

## Tucson Youth Development/ACE Charter High School

### C4-18: LEA Parental Involvement

#### Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Title I Parent Involvement Activities

As part of the continuous improvement process, the Principal, District Testing Coordinator and Activities Committee chairperson reviewed the effectiveness of the previous school years (2010-2011) parental involvement activities. It was determined that an additional needs assessment was required to evaluate how to increase parental involvement and identify the specific needs of parents. A survey was developed and distributed at a parent meeting in August 2011.

After evaluating the results of the needs assessment survey, two specific areas of need were identified. Parents stated that computer based training and nutritional based programs were areas of high interest and need. A plan was developed to increase the effectiveness of parental involvement activities, such as site based advisory council, provide parental training opportunities, and increase meaningful active communication between home and school. The measurement of effectiveness is based on continuous parental participation in site based advisory meetings, parent attendance at trainings, activities and increased website traffic. These strategies and action steps were incorporated in the 2011-2012 LEA Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP).

#### Summary of Parental Involvement Activities and Results:

- The initial parent meeting held in August was successful with over 25 families participating. The needs assessment survey was given to parents in attendance and completed with help of staff members. Parents were informed about this meeting through the mail with a letter in both Spanish and English. Sign-up sheets for parents to volunteer and participate in future activities, such as site council and school dances were made available to parents. This potluck even featured a desert competition between classes, and included student art work and demonstrations. Events that feature pot luck food, entertainment, and that are conducted in both English and Spanish typically have a high degree of parental involvement.
- Following the initial district assessment, the District Testing Coordinator and Activities Committee held an informational, technology based meeting to demonstrate to parents how their students were being assessed, the meaning of assessment data, and to familiarize parents with the types of curricular resources the school uses. Parents were informed of this training opportunity through a bilingual school wide mailing, which included phone calls to families who had previously demonstrated interested in this type of training. This training took place in early September during the evening. Information was also presented to assist parents in understanding what the quarterly progress reports mean in terms of student academic progress and provided parents with opportunities to sign up for conferences. This meeting was poorly attended with very few families in attendance.
- In late September, the initial Site Council meeting was held after school. Letters were sent home in both English and Spanish. Phone calls were also made to increase attendance based upon previous sign-up sheet contact information, and food was provided. The goal of meeting

was to select a Parent Involvement Coordinator, and begin to develop a calendar for future Site council meetings and agendas. This was a very poorly attended event, consequently no coordinator was selected and a calendar could not be developed.

- The Activities committee hosted a Halloween Dance that was chaperoned by several parents in addition to faculty and staff. This event was well attended by students and included food, music and other entertainment. This allowed teachers to socialize with parents and develop relationships.
- Beginning in November, The Community Food Bank partnered with the school. A series of three workshops were offered as the initial steps in creating a community garden on school grounds. The three workshops were well attended by students, faculty and parents. This is an ongoing program that continues to show a high volume of parental activity.
- Prior to the end of Semester 1, another Site council meeting was attempted. Phone calls were made home by teachers in addition to letters being sent home in both English and Spanish. Parents that had originally signed up to be part of the council were the focus in addition to the greater population. In an attempt to get more involvement the meeting was referred to as the Parent Committee. Food and drinks were also provided at this meeting. This meeting was also poorly attended.
- A second Parent Night was held at the beginning of Semester 2. This was a combination Awards and Informational meeting. Students were honored for passing the Fall AIMS, exceptional attendance, and for significant academic growth on district benchmark assessments. During this event a survey was distributed to assess the effectiveness of the Title 1 program. A Chili Cook off and potluck provided food for the event. This event, from the letters sent home to parents, follow up phone calls and the event itself, was conducted in both English and Spanish. This was a very successful event with over 30 families in attendance. Results from the Title I survey indicate that the school has created a welcoming environment for parents, that parents understand the scope of the program, and are effectively notified when opportunities for involvement are offered. Areas of improvement are to assist parents in helping student's complete homework and create a more effective partnership between parents, faculty and administration.

#### Future Action Steps to Increase Parental Involvement:

Strategies to increase communication between the school and parents have been successful, and the activities being conducted in both English and Spanish have created an engaging environment for families. The Community Food Bank program will continue, and provide opportunities for participants to receive assistance in creating home gardens in the future. Phone calls will be increased and made in both English and Spanish prior to events to personally invite parents to attend, particularly for Parent Committee meetings and other more informational activities. The Activities committee will continue to develop opportunities to increase the partnership between the school and parents during the remainder of the school year.