

## Memorandum

**Date:** December 20, 2018  
**To:** School Board  
**From:** James Bush, Director Family & Community Partnerships  
**Subject:** Family Partnerships Annual Report (Superintendent Procedure #4129)

---

In 2018, the Family Partnerships Department (FP) has begun to develop systems and resources to support schools and the central office in building leadership and staff capacity to engage their families. The FP team, with leadership from the former Communications & Engagement division, identified staffing, systems, and development of family resources as key areas of focus for the 2018-19 Academic year. The FP team has a lot to celebrate and wants to ensure the board is aware of all their great work, including successful implementation of the following:

- Family Engagement Landscape Analysis (February 2018)
- Family Engagement Taskforce / Action Plan (June 2018)
- Roadmap Family Engagement Institute (August 2018)
- Engaging Families in High School Success Summit (October 2018)

### **Family Engagement Landscape Analysis**

In Fall 2017, FP commissioned a landscape analysis with one of the Nation's leading experts on family engagement. This allowed the director and manager to be full participants in the process. The analysis established that families, school leaders, central office staff, and community partners were very unclear about how SPS's Family Partnership Policy #4129 was being implemented. Additionally, schools did not perceive reliable structures and connections to our district strategic plan. Families also expressed a lack of trust in the district's commitment to partnering with families to improve school culture and increase academic outcomes for students. The recommendations from this landscape analysis led to convening a taskforce to create a multi-year plan.

### **Family Engagement Taskforce**

The Family Engagement Taskforce was convened in February 2018. Members applied and were selected so that a diverse group of people and perspectives were represented, including parents, partners, and school and central office leaders. In June 2018, the taskforce identified four pillars that form the foundation of the FP team's work:

- Welcoming environments
- Two-way communication
- Facilitating respectful interactions
- Shared power and responsibility

### **Resources and Professional Development**

Network learning teams are being created with other central office departments, and the existing internal partners group is a learning community. This allows FP the space to share their systems, programs, and practices to break down siloes with school leaders and central office partners. Continuous improvement requires continuous learning and adaptation to changing conditions at schools and central office.

FP will offer trainings for families and staff in Family Engagement 101, Dual Capacity Building Framework, Culturally Responsive Family Engagement, Somali Cultural Responsiveness for teachers and

staff, Parents as Advocates, Reciprocity between communities and schools, Parents as Leaders, working with your student's data.

For schools and central office staff, Family engagement 101: the nuts and bolts of planning, families as classroom partners, building thriving schools through welcoming environments.

### Programs

- **Engaging Families in High Schools (EFIHS)** is a grant funded program from the US Department of Education in partnership with John Hopkins University that targets supports for 8<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> grade transitions. By working with 24 middle, high, and K-8 schools, EFIHS has increased families' capacity to guide their students through a successful 9<sup>th</sup> grade year. In October 2018, the FP team convened the 24 schools at the EFIHS Institute.
- **Family Connector University (FCU)** is a partnership with North Seattle College (NSC) that builds parent confidence at schools. NSC also provides 2 academic credits for parents who want to pursue further education. In 2018, FCU is being offered to Spanish speaking families at Graham Hill and Northgate Elementary Schools. The structure of FCU has been amended to encourage school participation and engagement to ensure that there is a reciprocal benefit between the school and families.
- **Roadmap Family Engagement Institute** was held in Summer 2018, bringing 250 family engagement practitioners together. Seattle had a central office team and three schools in attendance that used their time together to draft school family engagement plans.