

PIC Minutes - Region 2 October 7, 2014

I. Welcome

Michelle Sandrock, Parent Engagement Program Manager, opened the meeting by welcoming all in attendance, introducing the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) Parent Engagement team and thanking Richmond County for hosting the meeting. She briefly went over announcements. She informed the PICs about an upcoming 8-week live webinar series that will be taking place in January of 2015. She also informed them of the opportunity to get one-on-one feedback on their compliance documents at the conclusion of the meeting.

She then informed the PICs of the 'I CAN Play A Role' Campaign that the GaDOE will be launching for Parent Engagement Month, and explained to them that the GaDOE will be creating pledge cards. Each school must do their own campaign in an effort to reach 50,000 pledges statewide. She urged the PICs to think about the impact the campaign would have if every parent signed one pledge. She advised them to start planning and thinking about what they will do in November, and request an "I CAN Play Role" communications packet.

She informed the PICs of the Georgia Family-Friendly School Partnership Awards application deadline on 11/13/14. She encouraged PICs to apply but advised them to first go online and go through the initiatives to prepare, because she has found that schools that go through the process first typically become finalists.

Michelle briefly discussed the Parent Engagement Program's [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages, before discussing the [Georgia PIC Network Blog](#). She informed the PICs of the many resources that are currently available on the Blog as well as ones that will be available in the near future including an Academic Parent Teacher Team (APTT) educational resource library and a larger video library. She also encouraged the PICs to participate in PIC spotlight, because the GaDOE Parent Engagement team really wants to highlight the great work that the PICs are doing.

Michelle Sandrock continued by asking Nate Schult to share some additional information with the group about the Local Learning Communities initiative.

II. LLC Chair Presentation

Nate Schult welcomed everyone and shared that it is always a pleasure seeing everyone at the PIC meetings as these meetings are one of the only opportunities for everyone to network and share ideas. Last year, the GaDOE developed an opportunity for PICs to continue the conversation outside of these meetings through the Local Learning Communities (LLCs). He explained that LLCs are smaller, sub-regions of the PIC Network that are led by a school or district PIC who works in that region. These small regions allow PICs who work in closer proximity to communicate with colleagues who work with similar populations and face similar challenges. During the meeting this morning, participants will have a chance to meet the chairs for the LLCs that comprise Region 2. With that, Nate introduced Angela Fontain, Family Services Coordinator with Kendrick High School and chair of Region 2 East & West.

Angela stated that LLCs are a working tool to ask questions where PICs are able to hear what is going on in other's schools and share to take back to their respective schools. She expressed her excitement about the upcoming year and urged the other PICs to use their community to tie in best practices to help reach parents and build relationships because the community, school, and parents are accountable for child's success.

Nate thanked Angela and then informed the PICs that they can find and join their LLC on the [Join Your LLC](#) page of the Georgia PIC Network Blog. Michelle then moved into the host's presentation and introduced Audrey Spry, Title I Director for Richmond County Schools.

III. Learning from Each Other: Richmond County Schools PIC Presentation

Audrey Spry introduced herself as well as Debbie Alexander, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction. Debbie sent regards from Dr. Pringle, Superintendent of Richmond County Schools and expressed Richmond County's renewed sense of energy about parent engagement because Dr. Pringle's focus on parent engagement. She sincerely thanked the PICs for attending and Audrey continued with the meeting.

Audrey then asked the Richmond County Title I staff to stand so they can be recognized. She started her presentation with quick facts about Richmond County and their mission to educate students to become life long learners and productive citizens. She stated that Richmond County School System's belief statements are:

1. Every person has the right to a quality education.
2. Education is the shared responsibility of the individual, home, school, and community.
3. Every person can learn.
4. Respect and acceptance are essential for learning and personal development.
5. A safe, healthy and orderly environment is essential to learning.
6. Communication is the key to understanding among people.
7. Excellence cannot be compromised.

She shared a brief video on the Richmond County School System, before introducing Vel Bussey, District Parent Facilitator who discussed some of the activities Richmond County has been doing to increase parent engagement. She stated that they are focusing on building capacity to provide assistance to parents so that they can gain a better understanding of what parent involvement is and how they can become engaged. She stated that they have:

- Curriculum night
- Workshops throughout the year
- Trainings on Georgia milestones, high school graduation requirements, the parent portal, technology, volunteer program.

She stressed Richmond County's desire to let parents know that their help is vital. She emphasized how important it is to get parent input on the following documents:

- LEA Parent Involvement Policy
- LEA Parent Survey
- School-Parent Involvement Policy
- School-Parent Compact
- School-Parent Survey

She then went over a few opportunities Richmond County offered for parents to be involved.

- Classroom visitation
- Literacy Night
- Math/Science Night
- STEM Night (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)
- Curriculum Night (Common Core Performance Standards)
- CLIP, SWP, FLP, and SIP meetings
 - Post secondary opportunities
- Parent Café (Reading to students)
- Parent-Teacher Conferences
- Science Fair Night
 - Training on formats and procedures on conducting a science project
 - Viewing of science projects

She stated that they also make a point to provide parent education for faculty and staff by:

- Making The School-Parent Compact Meaningful
- Building Meaningful and Comprehensive Parent Involvement Policy For Your School
- Best Practices when working with parents
- Parents as Teachers
- Creating a Family Friendly Environment

Vel then brought up one person from the high school level, middle school level, and elementary school level to discuss how they have each engaged parents at their level. She introduces Kassandra Cunningham, Parent Facilitator at Laney High School, to discuss parent engagement on the high school level.

Kassandra introduces herself and starts by listing the tactics her school uses to get parents involved such as:

- Personal telephone calls

- Parent portal
- Flyers
- Parent Newsletter
- Messages to Parent
- School Website
- Local Radio PSA
- Announcements at Sporting Events

She then listed the various workshops that her school offered for 2014 – 2015:

- Volunteer
- Infinite Campus
- Georgia 411
- GHSWT
- FAFSA
- Homework/Study skills
- Planning for college

She then showed various flyers she created for different Parent Events and closed by saying that Laney High School's goal is that parents are equipped with the resources they need to be actively engaged in their child's education.

She then introduced Regena Jennings, Parent Facilitator for Murphey Middle School. She introduced herself by stating that Murphey's motto is their motto is to "strengthen their village". She stated that Murphey's school mission, vision and pledge all coincide with the goal for student success. She stated that if you empower parents they are going to engage their students and as a result succeed in the classroom.

She stated that teachers are expected to prepare rigorous lessons, use data to strengthen students' weaknesses, teach students to take ownership of their learning, model care and respect, and most important, love our children. Their staff is aware that in order to lead students to success, the staff must have a sound relationship with students, parents, and community.

Regena stated that to reach out to families, Murphey utilizes the web, greets parents in the lobby, and send flyers through thru the mail. She closed by listing the celebrations that Murphy Middle School has had:

- Science team won 3rd place in county-wide competition
- An 8th grade student won 3rd place overall in county math bowl
- A 6th grade student won 3rd place for exhibit entered in Georgia/Carolina State Fair
- "Ready for High School" partnership with T.W. Josey
- Principal's Book Talk-monthly

She then introduces Valerie Nixon, Parent Facilitator at Bayvale Elementary to discuss parent engagement at the elementary level. She began by reading her mission statement as a parent facilitator as

well as the Title I Parent Engagement mission statement. She then listed how she publicizes parent events with the following tactics:

- Flyers
- School Marquee
- County/School Website
- Posters all around the school
- Parent Engagement Monthly Calendar
- Phone Calls
- Word of Mouth
- Social Media

She also noted that because Bayvale has a 22% ESOL population, they ensure that there are always resources in available in Spanish. She then discussed Bayvale's various initiatives such as a collaboration with the Governor's Office of Student Achievement for a Title I Family Literacy Night, as well as a collaboration with Augusta Technical College for a Title I GED Program.

In closing, she stated that she has an open door policy with parents because to have a good parent relationship you have to get involved. Michelle Sandrock thanked Richmond County, and then asked if there are any questions, before allowing a 15-minute break.

IV. Break

V. Charting a Path Toward High-Impact Family Engagement

Michelle Sandrock laid out the objective for this section of the training as follows:

- Understand why family engagement matters
- Learn about the new US ED Framework for Family-School Partnerships
- Evaluate your current family engagement practices
- Discover high-impact strategies for family engagement
- Learn how to simplify Title I Parental Involvement compliance mandates while increasing effectiveness

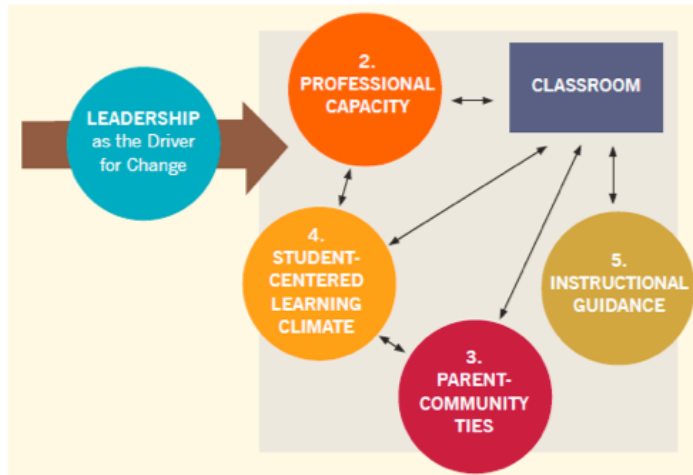
She encouraged the PICs to look at the "Partners in Education" framework. She stated that it lays out the framework and is also an interesting read. Renowned family engagement guru, Dr. Karen Mapp, had a hand in this work and it is very user friendly and easy to read.

She stated that over 50 years of research links the various roles that families play in their child's education with indicators of increased student achievement in the form of:

- Student grades
- Students' beliefs about the importance of education
- Achievement test scores
- Students' efficacy for learning
- Students' sense of personal competence

- Lower drop-out rates

A long-term study of Chicago schools found five essential supports for school improvement as illustrated by the following graphic:



The study found that in 90% of these schools, all five factors had to be present for school improvement. Michelle stated that this is the first study that followed schools for 15 years and showed what they did that made a difference and zeroed in on the five central supports. Furthermore, the study showed that parent-community ties and a student centered learning climate were the foundation for the other keys. Students who had a strong presence of parent-community ties were four times for likely to improve in reading and ten times more likely to improve in math.

How did they measure it?

- **Teachers' ties to community:** Understand student culture and local community, spend time in community, and use local resources.
- **Teacher outreach to parents:** Invite parents to observe in class, try to understand parents' concerns, and embrace parents as partners to engage them in the process of strengthening student learning.
- **Parent response:** Become involved in school activities, monitor student-learning goals, and respond to teacher concerns about schoolwork.

Michelle stated that the federal government put all the requirements in place but staff never had any training. She then asked how many former teachers had any training on how to work with families, to which no one raised their hand. As a result, we have a law but staff who aren't equipped and families that facing barriers. This causes a lack of collective capacity to implement and sustain home-school relationships. In an effort to address this, the U.S. Department of Education rolled out a new framework, which is shown below:



Michelle urged the PICs to utilize this framework as a compass to guide them toward family engagement. She stated that the first part, the challenge, is a lack of opportunity to build capacity in staff and parents.



The second part, opportunity conditions, is made up of two subcategories: process conditions and organizational conditions.

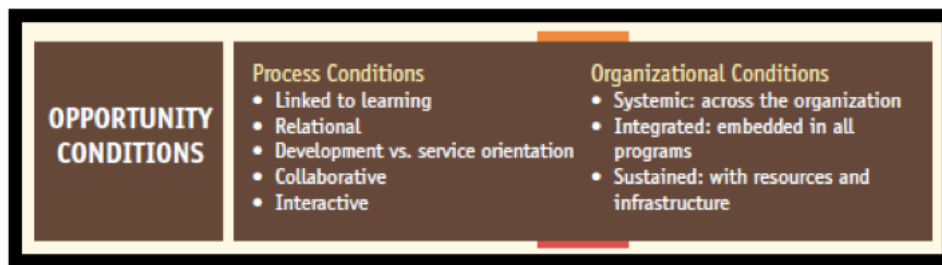
The Process Conditions:

- Linked to learning
Connected to teaching and learning goals for students
- Relational
Building respectful and trusting relationships between home and school
- Developmental
Building intellectual, social and human capital of stakeholders

- Collective/Collaborative
Learning is conducted in group versus individual settings
- Interactive
Skill mastery requires coaching and practice

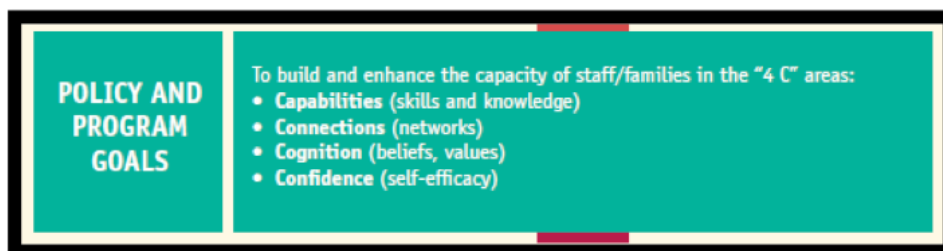
The Organizational Conditions:

- Systemic
Core component of educational goals
- Integrated
Embedded into structures and processes
- Sustained
Operating with adequate resources and infrastructure support



The third section, policy and program goals, refers to building capacity which is defined by the four C's:

- Capabilities
 - Staff need to knowledgeable of what is available
 - Parents needs access to how the school works
- Connections
 - Social capital. These networks should not just be parent to parent. You are looking at your sphere of influence. Does it draw meaningful connection?)
- Cognition
 - People must believe in it. You are changing mindsets.
- Confidence
 - Staff and families need a level of comfort to be able to work.



The fourth section, family and staff capacity outcomes state that if you're effective in building capacities you will build increase family engagement and student achievement.



Michelle then directed the PICs to the Link to Learning activity and asked them to think about what the difference is between family involvement and parent engagement. She then asked them to write down everything that they do at the school to involve families and then asked them to put a star next to the things that have to do with learning. Then she told them to look at what they have starred and then circle everything they invite parents to that is focused on grade level or subject level learning goals. She advised that their circled items are where their focus should be because it is best to focus energy on the events that have the highest impact. She then asked the group to draw an arrow next to every item in which school district staff were provided professional development opportunities specifically on that item to effectively build capacity within themselves to work with families.

She stated that parental involvement is everything we do to bring parents into the school. And family engagement is what parents take with them in the form of learning and skills to apply in the home with their child to achieve academic success.

Michelle advised the PICs to remember that High Impact Strategies are not simply random acts of kindness. High impact strategies must be ongoing throughout the year. If it is just a one time workshop, it is not a high impact strategy. She listed the high impact strategies as:

- ✓ Link to learning
- ✓ Build relationships
- ✓ Develop dual capacity

Michelle shared the definition of the new family engagement framework provided by US ED. She stated that the Georgia Department of Education will be using US ED's new Family Engagement framework as part of the discussion to guide the outcome-based monitoring process to help encourage effective family and staff partnerships. She continued by explaining that the GaDOE will be moving towards a results-based monitoring this year to measure the outcomes of what schools are doing. For example, looking at whether or not the funds being spent are actually making an impact. There will be an added interview element this year but the state will be not sharing the questions in advance. Those asked to participate in the interview will be the Title I Director, a district level PIC (or school principal) and a school level PIC (or someone at the school level responsible for parent engagement). Michelle explained that US ED's framework will be used to develop some of the questions to be asked during the monitoring interview. One advantage is this will allow the state an opportunity to provide more feedback and point out what the schools are doing well during the monitoring process. Additionally, schools and LEAs will only be

monitored on seven indicators this year in order to reduce the burden of paperwork. However, it is important to note that districts and schools are still responsible for implementing the requirements under the law, but Michelle stated that they will only have to provide documentation for seven parental involvement indicators this year. She encouraged any districts who will be monitored this year to attend the upcoming LEA Cross Functional Monitoring trainings.

Michelle continued by asking the audience if their life ever feels like a checklist referring to the Title I parental involvement requirements. She asked how we can change the mindset so we are not only focused on checking the boxes but still remain in compliance. She stated that the framework compliments compliance by giving us a reason and compass for our compliance work. Begin with data, and talk with parents and teachers - then pick a high impact strategy. By doing this, most schools will find the majority of the boxes will be checked off – no more random family activities – just serious activities so parents know that when the school holds an event it is important and serious. Next, Michelle illustrated this point by sharing different high-impact strategies.

She asked attendees to review their lists and identify what strategy builds dual capacity. Look at the one thing that will produce the desired results and possibly cross off the other things that are not having any effect.

The first high-impact strategy that Michelle reviewed was Academic Parent-Teacher Teams, by playing a brief video featuring Stanton Elementary School in Washington, DC that implemented APTT with successful results. She shared that the APTT model repurposes traditional parent– teacher conferences with a focus on group learning and collaboration. Family members of all the children in a single class meet together with the teacher three times a year for 75 minutes, along with a single 30-minute individual parent–teacher conference. The APTT initiative provides a structure for parents to meet with teachers and converse, build networks with other parents, and learn ways to support their child’s academic skill development.

She continued by explaining that the GaDOE has partnered with WestED to bring the APPT Model to Georgia schools. Ten districts, one school in each district, participated in training last year to implement APTT this school year.

Michelle then explained why APTT is a high impact strategy:

- Building relationships
- Establishing trust
- Sharing knowledge and goals for child
- Explaining data
- Focusing on skills
- Developing a plan/Set goals
- Sharing progress
- Evaluating

She stated that APTT is a supplement to parent teacher conferences. There are 6 essential elements:

1. Develop Meaningful Relationships

2. Focus on Grade-Level Learning Skills
3. Data-Driven Decision Making
4. Modeling Home Practice Activities
5. Parent Practice with Activities and Materials
6. Set Short-Term Learning Goals

Student data from APTT provides a sense of urgency or a sense of pride in the parent. APTT's model is 'I do, we do, you do'. The teacher coaches the parent to set realistic goals for their child. As a result, the parents have ownership, and they leave feeling like partners. Michelle then informed the districts that GaDOE is still accepting 4 slots.

She then shared Boston Public Schools' experience with high impact strategies. She stated that their staff plays a leadership role in the school's family engagement. The teachers are also family engagement coaches because they found that when it was just a parent coordinator engaging parents, the staff saw it as just the coordinator's job and not theirs. Boston Public School focused on building school and district capacity by:

- Conducting needs assessment
- Explaining student skills and knowledge at each grade
- Equipping teachers with guidance and tools/training courses
- Integrating family engagement in school improvement plans
- Linking to curriculum materials
- Developing family engagement coaches
- Labeling as "essential" in district

Michelle then discussed Shiloh Middle School's Parent Observation days. Shiloh has eight days in a year that are designated parent observation days, where the parent can observe their child throughout the day. The staff was slightly apprehensive, but once the school focused on building staff capacity, the teachers began to love and value it because it helped them to build relationships with their parents and families. Parent Observation days are high impact strategies because:

- They invite families to follow their child's schedule eight days throughout the year
- Have parents observe how and what their child is being taught
- Train school staff on communication with parents and ways to help supplement student/parent learning
- Build trust and communication between school staff and parents
- Set expectation of parents as partners in student learning

Michelle then directed the group to the high impact strategy criteria sheet in their folder, separated them into small groups, and asked them to share the high impact strategies they do in their schools and/or districts. Then as a group they select which one they want to work on. After the activity, Michelle said that her hope was that they now think about high impact strategies in a different way. She urged them to limit their activities to always make them meaningful and purposeful, because when the school calls we want to parent to know that it is for something important.

VI. Working Lunch

During lunch, Michelle directed the group to complete the PIC Spotlight in the folders to fill out during their working lunch. Also, a short video was shown about High Impact Strategies.

VII. Discover the Missing Piece: Educating Staff to Build Ties between Parents and Schools

Nate Schult facilitated this portion of the meeting. He informed the group that this afternoon would be an opportunity to talk about that missing piece in family engagement, which is educating staff. He stated that although parent engagement has increased over the past 25 years, it still remains a challenge for many schools, because it still falls to one person - the parent involvement coordinator, and that is not an effective way to increase engagement. Nate then introduces an icebreaker activity called 'What in the World?' The icebreaker had the following questions:

1. Why in the world are you here?
2. What in the work do you hope to get out of this session?
3. Where in the world have you been?
4. Where in the world do you want to go?

Nate stated that this icebreaker is an opportunity to help the presenter to see what the audience wants to know. He urged the PICs to not underestimate the value of an icebreaker, even if you think you know everyone, because they are helpful for learning opportunities.

He stated that to build capacity we must educate our staff, and not just in the schools but also in the districts. He stressed that not educating staff is a lost opportunity to increase parent engagement. Furthermore, the U.S. Department of Education identified this as a weakness in parent engagement. He urged the PICs to not just focus on this as this is your job, but to let their fellow staff know that it is everyone's responsibility.

Nate stated that the first thing that PICs must do is understand the reality. Educators have a lot of responsibilities. He urged the PICs to think outside the box, focus on pre and post planning, look at ways to help staff increase family engagement. Nate then asked the PICs to share what are barriers they have faced in providing professional learning. They said:

- Scheduling/time
- No incentive for parents/teachers
- Fear
- Too much responsibility
- Buy-in from leadership
- Resistance to change

Nate urged the group to get their staff to see parent engagement as something that will make their job easier. The first step is to get them to buy in and see the value in parent engagement. He then directed the group to take out the Changing Perspectives handout and in smalls group discuss it and brainstorm ideas to change staff perspectives.

Some counter-attacks to common staff excuses:

- We're equal partners
- Teaching is a gift be excited
- Families aren't going away
- Parent support leads to student achievement
- Are you making school an inviting place for parents?

Nate urged the PICs to share the benefits of parent engagement with their staff. When staff learn about family engagement, they:

- Address assumptions and perceptions
- Discuss barriers
- Discover strategies
- Practice behaviors
- Combine resources and efforts
- Stay informed
- Improve communication

He stressed the importance of making sure to not just have one event. If an event is systemic, ongoing, focused, and collaborative the professional learning has a greater chance of making a difference and making a difference. Professional learning doesn't have to be a meeting, it can learning groups, case studies, mentoring programs, activities, videos, parent panels, etc. He urged the group to change the way they view professional learning and consider new ideas to provide it to their staff. He stated that to provide meaningful learning for education's PICs must:

- Provide support
 - *Give feedback and follow-up*
- Flip the learning
 - *Send information before meeting*
- Make an investment
 - *Alter the traditional paradigm*
- Utilize Resources
 - *Inspire all staff to design trainings*
- Develop New Skills
 - Practice makes perfect
- Build a Plan
 - *Move from schedule-based to outcome based*
- Increase Exposure
 - *Embed family engagement ideas and information in a wide range of ideas*
- Start from the Top
 - *Encourage administrators to participate*
- Make a Connection
 - *Link the staff training to school wide programs*

Nate then asked for four volunteers who are parents of high school or middle school aged children. He stated that these four parents will be an example of a parent panel. Nate asked the parents the following questions:

1. What do you do to help your child at home?
2. How have you reached out to teachers?
3. What obstacles or challenges have you experienced?
4. What is one thing your teacher has done that you appreciated?
5. What is one thing that you would like to tell a teacher?

Upon the conclusion of the parent panel, Nate stated that he hoped that helped the group to really see the parent perspective. He urged the group to utilize parent panels in their schools to help with changing staff perspective.

Nate then discussed how important communication is in professional learning. He stressed that it is not always about talking – but also listening. He also advised the PICs to make sure the school has the resources to ensure that staff can successfully communicate with parents. He then shared questions to consider:

- What message do you hope to convey?
- What do you want to happen?
- Who is my audience?
- What is my preferred method of communication? How is this different than the parent of my students?
- What approach will open and enhance communication?

He directed the group to take out the ‘Family Engagement Teaching Cases’ handout in their folder. He stated that this is a great tool they can use to address situations that happen in the building, but not point any fingers. Nate then showed them another resource from Head Start; an online world where they role-play different scenarios involving engaging parents and families. He then instructed the group to locate the ‘What’s Your Experience’ handout and tally up how many boxes they checked from the left column and right column. The purpose of this activity is to demonstrate to your staff how parent engagement has shifted over the years. He stated that the left column describes more traditional activities and the right column describes more reciprocal ones.

Nate then discussed additional family engagement topics connected to school goals to consider:

- “Create a Family-Friendly School... and Classroom!”
- “Connect Family Engagement to Academic Success”
- “Host a Productive Parent-Teacher Conference”
- “Plan a Successful Student-Led Conference”
- “Improve Parent-Teacher Communication”
- “Build Family and Community Partnerships”
- “Host the Best Parent Workshop”
- “Develop Interactive Homework”

- “Improve Cultural Awareness”
- “Help Parents Ace the Test!”
- “Share Data with Parents”

Nate urged the PICs to utilize the PTA National Standards for Family-School Partnerships because it provides a lot of great ideas. He stated that these help teachers work with families more effectively. He also mentioned the plethora of resources on the GaDOE Parent Engagement website and urged the PICs to utilize them. He then gave the PICs ten take away tips for teachers, which are:

1. Practice the 4 Ps – Positive, Personalized, Proactive, Partnership
2. Contact three new, “less-engaged” parents each month
3. Ask parents for their suggestions – “*What can I do to help?*”
4. Include tips for parents in newsletters, websites, and homework
5. Greet parents at drop-off and pick-up
6. Thank parents for their contributions
7. Organize a parent telephone tree
8. Practice active listening - “*If I understand correctly, it sounds like*”
9. Provide and advertise flexible and convenient meeting times
10. Dedicate time to share family engagement strategies with peers
11. Send a welcome letter to parents and when new students arrive

He then asked for any last questions or comments, before bringing Michelle Sandrock up to facilitate the next segment of the meeting.

VIII. Speed Networking

Michelle stated that PICs expressed their desire for more networking opportunities, as a result a speed networking segment was added to the meeting. For the speed networking activity, the PICs were instructed to locate someone they did not know who works with Title I Parent Engagement at the same level as them (elementary, middle, high, or district). The group was then asked to discuss the answers to three different scenarios. The PICs at the district level were given the following scenarios:

1. While Title I schools actually implement many of the parental involvement programs, activities, and procedures mandated by federal law, it is ultimately the District’s responsibility to ensure that these requirements are being met both at the school level and District level. This requires strong procedures and thoughtful organization. *Share with your partner some tips and strategies that you use to maintain proper documentation and provide proper technical assistance to ensure compliance for all Title I schools. How, as a District, do you ensure compliance and effectiveness of family engagement at each individual school level?*
2. The District oversees the final decision regarding how parental involvement funds are spent by Title I schools. *First, discuss with your partner how your district determines if the money spent is providing the desired effect for family engagement and its impact on student achievement. Secondly, share some examples of how Title I schools in your district use their parent involvement funds to improve the quality of family engagement and build parent capacity.*

3. When it comes to effectively engaging all families in their child's education, the District establishes the expectations and sets the tone for schools to follow. Often viewed as something nice to do when time allows, family engagement should become the expected way rather than the exceptional idea. *Talk with your partner about the District's role in building a universal approach to meaningful family engagement for schools to follow. How do you establish buy-in from your district colleagues and school administrators? How is family engagement embedded into district expectations?*

The PICs at the various school levels were given the following scenarios:

1. A certain percentage of parents will almost always participate and show up when called upon by the school. While there are other families who may need the information, but rarely participate in events/activities or communicate with the school. In order to make a difference, schools need to engage the families who are disengaged. *Share with your partner some methods and ideas your school has used to successfully reach those hard to reach families in order to build relationships, communicate and provide them with helpful resources. Does your definition of family engagement change when working with these families?*
2. Schools rely on a core group of parents each year to support and assist the school in various roles. These parent leaders, unfortunately, are only available for a few short years while their child attends the school. *Discuss with your partner how your school identifies, trains, and sustains parent leaders to ensure continuity and availability of this important group of parents. What does vertical alignment and transition look like with our parent leaders? Do we consider this with our parents in the same way that we address it with our students?*
3. Engaging families in their child's education is sometimes viewed as the responsibility of a select person in the school rather than a collective commitment of all staff. Furthermore, not all educators feel that it is a valuable use of their time to contact, assist, and work with parents to help them support their child. *Talk with your partner about how you help change the mindset to get staff on board to view family engagement as an effective strategy to improve student academic achievement. How do you gather administrator and staff buy-in for this important work?*

Michelle encouraged the PICs to not just talk to their friends, but to branch out and talk to people they do not know, and urged them to keep in contact with new acquaintances.

IX. Closing

After this successful networking activity, Michelle kindly asked the group to fill out the evaluation forms located in their folders. She stated that the evaluations are especially useful to the GaDOE Parent Engagement team because feedback is taken into consideration when planning future meetings. Participants were also informed of the optional compliance segment designed to answer questions one on one with districts. All participants collected their certificate of attendance and the meeting was adjourned.