

RIVERSIDE PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT 96

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MEMORANDUM

To: Board of Education
From: Martha Ryan-Toye, Superintendent
Date: April 3, 2024
Re: Update on Strategic Goal 4 - Family and Community Partnership

The Family and Community Partnership Action team met on March 12, 2024. The agenda from that meeting is attached [here](#).

The action team reviewed and discussed the details of a very successful family learning night. We had over 100 students in attendance at the Family Science Night on February 28, 2024 ([flyer from the event](#)). Along with the FCP teacher leaders, the EL department attended the event to support families who may not speak English as a first language. We had a strong number of bilingual families join us for this event. The FCP is committed to an annual learning event with a plan to rotate "learning areas" year to year. Last year's family learning night focused on math; this year, science and next year's anticipated topic is literacy.

The time needed to plan and prepare for this event is significant. We may consider an added stipend for several employees who will lead the coordination of this event.

The Family and Community Partnerships reviewed other opportunities to improve family engagement district-wide. This included a discussion about a possible family programming audit to help us understand our strengths with family programs and celebrations while also understanding possible gaps in opportunities for all families. This idea will be considered in the future.

The action team discussed in detail the possibility of creating a document representing the agreements we value as partners in each child's education. This process would support strong, healthy family and school partnerships by explicitly identifying agreements. The action team is interested in this work. This may also lead to other informational resources, such as parents' guides to parent-teacher conferences, classroom visits, and volunteering, to name a few.

The FCP Action team has supported other district-wide efforts to engage and inform families. The importance of family information nights, such as the presentation by Richard Wistocki on "Keeping children safe online" was discussed by the FCP.

The FCP also values the opportunity to communicate with the longstanding Parent Leadership Team, which consists of each school's PTA or PTO presidents, to create a bridge to the work of PTAs and

PTOs. This group has supported efforts to create parent ambassadors to welcome and connect with families new to District 96.

The FCP also discussed the successful cultural heritage events at Ames School and Central. These are hosted/coordinated by the PTO and PTA at each school. Blythe Park plans to celebrate cultural heritage in May. One consideration in partnership with the PLT might be to consider a district-wide event that supports the smaller schools with this type of event.

Other areas that are not directly part of the work of FCP include:

The plan is to launch a new website platform. This new website platform has the potential to improve parent access to information and two-way communication. The new website is viewed as more student-centered and may better allow us to tell the many positive stories about District 96 students.

We are again working with West 40 to design and produce our annual Community Report. This report encompasses brief stories about students at each school and updates related to the five goal areas of the strategic plan. We are exploring adding a QR code to the report to gather community feedback. The Family and Community Partnership Action Team discussed possible questions to be presented through the QR code access. This should also be considered if there are particular questions of interest to the Board of Education.