

Parent Leadership Network
Monthly Meeting Notes
February 15, 2018

Parent Leadership Network

- **Who are we?** - representatives serving as school leaders
- **Where are we going?** - increased student achievement due to parent, school & community partnerships.
- **How will we get there?** - by learning, practicing, and sustaining effective family engagement strategies and best practices; measuring outcomes
- **What we need to get there?** - passion for the work, professional development, and RUSD support

Meeting Notes

Meeting opened up with a welcome, introductions and creating meeting norms

Guest Speaker

Stacy Tapp, Director of Communications, Racine Unified

Topic: Communications

Stacy Tapp held an open session where parents could ask her questions and provide feedback about communications at the school and district levels. Some of the issues brought up were:

- Who maintains school websites and how can the district support the maintenance of the websites that create consistency across the district?
 - Individual schools maintain their own websites, however the Communications Department does assist by monitoring the websites as best possible. The district prefers that school staff maintain the websites versus a school volunteer, so there are no liability issues.
- Feedback given:
 - Schools need to continue to print flyers in both English and Spanish
 - Send home in backpacks, provide flyers at the school and post them on website and newsletters
 - Communications need to be in one accessible place. Some schools have electronic newsletters, emails or well maintained websites. However, this is not consistent from school to school.
 - School marquees should be better maintained with current and accurate information. Some parents have noticed a decline in the boards being up to date.
- Next Steps:
 - Stacy Tapp will take back questions and feedback.

Debrief of Relational Meetings and Training Recap

Drea Hall, Parent Engagement Consultant

DEBRIEF OF RELATIONAL MEETINGS

Parents reported out on their relational meetings and efforts made to meet with new parents.

Some of their experiences were highlighted:

- Parents have been meeting with both administrators and parents.
 - No matter who you are meeting with, you treat the meetings and the people equally the same. Relational meetings are an opportunity to share life experiences and common values and passions each other have in life. Titles and positions are not the focus of the meeting. Building a public relationship is the goal of the meetings with intentions to increase parent engagement at schools
 - Parents should meet with a mix of school leadership, teachers, parents and stakeholders
- Some parents voiced frustration with other parents not appearing to care or willing to step up and be an active parent at the school.
 - This is a great opportunity to share with other parents why parent engagement is important to you as a parent, and can result in increased student achievement.
 - Parents come from all walks of life and we need to be sensitive to their life situations that may prevent them from being an active parent. We should keep moving forward and not let rejection deter us from building relationships with other parents at our schools. We may not get everyone, but we have planted seeds.
 - PLN is an opportunity for all parents to come together to share information, best practices and support each other in our efforts to increase parent engagement at our schools. As leaders, we will make a better effort to communicate to other parents what PLN is and what it is not (see above for what PLN is).
 - Parents agreed that we must all come together no matter what parent organization we may represent or not. It is not a competition, but an opportunity to network with other parents across the district to help increase our knowledge and capacity to better support our student learners.

TRAINING RECAP

Topics: Life Tree & Relational Meetings

- Parents learned about the Life Tree and how it can be used when conducting relational meetings. The Life Tree is a metaphor for how we shape our lives, describing who we are and why we are the way we are (roots = stories/experiences, trunk = values and leaves = public person).
- Participants also learned how relational meetings can be a tool to build relationships with other parents, teachers and school administration. Using this tool can help parents network and build stronger relationships within their school community. The end goal is

increased commitment and accountability for parent engagement efforts within the schools.

- Trainer provided an overview of the goals of relational meetings and discussed what relational meetings are and are not.
- Parents observed a relational meeting and conducted a relational meeting with a partner.
- The assignment for the next few months for PLN parents is to conduct 10 relational meetings with members from their school communities. The goal of the assignment is to increase parent engagement efforts at individual schools and increase PLN monthly participation. Parents will begin to report out on their efforts at the January PLN meeting.
- Parent Leadership Network may re-train on relational meetings in the future if requested.

Next month's meeting:

- March will focus on parent engagement pioneers, both at the national level and school district level at Racine Unified.
- Parents will continue their relational meeting assignment and we will check-in monthly about it