


A stylized, light blue illustration of a plant with several leaves and a cluster of small, round buds or flowers, positioned on the left side of the slide.

PARENT PARTNERSHIPS: GROWING TOGETHER

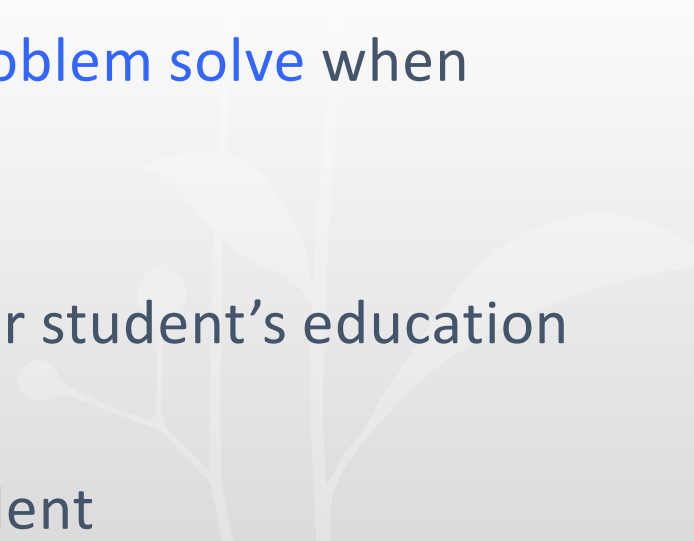
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New SPED Director Conference
Salem, OR

Parent Engagement Supports Students!

- Achieve higher grades and enroll in higher level programs
 - Earn higher test scores and have higher graduation rates
 - Have regular attendance and show improved behavior
 - Have better social and communication skills
 - Smoother Transitions to new environments
 - Bridge the gap between the culture/language at home and at school
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Parent Engagement Supports Parents!

- Increased understanding and engagement in the school system
 - Increased communication with school staff
 - Increased ability to collaboratively problem solve when problems arise
 - Increased feeling of ownership in their student's education
 - Increased ability to support their student
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Parent Engagement Supports SCHOOL COMMUNITIES!

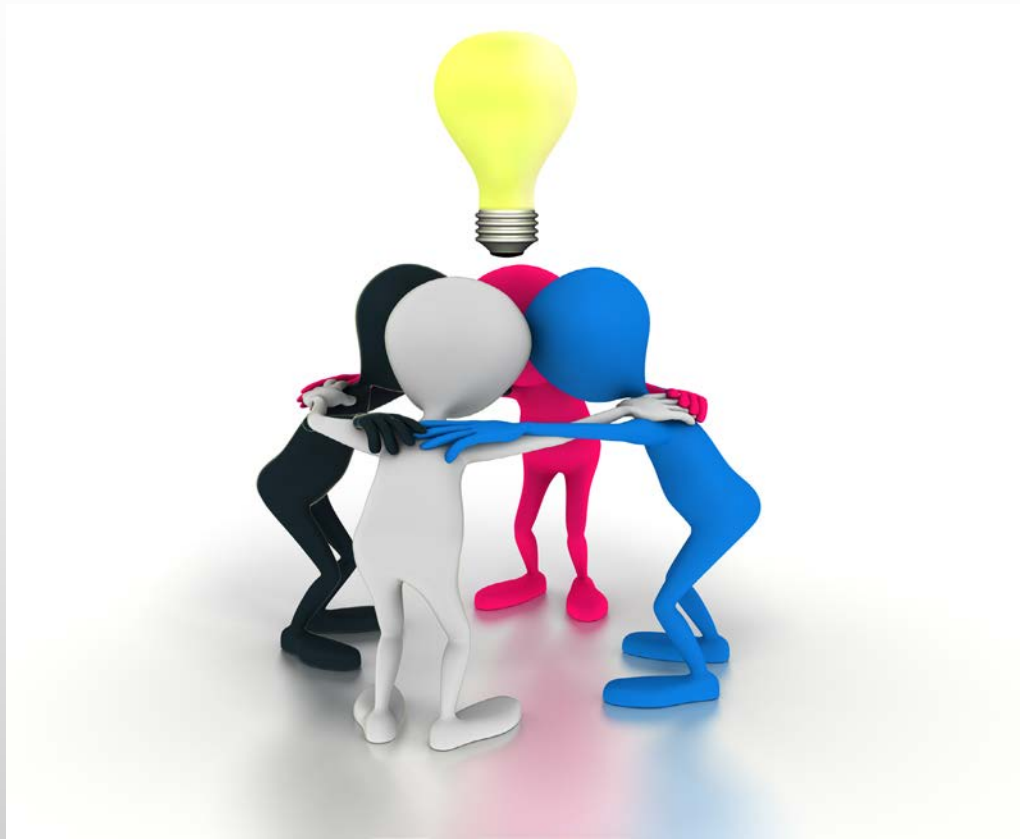
- Increased understanding of the **needs, values and hopes of a culturally diverse community**
- Opportunities **to share information with parents** and allow for productive discussion to occur
- Opportunities for parents to **share information with schools** and connect with their child's experience
- Community space for **support and understanding**

Parent Engagement is Legally Required!

- The term *parent involvement* appears 1,299 times in IDEA
- Requires states to *report how parents feel* districts facilitate their involvement
- Requires *meaningful parent involvement* (IEP and more)
- Mandates *shared responsibility for* equitable educational access for students
- Parents and districts must collaborate to design a program that includes *meaningful access to opportunities*

TABLE TALK

- Talk with your table about your biggest fears/concerns related to intentionally focusing on building a parent engagement program

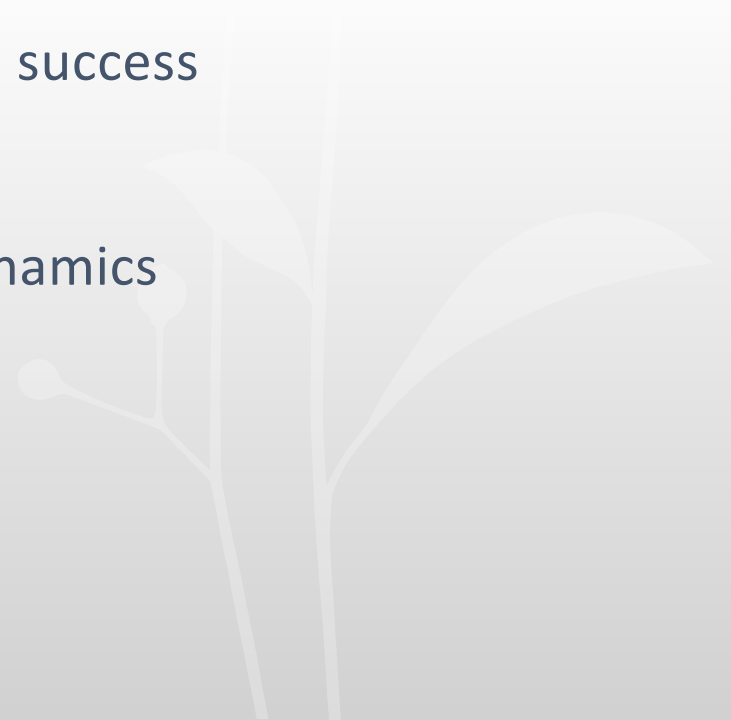


Family and Community Together

- Each state has a [Parent Training and Information Center \(PTI\)](#)
- Oregon's PTI is FACT www.factoregon.org or 1 (888) 988-3228
- FACT is a [great school district partner](#)
- FACT is a [great parent partner](#)
- Fact is willing to come speak at your parent events!



FACT is Your Community Partner!

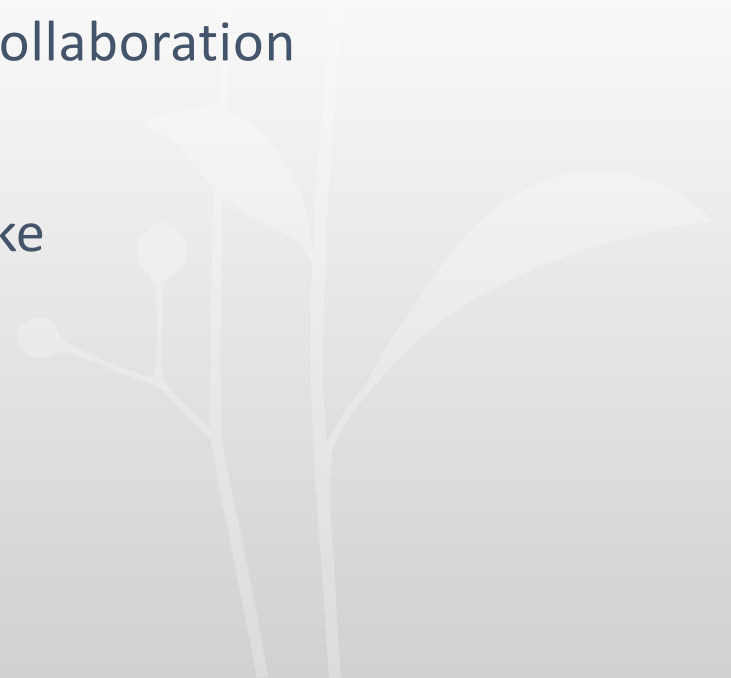
- Trainings and support for parents
 - Trainings and profession in-service for staff
 - Person-centered plan workshops and PCP facilitation
 - Increased parent engagement and student success
 - Successful communication strategies
 - Deescalating dispute – improving team dynamics
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Parent Perspective

- Healthy Team Dynamics
- Understanding special education services
- Being prepared
- Creating parents that are confident in their role on the IEP team
- Knowing district policies
- Preparing written parent input

Collaborating Together

- Creating a parent collaboration advisory team
- Shifting from their voice and our voice to one voice
- Creating a deeper understanding around complex issues in SPED
- Supporting student self-determination and self-advocacy skills
- Self-advocates need to be a part of this collaboration
- Focus should be big picture
- What does the ideal collaboration look like



Collaboration For Success: What does it take?

- The **district must value** the process and outcome of building a relationship with parents
- The **district must have access to somebody with the skill** to provide trainings and other important resources
- The **district must be willing to prioritize time and resources** to building parent engagement – the “on the side” is not a successful model
- The **district must be willing to take the time to communicate** with parents effectively in multiple ways and **understand barriers to participation**
- The **district must be willing to collaborate with key community agencies** and resources and identify **key community stakeholders**

Discussion with a partner

1. What are your current barriers to engaging parents?
2. What are your current successes?
3. What have been some of your most successful ideas?



Small District Considerations

- **Small communities have advantages!**
 - More personal relationships
 - Change can be handled quickly and efficiently
 - Less expensive to sponsor activities
 - Communication is less complicated
- **Other Considerations:**
 - Ensure all contracted staff (ESD staff, etc.) understand district values
 - Include all related service staff, other departments and administration understand and are part of creating a vision for engagement
 - Understand community values. Tailor the presentation to your community!

Hillsboro School District Demographics

- 20,000 Students in Hillsboro School District
- 4 comprehensive High Schools, 4 Middle Schools, 25 Elementary Schools, 1 Charter School, 1 Alternative High School, 1 Online School
- 2900 students eligible for Special Education
- 3200 students eligible English Language Learners
- 530 students dual eligible for Special Education/English Language Learners
- 33 Programs (Lifeskills, Social Communication, Social Learning)
- 50% Free/Reduced lunch
- 50% of Special Education eligible students have Special Education code of Learning Disability

INCLUSION BLUEPRINT

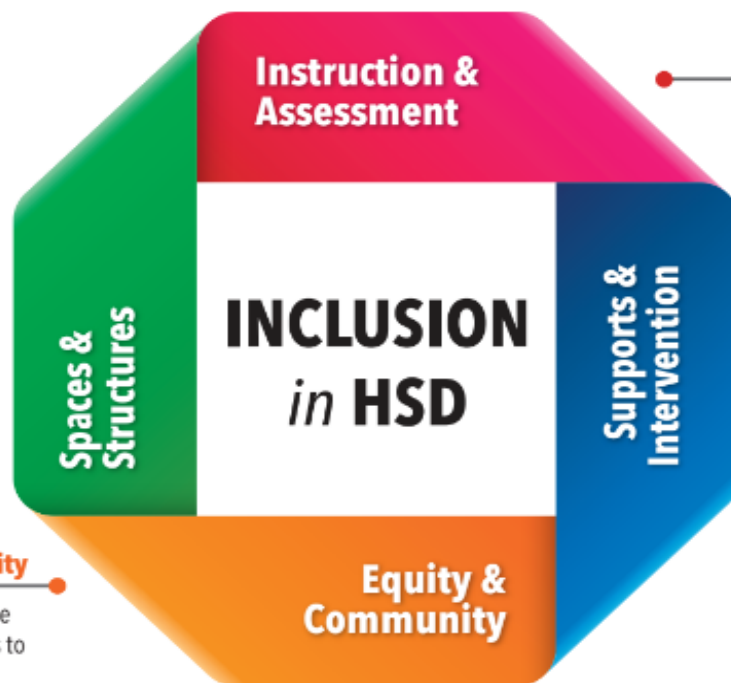
The elements:

Universal Design, Walls, Storage, Furniture, Instructional Spaces

All school environments are ADA accessible and compliant. All areas of the classroom have a clear student-driven purpose and are designed to meet the needs of any student regardless of disability.

Classroom, School, Community

Students with special needs spend the maximum amount of time with peers to develop academic and social skills. Students participate fully in schoolwide activities and feel a part of the school community. Families are partners in supporting students. Multiple structures for information- and knowledge-sharing are in place.



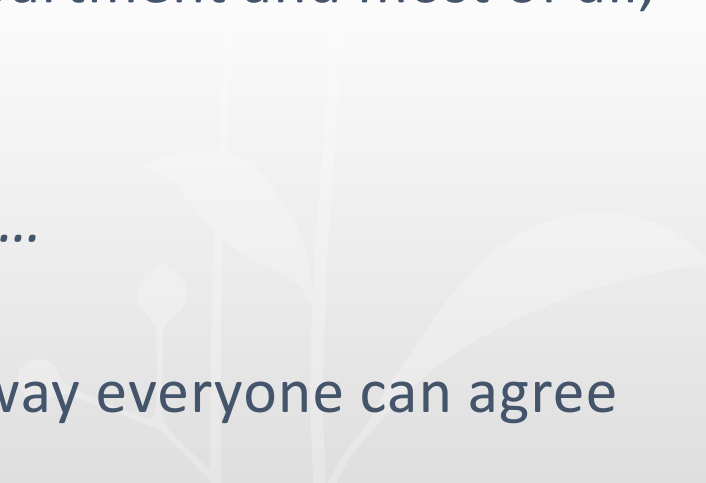
Standards-Based Teaching and Learning, Instructional Strategies, Assessment, PLCs, Accommodations and Assistive Technology

Students learn together, are engaged in instructionally-appropriate, grade-level work and consistently master standards alongside their peers.

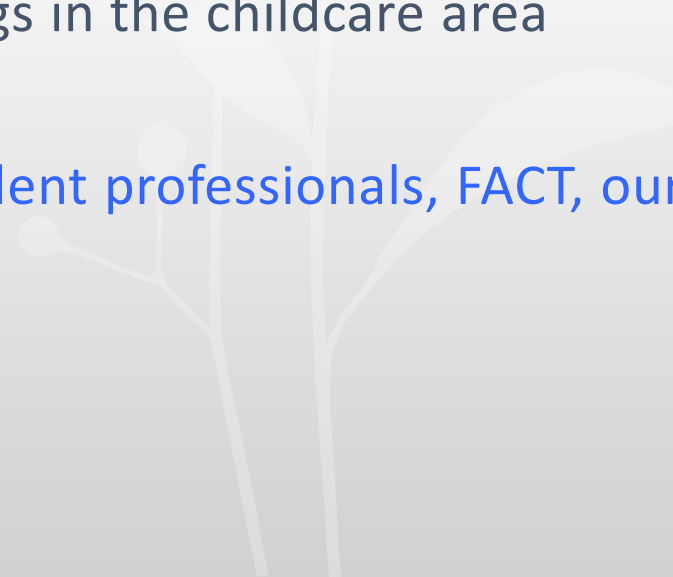
Staff, Families and Partners

Teams of adults support the academic and social/emotional needs of students. We take a strengths- and skills-based approach to supporting our students through positive, universal behavioral supports.

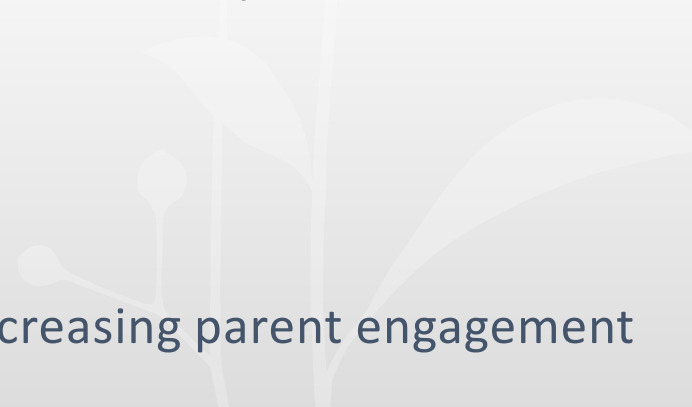
Hillsboro School District Values

- **Buy in from all staff** is critical to have an effective parent engagement system.
 - Values and priorities in the **district must be shared** with all staff in the department, outside of the department and most of all, with parents.
 - *Transparent communication is key.....*
 - **Values are called out** and stated in a way everyone can agree with.
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Staff Engagement

- Hillsboro Student Services requires all staff to engage with at least three of five parent partnership nights a year
 - Four additional “Parent Advisory” meetings are held to facilitate a time when parents can give feedback to administrators
 - Staff can engage by presenting, facilitating table discussions, or providing activities for students and siblings in the childcare area
 - We have had presentations from independent professionals, FACT, our staff and parents
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Prioritizing Time and Resources

- A **primary administrator** is assigned to coordinate parent activities
 - **Skilled childcare, water and gluten free snacks** and are provided for children each evening
 - **Activities for children** of all ages are provided for each evening
 - **A nurse is on site** each evening to monitor and handle any health issues that may arise
 - **Coffee and snacks** are provided to parents
 - **A budget is set aside** each year explicitly for increasing parent engagement opportunities
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Communication, Communication, Communication!!!

- 2900 Bilingual letters in English/Spanish are sent out to parents, principals, teachers, board members and other administration for each of the three meetings annually
- A Spanish interpreter is available for each meeting. There is a number for parents to call if they need a language to be interpreted other than English
- All materials are translated in both English and Spanish
- Hillsboro has a Parent Partnership Facebook page. Information and community events are posted on the page.
- Student Services has a department website with contact information, parent resources
- Regular meetings with key community contacts

Build a Culture of Collaboration

- Reach out/provide opportunities
- Listen
- Prioritize
- Be Visible



Other important items.....

- Administration shares an “**attitude of collaboration**”.....
- Parents regularly make appointments and discuss issues or concerns
- Administrators and support staff are often in buildings and proactively aware of situations
- Department/District philosophies are openly shared with parents
- Engage case managers out in buildings to help
- Constantly engage in getting parent feedback. After each meeting pass out a review sheet letting you know how it went, what they would like, what they wouldn't like.....this is **critical information!**

Engage Key Stakeholders

- Learn your community resources....personally invite them
- Make regular times to meet with people who can support the parent group and help identify problems and solve them
- Personal calls to parents yield amazing results
- Work to actively meet and engage community members
- Avoid feeling threatened by one bad experience.....! Don't give up!!
- Keep trying....it is a slow building process that is built one parent at a time

Results.....

- Increase in positive parent relationships
- Increase in parental knowledge of Special Education processes, issues and procedures
- Increase in staff knowledge of parents
- Increase in awareness of community resources
- **Decrease in litigation, complaints, and overall levels of conflict**
- Increase in student engagement with IEP process and school in general
- **We are still a work in progress!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**