

Parent Engagement in School Dropout Prevention: Planning Session with Parents and Parent-Serving Groups

PROPOSED ANNOTATED AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARIES: WHY ARE WE HERE? (9:30 – 10:15 am)

A. Welcoming Remarks (20 min)

- AECF representative/summit convener/or facilitator opens session (announce we are beginning, get folks settled)
- 3 Partner Organization representatives give brief welcoming remarks and explains interests of their organizations;
 - Representative, America's Promise Alliance
 - The School Dropout Problem in America**
 - Representative gives brief general overview of America's Promise Alliance and its interest in the school dropout issue; explains the launch of the summits nationally and the anticipated results
 - Local summit convener
 - Offers general overview of plans for the forthcoming summit and why they think this meeting is important.
 - Representative, The Annie E. Casey Foundation
 - Need for Parents/Families/Caregivers to be involved**
 - Annie E Casey Foundation representative explains family strengthening work and its relationship to America's Promise school dropout work. Explains the reason for this session is to work with parent-serving organizations to reach an understanding about what it will take to engage parents in the dropout issue and to devise strategies to ensure that parent voice is present in the upcoming summit and action plan development
 - Reviews briefly what the impact of parental involvement is on children's success in school
 - Should use this as the place to make the point that this can't be the school system's problem alone and that the response can't be to blame the parents (acknowledge that this may be preaching to the choir) – but that it has to be a partnership between parents, schools and community organizations.

B. Participant Introductions (20 minutes)

- Go around room – participants give name, organization, a key insight that I've about engaging parents in children's education.

C. Session Outcomes, Agenda Review & Ground Rules (Facilitator) (5 min)

Desired Session Outcomes:

- Develop a shared picture of our drop-out problem.
- Nurture a common understanding of engaging parents in drop-out prevention, especially the parents from the highest risk populations or schools
- Identify assets that can be drawn upon from among the participants
- Identify how the upcoming summit can help to serve as a catalyst for engaging parents in the development of a community plan for preventing school drop-out that ensures parents are part of the solution
- Generate commitments and action steps to ensure parents are engaged.
- Model what it means to have parent voice (If design includes involving parent leaders – see final note.)

Ground Rules:

- Respect and explore differences of opinion
- Ask clarifying questions
- Create space for everyone to participate

(Note: During this time, circulate a sign in list asking for name, agency, phone number and e-mail address)

**II. WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE SCHOOL DROP OUT PROBLEM?
(10:15 – 11:30)**

A. Understanding the scope of the problem in _____ (15 min)

- Local person gives an overview of what's known about the scale/scope of the dropout problem in ___ using community specific data

B. Early Warning Indicators – why interventions need to begin early (15 min)

- AECF presenter reviews relationship between early chronic absenteeism and failure to read by grade level research and its relationship to subsequent school dropout. Provides community specific data, if available.

C. Questions & Answer (15 min)

III. WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT PARENT ENGAGEMENT?

A Proposed Framework for Parent Engagement – *The 3As: Attendance Every Day, Achievement Every Year & Attainment over Time* (11:30 – 12:00)

- AECF/AP present framework (10 min)
Handout: Overview of Parent Engagement in Toolkit plus Grids
- Reactions: Participants discuss framework in dyads or triads (10 min)
 - What do you like?
 - What would you add or change?
 - Try filling out a few things on one line of empty grid...
- Discussion: Invite feedback (10 min)

12:00 – 12:30 (Break & Get Lunch)

B. What Parent Populations Do We Most Need to Engage? (12:30– 12:45)

- Group brainstorms list of parent populations that they would want to target for parent engagement (e.g., children of families in special education, fathers, low-income families, immigrant families, etc.)
- After group generates the entire list, identify who is interested/willing to lead a discussion about how to engage that target population. Invoke open space rules for moving into small group discussions. (Walk with your feet, Whatever happens was supposed to happen, Two people make a group)

C. Small Group Discussions (12:45 – 1:30)

- For each target population, participants should fill out the following chart:

Name of Target Population:

	What are major barriers preventing parents/families from ensuring their children:	What are effective strategies for helping parents to support their children to:	What local resources could we tap to help families and their children to:
Attendance Every Day			
Achievement Every Year			
Attainment Over Time			

- Each group should identify a note taker and a person who will report out. As part of notes, notetaker should list the small group participants. Prior to breaking out, facilitator also reminds participants about the importance of avoiding.

D. Report Out (1:30 -2:15)

VI. WHAT WILL WE DO TO ENGAGE PARENTS? (How Will We Get Parent Voice into the Summit and Action Plan Development) (2:15 – 3:00 pm)

- Local representative talks briefly about the work to date on the summit and the extent to which parents have been engaged so far. ***Review draft local summit design (if available locally);***
- Quick review of remaining, potentially helpful, elements of the tool kit (AP or AECF staff)
 - ***Sample survey for seeking perspectives on parent engagement***
 - ***Parent Focus Group Guidelines***
 - ***Toolkit Guidance on Summit Design & Summit Action Plan***
- ***What should we before & during the summit to ensure parent voice? (facilitated conversation):***
 - Should we conduct focus groups? Survey parents? What else?
 - What could we do to make sure parent voice is a visible part of the summit?
 - Are there other key stakeholders who still need to be engaged in the summit who could strengthen the parent perspective?

VII. NEXT STEPS (3:00 – 3:45 pm)

- What are key next steps? Who should take responsibility for taking them?
- What are implications of this discussion for existing or new committees?
- When and how should these committees be convened?

VIII. SUMMARY (3:45 – 4:00 pm)

- Comments from Summit Convener
- Comments from AECF and AP staff
- One word reflection around the room from each person

IX. ADJOURN (4:00 pm)

Note: One suggested variation is for each family serving organization attending this session to bring a parent leader. If this is the case, a similar agenda may still be useful. However, planners may need to anticipate the need for more time to allow for processing. Planners may also need to hold this session on a Saturday in order to ensure parents can participate.)