

Suffolk Region

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Family Engagement

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Family Engagement Update:

This Month a lot has happened in Family Engagement Advocacy. PTA on the state and national level has been advocating with our legislators for more funding. National PTA through its Center for Family Engagement is also forming a Family Engagement Fellowship which will kick off in May 2018. These fellows will be intricately involved in updating the National Standards and Implementation Guide which has not been updated since 2007. We look forward to the outcome of this inaugural project.

Review of National Standards for Family -Partnerships Standard 3 – In continuing with our overview of the National Family and School Partnership Standards, this month I am over-viewing -Supporting Student Success- Standard 3. There are 7 areas for implementation under the standard, each having three levels of engagement- 1 to 3, level 3 being the most advanced level.

Standard 3 – Supporting Student Success:

1. Ensuring – Parent-Teacher communication about student success

Quality of Implementation:

Level 1 Emerging- Limited level of development and Implementation- An example would be teachers send a welcome note to all families with an email address or phone number inviting comments.

Level 2 Progressing- Functioning level of development and implementation- Teachers and guidance counselors regularly contact parents with positive news as well as problems. It is easy for parents to communicate with teachers on a regular basis. For instance, there is a classroom website with clear work assignments and other events listed and where parents can ask general questions and schedule meetings with the teacher.

Level 3-Excelling-Highest functioning level of development and implementation. What this could look like is a school that has adopted a Personal Education Plan from which parents, teachers and students can establish educational and career goals for the student. This plan takes into account individual student learning styles, cultural experiences, strengths, academic and personal needs in the process of developing learning goals to support academic success at school and home.

2. Linking Student work to academic standards-

Quality of Implementation

Level 1 Emerging- Teachers display student writing assignments that demonstrate how students used the required skills properly to complete the assignment. (proper spelling, focus on the topic, clear and concise language)

Level 2 Progressing- Throughout the year, teachers explain what students are learning and what good work looks like. For example, showing parents their student's portfolio of work.

Level 3 Excelling- Teachers and parents regularly discuss how each school program or activity is tied to academic standards- For instance, they discuss the music curriculum prior to the music concert or families of football players are offered opportunities to learn how the playbook relates to the math and logic standards.

3. Using standardized test results to increase achievement-

Quality of Implementation

Level 1 Emerging- Parents are informed about standardized tests. The principle may have an informational meeting to discuss which tests are given to each grade and why.

Level 2 Progressing- Families have the opportunity to learn how to interpret the test data. This could be in a workshop format sponsored by the school and PTA to demonstrate to parents how the standardized tests results are used to improve student achievement.

Level 3 Excelling-Parents are included on school or school district academic standard committees and discuss how to raise expectations and achievement for every student. A co-chair position on the committee could be established and reserved for parents only.

4. Sharing school progress-

Quality of Implementation

Level 1 Emerging- The principal hosts parent meetings to present academic goals for the year for each grade or subject (depending on the format of the meeting) and solicits feedback. Then also presents progress from the previous year.

Level 2 Progressing- The principle collaborates with PTA to facilitate discussion between staff and parents on needed academic improvements. Increasing the diversity of the students in gifted programs or increasing the number of girls in advanced math and science classes, would be an example of this.

Level 3 Excelling-The principle collaborates with PTA leaders to present regular progress updates on academic goal progress and development of strategic improvements. Implementation of this could be PTA and school staff matching mentors with struggling students.

5. Engaging families in classroom learning-

Quality of Implementation

Level 1 Emerging- Teachers and families work together to provide resources for upcoming units of study; such as, grandparents discuss life under segregation, during a civil rights lesson.

Level 2 Progressing- Teachers invite community groups /families to their classroom to share information about their cultures and demonstrate preparation of their cultural foods to help students learn history, culture and math and chemistry skills.

Level 3 Excelling- PTA helps to organize a database of parents and family skills, expertise, and backgrounds through which teachers can find resources. A parent who is an artist could be brought in to work with students on a school mural.

6. Developing family ability to strengthen learning at home

Quality of Implementation

Level 1 Emerging-The school offers parenting programs that instruct on promoting learning in the home, such as hosting an expert on the tough issues of raising teenagers.

Level 2 Progressing-The school and PTA collaborate to provide families with tools to support learning at home. For instance, a series of workshops that teach strategies for improving reading at different grade levels.

Level 3 Excelling- Teachers and PTA plan regular family learning events at workplaces and community locations. For example, workshops on various topics held at local businesses or community sites during lunch or late afternoon for alternate schedules.

7. Promoting after school learning-

Quality of Implementation

Level 1 Emerging- The school informs parents of after school opportunities. Flyers, email, web announcements and phone calls in a family's home language are used to communicate school-based and community-based programs.

Level 2 Progressing-PTA and school invite families to a program highlighting the importance of after school programs and what they have to offer.

Level 3 Excelling- The school partners with community organizations (including faith based) to provide after school programs for children and families. An example would be the local Boys and Girls Club works with parents, students, and school staff to create programs that meet recreational and academic needs of students. The program is available five days a week and is free of charge.

PTA National Standards for Family-School Partnerships

Below is a summary of all the standards. Previous reports have highlighted Standards 1 and 2 and future reports will overview the remaining standards in more detail. Can't wait? Need to read them now? Go to:

<https://www.pta.org/home/run-your-pta/National-Standards-for-Family-School-Partnerships>

Standard 1—Welcoming All Families into the School Community Families are active participants in the life of the school, and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to school staff, and to what students are learning and doing in class.

Standard 2—Communicating Effectively Families and school staff engage in regular, two-way, meaningful communication about student learning.

Standard 3—Supporting Student Success Families and school staff continuously collaborate to support students' learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.

Standard 4—Speaking Up for Every Child Families are empowered to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.

Standard 5—Sharing Power Families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.

Standard 6—Collaborating with Community Families and school staff collaborate with community members to connect students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

This Month Is:

April 21 is Reflections showcase- see Reflections report for details.

April is ELA testing for many students remember to give them the best foot forward with plenty of sleep, hydration and a good breakfast to start the day.

PSAT and SAT testing is also this month – In addition to the above, please share these mindfulness techniques to help them focus and stay calm.

Take a slow deliberate Yawn. Yawning actually calms and activates the mind.

Take a slow deliberate stretch; take several mini- 10 second breaks (mind vacations) to improve focus. (These tips are from Mark Waldman- www.NeuroWisdom.com)

Next Month Is:

May 7-11 is Very Important Teacher week- please give your VITs some props.

Helpful Links:

https://www.nyspta.org/Resources/Resources_ParentResources.cfm

<https://nyspta.org/home/about/empire-state-pts/>

http://www.suffolkpta.org/advocacy_chairmen_reports

<https://www.senate.gov/>

<https://www.house.gov/>

<https://www.nysenate.gov/>

<http://www.assembly.state.ny.us/>

<https://www.scnylegislature.us/>

<https://www.pta.org/For-Sorting/Male-Engagement/ABCs-of-Male-Involvement>

<https://nyspta.org/home/programs/reflections/>

<https://nyspta.org/home/programs/pick-reading-partner-parp/>

<https://www.pta.org/home/family-resources/Parents-Guides-to-Student-Success>