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#### REMELE BEARD JOHNSON

Vice-President & National Field Director Columbia, South Carolina remlebaerd@projectappleseed.org Dear Educators and Administrators.

I am writing to share an inspiring story that highlights the transformative power of Project Appleseed's Professional Development programs in the realm of family engagement. Recently, I had the privilege of conducting a workshop in Devils Lake, North Dakota, where I met Ryan Hanson, the principal of Devils Lake High School. As a seasoned professional in family engagement, I have seen various reactions from workshop participants, but what transpired during this session left a lasting impression on me.

After a day of engaging discussions and presentations, I returned to my hotel room, feeling a sense of accomplishment. However, my satisfaction was soon interrupted by an unexpected call from the hotel front desk. I was informed that I had a guest waiting for me. Confused but curious, I made my way to the front desk, where I was greeted by Ryan Hanson, whose face was beaming with excitement.

Ryan shared with me that he was so inspired by the possibilities of family engagement that he immediately began working on a comprehensive family engagement plan. This was a significant milestone for Ryan, as he mentioned that, in his 23-year career as a principal, he had never taken such proactive steps towards improving family engagement at his school. He expressed his confidence in making a significant difference in the lives of his students and their families by implementing the strategies learned during the workshop.

This encounter truly warmed my heart. It exemplified the impact that Project Appleseed's Professional Development programs can have on educators and administrators like Ryan, igniting their passion for family engagement and empowering them to take tangible actions to strengthen their school's connections with families.

I share this story with you to illustrate the transformative nature of our Professional Development programs. Our workshops are designed to inspire and equip educators and administrators with practical strategies and best. We believe that when schools and families collaborate effectively, students thrive, and communities flourish.

At Project Appleseed, we provide professional development experiences that drive positive change in education. I work hard to focus our workshops on the eight interrelated core competencies for Educator Preparation Programs recommended by the National Association for Family, School, and Community Engagement.

I invite you to explore the possibilities that Project Appleseed's Professional Development programs offer. Join us in our mission to strengthen family engagement, enhance student success, and create supportive school communities where every parent, grandparent, and caring adult is actively involved in their child's education.

Thank you for considering Project Appleseed's Professional Development programs. Together, we can make a difference in the lives of children and families across the country.

Kevin Walker

President & Founder

# **Family Engagement Professional Development**

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Project Appleseed adapted portions of this document from a publication prepared by our partners at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (NCCDPHP), Division of Adolescent and School Health (DASH), with conceptual, technical, and editorial assistance from others across CDC and experts from the fields of health, education, and family involvement and engagement. The original document was released as part of Project Appleseed's National Parental Involvement Day celebration in 2012.

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Effective family engagement transcends the mere implementation of proven strategies. It involves cultivating a culture of enthusiasm and excitement about parenting within both the school and the broader community. By celebrating and emphasizing the critical role families play in their children's education, we can inspire and mobilize the entire community to support every student's success.

### **ABOUT PROJECT APPLESEED**

Project Appleseed organizes family engagement in public schools. We work to improve public schools by building public awareness, celebrating family engagement, advancing policy positions and advising decision -makers on the best practices for creating optimal family and community outreach. The effect of our efforts is clear: academic achievement rises in tandem with parent engagement.

Project Appleseed has promoted family engagement in America's public schools for 30 years. Project Appleseed has been an effective advocacy organization that has mobilized millions of volunteers, built responsibility and promoted accountability — both at school and at home. We serve all schools with a heartfelt focus on low-income and under-served families and schools.

### **Our Vision**

We envision a future where all public school families in America will be equipped with the knowledge, skills, resources and motivation for effective family engagement.

### **Our Mission**

Project Appleseed strengthens families, schools and communities by making family engagement a systemic, integrated, and sustained school improvement strategy.

### **Our Goals**

- 1. Increase family engagement by promoting parenting with an enthusiasm that inspires the entire community to support every student.
- Advance the importance of evidenced-based family engagement and the positive benefits for students and families.
- 3. Improve communication between families and schools to lift student academic, social and health outcomes.
- 4.Decrease the decline in parent group formation, participation and advocacy that sustains family engagement over time.



### **Our Program**

Our program and training utilize the Six Types of Parental **Involvement** from Dr. Joyce Epstein's research to engage with families. Our web site has the resources for both educators and parents including the Family Engagement Toolbox, which is our parent engagement program for individual schools and school districts.

Our program and training utilize the Six Types of Parental Involvement from Dr. Joyce Epstein's research

The Toolbox contains Project Appleseed's Parent **Engagement Pledge and Parent Engagement Report Card,** providing an opportunity for parents to formalize their commitment to working with their child's school through a written agreement, which they can complete and take to their parent leader, school secretary, teacher, or principal. The Pledge also includes a survey of parent volunteer interests in which parents can immediately volunteer in school, outside the classroom, and at home.



# **Our Signature National Events**

In 1994 we launched National Parental Involvement Day to recognize the valuable role parents play in school improvement. In 1997 we declared Public School **Volunteer Week** to thank parents and recognize their involvement. These are the celebrations in which schools recruit, engage and recognize the services of America's dedicated school volunteers who have offered their time, encouragement, and meaningful contact with students.

# Los Angeles Unified Celebrates NATIONAL FAMILY **INVOLVEMENT DAY**

There are multiple ways to engage from home and at school

Parent Portal (1) (1) (1) (1)



Volunteer

Homework Support

School Site Council



Workshops and meetings

### Our Approach

Our school improvement strategy is based on the best available research. Project Appleseed believes that family engagement should be systemic, integrated, and sustained:

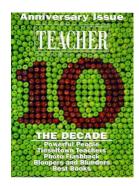
Systemic family engagement is purposefully designed as a core component of educational goals such as school readiness, student achievement, and school turnaround.

**Integrated family engagement** is embedded into structures and processes designed to meet these goals, including training and professional development, teaching and learning, community collaboration, and the use of data for continuous improvement and accountability.

Sustainable family engagement operates with adequate resources, including public-private partnerships, to ensure meaningful and effective strategies that have the power to impact student learning and achievement. 70

### **Our history**

Project Appleseed was founded by Kevin Walker in 1993. He serves as the organization's president & national director. Under his leadership Project Appleseed was one of the first nonprofits in America to utilize the Internet to build social capital.



Over the years, Kevin Walker's legend has grown.
The late Michelle Molnar, an Education
Week associate editor, fondly nicknamed him
the "grandfather of parent involvement".

As our first national leader, Mr. Walker worked with the Clinton White House and helped pioneer the original parent engagement provisions in the reauthorize Title I of the **Elementary and Secondary Education Act** in 1994. Congress reauthorized the provisions under Title I of No Child Left Behind in 2001 and again under Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015. Mr. Walker is the creator of National Parental Involvement Day and Public School Volunteer Week - two of the oldest family engagement events in the nation. He has been named one of the **Top Ten People** in American Education by *Teacher* magazine and he is the recipient of *Parenting* magazine's Parenting Leader Award. Over the years, Mr. Walker's legend has grown. The late Michelle Molnar, an Education Week associate editor, fondly nicknamed him "the grandfather of parental involvement' in public schools.

### INTRODUCTION

Children and adolescents are establishing patterns of behavior that affect both their current and future learning and health. Young people are at risk for engaging in tobacco, alcohol, or other drug use, participating in violence or gang activities, and initiating sex at an early age. However, a growing body of research demonstrates that enhancing protective factors in the lives of children and adolescents can help them avoid behaviors that place them at risk.

Protective factors include personal characteristics such as educational or career goals;4 life conditions such as frequent parental presence in the home at key times (e.g., after school, at dinner time);3 and behaviors such as involvement in pro-social activities (e.g., school or community sports).5 Engaging parents in their children's and adolescents' school life is a promising protective factor. Research shows that parent engagement in schools is closely linked to better student behavior,6–9 higher academic achievement,10–12 and enhanced social skills.2, 9 Parent engagement also makes it more likely that children and adolescents will avoid unhealthy behaviors, such as tobacco, alcohol, and other drug use.13–15

This publication defines and describes parent engagement and identifies specific strategies and actions that schools can take to increase parent engagement in school activities. The audiences for this publication include:

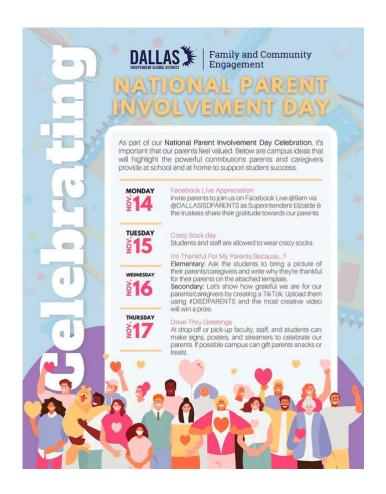
- School administrators
- Teachers
- Counselors
- Parent liaisons
- Support staff
- Parent leaders
- Others who are interested in promoting parent engagement.

Each of these audiences has different but important roles and responsibilities related to garnering support for, and implementing, these strategies and actions.



Parent Partnership:
Secretary Cardona and Friends
Celebrate National Parent
Involvement Day

November 16, 2023



# What is parent engagement in schools?

Parents play a significant role in supporting their children's learning, guiding their children successfully through school processes, and advocating for their children and for the effectiveness of schools. Parent engagement in schools is defined as parents and schools working together to enhance and improve the development of children and adolescents.16,17 Parent engagement in schools is a shared responsibility in which schools and other community agencies and organizations are committed to reaching out to engage parents in meaningful ways, and parents are committed to actively supporting their children's and adolescents' learning and development.16, 17 This relationship between schools and parents cuts across and reinforces children's health and learning in the multiple settings—at home, in school, in out-of-school programs, and in the community.

For the purposes of this document, the word parent is used to refer to the adult primary caregiver(s) of a child's basic needs (e.g., feeding, safety). This includes biological parents; other biological relatives such as grandparents, aunts, uncles, or siblings; and non-biological parents such as adoptive, foster, or stepparents. Parents guide the child's upbringing, which includes the interaction processes between parent and child that contribute to the child's emotional and social development.

### How were these strategies developed?

The strategies and actions recommended in our workshop are based on a synthesis of parent engagement and involvement research and guidance from the fields of education, health, psychology, and sociology. Materials in the review include peer-reviewed journal articles, books, reports from government agencies and nongovernmental organizations, and Web sites. Information from these sources was summarized to identify parent engagement practices in school that demonstrated an impact on students' academic behaviors. In addition, recommendations were informed by the opinions of expert researchers, public health practitioners, and educators at the Parents as Partners: Strengthening Parent/Family Involvement in School Health Policy and Practice meeting hosted by the National School Boards Association in 2008. This process identified evidence-based strategies and specific actions that can be taken to increase parent engagement in school activities.



U.S. Department of Education @ @usedgov

Every student deserves access to high-quality out-of-school time programs. Parents & families can find local programs, tips for keeping children active & engaged, & useful guides here: engageeverystudent.org/resources/ #EngageEveryStudent #NationalParentalInvolvementDay



2:20 PM · Nov 17, 2022

11 Retweets 1 Quote 23 Likes

# What are three essential aspects of parent engagement?

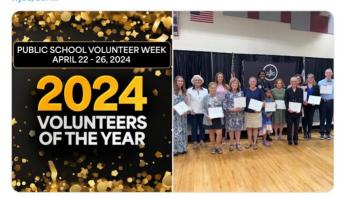
Connect, engage and sustain.

### Why is parent engagement in schools important?

Parent engagement in schools can promote positive behaviors among children and adolescents. For example, students who feel supported by their parents are less likely to experience emotional distress, practice unhealthy eating behaviors, consider or attempt suicide, or disengage from school and learning.3,18 In addition, school efforts to promote learning among students have been shown to be more successful when parents are involved. For instance, studies have shown that when parents volunteer at their children's school, the likelihood of their children initiating smoking decreases,14 and the likelihood of their children meeting the guidelines for physical activity increases.19 In addition, interventions with a parent engagement component have been shown to increase positive health behaviors such as children's school-related physical activity.20

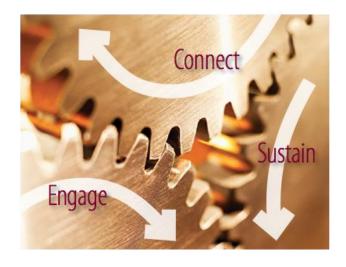


April 22-26 is Public School Volunteer Week. To celebrate, we would like to congratulate our Volunteers of the Year! These individuals were recognized during last week's School Board meeting for their impactful contributions. Read about each volunteer at wjccschools.org/about-wjcc/ach...



9:28 AM · Apr 22, 2024 · **529** Views

When parents and schools work together, they can deliver clear, consistent messages to children, encourage the development of positive health and academic behaviors among children, encourage children to value education, assist children in getting necessary preventive care, and improve access to resources and support networks. 2,13,14, 21



### How can school staff increase parent engagement?

Although relatively little is known about what factors motivate parents to become engaged in their children's education, the primary motivation for parents to become involved appears to be a belief that their actions will improve their children's learning and well-being.22 Therefore, school staff should demonstrate to parents how their children's education can be enhanced by their engagement in school activities. In addition, parents tend to be more involved if they perceive that school staff and students both want and expect their involvement.23

To increase parent engagement, schools must make a positive connection with parents. Schools should also provide a variety of activities and frequent opportunities to fully engage parents.16, 24 Schools can sustain parent engagement by addressing the common challenges to getting and keeping parents engaged.

Parent engagement is not a linear process, and the separation between strategies to connect with parents, engage them in school activities, and sustain their engagement is not always distinct or discrete. For example, strategies used to connect with parents might overlap with those used to sustain their involvement, and schools might need to reconnect with parents throughout the school year.

Each school is unique, and it is not possible to develop one prescribed plan for parent engagement that is appropriate for all schools. The actions suggested in this document are not listed in order of priority and are not intended to be an exhaustive list. Some of the actions are small changes in school processes that can be done in the short term with relative ease, whereas others

might be much broader, longer-term goals that require administrative or budgetary changes. Individual schools and school districts should determine which actions are most feasible and appropriate, based on the needs of the school and parents, school level (elementary, middle, or high school), and available resources. Schools should also evaluate their efforts to increase parent engagement to learn which actions have the greatest impact.



"Our families care deeply about their children, but they don't always have experience to draw from. When someone leaves our program they can be an advocate for their child." #NationalParentalInvolvementDay #GetInvolved



nhsa.org
ESL Program Helps Oklahoman Refugee Parents Advocate for Themselves and ...
Early Head Start empowers refugee parents, from ESL classes to career training to help interacting with their children's teacher or doctor.

3:10 PM · Nov 18, 2021 · Sprout Social

# Connect with Project Appleseed

School districts and school staff need to *connect* and build positive relationships with parents before they can effectively engage parents in improving school programs and activities. First, it is essential for school staff, parents, and community partners to recognize the advantages of working together to guide children's learning. <sup>24, 25</sup> This can be accomplished by having a shared school vision for engaging parents in their children's education and communicating that vision to everyone in the school community with

The Parent Engagement Pledge learning compact. The Pledge can set the school's vision for parent engagement and can set the tone for a positive relationship with parents and the expectations parents have for being involved in school activities. In addition, school administrators should assess the school's capacity to engage parents and establish or enhance policies and procedures for parent engagement by employing the Parent Engagement Checklist.

Furthermore, school staff should be prepared to work with parents. School administrators can enhance staff knowledge, ability, and confidence to engage parents by ensuring ample opportunities for professional development on effective parent engagement strategies through Project Appleseed's Traveling Workshop on Family Engagement or Family Engagement Toolbox Training.28 For example, teachers can learn how to involve parents in students' homework or how to reach out to uninvolved parents. Schools might invite community partners to provide professional development in these areas and make staff aware of existing parent engagement resources. In addition, school staff can be given dedicated time to plan and organize parent-friendly activities.

Finally, school administrators and school staff should use the **Red Carpet Treatment** to ensure that all parents feel welcomed in the school and should provide a variety of opportunities for them to be involved in school activities. 29,30

School administrators might use the Parent Engagement Report Card to survey and assess the needs and interests of parents related to academics. The results from such an assessment can inform school administrators about the best ways to communicate with parents and help administrators prioritize the types of activities to implement throughout the school year to increase parental participation. An assessment also can inform school efforts to reach out to and engage parents whose children are at increased risk for chronic diseases and conditions, such as asthma. To ensure that all parents are represented in the assessment, school administrators should consider innovative ways to gather information from parents who are typically less engaged or who might not respond to school surveys.



# **Professional Development**

Our in-person and online professional development is tailored to help your school or district reach every parent, grandparent and caring adult. Our professional development is the first step in preparing schools and districts to reach out to your entire school community. Project Appleseed's professional development comes in two forms - our Traveling Workshop or Family Engagement Toolbox Training.

After completing our professional development participants will be able to identify parent engagement activities in their school and how to employ our Title I learning compact - the Parent Engagement Pledge.

Participants will understand the importance of parent & family engagement, define parent engagement in schools and understand why it is important and describe the association between parent engagement in schools and student social, academic, and health outcomes.

Project Appleseed provides a unique opportunity to bring **Kevin Walker** (Pictured) our founder and a national parent leader to your school community. Project Appleseed's professional development is an excellent way to teach specific parent engagement objectives to a targeted group school staff, parents, and school groups, like parent teacher associations with ideas and strategies for working together to create a healthier school.

Parent engagement in schools is parents and school staff working together to support and improve the learning, development, and health of children and adolescents. Parent engagement in schools is an important, shared responsibility in which schools and other community agencies and organizations are committed to getting parents involved in meaningful ways, and parents are committed to actively supporting their children's and adolescent's' learning and development.



Our Traveling Workshop is a one-day session, and our Family Engagement Toolbox Training is two hours - both have highly effective transfer skills and knowledge. Project Appleseed's workshops and online training provide a program for schools and communities that focuses on the techniques and skills in family engagement that has long-term benefits.

# Family Engagement Traveling Workshop

The costs for one-day sessions are \$4,500.00 for in-person multiple schools, \$3,500.00 for in-person single school, and \$3,000.00 for virtual sessions all schools.

Research repeatedly correlates family engagement with student achievement, yet this strategy is rarely activated as an integral part of school improvement efforts. Our family engagement training provides strategies that are aligned with student learning and achievement. Schools organize parent responsibility with an effective model that is research-based, meets district, state and Title I ESSA mandates. You will leave the workshop with a multi-year plan and the tools to engage all families.

### 10 Professional Development Learning Objectives

Following this program, participants will be able to —

- Understand the importance of parent & family engagement.
- Define parent engagement in schools and understand why it is important.
- Describe the association between parent engagement in schools and student social, academic, and health outcomes.
- Identify the essential aspects of parent engagement in schools.
- Identify resources for assessing and promoting parent engagement in the Family Engagement Toolbox.

Project Appleseed's professional development is not a stand-alone activity rather than a journey that is intensive, collaborative, job-embedded, data-driven and family focused. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) redefines high-quality professional development for elementary and secondary education. Whether you're a brand-new or seasoned educator or parent leader, we have the evidence-based knowledge you need to get up to speed, perform at your best, and get the most out of parents.



# Six Slices of Family Engagement

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

### Our program and support are included:

- Complimentary Family Engagement Toolbox for single schools and four Toolboxes for multischools conducting district Traveling Workshop - a \$700.00 value.
- Participant guides and resources to build connections between home and school.
- Our interactive workshops have hands-on applications.
- The Traveling Workshop is available in your schools in-person virtual, for all staff and administrators. No limit on the number of participants. We ask that you book at least 30 days in advance.
- Virtual follow-up sessions are available at no cost.
   These sessions are used to reinforce learning that took place in the Traveling Workshop. A virtual follow-up session is a phone meeting led by Kevin Walker. We want to ensure that what is learned in the Workshop will be applied correctly to participants' work.

### Staff Development Program Agenda

Introduction 30 min
Our Advocacy
National Signature Events

Learning Objectives

Connecting 60 min

What Is Family Engagement?
Title I Family Engagement
Barriers to Family Engagement
Activity #1. Connect Families

Engaging 90 min

Effective Home-School Communication Acknowledging Cultural Differences Six Slices of Family Engagement Family Engagement Toolbox Teacher Home Visits (Optional) Activity #2. Engage Families

Sustaining 90 min

Red Carpet Treatment
Activity #3. Sustain Engagement
Activity #4. Multi-Year Family Engagement Plan



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

# Complimentary Family Engagement Toolbox for single schools and four Toolboxes for multi-schools Workshops:

When you order the Traveling Workshop on Family Engagement, you can choose between lifetime or annual reproduction rights for the **Family Engagement Toolbox**. Single school workshops receive one free Toolbox, while multi-school workshops receive up to four Toolboxes. You'll get master copies of all documents in Adobe PDF format, ready for unlimited duplication and distribution. Orders are delivered within one week, any time of the year.

### **Parent Engagement Pledge and Report Card**

The Toolbox includes essential tools like **the Parent Engagement Pledge** and **Report Card**, customized with your school's logo, and other resources to support effective parent engagement strategies aligned with district, state, and Title I ESSA mandates.

### **Strategies for Engaging Families**

Developed with the CDC, this guide is based on the Six Slices of Family Engagement framework and aligns with our Family Engagement Toolbox. It integrates the CDC's six professional development practices—Sustain, Design, Promote, Deliver, Follow-Up, and Evaluate—ensuring comprehensive and practical strategies for meaningful family involvement in education.

### **Parent Activity Handbook**

The new Parent Activity Handbook 2024-25 offers 100 ideas for school-based activities and events that involve families, promoting positive school-home partnerships. Celebrate volunteers with National Parental Involvement Day, Public School Volunteer Week, and 150 Days of Family Engagement Activities. Additional resources include the Strategies for Engaging Families Guide and the PTA Partnership Standards Overview.

### **The Red Carpet Treatment**

Our **Red Carpet Treatment** tool guides schools in creating a welcoming environment for all families. Focusing on Physical Environment, School-wide Practices & Policies, Welcoming School Staff, and Communication, this tool involves parents, educators, administrators, and community members to enhance the school experience.

### **Project Appleseed Certification**

Our certification demonstrates your capability to address the complex challenges of parent engagement effectively.Enhance your school's family engagement initiatives with these comprehensive tools from Project Appleseed.

# Family Engagement Toolbox Training

All Schools, Virtual Two Hours: \$1,250.00

The Family Engagement Toolbox is a family engagement program designed for schools that want to mobilize family engagement to improve student outcomes. Each Toolbox, Parent Engagement Pledge and Parent Engagement Report Card are branded with each school's logos for distribution to every student and family. Schools organize parent responsibility with an effective model that is research-based, meets district, state and Title I ESSA mandates. Zoom! with Project Appleseed president & founder, Kevin Walker. Our flexible professional development options offer two hour training sessions scheduled at your request. Download our slideshow presentation of Project Appleseed's program, Strong Families, Strong Schools, for more information on how we engage families. Toolboxes are required and must be purchased with the training.

### **Toolbox Training Program Agenda**

Introduction 10 min Connecting 20 min

Title I Family Engagement

Engaging 60 min

Six Slices of Family Engagement Family Engagement Toolbox Parent Engagement Pledge Parent Engagement Report Card Signature Events

Sustaining 30 min

10 Stepfamily Engagement Plan

- Features the implementation of the Family
   Engagement Toolbox in your school community
   and the metrics for parent engagement success.
- An overview of the Six Slices of parent engagement. Guidance on how to engage parents. Each session is meant to offer solutions for educators and parents tailored to each school

Parent Academy DCPS
@ParentAcadDCPS

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 or district's needs.

- An introduction to Title I parent engagement and planning and evaluating your Title I Program.
- A virtual follow-up session is available at no cost!
   This session is used to reinforce learning that took place in the Toolbox Training. A virtual follow-up session is a 30-60-minute Zoom or phone meeting led by Kevin Walker. We want to ensure that what is learned in the Toolbox Training will be applied correctly to participants' work.
- Toolbox training in your schools is training of all staff and administrators. No limit on the number of participants. We ask that you book at least 30 days in advance.



Professional Development: Fai	mily Engagement	t Training Date Desired:	
□ On-Ste In-Person Workshop (Multiple Schools) - \$4,500.00*			
□ On-Ste 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 Ar	nnual Choices	Membership (Two-Years)	
☐ Lifetime Toolbox! \$ 1,000.00 Lifetime Copyrights for an individual school. ☐ One Year \$400.00 - Copyrights for one year at an individual school. ** ☐ Two Years \$500.00 - Copyrights for two years at an individual school. ** ☐ Three Yrs. \$600.00 - Copyrights for three years at an individual school. ** ☐ Four Yrs. \$700.00 - Copyrights for three years at an individual school. **		** ☐ District \$300.00  pl. ** ☐ State/ Regional Membership \$1,000  pol**	
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<sup>\*\*</sup> 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.

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