



Family Engagement Forum

An Education Collaboration
in the Capitol Region

January 9, 2020

Elk Grove Education Association Building

9297 Office Park Circle #100

Elk Grove, CA 95758

12pm-2pm

Meeting Notes:

Elk Grove Presentation

Lisa Levasseur – Program Specialist (FACE)

The Elk Grove school district is the 5th largest district in California and the largest in Northern California. With over 320 sq. miles, 67 schools, 63,000 students and over 80 different languages there is a lot of diversity and a lot of students and families that need assistance. It is because of this that the Family and Community Engagement department was formed four years ago. The department was just Lisa to begin with and she spent her first year visiting 65 of the schools interviewing students, principals and families about challenges and strengths of the district. Lisa also attended parent meetings and hosted focus groups to gather information which was used to create a steering committee and strategic plan. Over the years additional positions have been added and now the team of one has become a team of eight. The FACE department believes that families are co-creators and partners, and since learning starts at home it is important to work with families.

The FACE Team members are Alma Avalos (Program Educator), Nancy Lopez (FACE Resource Teacher), Vicki Trimmingham (FACE Resource Teacher), Kathy Wilson (FACE Instructional Coach), Sheri Hughes (Refugee Coordinator), and Lysette Lemay (Community Partnership Coordinator).

A common questions binder, translated into 13 different languages, is provided in school offices to assist parents that need assistance. Google chrome books are also available for more in-depth questions. By providing these options it helps lift the barrier of parents who do not speak English so their voices can be heard.

Alma Avalos - FACE has implemented workshops and events, such as family writing nights, to help promote bonding time between parents and children. Also focusing on workshops for parents around how to be a leader, the LCAP and personalities. A Family Staff Wellness Series around mental health, social media and college readiness is also in progress. Feedback is especially important for the department to know that the correct resources are being shared so focus groups and parent surveys are used.

Nancy Lopez - The FACE team has had a lot of focus regarding in-home visits to build a relationship with families, understand their needs, and implement a plan on how to help them. In-home visits help create a more one to one personalized communication and have helped improve student's behavior, attendance and academics. Families can be reluctant at first but once they see that this is a resource to help them, they become engaged. The greatest hurdle to in home-visits are time and fear about going into communities, this program has been around for 20 years without incident. FACE works on lifting these misconceptions to continue to build a relationship with these families within the community through the support of coordinators at elementary and secondary sites.

Vicki Trimmingham – Focus on modules to help provide information on how to build relationships and improve attendance.

Kathy Wilson – Kathy is working to build a bridge between families and teachers through trainings and resources.

Parent Liaison – Another need is redefining parent liaison through meeting with parents, students, administrators, and teachers to redefine what it is to be a parent liaison and build the bridge between parent and teacher.

Sheri Hughes - FACE is also working with refugees through cultural awareness trainings to help people understand the culture within Afghan Families. FACE helps meet needs by providing interpretation services, workshops, college prep, and financial planning. There is also a pre-basic ESL class to help parents learn English.

Lysette Lemay – A main piece that is missing from the district is an education foundation, but this is a main focus for the team this year. The hope is that this will be able to help fill the gaps that the district is not able to currently fill in support.

Updates From Districts

Shari Malespin – Robla: At the moment Robla does not have a Family Engagement department. They are working on increasing their out-reach for pre-school and inviting families to participate in LCAP. The district sent out a LCAP Infographic in the fall and will be putting together and updated version to be send in the spring. There will be a celebration dinner with guest speaker Ruby Bridges and a performance by the Robla T-K class on January 28th.

Mark Lawler – Robla: The district is focusing on pre-school enrollment videos. Robla also has their Play Pal program that allows younger children, 12 months to 3 years of age, to come to the pre-school with their parents to engage and play.

Ryan Miranda – Center: Center did an online survey for parents and received great feedback around Family Engagement. The district also hosted a Family Engagement workshop with close to 30 people in attendance. Center is currently working within the homeless education department to see what needs can be accommodated for those families and students in need.

Heriberto Soto – Twin Rivers: Working on LCAP, including a community forum. Enrollment fairs for the district will start in January. The district will be providing parent workshops during a spring retreat on March 30th. The retreat will be divided between different class pathways from Kindergarten through High School.

Jennifer Collier – GALT: Galt worked with Lakeshore designers to help build a Maskerspace at a pre-school. Good day Sacramento will be doing a piece on this new space to help get the word out to the community that this is available. Galt has also submitted an art integration 5-year plan which was created in collaboration with SCOE and lead teachers. The hope is to create community and community resources for families and students with family art nights, bright future learning centers and fun engagement.

Lisa Borrego – San Juan: The district is working on providing resources such as central enrollment and vaccinations in locations where families have difficulty traveling, such as Citrus

Heights. On February 15th San Juan is hosting an event with ARC that encourages African American Families to come together, Jeri Marshall, a professor at ARC will speak on social and emotional building of community bonding.

San Juan is also working on Family Education, CTE workshops, and mini grants that were awarded to various Family Engagement projects. Also focused on LCAP with a review team, new template trainings and a LCAP road map that is in full swing. San Juan will also be providing advocates for English learners and a training designed for parent educators in Spanish for free.

Lisset Mijares – Natomas: Natomas is trying to figure out what is causing low numbers for preschool and what solutions can be put in place to gain more enrollment. The district is working on a campaign to spread the word about pre-schools with apartments around the community and in LCAP.

Natomas has several other projects occurring around family engagement including a podcast, Parent University Love and Logic and Tech nights. The district is working with Common Sense Media and will introduce Myapp, an app that gives parents access to their students' progress and shows if they are on track for graduation. In March Natomas will host a speaker series with Jason Seals, focusing on restorative practices within classrooms.

February/March Programming

Ideas included: Census took-kit, deadlines for Financial Aid, Mills collaborative for summer meals, getting ready for testing, LCAP, the value of family engagement, internships and public programs, Expanded Learning, and attendance (how sick is too sick?).

Future Agenda Items

Brainstorm Best Practices for Communications

Future Meetings: Thursdays from 12-2pm

March 12th – Center Unified

May 14th – Natomas