

ELL Task Force Parent Engagement Subcommittee Work Plan

This work plan was developed by the Parent Engagement Subcommittee with the input of the Office of Engagement (OOE) and the Office of English Language Learners (OELL). We want to especially thank Assistant Superintendent of Engagement Monica Roberts, Sonya Gomez-Banrey from OOE and Kevin Montoya from OELL for their participation at OELL meetings and in the development of this plan.

This work plan is based on the recommendations that the Parent Engagement Subcommittee presented to the School Committee in June 2016. The work plan reflects strategies that the subcommittee hopes will move our recommendations towards reality and implementation. This document provides the ELL Task Force with updates on each of the recommendations and is intended to elicit input, feedback, recommendation of resources, people we should be connecting with, next steps, etc.

There are specific areas where the PE Subcommittee is looking for feedback and support:

- Could the Task Force reach out to Deputy Superintendent Donna Muncey and the Superintendent to register the subcommittee's request/desire for (1) increased funding next year for the family engagement work of OOE and the School Support Team and (2) the possibility of the district requiring principals to reach "**proficiency**" for both **Standard III: Family and Community Engagement** and **cultural competence** in the Principal Evaluation Rubric to be deemed "competent"?
- There has been a proposal for the subcommittee to invite Instructional Superintendents to a meeting to present the evaluation process of principals (contact Jerome Doherty and Kris Taylor). This might be suited for a full ELL Task Force meeting instead?
- Can the Task Force better monitor **cultural competence** on the curricular, school, and district level, if the subcommittee does not take this on?
- Monitoring the PE Subcommittee recommendations is a lot of work. What are you particularly pleased with and what would you like to see us focusing on more?

Recommendation 1: District-wide commitment to better train, support, resource and hold school leaders and educators accountable for parent engagement for all students, including ELLs.

Planned Action:

- Monitor the development of a process to evaluate the quality of family engagement: There is currently no district-wide evaluation of school-based family engagement. OOE is in the process of framing and developing an evaluation plan to assess the effectiveness of the programs implemented by OOE, but the office does not have the capacity, neither human nor financial, to evaluate parent engagement at the school level for the entire district. *The subcommittee decided that without resources to evaluate effective parent engagement, the focus should be on the development of a rubric/tool.* The Family Friendly Schools Initiative rubric provides some standards for effective family engagement practices. The PE subcommittee will review the Family Friendly Schools Initiative rubric (and other rubrics) and provide input to OOE to assist in the development of a ELL parent engagement rubric/tool that parents could fill out to monitor the level and quality of ELL family engagement at schools and district level.

- Monitor that all schools understand what effective family engagement looks like and that there is an effective metric to measure quality family engagement. The Office of Data and Accountability has revised the School Climate Survey. Two questions with regards to ELL families' participation have been added. We have been told that the additions are critical questions that could allow for better monitoring of ELL parent engagement district-wide. *We are waiting for the questions to be sent to us.*

- Monitor and hold principals accountable to family engagement – The Office of Human Capital evaluates principals through Principal Leaders. In accordance with DESE requirements, the district evaluates principals using a rubric with four “Standards”: (I) Instructional Leadership, (II) Management and Operations, (III) Family and Community Engagement, and (IV) Professional Culture. However, principals do not need to be evaluated as “proficient” on Standard III: Family and Community Engagement to be deemed proficient in their overall evaluation. In this way, parent engagement, although included on the rubric, has no weight or impact at all. The state is considering shifting the accountability model, and giving more weight to parent engagement in this evaluation, but this is a preliminary idea. The PE Subcommittee has recommended that in the SIP, parent engagement needs to given equal weight in principal evaluations. It does not seem that this recommendation was added to the latest draft of the SIP. *Need to approach Donna Muncey and Dr. Chang to see if they have an inclination to give the family engagement standard more weight even if the State does not. There was also a recommendation to meet with a representative from the Principal's union for their support, as this may be a union issue. In addition, the PE Subcommittee will invite Principal Leaders to meet with the subcommittee to better understand the principal evaluation process.*

- Steps taken to increase ELL parent participation and voices on the school and district level. Monitor that ELL parent participation is supported at SSC, SPCs, CPCs, Task Forces, community meetings with superintendent, and other meeting seeking community input.

- OOE to better monitor SPC and SSC participation of ELL parents by collecting race and language data of school SSC and SPC parent leaders. OELL will have a separate DELLAC at schools and representatives on SPC and SSC. *The PE Subcommittee can monitor the level and quality of parent participation through school visits and using the new rubric that is to be developed in bullet 1. Subcommittee will also discuss with OE keeping track of ELL parent participation at CPC, Task Forces and community meeting with the Superintendent.*

- Advocate for increased resources for the School Support Team to better support school based family engagement. OOE has been given increased responsibilities without increasing their staff. For instance, each member of the School Support Team is supporting 30 schools, making real and increased parent engagement very challenging. The PE Subcommittee has advocated for an increase of staff working in this department. *It was suggested that a note supporting additional funding to increase the School Support Team be sent to Donna Muncey and Dr. Chang despite the reality that there is no chance of increasing funding this year. This note should probably come from the ELL Task Force and not the subcommittee or other approach.*

- Expansion of programs that successfully engage parents, such as APTT. APTT is costly in terms of money and time. The district is considering expanding it but is also studying the possibility of expanding other programs and implementing new ones. The options that are under consideration are: APTT, Structured Conversations, home-visits, Right Question Project, etc. *Continue to monitor the expansion of APTT and other programs.*

- Professional development of principals and teachers. OOE is currently working to integrate parent engagement into the August Principals Meeting. *Work with OOE to schedule timely reports on professional development for principals and teachers.*

Recommendation 2. Build culturally and linguistically welcoming school environments and culturally relevant curriculum that affirms our diverse student body and families.

Commitment to better train, resource, and hold school leaders and educators accountable to this recommendation. Cultural Competency is of deep concern to the subcommittee because it affects the ability of parents to participate on the school and district level.

Planned Action:

- Meet with Colin Rose to inquire about/monitor the district’s plan for cultural competency. Cultural competency is required by DESE but how is the district and schools monitored and evaluated on cultural competency by the state? How are school leaders being trained, resourced, and held accountable to build culturally and linguistically welcoming school environments? What are the benchmarks and how is progress being measured/evaluated? How is this responsibility being shared with various departments and how are departments being held accountable to this standard?
- Monitor the development of an effective metric to measure cultural competency at the district and school level that is aligned with cultural competent curriculum.
- Monitor that Principal evaluation will include proficiency in developing culturally and linguistically welcoming school environments and culturally competent curriculum
- Monitor the expansion of “Family Friendly Schools” in the district. There are only 4 certified Family Friendly Schools. In 2016, only 2 schools participated. Gain a better understanding of what Family Friendly schools are and monitor the development of the Family Friendly Schools Initiative.
- Recommend to the Program Quality Subcommittee to monitor the development of culturally competent curriculum.
- Have a conversation/coordinate with the Achievement Gap Task Force whose recommendations include parent engagement. Our understanding is that the Opportunity and Achievement Gap Task Force is trying to include parent engagement in the school climate survey, information on individual educator’s cultural competence, and to revamp the questions of the school climate survey to reflect cultural competence of schools and educators. *Rev. Tan has shared the subcommittee’s work plan with Jerry Robinson and will speak with Jerry Robinson to learn more about what the Opportunity and Achievement Gap Task Force is working on and coordinate efforts*

The subcommittee has not met with Colin Rose because many of the subcommittee’s concerns are also ELL Task Force level concerns and ELL Task Force is scheduling a meeting with Colin Rose to better understand what has been put in place around cultural competence and what future plans are. While it is a deep concern of the subcommittee’s, it does not fall directly within our focus area, and to our knowledge no subcommittee is currently monitoring this crucial recommendation.

Recommendation 3: Build language capacity at the district and school levels, both oral and written, to communicate with parents in schools

Planned Action:

- Monitor how the needs of ELL parents are being met through appropriate staffing in schools. There is a lack of bilingual staff in schools to be able to respond to parents. There was also a lack of access to interpreters and translated documents in schools. *Find out how to keep track of bilingual staff at schools with a large proportion of families.*
- Monitor that the needs of ELL parents for interpretation and translation of materials are being met. *Request that interpretation and translation office track number of requests for translation and interpretation and compare to the schools where there is a large number of ELL students and parents. Monitor how Outreach and education is done to ensure that schools use the translation and interpretation services as they should be in order to adequately serve ELL families.*

Updates:

- Two Spanish, Haitian/French Creole, Cape Verdean Creole/Portuguese speaking and translation staff has been hired. Recently, *Chinese and Vietnamese speaking staff were also added.*
 - The protocol for requesting written translation and oral interpretation has been developed and distributed to central office and school staff.
- Question – can parents request these services?**
- A pilot for virtual interpretation on iPads in collaboration with a reputable company has been developed that schools can access.
 - The district is beginning to translate IEPs with the goal is to translate all IEPs
 - Compile a draft glossary of important terms for the district.
- Monitor how the diverse communities are being informed of important information such as registration periods, forums, meetings, happenings or available resources. From talking to the Office of Communications, it does not seem that relationships with ethnic media have been built and therefore, ethnic media has not been adequately developed as partners to disseminate important information to the diverse communities. Parents in Mattapan did not feel adequately informed about school closings.
 - Monitor that there will be regular conversations with parents and Dr. Chang (June mtg notes). Suggestion from Monica Roberts that there be a community engagement advisory committee that serves as a sounding board for Dr. Chang and give better transparency and dialogues around topics. Have to think about how to set this up. Will come to Parent Engagement Subcommittee for proposed structure and participation.

Recommendation 4: Ensure adequate information and outreach to familiarize new immigrant parents with the school registration process (including the registration timing and schedule) and to help parents understand how to pick schools that best meet their child’s needs. Many parents we spoke with did not know how to pick schools. They were

unfamiliar with programs offered and did not know how to evaluate schools. Many chose schools that were close to them as the main criteria or were recommended by friends or family. Monitor what is being done to better reach and educate parents with relevant information.

- **Assignment of new ELL students to school seats.** The assignment process is now under OOE, which is planning to make changes for next year. For this registration period, students who are required to be tested by the NACC due to the results from home language surveys will receive a list of schools with ELL programs. After the testing the families are encouraged to choose a school that offers the ELL programs that their children need. *Monica is doing exit surveys with parents registering their children this period. She will share the survey results with the PE subcommittee.*

Next Steps:

1. Set up a timeline for reports on the various areas to be monitored. Continue to meet with Monica Roberts and Kevin Montoya to review and monitor the Subcommittee priorities
2. Work with OE and OELL to see about developing a rubric to better monitor family engagement that parents can fill out or be used to interview parents at school visits.
3. Set up a plan and schedule for some more school visits to monitor how reported progress made is translated on the ground.