

PARENT PARTNERSHIP IN HILLSBORO SCHOOL DISTRICT: GROWING TOGETHER

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Why is Parent Engagement Important?

Research shows students with engaged parents:

- Earn higher grades and enroll in higher level programs
- Achieve higher grades, test scores, graduation rates
- Have regular attendance
- Have better social and communication skills
- Show improved behavior
- Transition/Adjust better to new environments
- Bridge the gap between the culture/language at home and at school

Why is Parent Engagement Important for Parents?

Parents Benefit from being engaged by gaining:

- Increased understanding and engagement of the school system
- Increased communication with school staff
- Increased ability to collaboratively problem solve when problems arrive
- Increased feeling of ownership in their student's education
- Increased ability to support their student

Why is Parent Engagement Important?

School communities benefit from providing multiple opportunities for parent engagement by:

- Increasing their understanding of the needs, values and hopes of a culturally diverse community
- Providing opportunities to share information with parents and allow for productive discussion to occur
- Providing a community space for support and understanding

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**

Hillsboro School District Demographics

- 22,000 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
- 2800 students eligible for Special Education
- 3200 students eligible English Language Learners
- 530 students dual eligible for Special Education/English Language Learners
- 32 Programs (Lifeskills, Social Communication, Social Learning)
- 50% Free/Reduced lunch
- 50% of Special Education eligible students have Special Education code of Learning Disability

Hillsboro School District Values

- Buy in from all staff is critical to have an effective parent engagement system.
- In order to get buy in, 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.
- Values are regularly reviewed and progress is reported.

Continuous Improvement Plan 2013-2014

HILLSBORO SCHOOL DISTRICT

STUDENT SERVICES

*Continuous Improvement Plan
2013-214*

Communication

Develop a common understanding through collaborative, consistent, transparent and timely communication.

1. Student Services staff will communicate with building principals and other staff in a timely, helpful and predictable manner.
2. Student Services staff will learn about and be able to articulate the ways in which students with special needs can access *dual language programs*.
3. Student Services will communicate regularly with families and work toward building relationships with parents and other community partners.
4. Student Services will collaborate with OSP, and other departments as needed to provide high quality service to all students.

Instructional Practices

All stake holders believe that high quality, evidence based instruction regardless of ability or need is the norm of Hillsboro School District

1. Student Services Staff will gain an understanding of standards based teaching and learning for *all* students.
2. Student Services Staff will seek out and share instructional resources with building staff.
3. Student Services Staff will identify situations that are ineffective and work with OSP and the building to problem solve on a regular basis.

Outcomes for Student Success

All students have equal opportunity access to individualized high quality instruction in order to be college and or career ready.

1. Provide coaching and feedback to building staff to ensure all students have equitable access to the core curriculum in order to increase academic achievement of sped students.
2. Review and re-evaluation the current resource program model.
3. Student Services staff will partner with building and department staff to support principals working toward more inclusive student instructional models.
4. Student Services staff will support buildings in reducing their modified diploma graduation rate while maintaining high quality classes designed to teach college and career readiness skills to

Committed to meeting the needs of culturally, linguistically, and intellectually diverse students

Drawing on Our Resources!

- Hillsboro Student Services requires all staff to engage with at least one of three parent partnership nights a year
- Four additional “Parent Advisory” meetings are held to facilitate a time when parents can give feedback to administrators
- They can engage by presenting, facilitating table discussions, or providing activities for students and siblings in the childcare area
- We have reached out to community agencies such as FACT to provide training and parent information sessions. We have had presentations from independent professionals, FACT, our staff and parents

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

Communication, Communication and more Communication!!!

- 2700 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, and resources shared at previous Parent Partnership evenings
- Regular meetings with key community contacts

Communication, Communication.....

- 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 during presentations and in individual meetings
- 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!**

Identify and 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 community members and engage them
- 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 awareness of community resources and other community organizations
- 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!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

CONTACT INFORMATION

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