

Understanding Family Partnering Data

Jeffco Public School District
Golden, CO



COLORADO
Department of Education

While Jeffco Public School District has done well on family engagement surveys in the past, little time has been devoted to training families or school staff on the basics of meaningful family engagement outside of Title I schools. New energy around the release of the “Jeffco Generations” strategic plan in 2017 encouraged schools to take on family engagement in a different way.

To that end, “Articulation Area” Family Engagement meetings are held throughout the district. Usually, the process starts with a meeting involving the community superintendent and all principals in a given articulation area to decide on details. Promotional materials are created and provided to the schools so they can advertise to their individual communities. Most often, the event is held at the feeder high school with the school’s principal taking the lead as host. Food is provided in a variety of ways from PTA/PTO, school funds, or Title I funds. Childcare is handled by the high school’s National Honor Society students.



A typical evening is as follows: Opening and presentation by the superintendent followed by the sharing of family engagement research, foundational documents (National Standards for Family-School Partnerships and Dual Capacity Framework), and family school partnership data for each school. Participants are grouped by school and they participate in a “sorting” activity around their current family engagement initiatives using the National Standards for Family School Partnerships as reference. Successes and opportunities are shared with the whole group and then question and answer time finishes off the evening.

Participants fill out feedback forms at the end of the event and the results are overwhelmingly positive. Most ask for more events of this nature and more time to talk in their school groups. Some schools replicate the sorting activity with staff and families in their individual schools and additional materials/training is frequently requested.

These events are a wonderful opportunity to introduce family engagement from a community perspective and allows for schools to see how the family engagement work they do impacts student learning. When planning this type of evening, pre-planning is critical. Principals appreciate that promotional materials are already created and a promotion plan is provided to them with dates attached (messenger phone calls, marquee wording, website promotion, social media blurbs). Schools truly appreciate having the logistics handled but the flow and format of the evening is determined by them as they know their communities best. Provide more time than you think for discussion. Once people start talking about family engagement, they want to keep the conversations going!

Standard 2—Communicating Effectively