Parents That Show Up Have Students That Go Up: Best Practices for Effective Parent Engagement

2019 NCCEP/GEAR UP Capacity-Building Workshop
February 11, 2019
Objectives

• Develop family-friendly and culturally-sensitive strategies that improve communication between, GEAR UP teams, families and schools

• Enhance the participation of parents/families in post-secondary education through a multi-faceted recruitment plan

• Review the research and data points that support family engagement and its relationship to student achievement;

• Receive replicable activities with your own GEAR UP program parents’ practice in action sessions you use or adapt for your GEAR UP parent program
Agenda

• Why It Matters
• Icebreaker
• Integrating Family Engagement into the School Culture
• Tools for Program Design & Improvement
• Break
• The Data Connection
• Planning
• Q & A
What is Family Engagement?

According to the U.S. Department of Education it is “the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities”.
Students with involved parents (caring adults), no matter what their background, are more likely to:

- Earn Higher Grades
- Enroll in Higher Level Programs
- Adapt Well in School
- Graduate & Go to College
Why It Matters to GEAR UP

Research on GEAR UP programs shows that students who have a family member participate in at least one GEAR UP college visit are nearly three times as likely to enroll in college, and students who have a family member participate in at least one GEAR UP workshop are one and a half times as likely to enroll in college (Tillery, 2009).
The involvement of families of underserved students is limited by their lack of confidence in their ability to interact with school staff effectively, limited language skills, and a lack of understanding of the types of involvement that are valued.

- Parents/adults do not know the laws governing the school.
- Parents/adults are unfamiliar with the programs in the community.
- Parents/adults do not understand the assignments brought home.
What Research Says

Just about all families care about their children, want them to succeed, and are eager to obtain better information from schools to remain good partners in their children’s education.

• Partnerships tend to decline across the grades...

• Schools in more economically depressed communities make more contacts with families about the problems and difficulties their children are having...

• Single parents who are employed outside the home, parents who live far from the school, and fathers are less involved...
Types of Family Engagement
Epstein’s Six Types of Family Involvement & Connection to GEAR UP College Planning

- Parenting
- Communicating
- Volunteering
- Learning at Home
- Decision Making
- Collaborating with the Community
Adult Learning Theory

GEAR UP Parents

GEAR UP Students
Ice Breaker
Climate in School
Best Practices: Parent Climate in School

1. Review the *Parent Climate in School* sheet

2. Place an “X” by the appropriate level of implementation for you grant.

   Consider the following:

   • Do you feel like you have mastered these activities? What helped you get there?
   • Have you done a few of these, but still have areas to improve?
   • Are there some that you have not tried?
Fundamentals for Facilitation

• Parents must have fun!
• Parents must participate
• Parents must take something away of value
• They must like you
Me during the parent meeting when they ask for volunteers.
Needs Assessment
Conducting a Parent Needs Assessment

In your group discuss the PROS and CONS of using a Parent Needs Assessment.

What information should you try to obtain from parents?
Parent Outreach Plan

Targeted Content Delivery

• Brainstorm a list of grade specific content/topics you plan on covering with students, that parents need to know, be sure to include topics parents have demonstrated interest in.

• Organize and prioritize the topics – remember to try to keep list to 3-5 main topics you will be addressing during the length of the school year.

• Decide which will be the best medium to share the information.

• Get to work, set your goals, and timeline.
Parent Outreach – Flow Chart

SOPHOMORE PARENTS

Off Track
- Intervention
  - Phone Call

On Track
- Celebratory
  - Phone Call

Login / Update Parent Portal
- GEAR UP Workshops
- Extracurricular Activities

Credit Recovery / Graduation Requirements
- Tutoring
- • Summer School
- • Night School
- • Online Recovery

Maintaining GPA
- • College Overnights
- • Scholarships (Posse, Dell, Questbridge)

Summer Opportunities
- • Early College Credit
- • Enrichment/Career Exploration Programs
Parent Phone Call

Create Your Own Script

• Working with the person sitting next to you, begin to create a script for a parent phone call.

• In your tables, half of the groups should work on creating a “celebratory” phone call script and the other half should create an “intervention” phone call script.

• Test your script with another group

What Makes a Good Script?
The National Challenge

- Low college enrollment for low-income students
- Historical and social forces have contributed to disadvantaged students’ low-academic achievement
Low College Enrollment

- 65-74% of high income high school graduates applied and two years after graduation 54% were still enrolled.
- 21-50% of low income high school graduates applied and two years after graduation only 14% were still enrolled.

National Center for Education Statistics, Condition of Education 2006

The Relationship of Parent Involvement and Student Success in GEAR UP Communities in Chicago
Stack Ph.D. Dissertation 2010
Objectives to Research Study

- Understand the influence of GEAR UP parent participation on student success
- Use empirical design to study parent involvement in GEAR UP programs
- Explain the influence of parent involvement on student success using the theoretical framework of social capital
Access to social capital allows individuals to secure benefits through the relationships and communication that exist with structures and network.

Coleman, 1988

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## Social Capital

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Capital</th>
<th>GEAR UP Parent Programs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educational attainment is an important predictor for the child’s academic success (USDOE, 2001)</td>
<td>Provides opportunities for parents to complete their GED, attend workshops, go to college</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students do better academically when their parents are aware, knowledgeable, encouraging and involved (Epstein, 1992)</td>
<td>Provides information to help parents become more aware and knowledgeable regarding academic success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The amount of social capital depends on the size of the network and the amount of resources possessed (Bordieu, 1986)</td>
<td>Provides opportunities for parents to meet with each other and increases their knowledge of the education system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High income parents possess characteristics that lead to their child’s success (Lareau, 1987)</td>
<td>Assists parents with understanding curriculum, increases access to college information, provides for tutoring and transportation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School, family and community partnerships are key (Epstein, 1995)</td>
<td>Structures are developed to improve school/community connection</td>
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Major Findings

- A statistically significant relationship was found between Parent Involvement and 9th grade GPA
- A statistically significant relationship was found between Parent Involvement and the PLAN Composite Score
Implications

Parent Advocate Model – Parent Leadership

- The Parent Advocates are parents who complete a parent training model designed to educate parents for leadership
- The Parent Advocates are in paid positions and are an integral part of the GEAR UP program
- Parent Advocates are insiders who are leaders in their local communities and know firsthand the struggles of families in low-income neighborhoods

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College Admissions - “Will I get in?”
Closing Q & A
EXCEL. Enhance Skills. Promote Continual Improvement.

Betty Paugh Ortiz
Vice President of Programs
National Council for Community and Education Partnerships
betty_paughortiz@edpartnerships.org

Wendy M. Stack, Ph.D.
Associate Vice President, Access, Innovation and Research, Executive Director, Chicago GEAR UP Alliance
Center for College Access and Success
Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago, IL
W-Stack@neiu.edu

Rhonda Thomas
Program Manager
Chicago GEAR UP Alliance
Center for College Access and Success
Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago, IL
R-Thomas2@neiu.edu

Rene Diaz
Parent Resource Coordinator
Chicago GEAR UP Alliance,
Center for College Access and Success
Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago, IL
R-Diaz5@neiu.edu