present data to ignite a sense of ***urgency***
- Use ***words and graphics***, try graphic recording
- ***Split sections*** up, only focusing on ***big picture*** ideas that matter
- Provide ***guiding handouts*** as well as engage ***group discussion***
- Ask ***targeted questions***, moving from ***broad to more specific***

# Campaigning for Parent Input: Consult

## *Actualize: Traditional with a Twist*

**FLIPPED** **PARENT** **MEETINGS**

- Parents are given informational items in advance
- Share agenda items, new ideas, or documents ahead of time
- Record brief video of agenda highlights
- Post or email the video
- Encourage feedback
- Establish a timeline
- Generate thoughts and conversations prior to meeting
- Facilitate productive conversations between informed groups

# Campaigning for Parent Input: Consult

## *Actualize: Traditional with a Twist*

### *Online Meetings*

- Record a video
- Provide an online response/feedback sheet
- Utilize the same strategies and tools to craft your video message
- Hold online chat room discussions to capture live input or answer questions
- Develop a parent input blog to capture comments during review periods

# Campaigning for Parent Input: Consult

## *Actualize: Parent Café*

# Campaigning for Parent Input: Consult

## *Actualize: Parent Café*

- Clarify the purpose
- Create a hospitable space
- Explore questions that matter
- Encourage everyone's contribution
- Make collective knowledge visible
- Listen for insights/share discoveries
- Record ideas and follow-up

# Campaigning for Parent Input: Consult

## *Actualize: Parent Surveys*

- Include ***targeted*** open & closed ended ***questions***
- Utilize separate ***feedback surveys*** or include in ***existing parent survey*** opportunities
- Consider ***background information*** needed for parents to provide relevant input – think ***cover sheet*** or short ***introduction video***
- Present in a ***family-friendly*** context
- Place survey ***online*** and ***send home*** to parents

# Campaigning for Parent Input: Involve

*Involve*

Implement

Utilize the information that was shared by parents

Take action! Be transparent and share what you did with the feedback received

# Campaigning for Parent Input: Involve *Implement*

- Present a ***summary of changes*** and the ***revised parent document(s)*** before final approval.
- Highlight where ***parent input was included***, also be ***transparent*** with what wasn't included and why.
- Demonstrate to the ***entire school community*** how their input has made a ***difference***.
- Advertise activities, communications or initiatives that were ***created or formed*** from ***parent feedback***.

# WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

# The PARENT VOICES AT OUR SCHOOL MATTER!

Dr. John D. Barge, State School Superintendent
*"Making Education Work for All Georgians"*
www.gadoe.org

# References


- *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965*, as amended, Title 1, Part A; 20 U.S.C. 6301-6339, 6571-6578, http://www2.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/legislation.html

- NCLB Action Briefs. Community and Parent Decision Making: A Review. http://www.ncpie.org/nclbaction/community_parent_decision_making.html

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# Questions