

Keeping Parents Informed and Involved

Roadmap to Planning a Parent's Night

As schools shift to implement the Common Core standards, parents and guardians are critical partners for ensuring student success. A first step in this is helping parents to better understand the new standards and how what their children are learning and how it is taught will change. This checklist provides some useful tips to help plan an effective event that engages parents and follow-up that builds ongoing relationships.

PLANNING FOR THE EVENT

- Dedicate staff and resources to the event as soon as possible, including event coordinators, master teachers and community outreach specialists
- Set up regular planning sessions for the event
- Identify partners to play a key role in the planning and organization of the night (e.g. advocates, parents, teachers, etc.)
- Identify which formats will be most effective for engaging with parents (lectures, round table discussions, town hall meetings, etc.)
- Reach out to local community and parent groups to gauge opinions and identify what type of information and support local parents need most
- Work with partners, school leaders, teachers and local parent coordinators to develop objectives for the evening and draft an agenda that includes activities to engage parents in the material
- Identify speakers and facilitators who will be most relevant to parents; this can include local community leaders, principals, master teachers and others
- Share notice with community leaders and parent advocacy groups to distribute to their members
- Use multiple methods to notify parents directly, such as sending the notice home with students, posting on school website, announcing via social media, online registration, etc.

FOLLOW-UP FOR THE EVENT

- Send surveys to parents to gather feedback on the event
- Post all materials and pictures to the school website
- Develop information materials synthesizing the event and listing action steps for both the school and parents moving forward
- Continue contact with parent advocates and regularly invite parents back to talk further
- Develop regular outlets of communication for parents to receive information and submit their thoughts (newsletters, webpages, rapid response email systems, etc)