

# Lost Art of Conversation: Engaging Families in Important Topics

Spring 2015 Regional PIC Meeting

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# Parent Input

*What is the ultimate goal for seeking input in Title I parental involvement?*



**When parents provide input they are involved in their child's education**

# Parent Input and The Law



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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."*

# Parent Input and *The Law*



*There are over ten different roles described in law:* Richard Woods,  
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"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*

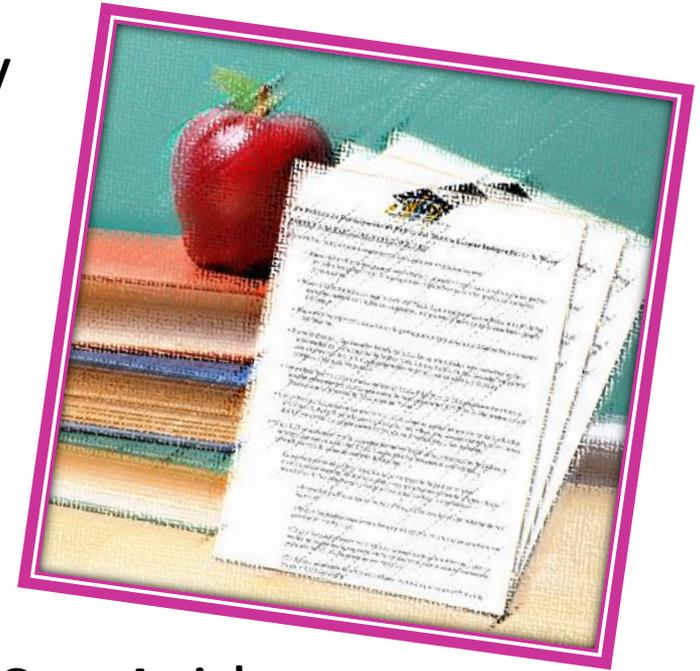
# Parent Input and *The Law*



Richard Woods,  
County School Superintendent

*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



# Why Parent Input Matters



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Parents Work  
More Closely  
With Their  
Children Than  
Other Adults Can

Involvement 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

# Campaigning for Parent Input: *Inform*



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## *Inform*

Simplify

Personalize

Frame 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: *Consult*



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## *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*



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*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*



**AVOID**



# Parent Input with a *Twist*



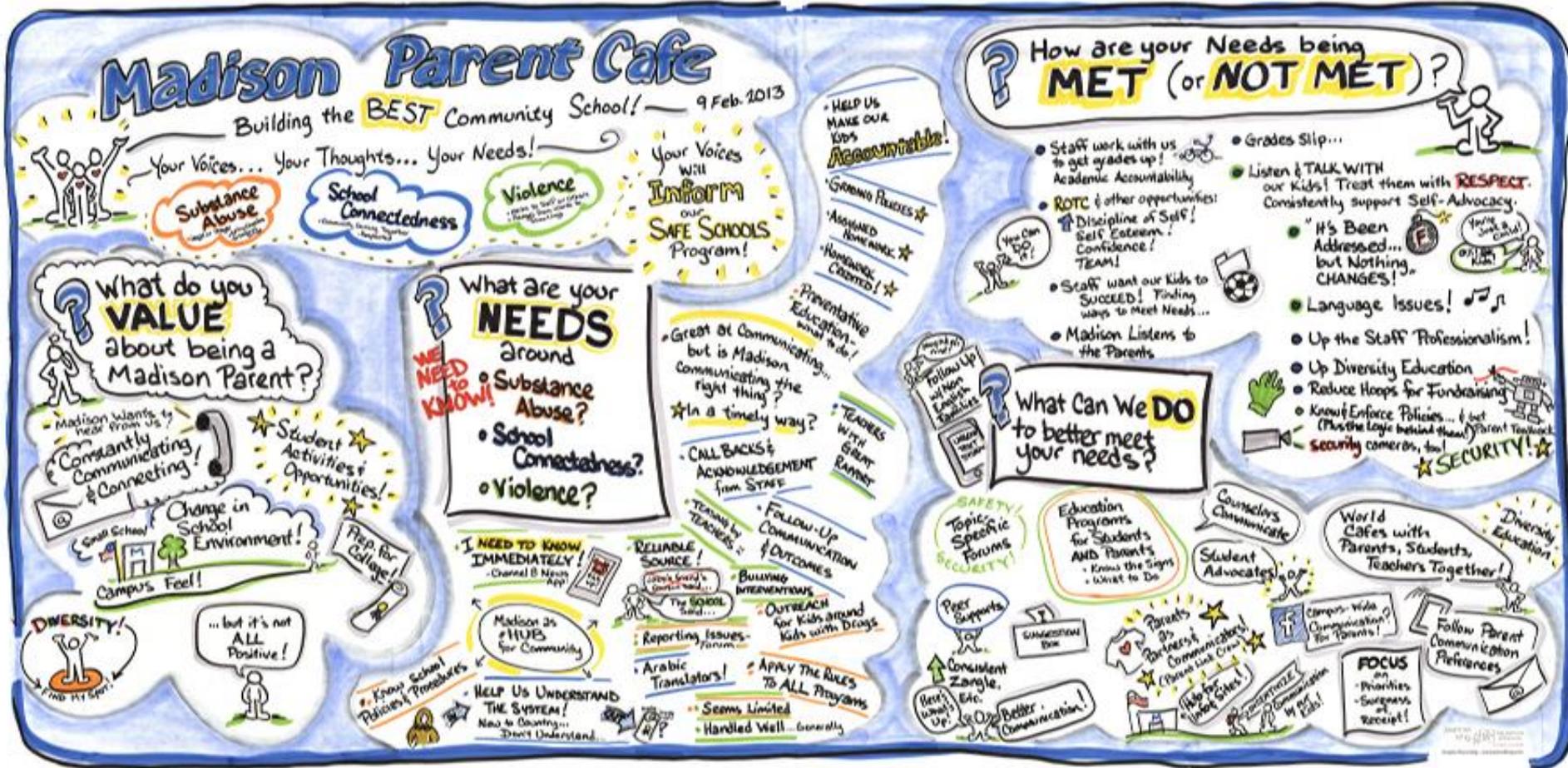
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- Share information in a ***family-friendly context***
- Present data to ignite a sense of ***urgency***
- Use ***words and graphics***, try graphic recording
- ***Split sections*** up, only focusing on ***big picture*** ideas that matter
- Provide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

# Campaigning for Parent Input: *Parent Café*



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Georgia's School Superintendent



# Campaigning for Parent Input: *Parent Café*

Clarify the purpose

Create a hospitable space

Explore questions that matter

Encourage everyone's contribution

Make collective knowledge visible

Listen for themes/share discoveries

Record ideas and follow-up



# Parent Café: *At a Glance*



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Small groups at  
café tables

Encourage members  
to draw, doodle, and  
write ideas

Set up  
progressive  
rounds of  
conversation

Use Table Hosts to welcome  
guests, briefly share main ideas,  
link and connect main ideas from  
prior conversations

# Parent Café: *Getting Started*



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## Get Parents on Board

- *Consider beginning with a short session*
- *Find champions to help publicize*
- *Use all avenues to spread the word*

## Invitations

- *Personal invitations are more effective*
- *Have parents bring a friend*
- *Determine best time for parents*

## Emphasize the Benefits

- *Help parents create networks*
- *Provide a space for parents to share*
- *Build knowledge and social capital*

# Parent Cafe: *The Café Host*



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Work with planning team to determine purpose  
Name your Café  
Create a comfortable Café environment  
Welcome the participants  
Explain the Café guidelines and Café etiquette

# Parent Cafe: *Table Host/Facilitator*



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- Remind people at your table to jot down key connections, ideas and discoveries
- Remain at the table when others leave and welcome travelers from other tables
- Briefly share key insights from the prior conversation so others can link and build on key ideas



# PIC Café

- *Select a Table Host*
- *Three Rounds –*
  - \* *Move to Tables based on the colored numbers on your folder*
- *Draw, Doodle, Scribble and Share*
- *Return to Your Host Table*
- *Share Collective Input*

# Round One

- *Question 1* – What does strong family engagement look like to you?
- *Question 2* – How do you promote the importance of family engagement in your school?

# Round Two

- *Question 1* – Who is responsible for family engagement in our schools?
- *Question 2* – How do you increase the capabilities and confidence of your school and staff to improve family engagement?

# Round Three

- *Question 1* – How do you provide parents with opportunities and resources to support academic achievement?
- *Question 2* – What are some specific examples of how families can support learning at home?

# Return to Your Host Table

*Invite Guests to Share  
and Post Ideas*



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**What are two challenges that we face?**

**What are two ways that families and schools can better work together?**

**What is one strategy that is worth trying this school year?**



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# 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](http://www.ncpie.org/nclbaction/community_parent_decision_making.html)



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Questions?