November 10, 2017

Members, Partners and Stakeholders,

How can we create family engagement programs that address implicit bias and promote educational equity? What are the cultural barriers that prevent many parents from becoming fully engaged in their children's education? One only needs to look at the articles featured in today's *NAFSCE News* to know that these are questions on the minds of educators, administrators and parents alike. The effective implementation of culturally responsive family engagement has come to the forefront of the discussion around racial equity and how it affects student success.

A [new research study](#) by the Parent Teacher Home Visit (PTHV) program concludes that implicit bias is part of being human, yet mindsets can be shifted. A mother from South Korea laments that for immigrant and nonwhite families like hers, the absence of genuine, two-way communication can be especially hurtful. And yet, a school in Texas simply asked parents what they needed, and created an English language class in response. The challenges are many, but solutions are starting to emerge.

Your response to [NAFSCE’s recent programming](#) also confirms this topic's importance. NAFSCE Members can view the video and presentation deck of our [Effective Practices Webinar: Culturally Responsive Family Engagement: Engaging Families of High Need Latino Students](#), as well as a summary of our [Twitter chat](#) on the same subject in the [Resources](#) section of our website. Webinar registrants should have received an email with links to these presentations. If you are not yet a NAFSCE member, but would like to access these resources, [click here](#) to learn more.

Finally, it is most fitting that we congratulate our good friends and partners at the [Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium (MAEC)](#), headed by NAFSCE Chairperson, Susan Shaffer, on 25 years of tireless work to promote excellence and equity in education to achieve social justice. Well done!

Best regards,
Ask the Experts

**Home visits can counteract implicit bias in both parents and teachers**

A new research study finds that the model employed by the Parent Teacher Home Visit (PTHV) program can support mindset shifts in ways that improve partnerships between educators and families and that are supportive of student success. Researchers observed that implicit biases may be "human" but they are not un-changeable.

**In the Trenches**

**Parent engagement credited with 75% increase in test scores for this LA Unified school**

Four years ago, Amestoy Elementary Principal Hugh Ryan made a strategic decision to invest in parents. He set high goals for parent participation and enlisted teachers in that effort and in making sure parents felt valued. In two years, math scores on state tests increased more than 75 percent. English language arts scores rose nearly 50 percent. Ryan called parent involvement "intrinsical" to the higher test scores.

Parents celebrating the winners of a gift card raffle during a literacy workshop last month at the Amestoy Elementary parent center.

**After turning around one failing middle school, this tattooed, skateboarding principal is taking on a new challenge**
Hamish Brewer is a born motivator. The New Zealander with an infectious energy served as principal of Occoquan Elementary, a school serving a large low-income and immigrant community. His unique leadership approach turned Occoquan from a struggling school with sagging test scores into one of the best schools in Virginia. Now, he's in his first year at a new school, tasked with spearheading the same transformation he led at Occoquan. Can he replicate his remarkable success at Fred Lynn Middle School?

Unique reading log embraced by parents, teachers and students alike

The new-style reading log is the brainchild of Ekuwah Moses, an educator and learning strategist, literacy specialist, and performance zone instructional coach from Las Vegas. It includes a number of real-life and unique options for kids to read and unlike most reading logs, it doesn't ask kids (or more likely their parents) to track the number of minutes read or number of books read, nor does it ask students to list the author or titles. The response has been overwhelming. Read the article. Download the Reading Log.

Attending school together: Principal responds to parent requests to offer English language course

"As a school, we're trying to incorporate parental involvement in the school, so what best way to do that than to ask them what it is they would like that would help them," says Rubina Sanchez, the principal at Julius Dorsey Elementary. The school provides the classroom, but the English education program is provided by Eastfield college. And it's the parents who wanted it here.

With just 54% of 3rd graders reading at grade level, this Texas school district is turning to parents for help
Waco ISD officials often hear from parents that they don't know how to help with instruction at home or that they learned how to read a different way than what is being taught today, McDurham said. This year the district is launching a parent engagement program that begins to address those barriers. "What we're really after this year is looking for meaningful opportunities to engage parents," said Robin McDurham, assistant superintendent of student services and family engagement.

Opinion

Parent-child relationships are crucial to the development of key character strengths that drive success in school and in life

Kimberly Krupa, director of Achieve Escambia notes that a growing body of research shows that character strengths, such as motivation to learn and empathy toward others, are as influential as IQ in determining life outcomes not only in school, but also in the workplace, and in areas such as health and criminality. Research also shows that the quality of parent-child relationships is 10 times more powerful than demographics (like race and family income) in predicting whether children are developing these critical character strengths. Her goal is to turn this evidence into improvement for the 100,000 children in her county.

Why I'm not involved: Parental involvement from a parent's perspective

University researcher and parent, Jung Ah-Choi explains how issues of race, culture, and trust have made her reluctant to become more involved at her son's school. "I wish that I had chances to offer my insights about the rules and values that are practiced at my child's school. But while my voice - and my critical understanding of race - is highly valued in college classrooms, it doesn't seem to have a place at my son's school."
2018 National Family Engagement Summit

Date: March 20 - 23, 2018
Location: Richmond, VA
The National Family Engagement Summit will help support your goals to promote collaborative family and school partnerships and strengthen the capacity building of your staff. With three keynote speakers, ten breakout sessions and multiple networking breaks, the 2018 Summit is your opportunity to learn from some of the nation's top experts in education. Learn more

Education Week Webinar

School Accountability, School Quality & Absenteeism Under ESSA

Date: Tuesday, November 14, 2017
Time: 2pm to 3pm, ET
Holding schools accountable for student attendance is ramping up under the Every Student Succeeds Act, as most states so far intend to use some measure of attendance (or absence) as an indicator of school quality. In this webinar, guest speakers Hedy Chang, director, Attendance Works and Charlene Russell-Tucker, chief operating officer, Connecticut State Department of Education will address the strategies and challenges associated with tackling chronic absenteeism and using it as a tool for school accountability.

Register Now

Grant Opportunity: Take Your Family To School Week

National PTA Announces the Take Your Family to School Week Grant Program, where 55 schools across the country will receive $1,000 to support family engagement programming in the areas of health and safety, literacy or digital learning. Applications must be submitted by November 17th at midnight.

Member Spotlight
Laura Gardner, culturally-responsive family engagement advocate and social worker

NAFSCE Member, Laura Gardner has 16 years of experience working in public education, refugee resettlement, and social work. While in public education, she worked as a district level manager for immigrant family and community engagement as well as a school social worker. Laura is a frequent contributor to NAFSCE's online member community. She participated in our first NAFSCE Twitter chat focused on culturally-responsive family engagement, and is currently teaching an online course on that subject. Thanks for being part of the NAFSCE community, Laura!

Are you a member on the move? Tag us on Twitter to tell us what you've been up to.

Join NAFSCE Today

NAFSCE is the only professional association dedicated solely to those who spend each and every day making family engagement happen -- those who advance high impact practices, promote evidence-based policies, and strive to engage all families in the development of their children. If you work with families and children, NAFSCE works for you.

Learn more about our membership benefits for individuals and organizations.

Career Center

Assistant Director, Family Engagement and Education

This position works to establish and strengthen parent partnerships and education within the Education program and to supervise and coordinate the Home Visiting and Parenting Journey Programs. The AD supervises the Social Worker and Family Support Workers and works to ensure that all aspects of the Parents as Teachers (PAT) program and Parenting Journey program are implemented with fidelity. Location: Washington, DC. Learn More

Family Engagement and Support Advocate

The successful candidate will work as a member of a team whose primary role is to engage families to partner with us to promote children's healthy development and school readiness. In their specialized role, the Family Engagement and Support Advocate will provide individualized, intensive support to the most vulnerable families in our Head Start program. Learn more

NAFSCE Members: Let Your Light Shine!
NAFSCE Members, let the world of family engagement professionals know all about your unique talents and skills by posting your resume in our Career Center. Members can also post listings for jobs that are available in their organization or school.

To post your resume, sign in to NAFSCE's Member Connect (click the Sign In button on the top of the NAFSCE website), then visit the Create a Resume page. This page is also found under My Profile on the right side of www.nafsce.org.

Not yet a NAFSCE Member? Learn more about these and other benefits of membership now! Join NAFSCE today.