Engaging Families for College and Career Readiness
Today’s Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Level Setting
  - Who is ACT Now?
  - Defining Family Engagement
  - Defining College and Career Readiness
- Creating a Family Engagement Plan
- Takeaway Activity
- Closing and Evaluation
Who is ACT Now?

Join the coalition by signing up for our newsletter
Our Family Engagement Philosophy

The process by which afterschool and summer programs build meaningful, impactful, lasting relationships with families to support them and their children.
College & Career Readiness and Afterschool
Family Engagement & Connection to College and Career Readiness

What does the research say?
College and Career Readiness is a feature of Family Engagement but EQUITY is a foundation and here is how...
You know the why, now for the HOW

Things to remember:
- College and career readiness happens at all ages
- Equity as the foundation throughout

Formal Family Engagement Plan = Consistent & Authentic Engagement
Creating a Vision Statement

● What are your/your staff’s core beliefs about FE?
● What makes ideal, high-quality FE practices?
● Draft a Vision Statement

Sample Vision Statement:
All families of students participating in ABC Cares programs feel like partners in their child’s growth and development, feel included in our organization’s work, and feel welcome as a member of the ABC Cares community.
Let’s Practice

In the chat, list a **core belief** you hold about **family engagement**
Evaluating Current Practices

What efforts are you already doing?

- Communications
- Family-focused events
- Current FE plan
- Feedback from families
- Shared resources
Let’s Practice

Select 3 ways you already engage families
Identify Goals

**Short-Term**
- Easily achievable in the next year
- Things to do/identify immediately

**Long-Term**
- Address where you want your FE to grow
- Formalized & systematized beyond you

**Both:** written with the Vision Statement in mind
Develop a plan

Diverse Families = Diverse Needs

Communication

Community Connections

Curriculum

Continuous Sustainability Efforts
Communication

Exchange of information that flows in both directions

Individual Level
- Digitally via texts, calls, emails, meetings
- In-person connections

Group Level
- Social media
- Newsletters
Communication

People are busy so make it easy

- Accessible and concise
- How do they WANT to be communicated with?
- Are you using an equity-lens?

Digital Family Engagement Tracker
High-Quality Curriculum

Social
Casual interaction with each other, youth, and staff
- Drop-Ins
- Fun Nights
- Coffee Chats

Skill - Development
Intentional, informative
- How-To
- Transition Support

Identity-Focused
Providing dedicated space for a specific identity
- Affinity Groups
- Holiday & Cultural Celebrations
Let’s Practice

Think of 1 virtual and 1 in-person potential event for any category
Community Connections

Build lasting relationships

1. Common Purpose
2. Complementary Content
3. Communication
4. Customized Partnerships
5. Continuous Improvement and Sustainability
Continuous Sustainability Efforts

Discuss
Plan
Learn
Implement

Continuously evaluate throughout the process

- Ask for feedback (from families and staff)
- Evaluate feedback
- Adjust plan as necessary
Activity
Elementary School

Our program consists of 25 second graders that come from a variety of schools in District 161. This month students are learning about the solar system and how our planet fits within our galaxy. Program staff have decided to explore this subject further and allow students to learn more about this field in the OST setting.
Middle School

16 students ages ranging from 11 to 14 come to our afterschool program three days a week throughout the school year. Several students share that they participated in a career aptitude test during the school day and they are discouraged by their results- many of which do not include a four year university.
High School

A large portion of high school students in our afterschool program (about 40%) are children of immigrant families. Many of these students will be the first to apply for college and live in households that do not primarily speak English. They have expressed concerns over the application processes for college and student aid.
Let’s Share!
Questions?
Closing

From the Afterschool Alliance, we know that:

- Family engagement encourages student growth and is associated with positive outcomes in a child’s education.
- Afterschool programs can help bridge the gap between families and schools.
- ACT Now is here to help eliminate the barriers for effective parent engagement.
Thank you!

Scan the QR code with your phone’s camera to complete the evaluation.