

DISTRICT EFFORTS TO MEET LCFF PRIORITY 3: FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

TIDES Report to PON
January 2021



Parent
Organization
Network

Breaking Through Barriers

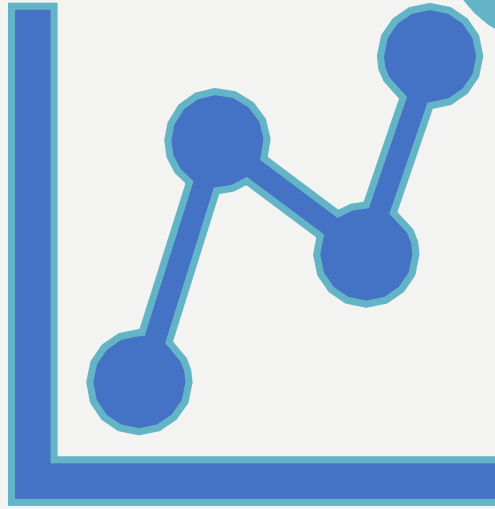
TAKE-AWAYS FROM DISTRICT NARRATIVES

Districts are working in multiple ways to increase partnerships with families, including staff professional development and actions to stimulate engagement.

TAKE-AWAYS FROM DISTRICT NARRATIVES

DISTRICTS RECOGNIZE THE NEED TO...

1. focus on professional development that addresses bias and inequities in policies and practices
2. ensure all family engagement initiatives focus clearly on student outcomes.



OVERVIEW OF DATA AND METHODS

**FOCUS OF ANALYSIS: NARRATIVE COMPONENT OF
SELF-REFLECTION TOOL**

PURPOSEFUL STRATIFIED SAMPLE OF RURAL, SUBURBAN, AND URBAN DISTRICTS WITHIN EACH REGION SELECTED

11 Regions	248 Districts 27% of 930 total	95 Elementary	29 Secondary	124 Unified
-------------------	--	--------------------------------	-------------------------------	------------------------------



- ❖ 24 districts with promising practices identified by PON, the California Department of Education, and other partners
- ❖ 8 county offices (out of 64 total) identified as providing promising practices in their court and community schools



NARRATIVE 1: BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN SCHOOL STAFF & FAMILIES

KEY DISTRICT STRENGTHS

❖ Parent Education:

- ❖ Most districts defined their strength as **providing parent education** with no mention of building relationships with staff

❖ Legal Rights and Advocacy:

- ❖ Increasing parents' understanding of **legal rights** and how to **advocate** for their child (48 districts – 19%)

DISTRICT TRENDS

- ❖ **Partnering** with County Offices, local universities and outside agencies to offer multi-session parent education programs (72 districts – 29%)
- ❖ Offering multi-tier **Parent University** or **Parent Academy** Programs with workshops focused on academic topics (35 districts – 14%)
- ❖ Establishing **Family Resource Centers** to welcome families, address their needs, and engage them in district/school (35 districts – 14%)



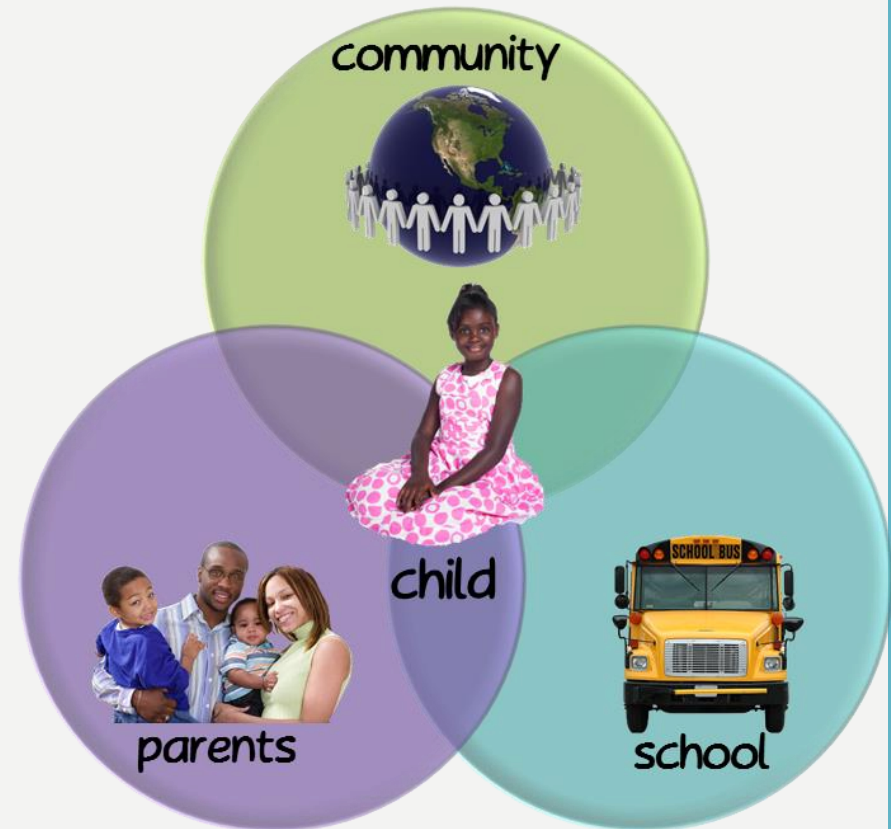
CENTER FOR
EDUCATIONAL
PARTNERSHIPS



Fresno Unified School District

NARRATIVE 1: DISTRICT NEEDS

- ❖ Lack of parent participation
(57 districts – 23%)
- ❖ Find better ways to support families with home learning (57 districts – 23%)
- ❖ Coordinate services and resources for diverse families (26 districts – 10%)



NARRATIVE 1: FOCUS AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- ❖ Customize learning programs and resources for parents to ensure reaching all subgroups
(22 districts – 8%)
- ❖ Improve communication and promote collaborative culture between families and teachers
(14 districts – 6%)



A KEY FINDING IN NARRATIVE 1

“Dual Capacity” as a framework for building staff-family relationships was not found in many district narratives.



Professional Development

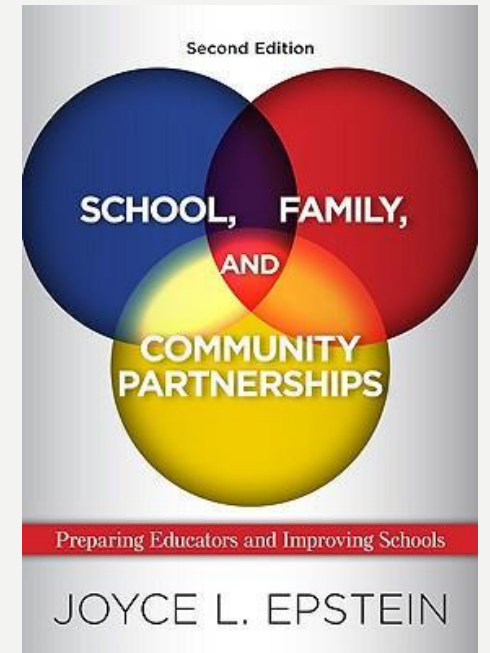
Hiring Staff



NARRATIVE 2: DEVELOPING PARTNERSHIPS FOR STUDENT OUTCOMES

DISTRICT STRENGTHS: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TO HELP STAFF LEARN TO...

- Partner with families (101 districts – 41%)
- Understand and appreciate family strengths, language, and culture (68 districts – 27%)



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

- Support families coping with **trauma, poverty, and social-emotional needs** (36 districts – 14%)
- Address systemic **bias and lack of equity** (23 districts – 9%)



DISTRICT STRENGTHS: HIRED NEW FAMILY ENGAGEMENT STAFF



- **At the school level** (parent involvement specialists, translators, technicians, counselors, resource center coordinators)
- **At the district level** (volunteer coordinators, engagement specialists, Spanish and bilingual liaisons, communication/community outreach specialists)

NARRATIVE 2: NEEDS & AREAS OF FOCUS



NEED TO...

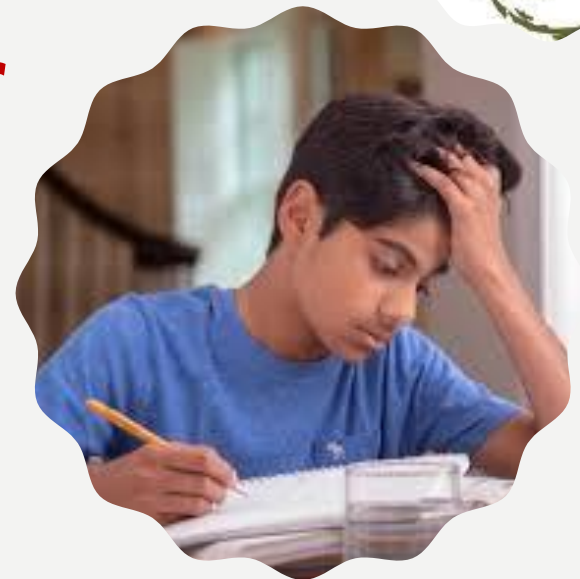
- Address inequity and bias towards diverse families (43 districts – 17%)
- Improve staff capacity to partner with families (16 districts – 6%)

AREAS OF FOCUS

- Offer professional development to address inequities (37 districts – 15%)
- Build stronger partnerships with underserved families (37 districts – 15%)

A KEY FINDING IN NARRATIVE 2

Very few districts mentioned a direct or indirect link of professional development or hiring staff to student outcomes.





NARRATIVE 3: SEEKING INPUT FOR DECISION-MAKING

KEY DISTRICT STRENGTHS

TRADITIONAL

- Input from **Advisory Committees** (187 districts – 75%)
- Using **surveys** for parent & staff input (105 districts – 42%)



NON-TRADITIONAL

- Input at **town hall meetings, community forums, focus groups** (22 districts – 9%)
- Using **social media** for parent & staff input (75 districts – 30%)



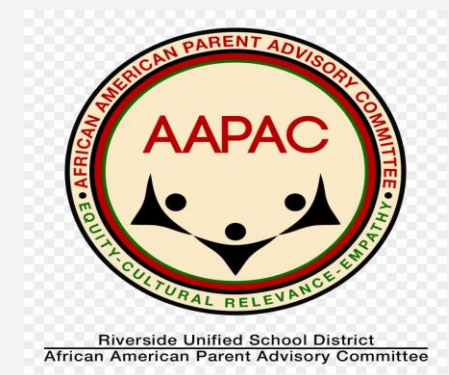
DISTRICT TRENDS

❖ Capacity Building:

Providing training for parents and staff to increase committee effectiveness (57 districts – 23%)

❖ Engaging Underrepresented Groups:

Establishing new advisory groups to address the needs of special populations (e.g. African American, Native American, Korean, Mixteco) (28 districts – 11%)



NARRATIVE 3: DISTRICT NEEDS

- ❖ Most frequently identified need was finding ways to reach out and engage underserved families (54 districts – 22%)
- ❖ Securing participation and attendance at parent meetings (20 districts – 8%)
- ❖ Increasing parent and student voice to build more robust and diverse groups (13 districts – 5%)



SUPERINTENDENT'S
STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

NARRATIVE 3: FOCUS AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- ❖ Facilitate greater parent participation on advisory committees (23 districts – 9%)
- ❖ Find more dynamic ways to engage underrepresented families (21 districts – 8%)
- ❖ Use multiple platforms and other means for gathering information from parents on how they want to be engaged (19 districts – 8%)

A KEY FINDING IN NARRATIVE 3

Involving stakeholders in designing, implementing, and evaluating parent engagement initiatives was rarely mentioned in district narratives.



PROMISING PRACTICES FROM 24 DISTRICTS

- ❖ Addressing issues of **equity and bias** in district and school policies and practices (23 districts)
- ❖ Forming **Family Engagement or Partnership Teams** at the district or school level (12 districts)
- ❖ Supporting **new groups organized by parent and community leaders** to promote parent leadership and effective partnerships (10 districts)

PROMISING PRACTICES FROM 24 DISTRICTS

- ❖ Implementing interactive digital tools to enhance **Two-Way Communication** (11 districts)
- ❖ Establishing **Parent Ambassador and Buddy Family** programs to assist newcomer families (7 districts)
- ❖ Strengthening parent-teacher conferences to be two-way and goal focused, using **Academic Teacher-Parent Teams** model (7 districts)

SUMMARY OF COUNTY DATA

- ❖ Narratives mirror similar strengths, needs, and areas of focus as school districts
- ❖ Some Unique Strengths:
 - Involving community partners and support agencies (such as probation and social workers) in decision-making and providing support for students & families
 - Providing alternative education professional development

SUMMARY OF COUNTY DATA

❖ Unique Needs and Areas of Focus :

- Working to engage, educate, and communicate with families of more specialized populations with unique challenges

- Creating a Parent Transition Coordinator to work with parents of incarcerated students during the court process

- Helping families accessing resources and navigating the environment of public and community agencies

RECOMMENDATIONS: TO SUPPORT DISTRICT WORK

- ❖ Ask parents and students how they want to be engaged.
- ❖ Continue offering professional development to effectively partner with all families.
- ❖ Encourage courageous conversations needed to address systemic inequities and system bias.
- ❖ Share promising practices on collaborating with and engaging underrepresented populations.

RECOMMENDATIONS: TO SUPPORT DISTRICT WORK

- ❖ Use research-based tools that can be found on the CDE website.
 - ❖ The Dual-Capacity Framework to guide district efforts
 - ❖ Ideas on Family Engagement Team
 - ❖ CDE Family Engagement Tool Kit

- ❖ Simplify the self-reflection tool by describing 1-3 actions that have made a difference and one next step.

TIDES TEAM

- Janet Chrispeels, Director
chrispeels@gmail.com
- Margarita González Zaske, Research Director
- Pamela Long, Research Director

QUESTIONS / COMMENTS WELCOMED

