

ParentCamp USA DOE 2015 Session Notes

Room:

Time: 10:15 am

Title: Parent Voice in Developing a School Improvement Plan

Discussion Leader(s): Dr. Jim Detwiler & Dr. Geniene Delahunty, Boone County Schools, Florence, KY

Participant Twitter Handles: @JimDetwiler1, @GenieneD; @shreec, @Parent_Partners @only1keami
AUsing hashtag #ParentCampUSA on Twitter, Instagram or Facebook.

Consider joining #PTchat LIVE this Wed at 9:00 pm EST when we will recap highlights of #PTCampUSA

Shared Notes:

How schools answer this question is a predictor to what extent parent voice is included in school planning: "Are your parents involved, engaged, or empowered, and what is your role in getting them there?"

Dual Capacity Framework for Family-School Partnerships -

<http://www2.ed.gov/documents/family-community/partners-education.pdf>

Example of a District Strategic Plan where parents and communities provided input at several community meetings, resulting in the 10's C's skills for graduates that serves as a centerpiece for the plan. From the Boone County Schools, Florence, KY:

http://www.boone.kyschools.us/userfiles/17/my%20files/boe/bcs_strategic_plan.pdf?id=52333

Kentucky requires by statute that school leaders complete an annual diagnostic during school improvement planning regarding how parent voice is utilized in the improvement planning process. The results are made public as part of the posted school improvement plan. The diagnostic is based on the document, "The Missing Piece of the Proficiency Puzzle" found at

<http://education.ky.gov/commofed/adv/documents/pacthemissingpiecev2.pdf>

Example of District Improvement Plan (currently in revision) where parent engagement strategies listed on pages 23-25:

<http://www.boone.kyschools.us/userfiles/17/My%20Files/boe/bcscip.pdf?id=52331>

Questions to consider during discussion (please add)...

- What are your experiences, positive and negative, with utilizing parent voice in building school / district improvement or strategic plans?
- What worked well, what did not work well?
- What have been some barriers?
- What successes have you found in soliciting the parent voices of those who are often underrepresented in this planning process?

Please share any helpful resources you may have.

Dr. Karen Mapp: Beyond the Bake Sale (book)

Notes from session:

Dr. Detwiler: For me the difference between engagement and empowerment is giving parents the tools they need so they can make decisions.

Dawn Hayes: (Central Pennsylvania, federal programs coordinator) I work in rural community. Language needs to be changed from parent involvement to parent engagement/empowerment. Some of my principals/teachers are barriers--don't want parents involved in PLCs. Some progress, started having parent conferences. Lacking infrastructure for parent engagement, now growing.

Cindy Baumert: (Prichard Committee, Kentucky) We trained parents about the business of schools. Accountability, data, etc. So they can come in as equal partners in these decision-making roles Teachers/principals can be silo'd. Parent sometimes have a more global view of the school system--sometimes this can be intimidating for principals/teachers.

Kerry, TX: Need to have decision-making committee represent the diversity of the community. Administrators are afraid--we need to dispel fears inside and outside system.

Melissa: Do administrators want parent voice or parent buy-in? What is the parent role. We talked about parents as partners--but under whose authority and where do we meet in the middle.

Lynn, TX: I think what you said about fear (Kerry)...Sometimes it's a valid fear. I as a parent didn't feel I was prepared to have some conversations. We need to have a collaborative/teamwork spirit. Parents can do a lot to dispel these fears.

OK: Our parents want to help. We have 58 different countries represented in our county. We have a lot of diversity but not a lot of inclusion. What I find that we need to do--we need to provide tools to make parents feel welcome in schools. Administrators and teachers intimidate them--especially if they don't speak the same language, or have cultural competency to work with families. It has to be a partnership.

NY Parent: When it comes to each individual school, there are parents on boards--that are supposed to make decisions--but instead principals/schools have final say. Structures are there, but in implementation families don't have power to use these structures.

Resources mentioned: Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence and Governor's Commonwealth Institute for Parent Leadership

Mary Ann Stuart, MA Board of Education member #ptcamp @MAStuartMA

Dr. Detwiler: What about this idea of PTA v. councils?

Gwen Pescatore (sp?): We took parent camp and we took our PTO and we threw it out the window. At the beginning of the year, our meetings were 1 hour and we live-streamed them. No matter where you were, you could participate. Then we started sharing documents. Joann McCarthy Skype.

PTAs mission is advocacy and family engagement. If all the PTA is doing is fundraising, they are doing it wrong! The National PTA and each of the state PTAs have tons of resources about advocacy and family engagement that local units can tap into and use. I'd encourage everyone to take a look at the National PTA Standards for Home School Partnerships. www.pta.org

We had a tech-training piece, we had parent voice, we had teacher voice. We were able to reach out to people all over the country and all over the world.

My thought was to make families lives easier.

Anne Clark, Pennsylvania: Is translation inclusive? Our meetings are done in families' native language.

Bilingual resource

- Becky Raabe, Dept of Ed in AZ

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