PaTTAN’s Enhancing Family Engagement Series: Facilitating Professional Development through Online Learning

Presenter
Jennifer Geibel, MS, CCC-SLP
PaTTAN’s Mission

The mission of the Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN) is to support the efforts and initiatives of the Bureau of Special Education, and to build the capacity of local educational agencies to serve students who receive special education services.
PDE’s Commitment to Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

Our goal for each child is to ensure Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams begin with the general education setting with the use of Supplementary Aids and Services before considering a more restrictive environment.
Learning Objectives

Discuss legislation and research behind family-school partnerships

Introduce the PaTTAN Family Engagement Initiative

Review the evolution of the EFE Modules into an online learning opportunity

Explore aspects of the EFE online learning modules
Who Am I?

• Educational Consultant with PaTTAN Pittsburgh
• Doctoral Student in Special Education at University of Pittsburgh
• Supervisor of Special Education
• Speech-Language Pathologist
• Music Teacher/Therapist
• Mother of three great boys!
Opening Activity: Kahoot It!

• Access this hyperlink
  https://play.kahoot.it/#/k/5f6d4921-3032-46e5-8bbc-ddf78ccade69
• OR go to kahoot.it and enter the Game Pin
• Answer the questions
• Have fun!
Introducing PaTTAN’s Family Engagement Initiative
Why Family Engagement?

“At the end of the day, the most overwhelming key to a child’s success is the positive involvement of parents.”

Jane D. Hull, former governor of Arizona
### Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

- Develop with parents a written parent and family engagement policy
- Build schools’ capacity to engage families
- Evaluate its family engagement policy and practices, with meaningful input from families
- Involve families in the activities of Title I schools
- Reserve **at least** 1% of its grant to fund parent and family engagement activities; involve parents in deciding how to use these funds; and send 90% of this funding directly to schools

### Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

- Parents have the right to…
  - Receive a complete explanation of procedural safeguards
  - Confidentiality and inspection of records
  - Participate in meetings
  - Obtain an independent evaluation
  - Receive “prior written notice”
  - Give or deny consent
  - Disagree with decisions
  - Use IDEA’s mechanisms for resolving disputes
  - Receive training in order to best assist their children
Family Engagement Research: Lessons from Chicago

Leadership

- Professional Capacity
- Instructional Guidance
- Student-Centered Learning Climate
- Parent-Community Ties

Academic Success

(Bryk, Sebring, Allensworth, Luppescu & Easton, 2010)
Benefits of Family-School Partnerships

- Reduced drop-out rates and higher graduation rates (Bridgeland, Dilulio, & Morison, 2006)
- Increased student achievement (Hill & Tyson, 2009)
- Reduced absenteeism (Sheldon & Epstein, 2007)
- Better attitudes towards learning (Fantuzzo, McWayne, Perry, & Childs, 2004)
- Fewer behavioral problems (Caspe & Lopez, 2006)
- Better student-teacher relationships (Dearing, Kreider, & Weiss, 2008)
- Improved trust in schools (Payne & Kaba, 2001)
- Increased cultural competence (Marschall, 2006)
Why Professional Development for Family Engagement?

Most schools recognize the importance of family engagement but don’t always know how to do it.

Staff members are not always in tune with the diversities within their districts.

Educators may not be aware of the research behind family engagement.

Staff members may see family engagement as an impossible task and need functional tips on how to begin the engagement process.
Projects of the Family Engagement Initiative

http://www.pattan.net
Think-Pair-Share: What Do You Do?

- What types of trainings does your locality/state provide to teachers as professional development?
- What activities are/might be successful for teacher-training in the area of family engagement?
Enhancing Family Engagement Modules: The Journey to Online Learning
A Framework to Guide Family Engagement Work in Pennsylvania
What Are the EFE Modules?

Module 1: Welcoming All Families into the School Community

Six PD modules with different areas of focus based on the PTA National Standards
Evolution of the EFE Modules

Began as CDs disseminated to all LEAs in Pennsylvania

Recreated into a live training with PaTTAN supports (Trained 45 LEAs 2011-2015)

Now available as an online learning experience
### Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)

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<th>Free</th>
<th>Widely available</th>
<th>Geared towards lifelong learning</th>
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<td>Content driven</td>
<td>Teacher’s represent 28% enrollment</td>
<td>Many enroll, few finish</td>
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Limitations to Online PD for Educators

- Online PD may not directly relate to specific strengths and needs of the educator’s students/families
- Learning in isolation may be less effective than learning in interactive groups
- Individual learning of one teacher may have less of an impact on student learning that educators’ collective growth
- It is difficult to measure how well an educator applies their online learning to the benefit of students
Advantages of Online PD for Educators

• Teachers can study, reflect upon, and practice what they’ve learned in order to increase student learning
• Educators are able to access a wide-range of topics without high costs of education
• Individuals complete learning on a flexible schedule
• Schools can incorporate online learning modules into their school-wide PD
Development of EFE Into Online Learning Courses

- Increased accessibility of course onto public online course platform
- Addition of demographics section to track who is taking courses
- Addition of pre- and post-tests to determine efficacy of learning
- Development of multiple iterations of the PowerPoint to increase flexibility
- Conversion of Activities Sheets into fillable forms for ease of use
Elements of Online Modules

- Demographics Survey
- Pre-Test
- Overview of Module
- Resources
- Activities
- PowerPoint Training
- Course Certificate
- Post-Test

Not Required
Required
Exploring the Modules

Module 3: Pre-Test
This pre-test is to be completed prior to completion of the Module 3 Training Components. The purpose of the Module 3 Pre-Test is to determine what knowledge participants have going into the learning of this module and compare the results to the knowledge demonstrated after completion of the module. This data will be used in the construction of future Family Engagement Modules.

Module 3: Overview
The purpose of Module 3, "Supporting Student Success", is to discuss the importance of linking family engagement to learning. This module consists of a PowerPoint, five activities, and a list of supporting articles and resources that may be used for further exploration of this topic. This overview document describes training module components, the time required for each section, and the activities and materials that accompany the slides.

Module 3: PowerPoint Training
The purpose of Module 3, Supporting Student Success, is to assist school staff and families in maximizing the academic achievement of all students. The objectives of this PowerPoint are as follows:
- Discuss the impact of family engagement on student achievement based on presented research
- Discuss the elements of teacher-family partnerships and how to develop collaborative relationships
- Discuss strategies to increase family members' participation in a collaborative effort to increase student achievement
- Develop a vision statement and identify action plans that intentionally engage families to support student success

Links to Modules can be found at www.pattan.net under the Family Engagement Initiative.

Hyperlink to Family Engagement Initiative.
PowerPoint Options

Module 4: Speaking Up for Every Child - Narrated PowerPoint (Entire)

Module 4 PowerPoint, Narrated
File size: 81 MB

Module 4: Speaking Up for every Child - Narrated PowerPoint (Sections)

Module 4 PowerPoint, Section I (Introduction and Speaking Up for Every Child)
File size: 21 MB

Module 4 PowerPoint, Section II (School Advocacy and Family Advocacy)
File size: 42 MB

Module 4 PowerPoint, Section III (Family Efficacy and Student Self-Advocacy)
File size: 19 MB
Content Learning: The Core PowerPoint

- Primary training tool for content
- Narration and robust trainer notes provided
- A focus on pertinent research and essential concepts
Activities To Enhance Current Practices

• Participants reflect on current practice, examine procedures, and/or deepen understanding of presented concepts

• Activities can be completed by individuals OR with groups

• All accompanying materials are provided (i.e., journal articles, worksheets)
Sample Activity 1: What If?

- Take a moment to consider yourself as a family member of a student
- Now think about the family members within your LEA
- Read the “What If” scenario and determine your likelihood of attending the described event and how the event could be changed to increase your attendance
Sample Activity 2: Look Around

- Watch the hyperlinked video and consider the family engagement strategies of “Utopia School District”

- How could these strategies be adapted for use in your own district
“Family engagement is not a single event. It is a shared responsibility in which regular two-way communication insures that the student is on track to meet grade-level requirements.”

Heather Weiss

“As teachers and school leaders, we have a responsibility to shake out the notion of what traditional parent engagement looks like. We need to be creative and persistent.”

Allison Rodman

“If we take the time to care about people, we can transform whole communities. You never know how you can change someone’s life by showing him or her that you care.”

Chema Ellis

“Robust family engagement in schools positively affects student growth, improves test scores, and enhances the overall vibrancy and success of a school.”

Jessica Lander, Ed.M. ’15
Harvard Graduate School of Education

“There is no doubt that when family engagement is developed in true partnership, it has the ability to positively impact students’ academic, social and emotional growth, even within distressed communities.”

Kelli Cede, Virginia Beach Public Schools

“I think America needs to know that the principals and teachers are in this together, that the parents need to be a vital part of our team, and that we can all work together to collaborate and do what’s best for children.”

Elementary School Principal, Pennsylvania