



## Teachers and Parents as Partners

### Parkview Elementary School, Rangely School District

Submitted by Kristen Thayne, [Kristen.Thayn@rangelyk12.org](mailto:Kristen.Thayn@rangelyk12.org), and Susan Sheridan, [ssheridan2@unl.edu](mailto:ssheridan2@unl.edu)

Teachers and Parents as Partners (TAPP) is a research-based approach that builds relationships between parents and teachers to help students succeed. Implemented most commonly for students who are struggling with social, behavioral or academic challenges, it promotes goal attainment through meaningful home-school partnerships. Parkview Elementary School -- and all of Rangely RE4 -- nurtures students' full potentials by setting high expectations, engaging in collaborative teamwork, and addressing the unique needs of all students. TAPP complements these principles through its emphasis on strengths, partnerships, capacity-building, and individualized experiences.

The School Counselor was instrumental in bringing TAPP to Parkview. She learned of the program through collaborators at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, who also worked with members of CDE's Family, School, Community Partnerships office.

TAPP uses a structured, data-based approach to support students' success. It is designed to augment support systems already in place to support students and families, such as PBIS and MTSS. In particular, it functions effectively as a Tier 2 or Tier 3 approach to support unique and individualized needs of students and families. To use TAPP at Parkview, the counselor first participated in a self-paced, virtual TAPP training program. The program includes a personal coach who helped her hone her delivery of TAPP, introduce it to other teachers and parents at the school, and support its implementation. For each student identified for TAPP, she met with the student's parent(s) and teacher three to four times over approximately six weeks to identify as a team what they can do together to support student success. The first meeting involved identifying the student's strengths, needs and goals. The second meeting involved understanding students' skills and behaviors, and co-creating collaborative home-school plans for helping students' achieve their goals. Parents and teachers implemented the plans over a few weeks, continuing to communicate regularly with one another. They also continued to monitor students' progress using simple tools and procedures. During the final meeting, the counselor -- in collaboration with teachers and parents -- reviewed the home-school data, discussed whether goals were met, helped modify plans to support continued progress, and recommended methods for parents and teachers to continue their partnership.



Teachers at Parkview have reported that students made significant improvements in developing new skills to replace behaviors that interfered with their success at home and school. Some of the student goals included increasing time on-task in the classroom, improving emotion regulation, and following directions. On average, the students whose parents and teachers engaged in TAPP demonstrated 80% to 90% overall goal attainment. Relative to their performance prior to TAPP, they demonstrated more prosocial interactions, sustained effort completing tasks, and positive coping strategies. Teachers and parents report appreciating the open dialogue that occurred with TAPP and the focus on finding effective solutions instead of reacting to problems. Parents have expressed confidence that their child was better understood, and they reported feeling optimistic about



the success their child is experiencing at school. Another important indicator of successful student outcomes was based on comments made by teachers and parents. One parent said, “I have really appreciated working through this project (TAPP) because we can bounce ideas off each other and we're not on an island.” A teacher reported, “It's been very noticeable with this process. (The child) is more engaged and challenged now in a good way, instead of bored and distracted.”

The school counselor offers the following advice to fellow educators: “This is a great program to get parents more involved. It seems to give them more permission/motivation to be engaged in a nonjudgmental way. They almost seem empowered. It helps teachers have a space to find a solution that they might otherwise not feel supported with. We always left the meetings with positivity and encouragement for the process.”