



Increasing Participation in School-Wide Events & Academic Partnering

We all know the importance of gathering our families together in one room and taking the time to discuss and plan strategies that will help them to work with their child at home. However, if parents are not showing up to these meetings it defeats the purpose. Here are some suggestions to make your Academic Partnering meetings and School-Wide events attractive for parents and students, so that you can ensure representation from 100% of your families this coming school year!

Reflecting on successes you've had in the past can help you figure out what strategies will have the biggest impact for your school community. Think about an event or meeting that had strong attendance and ask yourself:

- ✓ How did I communicate the event details to my families?
- ✓ How often did I send reminders about the event?
- ✓ What time of day did I schedule the event? and/or Did I provide multiple times to attend the event?
- ✓ What day of the week was the event?
- ✓ What feedback did I receive from families after the event and what did I learn from that feedback?

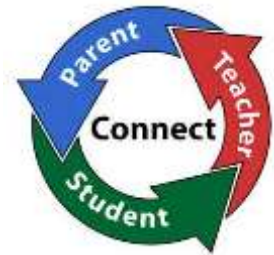
Answering these questions will help you and your colleagues gain a better understanding of the families that you work with and enable you to be more successful in implementing the suggestions in this section.

Possible Strategies & Ideas

- **Themed APTT or PTC Meetings**—snacks, handouts, and lessons can be connected to current events, destinations, class favorite characters (books or television), etc. Students help you choose a theme and create the atmosphere.
 - **Impact:** students have worked on the setting of the classroom and will encourage their families to come out and see it.
- **Morning and Evening Meetings**—Breakfast foods can be provided for the am meeting and dinner foods for the evening event.
 - **Impact:** parents have options regarding their work schedules



- **Themed Family Fun Nights**—Families in Grades PK-2 are meeting with teachers while their children are entertained by the teachers and resource staff in grades 3-5 (and vice versa)
 - **Impact:** Themes will encourage students to ask families to participate and thus give all a chance to meet individuals that they may not come in contact with regularly. Examples: favorite author, Around the World, seasonal themes, etc.
- **Door Prizes & Giveaways**—Families will be excited about winning an advertised prize and know that one has to be present to win
 - **Impact:** families get excited with the hope of winning the prizes and will be more likely to attend future meetings once they see what you have to share.
- **Guest Speakers**—invite a state representative, a local media personality, an author, athlete, musician, etc. to speak with families about how they were impacted by their parent’s engagement in their education.
 - **Impact:** Families come to meet these individuals and can then be inspired to work more with their child at home.
- **Taste of the Neighborhood**—contact local restaurants near your school and have them donate platters of food for the parents to sample for free leading up to the meeting.
 - **Impact:** Families get to sample food from their local restaurants and businesses in the community gain new customers.
- **Parents Night Out**—parents that attend all APTT or PTC Meetings receive a coupon that will give their child admittance to the Parent’s Night Out Event where families drop off their children at the school and from 5-8pm they can go out and enjoy themselves. Note: This will have to be coordinated with the entire school.
 - **Impact:** Parents have an incentive to attend all of the meetings
- **Share My Story Rooms**—Parents can record their stories or watch other families share their successes and struggles when working with their child at home. Kids can also record short videos about how they work on skills at home and parents can stop by to view these videos.
 - **Impact:** Parents can learn from one another and if students participate, parents will enjoy watching them talk about how they practice what they have learned at home. Both can be extremely powerful in broadening parent partnerships. Tip: create a school YouTube channel to store the videos.



Resources for planning School-Wide Events



Visit these websites to learn about how to create exciting family nights at your school!

- <http://www.ptotoday.com/sfn>
- <http://everydaylife.globalpost.com/ideas-silly-activities-family-fun-night-school-9167.html>
- [www.oaes.org/pdf/Family Fun NightsCompatible.pdf](http://www.oaes.org/pdf/Family_Fun_NightsCompatible.pdf)