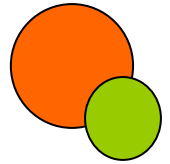




PASADENA EDUCATION NETWORK

PASADENA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Welcome Center



CREATING EFFECTIVE PARENT/SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS: PARENTS AS LEADERS

A collaboration between the Pasadena Education Network & the Pasadena Unified School District

Summary of Participant Evaluations

A total of 50 parents/guardians with children attending all but three PUSD schools participated in one or both of the two 3-hour Parents as Leaders workshops. There were 35 participants at each session; a total of 17 parents (representing 13 schools and including two parents of incoming kindergarten students) were able to attend both the Feb. 20 and March 6 sessions.

Evaluations were distributed at the March 6 session, and were made available via email to parents who attended the first session but not able to make the second session. A total of 30 participants (19 English speakers and 11 Spanish speakers) completed the evaluation survey.

1. What School(s) Do Your Children Attend?

Respondents represented a total of 20 PUSD schools: Altadena, Blair, Burbank, Don Benito, Eliot, Hamilton, Jackson, Jefferson, Loma Alta, Longfellow, Marshall, McKinley, Norma Coombs, PHS, Roosevelt, San Rafael, Sierra Madre, Washington [Middle or Accelerated?], Webster, Willard.

2. What leadership role(s) do you currently play at your child(ren)'s school(s)?

Of the 30 respondents, 10 listed leadership or active roles with their school PTA, 9 currently participate (and one previously participated) in their school site council, and 8 said they were actively involved in their school's ELAC. Other types of involvement cited included: classroom volunteer, leader, or room parent; Head Start parent leadership, Healthy Start volunteer, parent ambassador (including PEN Parent Ambassador and parent liaison for the Mandarin language immersion program), and book fair chair.

3. Did this workshop provide you with useful knowledge?

Prior to the workshop, we asked people who planned to attend to rate their current knowledge or skill level in the main content areas to be covered by the workshop. The workshop evaluation asked parents whether the workshop provided them with useful knowledge in these areas. A total of 24 English speakers completed the pre-workshop survey (which was also made available in Spanish).

The Table below compares pre- and post-workshop responses. In the post-workshop evaluations, 91% of Spanish-speaking respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they had gained useful knowledge in all areas but one; 82% agreed or strongly agreed that they had gained useful knowledge about school budgets. Spanish speakers were more likely than English speakers to agree they had gained useful knowledge or had skills/understanding in each of the content areas, but English speakers were more likely to strongly agree that they understood the District's organizational structure, how parents can effectively partner with schools, and that they had the skills to lead effective meetings. (See attached for

a detailed report of the responses, including a comparison of English v. Spanish-speaking participants' responses.)

	Pre-workshop Survey	Post-workshop Evaluation
“I understand the organizational structure of the District and school sites.”	44% - “Some knowledge” 30% - Little or none 17% - Some idea	53% agreed and 27% strongly agreed that they had gained useful knowledge. 73% agreed or strongly agreed that they gained a better understanding of the elements of school budgets. 87% agreed or strongly agreed that they gained a better understanding of how to use data to evaluate how their school is doing at reaching academic and other goals.
“I have the skill necessary to increase parent engagement with diverse groups of parents at my school.”	38% - “some idea/ no experience” 33% - “some knowledge/experience” 24% - little or none	55% agreed they had gained useful knowledge 33% strongly agreed
“I understand how parents can effectively partner with schools	48% - “some idea/ no experience” 33% - “some knowledge/experience”	52% agreed they had gained useful knowledge 31% strongly agreed 10% somewhat agreed and somewhat disagreed
“I have the skills to lead effective meetings.”	40% - some knowledge/experience 25% - “I am strong in this area” 25% - some idea/no experience	63% agreed they gained useful knowledge in this area. 33% strongly agreed
“I understand how parents can work collaboratively with their school to have a lasting impact on student achievement.”	48% - some knowledge/experience 33% - some idea/no experience 14% - “I am strong in this area”	60% agreed they gained useful knowledge in this area 23% strongly agreed. 13% somewhat agreed and somewhat disagreed.

4. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

All Spanish-speaking respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the goals of the workshop were clear, that the goals were met, and that the time was used well. Most English speakers also agreed or strongly agreed, though 6% (one respondent) expressed some ambivalence about whether the goals were met and time was used well, and another 6% disagreed that “time was used well.”

Sixty percent of Spanish speakers strongly agreed and 40% agreed that they had “gained many ideas that will help improve parent-school partnerships at my school”, that there had been opportunities to share ideas with others. Eighty percent strongly agreed that “overall, this workshop was worthwhile,” and the other 20% agreed.

One hundred percent of English-speaking respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the workshop was worthwhile. Eighty-three percent agreed or strongly agreed that there were opportunities to share ideas with others, and 77% agreed or strongly agreed that they had gained ideas that would help improve parent-school partnerships at their schools.

5. What part of this workshop was most useful to you?

About a third of respondents singled out the presentation and discussion of **diversity and cross-cultural communication** as the most useful part of the workshop.

Other topics highlighted by multiple respondents included:

- Leading effective meetings (5)
- Budget (3)
- “What is a Parent Leader” (3)
- Understanding data / Importance of Site Council (2)

Other responses:

- All was useful (2)
- Suggestions, slides, notes and encouragement
- Learning/hearing different perspectives
- Discussion of challenges to effective parent involvement and how to overcome them

6. What was least helpful?

Thirteen respondents did not answer, or answered “none”.

Best practices, Effective meetings, and the Curriculum presentation were each mentioned once.

Other comments:

- Some of the information was too general.
- I already knew most of what was presented at the first session.
- The Spanish translation was distracting. (Translation equipment did not work well during the second session, and we switched to grouping Spanish speakers with the translator.)

7. How you are going to use what you learned to improve parent-school partnerships at your school?

The four broad themes that emerged in response to this question were:

- ***Implement what I learned to improve communication with parents and encourage greater participation and involvement*** (e.g., create parent newsletter, make parent involvement more accessible to more people by alternating meeting times, let parents know they can be involved without having to take on a leadership role, help more parents feel welcome; work on having more effective meetings).
- ***Work more strategically with school principal.*** (One parent commented, “I have a better filter on what is possible”; another said, “I am not sure our school is ready for true parent partnerships.”)

- ***Share what I learned and brainstorm with other parents.*** (Respondents specifically mentioned bringing a summary to principal and other leaders, sharing at next ELAC meeting, and brainstorming with others about “bridge-building” among parents.)
- ***Take on more of a leadership position*** (e.g., learn more about the various parent groups and what they do; become a Site Council rep, attract more people to leadership roles).

8. What assistance or follow-up would you like?

A recurring theme was that it would be valuable to ***bring this kind of workshop to the school sites***, and especially to find ways to bring the diversity/cross-cultural communication conversation to the schools. Of the sixteen respondents who answered this question, seven made comments along these lines:

- *I want to make sure teachers and principals are hearing the same message.*
- *We need help fostering/building community among various parent communities – bridging the divide between ethnic groups at our school site.*
- *I would love for Wenonah to come talk about cross-cultural communication with our parents!*
- *Given technical difficulties, we need to evaluate what we do to engage Spanish speakers.*

Other respondents asked for ***more training or information on specific topics***, notably the budget, but also about the different opportunities for parent involvement.

Parents want to be kept updated on courses offered by PUSD and PEN to parent volunteers, and to be updated on opportunities for involvement. There were also specific requests for more info about:

- *How to be involved in your child’s education in general, and resources available to help parents support their child’s education*
- *Ideas on how to get involved as a working parent who cannot be at school during the day.*

9. Other comments or ideas

Respondents were generally enthusiastic (“great use of my time”, “good info”, “great speakers”, “loved seeing so many people involved”, “thanks for providing childcare”).

Several respondents underscored the frustration felt by both Spanish and English speakers with the challenge posed by language barriers.

- Three people suggested offering the workshop in Spanish (or in Spanish with English translation).
- An English-speaker noted the challenge to engaging Spanish-speaking parents at her school site because of the language barrier.
- A bi-lingual parent noted that the “simultaneous translation problem was not handled adequately” at the workshop, and that this is an example of a widespread source of frustration that “discourages non-English-speaking parents from getting involved in their child’s school.”

The theme of facilitating cross-cultural communication and constructive conversations about diversity at the school sites came up again.

- A Spanish speaker said, “to involve more parents it is necessary to have/create multi-racial workshops, because I believe that is a barrier that divides parents.”
- An English speaker suggested identifying an “anti-bias/anti-assumption leader at each PUSD school to address cross-cultural conversations and [parent?] recruitment.”