The Georgia Parent Involvement Coordinator (PIC) Network

Parent Engagement Webinar:

How to Develop Family-School-Community Partnerships?

Thursday, January 10, 2013
Georgia Department of Education

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What are Family-School-Community Partnerships?

- Family-school-community partnerships are collaborative relationships and activities involving school staff, parents and other family members of students at a school.

- Effective partnerships are based on mutual trust and respect, and shared responsibility for the education of the children and young people at the school.

DEEWR (Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations) 2008, *Family-School Partnerships Framework: A Guide for Schools and Families, Canberra.*

Why is it Important to Develop Family-School-Community Partnerships in our Title I Schools?

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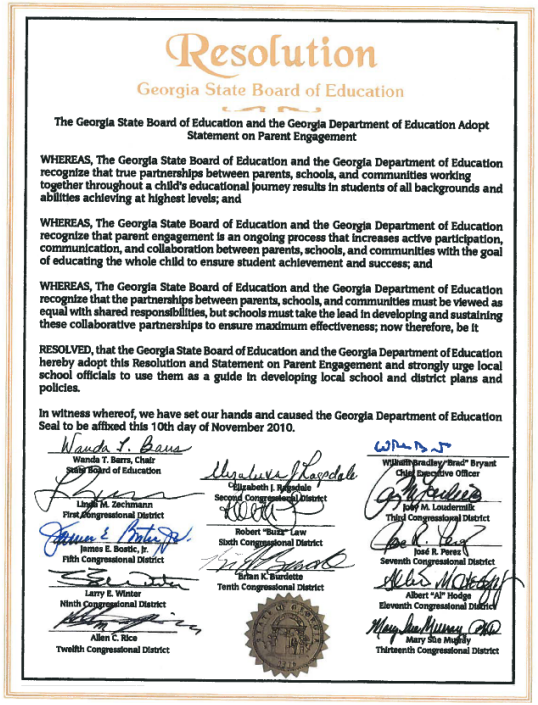
"The Georgia State Board of Education and the Georgia Department of Education believe that parents, schools, and communities working together create meaningful partnerships that ultimately lead to significant gains in student achievement."



Resolution

Georgia State Board of Education

The Georgia State Board of Education and the Georgia Department of Education Adopt Statement on Parent Engagement

WHEREAS, The Georgia State Board of Education and the Georgia Department of Education recognize that true partnerships between parents, schools, and communities working together throughout a child's educational journey results in students of all backgrounds and abilities achieving at highest levels; and

WHEREAS, The Georgia State Board of Education and the Georgia Department of Education recognize that parent engagement is an ongoing process that increases active participation, communication, and collaboration between parents, schools, and communities with the goal of educating the whole child to ensure student achievement and success; and

WHEREAS, The Georgia State Board of Education and the Georgia Department of Education recognize that the partnerships between parents, schools, and communities must be viewed as equal with shared responsibilities, but schools must take the lead in developing and sustaining these collaborative partnerships to ensure maximum effectiveness; now therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Georgia State Board of Education and the Georgia Department of Education hereby adopt this Resolution and Statement on Parent Engagement and strongly urge local school officials to use them as a guide in developing local school and district plans and policies.

In witness whereof, we have set our hands and caused the Georgia Department of Education Seal to be affixed this 10th day of November 2010.

Wanda T. Barrs, Chair
State Board of Education

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Why is it Important to Develop Family-School-Community Partnerships in our Title I Schools?

Research show that schools with effective partnerships have:

- **Students** with higher grades and test scores, better attendance, higher graduation rates, and greater enrollment in postsecondary education
- **Teachers** with higher morale and higher ratings from parents
- **Families** who give the school more support
- **Communities** which regard the school more highly

(Henderson, Anne et al. (1994). *A New Generation of Evidence: The Family is Critical to Student Achievement*).

Why is it Important to Develop Family-School-Community Partnerships in our Title I Schools?

- Parents need multiple sources of support to help children succeed in school and in their communities.
- Research demonstrates that effective schools have high levels of parental and community involvement.

What Does a Family-School- Community Partnership Look Like?

Regular, meaningful interactive conversations between parents, teachers, school administrators, and community leaders to enhance student academic learning based on the following components:

- **Mutual Respect**
- **Mutual Trust**
- **Mutual Support**

Handbook on **Family and Community Engagement**. (2011). The Academic Development Institute. www.families-schools.org

How Can Schools and Districts *Develop* Family-School-Community Partnerships?

Promising Family-School-Community Partnership Practices

1. Determine Shared Vision and Values
2. Develop a Plan
3. Communicate
4. Establish Connections
5. Share Leadership
6. Build Collaborations

1. Determine Shared Vision & Values

- **Listen** to what all family, school, community (and even student) partners have to say.
  - Taking time with all partners to discuss what they think, what should be done, and what they think will work brings a sense of belonging and ownership.
- **Reflect** and then **respond** by determining concrete roles and responsibilities of those in the partnership.
  - With vision and values in mind, it is easier to consider the goal – concrete roles that families, schools, communities, and parents will play.
- Reach **agreement** on your family-school-community partnership vision and values and then **commit** to them.
  - When communities unite behind a cause and a unified message related to student achievement and success, improvement is inevitable.

2. Develop a Plan

- **Examine** current school and community student and family trends and **assess** student achievement data.
  - Conduct needs assessment or review surveys, studies, and assessment data that is already compiled by your schools or community relating to your partnership's vision and values.
- Write **achievable** family, school, community engagement goals.
  - Start small as quality, sustainable partnerships take nurturing and time to build.
- Set a **clear standard** of what efforts and contributions are expected in schools, in the community and within families.
  - Work smarter, not harder by setting clear standards to ensure non-duplication of effort and maximum efficiency of all partners.

3. Communicate

- Implement **frequent**, **thoughtful**, and **diverse** methods of sending and receiving communication.
  - Send messages that have been genuinely crafted for the audience, and have a mechanism for receiving input, feedback, and messages from the audience.
- **Speak** in a way that provokes listening, and **listen** in a way that provokes a response.
  - Mutual respect, mutual trust, and mutual support must be communicated on all levels for it to be effective.
- **Decide** what you will communicate.
  - Make it clear that success is the norm by creating pathways to college, especially for students at risk and those at the margins, and by providing students with support to succeed.

4. Establish Connections

- Build **trust** among all members of the family-school-community partnership.
  - Eliminates the blame game and creates a positive culture and attitude that "we are all in this together."
- Develop a **culture of community** or a **welcoming school** environment.
  - There is an open-door policy at the school and within the community that promotes transparency and a sense of belonging, inclusive of all partners.
- Provide opportunities for **regular face-to-face interactions**, both planned and facilitated as well as informal and conversational.
  - This will build social capital by allowing all partners to share experiences and ideas relative to students' academic, personal, social, and emotional learning.

5. Share Leadership

- Develop a **decision-making** council that makes decisions as a **cooperative** team.
  - Task is focused on responsibilities and relationships among members of the greater partnership as they ensure students are equipped with knowledge, skills, habits, and attitudes necessary for achievement and success.
- Provide opportunities for potential new leaders to develop **skills** and current leaders to further their leadership **growth**.
  - Quality programs build on data and conversations among leaders in terms of strong family-school-community partnerships.
- Keep up with partnership **pulse checks**.
  - Create avenues for the larger family-school-community partnership members to voice what they see happening as part of ongoing work.

6. Build Collaborations

- Make learning **hands-on** and **relevant** to students' lives while showing that students and schools serve the community.
  - This will be a mutually beneficial process for students, schools, and community organizations, as for all players, as they interact in different arenas to create relationships that foster collective action in the future.
- **Sell** your initiative to strategic partners in a way that will **connect** with each one and engage them throughout the year.
  - Create a relationship with individual organizations separately from the crowd to create buy-in from each one.
  - Join other community collaborative groups to reach out for collective results.
- Open the door to **creative** solutions, activities, programs, and **collaborative** projects with various community partners.
  - When schools join other community collaboratives/projects, partnerships are formed that benefit school collaborations.

How Can Schools and Districts *Sustain* Family-School-Community Partnerships?

How Do You *Sustain* Family-School-Community Partnerships?

- Share responsibility with schools and other community organizations committed to engaging families in meaningful, culturally respectful ways, as well as families actively supporting their children's learning and development.
- Continue across a student's life, beginning in infancy and extending through college and career preparation programs.
- Carry out everywhere children are raised and taught - including homes, early childhood education programs, schools, after-school programs, faith-based institutions, playgrounds, and community settings.

Position Statement on School-Family-Community Partnerships for Student Success (2009). Connecticut State Board of Education. http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/LIB/sde/pdf/board/SFCP.pdf

How Do You *Sustain* Family-School-Community Partnerships?

Partnerships should:

- Have sticking and staying power.
- Produce results that are mutually beneficial and interdependent.
- Lead to desired outcomes that are supported through monitoring and evaluation.

Anderson-Butcher, D., et al., 2004

How Do You *Sustain* Family-School-Community Partnerships?

- Develop partnerships through a practical and justifiable plan that focuses on increased student achievement.
- Identify these partnerships as a priority for everyone which will evolve over time.

Anderson-Butcher, D., et al., 2004

Identify and Prepare for Barriers

Poverty

Language

Communication

Time

Transportation

Perception

Support

Participation

Cultural

Fear/Unwelcoming Environments

Example of Family-School-Community Partnership:

70 Local Community Partners

Committed Families and Children

Five Pilot Schools

1500 STUDENTS RECEIVED WRAP AROUND SERVICES & EXCELLED ACADEMICALLY

Small Group Exercise

Resources

- Anderson-Butcher, D., Lawson, H., Bean, J., Boone, B., Kwiatkowski, A., et al. (2004). *Implementation guide: The Ohio Community Collaboration Model for School Improvement. Columbus, OH: The Ohio Department of Education.*
- DEEWR (Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations) 2008, *Family-School Partnerships Framework: A Guide for Schools and Families, Canberra.*
- Handbook on Family and Community Engagement. (2011). The Academic Development Institute. www.families-schools.org
- Henderson, Anne et al. (1994). *A New Generation of Evidence: The Family is Critical to Student Achievement*.
- Position Statement on School-Family-Community Partnerships for Student Success (2009). Connecticut State Board of Education.
- http://www.familyschool.org.au/pdf/framework.pdf
- http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/fscp/fscphome.html
- http://www.pta.org/national_standards.asp

Open for Questions

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