

Parent Activity Handbook

100 Standards-Aligned Family Engagement Activities for Schools



Access 100 Great Ideas!

Mater Academy in Hialeah, Florida, knows how to make parents feel welcome, offering Cafecito in the Car Line!

Project Appleseed

The national campaign for public school improvement

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Parent Activity Handbook:

100 Standards-Aligned Family Engagement Activities for Schools (Beta Version)

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Forward

Welcome to the "Parent Activity Handbook: 100 Standards-Aligned Family Engagement Activities for Schools" brought to you by Project Appleseed! This year marks a special milestone as we celebrate **the 30th anniversary of our signature event, National Parental Involvement Day**, established in 1994 as part of our advocacy for parental involvement provisions in the renewal of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.



In today's educational landscape, the importance of family engagement cannot be overstated. Research consistently demonstrates that when families are involved in their children's education, students thrive academically and socially. This handbook is a curated collection of impactful activities and strategies designed to inspire educators, parents, grandparents, and caring adults to actively participate in enhancing student success and fostering a culture of school improvement.

Why Family Engagement Matters

High-impact family engagement activities serve as a cornerstone for student achievement and holistic development. By involving families in educational endeavors, we achieve several critical objectives:

Improved Academic Outcomes

Studies consistently show that students whose families are engaged in their education perform better academically. This effect is particularly pronounced for students from disadvantaged backgrounds, underscoring the importance of inclusive and equitable engagement strategies.

Enhanced Communication: Family engagement activities facilitate open lines of communication between schools and families. Effective communication ensures that families are informed and empowered to support their children's learning journey.

Building Strong Relationships. Engagement initiatives foster relationships between schools, families, and communities. Strong relationships build trust, which is essential for collaborative efforts aimed at student success.



Increased Involvement. Engaged families are more likely to participate in school events, volunteer, and actively contribute to decision-making processes. This involvement strengthens the overall fabric of the school community.

Effective family engagement goes beyond just implementing proven strategies. Its about fostering a culture of enthusiasm and excitement about parenting within the school and the wider school community. By celebrating and prioritizing the crucial role of families in their children’s education, we can inspire and mobilize the entire community to help every student succeed.

Project Appleseed’s Six Slices of Family Engagement aligns with National Standards for Family-School Partnerships. Project Appleseed is committed to aligning its efforts with the National Standards for Family-School Partnerships established by the PTA. These standards provide a framework for cultivating effective partnerships between schools, families, and communities. By adhering to these standards, we empower stakeholders with the tools and resources necessary to create equitable and inclusive educational environments.

Empowering Communities for Student Success

As you explore this handbook, you'll discover a wealth of innovative ideas and activities spanning various dimensions of family engagement, from welcoming initiatives to collaborative community endeavors. Each activity is designed to strengthen the educational ecosystem and foster a sense of shared responsibility for student achievement.

We invite you to leverage this handbook as a catalyst for change in your school community. Whether you are an educator seeking to enhance parental involvement or a parent eager to contribute to your child's educational journey, this resource offers practical insights and actionable strategies to promote collaboration and drive positive outcomes.

Together, let's embrace the transformative power of family engagement and pave the way for every child's success. Thank you for your dedication to advancing education and fostering inclusive school environments.

Make everyday parental involvement day in America.

Sincerely,

Kevin Walker
President & founder



Our hallmark events, **National Parental Involvement Day** and **Public School Volunteer Week** are the inspiration behind thousands of family engagement activities. They have been enthusiastically celebrated by schools, school districts, PTAs, PTOs, every state education agency, nonprofit organizations, and the U.S. Department of Education. In this handbook, we have compiled a selection of 100 outstanding school activities that were conducted during these signature events. These activities can be enjoyed at any time to honor and emphasize the vital role of families in their children’s education.



Six Slices of Family Engagement

Project Applesed is aligned with Joyce Epstein's Framework of Six Types of Parental Involvement and the updated PTA National Standards for Family-School Partnerships

Slice 1: Welcome All Families

The school treats families as valued partners in their child’s education and **facilitates a sense of belonging** in the school community.

Goal 1. Build a Community of Belonging: When families engage with the school and PTA/PTO, do they feel respected, understood, and connected to the school?

School & Parent Group Indicators:

- Learn about families and foster respect.
- Provide time, **training**, and resources for relationship-building.
- Facilitate opportunities for restoration and connection, especially with historically marginalized families and students.
- Use culturally and linguistically responsive engagement practices.
- Invite families to contribute to the school community.

Goal 2. Create an Inclusive Environment: Do the school’s and PTA/PTO’s efforts encourage engagement with and among the diversity of families in the community?

School & Parent Group Indicators:

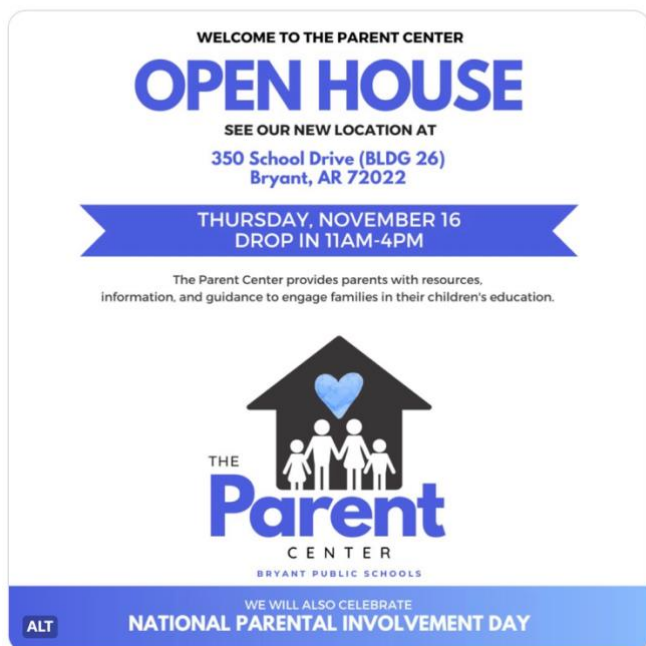
- Encourage school staff to see engaging all families as part of their responsibilities.
- Create an accessible, **family-friendly campus** and/or **virtual school**
- Track family engagement data and regularly examine it to identify gaps in access.
- Learn about and **remove barriers for families** to participate fully.

Welcoming Committee for New Families

The Welcoming Committee for New Families is a caring and proactive initiative aimed at ensuring a seamless transition for families who are new to our school community. Led by our dedicated committee members, this program offers personalized support and guidance to newcomers, helping them feel welcomed and valued from the very beginning.



November 16 is National Parental Involvement Day, the perfect day to host an open house for The Parent Center! Drop in TODAY from 11am-4pm to see the new location at 350 School Drive. Meet the staff and check out all the great resources offered to our parents.



Our committee members are friendly and approachable, ready to assist new families with any questions or concerns they may have. They provide introductions to key staff members, including teachers, administrators, and support personnel, fostering important connections and easing the process of getting acquainted with the school environment.

In addition to personal introductions, our committee offers valuable information about school programs, extracurricular activities, and community events. This ensures that new families are well-informed and empowered to make informed decisions about their child's education and involvement in school life.

Cafecito in the Car Line (Cover Story)

Step into our inviting "Cafecito in the Car Line" event, where educators warmly greet parents with freshly brewed coffee as they drop off their children. This thoughtful initiative not only offers a delightful morning treat but also encourages parental involvement and fosters a strong sense of community within our school. Join us for a special moment of connection and start your day with a warm welcome and a cup of joy!



Mater Academy in Hialeah, Florida, knows how to make parents feel welcome, offering Cafecito in the Car Line!



Breakfast or Coffee & Pastries

Host an event to announce a [new PTA](#) or to boost membership in your PTA. The PTA is a key organization to connect parents, especially new parents to your school with other parents and community members.

- Set up tables to [welcome families](#) and community members to your school. Make available membership forms to enroll new PTA members.
- Make special name tags for members that say, "Ask me about the PTA" or "Join the PTA Today."
- Provide "Welcome Bags" with school information, PTA brochures, and goodies gathered from local businesses or organizations. Include a bookmark with the dates of PTA meetings and special PTA sponsored school events.
- Have a chart with a list of volunteer opportunities so parents can [take the Pledge](#) and sign up to help. Man the table with a volunteer to encourage sign-ups!



Shady Grove Elementary
@ShadyAtTheGrove

It's public school volunteer week! We are so grateful for everyone who supports our community. Please save the date for our Volunteer Breakfast on May 23 at 8am! RSVP here: forms.gle/EDJvy1FcvY8aNn...



1:11 PM · Apr 19, 2024 · 25 Views



Alonzo DeLeon Middle School
@deleon046

We are celebrating National Parental Involvement Day Nov. 15th 9:30am. Hope to see you here! -- Estamos celebrando el Día Nacional de Participación de los Padres el 15 de noviembre a las 9:30 am. ¡Esperamos contar con su presencia!



3:33 PM · Nov 9, 2023 · 192 Views

Coffee with the Principal

This is an engaging school activity that provides parents and guardians with a unique opportunity to connect with the school's principal in a relaxed and informal setting. This event typically takes place in a comfortable space within the school, such as the library or cafeteria, and is designed to encourage open dialogue and foster positive relationships between school leadership and families.

During "Coffee with the Principal," parents are invited to join the principal for a casual morning or afternoon session over coffee and light refreshments. The atmosphere is welcoming and conducive to conversation, allowing parents to ask questions, share feedback, and express any concerns they may have about their child's education or school environment. The principal may use this time to discuss important school updates, upcoming events, academic programs, or initiatives. It's also an excellent opportunity for the principal to listen to parents' perspectives, gain insights into their experiences with the school, and address any specific issues or inquiries raised by attendees.

This activity not only strengthens the relationship between families and school leadership but also demonstrates the principal's commitment to parent engagement and collaboration. By fostering open communication and partnership, "Coffee with the Principal" contributes to a supportive school community where families feel valued and involved in their children's education.

In celebration of National Parental Involvement Day, sign the Family Engagement in Education Pledge!
bit.ly/3UPc07U



10:05 AM · Nov 16, 2023 · 234 Views

Parental Involvement Toolbox

Unlock the potential of parent engagement in your school community with the [Family Engagement Toolbox](#). Our comprehensive program is designed to help schools mobilize [high-impact family engagement](#) to improve student outcomes. Each toolbox includes a branded [Parent Engagement Pledge](#) and [Parent Engagement Report Card](#), tailored to your school's logo. Our research-based and effective model meets district, state and [Title I ESSA](#) mandates and helps schools organize parent responsibility effectively. Events and Activities: [National Parental Involvement Day](#) & [Public School Volunteer Week](#), to increase the involvement of the parents in the school community. The [Red Carpet Treatment](#) - Welcome Atmosphere Walk-Through, to create a welcoming environment for parents and students.

Today marks the beginning of Project Appleseed's Family Engagement Countdown! Find family engagement activities, events, and strategies for every week of the school year: projectappleseed.org/activities
[@pledgeappleseed](#)



8:00 AM · Nov 18, 2022

2 Retweets 7 Likes

Volunteer Appreciation and Resources Fair

This is a festive school event that celebrates and supports the dedicated volunteers who contribute to the school community. Held in a central location like the gymnasium or cafeteria, the fair features:
Recognition Ceremony: Volunteers are individually thanked and honored for their efforts.

- Information Booths: Displays provide details on upcoming volunteer opportunities and school programs.
- Workshops and Training: Sessions offer valuable insights into volunteer best practices and school policies.
- Networking: Volunteers connect with each other and school representatives.
- Refreshments and Entertainment: Enjoyable refreshments and light entertainment add to the celebratory atmosphere.



(1/2) Thursday is National Parental Involvement Day, and we are inviting families & community members to join us at the Volunteer Appreciation Celebration & Resource Fair

Thursday, Nov 16
3:30-4:45 pm
Ed Center Front Lawn 4100 Normal St. 92103



2:36 PM · Nov 14, 2023 · 2,045 Views

Metrics: Schools that Count

Schools can count the number of parent and family volunteers by using a standard hourly rate to calculate the value of the time contributed by parents and families. The average value of volunteer time is \$29.95 an hour. This is based on the Independent Sector's value of volunteer time, which is an annually updated estimate of the average hourly value of volunteer time in the United States.

By tracking the number of volunteer hours contributed by parents and family members and multiplying that number by the hourly rate, schools can estimate the monetary value of the time these volunteers have donated to the school. For example, if a parent volunteers for 10 hours in a month, that would be equivalent to a donation of nearly \$300 based on the hourly rate of \$29.95.



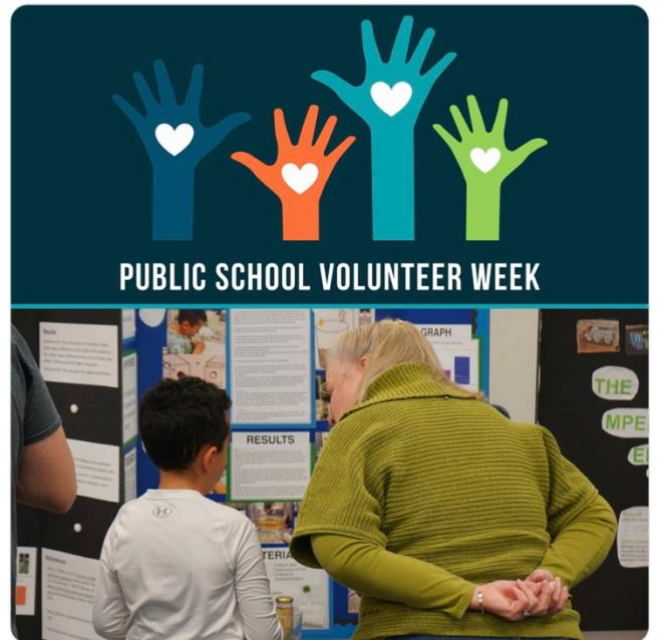
Did you know that during the last school year, more than 14,000 individuals volunteered in our schools? We appreciate everything these community members do to support our schools!
spokaneschools.org/volunteer #BuiltOnLove #Spokane #SpokaneSchools #PublicSchoolVolunteerWeek



10:27 PM · Apr 15, 2024 · 261 Views



This week is Public School Volunteer Week! ❤️
Currently, GISD has more than 7,900 registered volunteers in the district. That's a lot of people who make a difference in the lives of our students! We are so grateful for your support and dedication.
[#PublicSchoolVolunteerWeek](#)



3:47 PM · Apr 21, 2024 · 491 Views

Family School Spirit Day

Join us for a day dedicated to fostering parental involvement and strengthening our school community! Family School Spirit Day is not only an opportunity to showcase your school pride but also a chance for parents to actively participate in their child's educational journey. At this event, parents are encouraged to join in the fun alongside their children, engaging in various games, activities, and friendly competitions. By actively participating in these activities, parents not only bond with their children but also become more connected to the school community.

Family School Spirit Day serves as a platform for parents to play an active role in shaping the school environment. Through their involvement, parents contribute to creating a positive and supportive atmosphere that benefits everyone in the school community.

Parent Orientation Day

Our comprehensive Parent Orientation Day provides new families with essential information about our school culture, curriculum, and resources. It's an opportunity to connect with staff and fellow parents, fostering a sense of belonging and support.

By encouraging parents to take the [Parent Engagement Pledge](#), schools can increase the number of volunteers and the total value of volunteer time contributed. This can have a positive impact on the school community, as it fosters a sense of collaboration, shared responsibility for the success of the students and accountability for all.

The Red Carpet Treatment!

Welcome families to your school with the [Red Carpet Treatment](#), an innovative tool designed to create a more welcoming environment for all families. As part of the [Family Engagement Toolbox](#), the Red Carpet Treatment is a family-friendly walk-through process that brings educators, parents, community members, school board members, and administrators together to identify ways to improve the school for families.



By taking the time to walk through the school and consider how it looks and feels through the lenses of all families, including parents of children with disabilities, you can create an environment that truly welcomes and supports every family. This toolkit provides a step-by-step guide to conduct the walk-through, and the checklists and questions to use during the process.



Jocelyn Scruggs
@jsillas14

@MunseyBCSD held a very successful Donuts with Dads on National Parent Involvement Day. Over 200 dads and students joined in for an engaging and fun morning on why DADS MATTER presented by @BcsdYss Mr. Tyson and Mr. Lewis Neal #teamBCSD #MunseyStars #Area1



11:12 PM · Nov 17, 2022

1 Retweet 3 Likes

Celebrate Dads' Involvement

One way to engage fathers and male role models is through "Donuts for Dads" events. Invite fathers and other male role models to come to the school for a morning treat and a chance to spend time with their child in the classroom. Encourage teachers to plan activities for fathers to participate in alongside their children, such as [reading a book together](#) or working on a craft project.

Not only will this create a positive and fun atmosphere for the students, but it will also give fathers an opportunity to see firsthand the work their children are doing and how they can support their learning at home. Be sure to promote the event through flyers and social media, and also reach out to local media outlets to get the word out to the community.

Game Night: Family Engagement Game for Change

Join us for an exciting evening of fun and learning with our special "Game Night" for parents! As part of this engaging event, we are thrilled to introduce the Family Engagement Game—a unique opportunity for parents to come together, whether in-person or online, and embark on a journey of meaningful discussions, collaborative problem-solving, and interactive learning experiences. At "Game Night," parents will have the chance to immerse themselves in a series of captivating games designed to spark insightful conversations and promote active participation. Whether it's through thought-provoking discussions, hands-on activities, or friendly competitions, participants will be encouraged to explore new ideas, reflect on their experiences, and embrace innovative approaches—all in a fun and supportive environment.

The overarching goal of "Game Night" is to provide parents with a platform to collaborate, share their perspectives, and co-create learning experiences that resonate with their unique backgrounds and expertise. By integrating gaming into the framework of professional development, we aim to empower parents to become active contributors to their child's educational journey, fostering stronger connections between home and school.

As endorsed by the Global Family Research Project, "Game Night" serves as a powerful catalyst for promoting family engagement and nurturing a culture of continuous learning within our school community. We invite you to join us for an unforgettable evening of camaraderie, exploration, and growth at our upcoming "Game Night" event!



Language Services and Cultural Equity hosted their Annual International Parent Potluck on Thursday, Nov. 17, 2022, on National Parent Involvement Day. It was wonderful to be with our families @KCPS_Northeast after a two-year hiatus!

More photos: ow.ly/yitc50LlzGb



2:01 PM · Nov 23, 2022

3 Likes

International Parent Potluck

Culturally and linguistically responsive family engagement practices recognize and respect the cultural and linguistic diversity of families, and aim to create a [welcoming](#) and inclusive environment that encourages parental involvement in their children's education.

When educators and schools use culturally and linguistically responsive family engagement practices, they demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of families' cultural backgrounds and linguistic needs. This, in turn, can help to build trust and create stronger relationships between families and schools, which can lead to increased parental involvement.

For example, when schools provide materials and resources in families' native languages, parents who may not be fluent in English are better able to understand the curriculum and [communicate](#) with teachers.

Family Movie Night

Join us for an evening under the stars with popcorn and family-friendly films. This event promotes bonding and relaxation, creating cherished memories for families within our school community.



November 19th is National Parental Involvement Day! To celebrate @SMShammond is hosting a Virtual Resource Fair. Our community partners are excited to share valuable resources with our families! Everyone is welcome to attend! #schstrong #schk12 #15K



11:30 AM · Nov 13, 2020

Virtual Parent Resource Fair

Explore a wealth of educational resources and community services at our Parent Resource Fair. From tutoring programs to health and wellness resources, parents discover valuable tools to support their child's academic and personal growth. Take a virtual journey through our school from the comfort of your home. Our Virtual School Tour provides insights into our facilities, programs, and extracurricular offerings, fostering a deeper understanding of our educational environment.



Happy Public School Volunteer Week from our Silva Art Club! This beautiful art display was their way of saying thank you to our awesome parent volunteers.



8:52 PM · Apr 21, 2023 · 86 Views

Family Art Showcase Event

Our Family Art Showcase Event is a wonderful celebration of creativity and talent within our school community. This special occasion is designed to shine a spotlight on student artwork while also showcasing collaborative family projects that highlight the importance of self-expression and artistic exploration. During the Family Art Showcase, students' creative endeavors take center stage, providing a platform for them to share their artistic achievements with peers, teachers, and families. It's a moment of pride and accomplishment as the school community comes together to appreciate the diverse talents of our young artists.

In addition to displaying student artwork, the event features collaborative family projects that reflect the spirit of teamwork and creativity shared between parents and their children. These joint efforts not only demonstrate the power of family involvement in education but also reinforce the value of artistic expression as a means of connection and communication.

The Family Art Showcase Event is more than just an exhibition—it's a celebration of individuality, imagination, and the joy of creating art. Through this event, we aim to inspire a lifelong appreciation for the arts and encourage every member of our school community to embrace their creative potential. Join us in celebrating the artistic achievements of our students and families!

Parent-Teacher Meet & Greet

Parent-Teacher Meet & Greet events provide a valuable opportunity for parents to establish direct connections with their child's teachers in a relaxed and informal atmosphere. These gatherings are designed to foster open communication and collaboration between parents and educators, ultimately enhancing the academic experience for students.

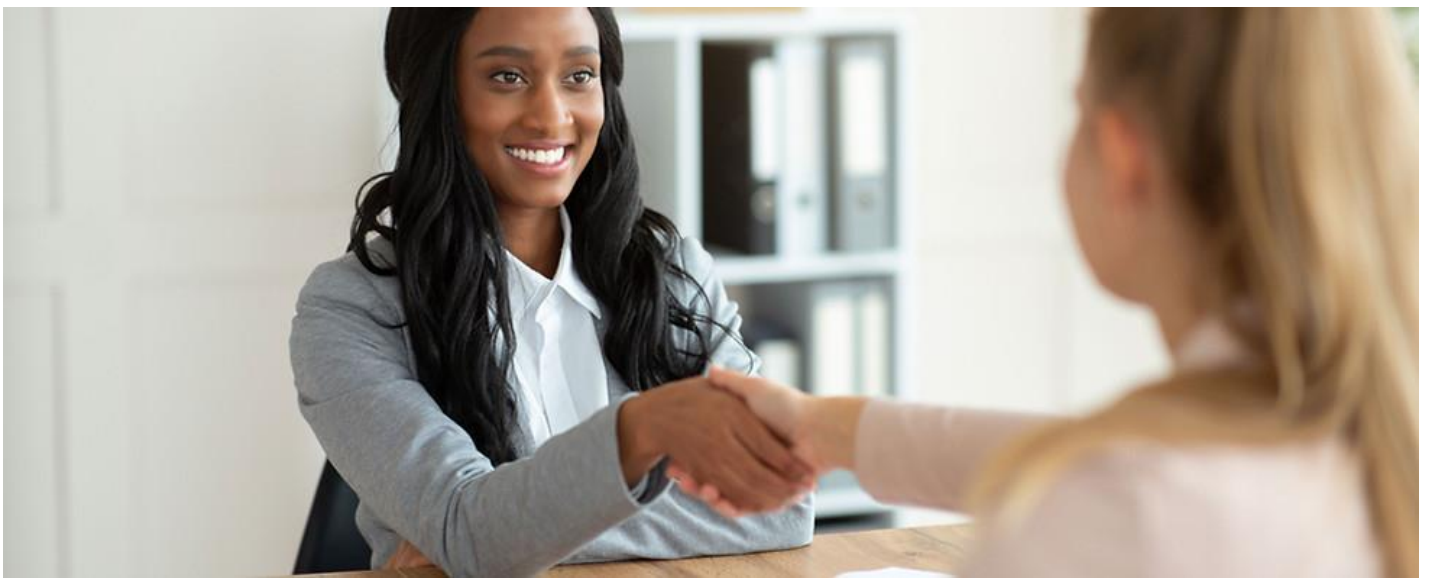


During a Parent-Teacher Meet & Greet, parents have the chance to engage in meaningful conversations with teachers about their child's academic progress, goals, and any concerns they may have. This direct interaction allows parents to gain insights into their child's learning environment and educational journey.

The event encourages proactive discussions on strategies for academic success, enabling parents and teachers to work together to support the student's development. By sharing perspectives and exchanging ideas, parents can contribute to tailored approaches that meet their child's unique needs.

Beyond academic discussions, Parent-Teacher Meet & Greet events promote relationship-building and trust between families and educators. Building strong connections between home and school positively impacts student motivation and achievement.





Slice 2: Communicate Effectively

The school supports staff to engage in proactive, timely, and [two-way communication](#) so that all families can easily understand and contribute to their child's educational experience.

Goal 1. Exchange Information Between School and Families: Are families able to receive and share information in culturally and linguistically sustaining ways?

School & Parent Group Indicators:

- Learn about and meet families' [communication preferences](#)
- Address access by providing interpretation, translation, and/or accommodations
- Coordinate information-sharing across communication outlets
- Gather family input and report back with how input was used
- Foster transparency and enable families to follow-up
- Co-create [engagement plans](#) for times of crisis

Goal 2. Facilitate Parent-Teacher Communication: Does the school and PTA/PTO promote communication between families and teachers?

School & Parent Group Indicators

- Co-develop communication expectations with families and staff
- Provide time, [training](#) and resources for parent-teacher communication
- Solicit teacher and family feedback on how communication is going and what could be improved

 **UConn CSCH** @UConnCSCH · Nov 18, 2021

It's [#NationalParentalInvolvementDay!](#) An easy way for schools to help improve student attendance and achievement is to engage in ongoing **communication** with families. Learn about how schools can focus on Family Engagement in our updated WSCC practice brief. ow.ly/hgO950Gjzlf



THINK ABOUT THE LINK

ACADEMIC • SOCIAL • EMOTIONAL • PHYSICAL • BEHAVIORAL
WHOLE CHILD

1 2

Parent Book Club Discussions

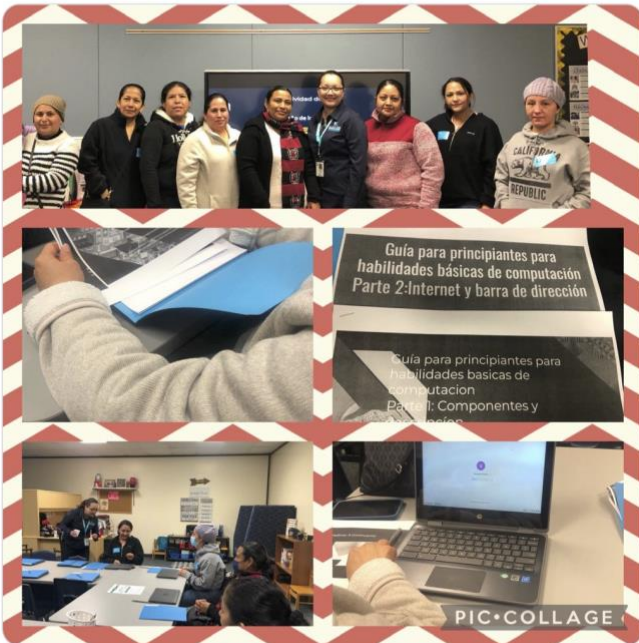
Join fellow parents in stimulating discussions about books related to parenting, education, and personal growth. Our Parent Book Club promotes lifelong learning and meaningful connections among parents.

Family Technology Night

Discover the latest in educational technology and learn how to support your child's digital learning journey. This interactive event equips parents with valuable insights and resources for navigating the digital age. Programs offered through everyoneon.org: Trainings for Individuals: We collaborate with community organizations, foundations, government, and other sectors to provide tailored digital skills training programs to communities. From high school students to parents and seniors, our training covers everything from computer setup and internet navigation to online banking and tech industry job preparation.



[@EppsislandKISD](#) parents decided to celebrate [#nationalparentalinvolvementday](#) sharpening their technology skills! Ms. Teresa said it best: "I want to learn more about Technology to help my student at home!" 🎉👏👍 [@KleinISD](#)



9:36 AM · Nov 17, 2022

Parent Communication App Training

Learn how to effectively use our school communication app to stay informed about assignments, grades, and school updates. This training empowers parents to stay connected and engaged in their child's educational experience.



Our parenting classes give parents the tools, skills and confidence to raise a healthy family.

blog.anybabycan.org/2018/11/05/pos...

[#nationalparentalinvolvementday](#) [#parenting](#) [#parentingclasses](#) [#family](#)



3:25 PM · Nov 15, 2018

Podcast Series on Parenting Tips

Tune in to our podcast series featuring expert advice and practical tips on parenting and family life. Listen and learn from insightful discussions that support your role as a parent and advocate for your child.

Host an open house

Hosting a successful [school open house](#) or [parent night](#) is a great way to connect with the parents of your students, familiarize them with your teaching style and classroom, and let them know what you expect from their children in the coming year. Additionally, it's an excellent opportunity to get parents involved with the school and [volunteering](#). However, since open houses and parent nights typically have limited time, it's important to plan!



Professional Development: Family Engagement Training Date Desired: _____

- On-Site In-Person Workshop** (Multiple Schools) - \$4,500.00*
- On-Site In-Person Workshop** (Single School)- \$3,500.00*
- Virtual Workshop** (One or More Schools) - \$3,000.00
- Family Engagement Toolbox Training via Zoom** - \$1,250.00 Date Desired: _____

*Includes all travel expenses and includes a Lifetime Family Engagement Toolbox for single schools, four for multiple schools!

Family Engagement Toolbox Annual Choices

- Lifetime Toolbox!** \$ 1,000.00 Lifetime Copyright for an individual school.
- One Year \$400.00 - Copyright for one year at an individual school. **
- Two Years \$500.00 - Copyright for two years at an individual school. **
- Three Yrs. \$600.00 - Copyright for three years at an individual school**
- Four Yrs. \$700.00 - Copyright for three years at an individual school. **

Membership (Two-Years)

- Individual School \$150.00
- District \$300.00
- State/Regional Membership \$1,000

Order Information

First Name: _____ Middle: _____ Last Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Required* School: _____ District: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Required* E-mail address: _____

Title: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Send Payments and Purchase Orders to Project Appleseed

1. Online at – www.projectappleseed.org
2. By email at headquarters@projectappleseed.org
3. Snail mail this form to Project Appleseed, c/o Side Street, 520 Melville Ave, St. Louis, Missouri, 63130-4506
4. Request W9 by email at headquarters@projectappleseed.org - IRS Tax ID #43-1859663, a nonprofit organization 501 (c) (3)

** Master files are in Adobe Portable Document Format (.pdf files). Toolboxes are delivered by e-mail. * Allow 10 business days for delivery. 25% off for all re-orders with Membership Renewal only.