

Family Engagement Liaison Professional Learning Communities

Jeffco Public Schools

Submitted by Susan Kimes-Demboski, Susan.Kimes-Demboski@jeffco.k12.co.us

Jeffco's Family Engagement Liaisons (FELs) serve 31 Title I schools. The FEL program's core mission is to build strong, genuine partnerships between schools and families, empowering all as equal education partners. The Professional Learning Community (PLC) model's goal was to empower FELs to navigate complexities, ensure consistent and coherent family belonging, and continuously refine practices through joint planning and critical reflection. Jeffco's FEL-PLC model was planned and implemented through a vital collaboration with Scholastic's F.A.C.E. (Family and Community Engagement) specialists.

FELs engaged in three unique PLC groups: Building Family Capacity, focusing on Elementary Literacy, READ Plans, and Illustrative Math; Building Diverse Family Voice and Agency; and Bridging Grade Level Transitions. A key focus was fostering shared power and ownership of student academic success. This was achieved by creating the conditions necessary for all families to communicate high expectations, support learning at home, monitor progress, guide education, and effectively advocate for their child's needs. Strategies were continually elevated through data-informed reflection.



Successful outcomes of FEL-PLCs were evident in tangible examples of shared practice. These communities fostered [collaborative data analysis](#), significantly enhancing the data literacy of FELs. This improved data literacy led to more responsive and strategic decision-making. Improved communication among Liaisons, stronger team cohesion, and a heightened sense of collective identity were all direct results of this collaborative model. Furthermore, the PLCs fostered enhanced accountability to district-wide outcomes. Crucially, these communities culminated in the authentic integration of diverse family perspectives into discussions, planning, and decision-making processes.

Challenges included consistent PLC meeting times, common strategy implementation, and calibrating data collection. Feedback from FELs overwhelmingly highlighted the impact of the PLC model. They found immense benefit in learning from their colleagues and collaborating across different schools and grade levels.

Bringing FELs together around a common goal and purpose, then collecting, sharing, and reflecting on data to implement shared strategies, really puts learning into action collaboratively across schools. Make sure to dedicate time for PLCs to build and practice effective meeting structures, norms, and facilitation. Identifying 'community' categories that genuinely align with school and district goals will ensure the work has real impact. Finally, building the team's data literacy will be key to driving smart PLC decisions and next steps.