



Family Involvement in Expanded Learning Programs for High School Students

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A Look at the Research Findings

- Low parent interest in a child's schooling is associated with substandard student achievement (Steinburg, 1996).
- Various parenting, volunteering and home learning activities positively influence student grades, number of course credits completed, attendance, behavior, and school preparedness, regardless of student background and past achievement (Simon, 2001).

A Look at the Research Findings

- Bogenschneider (1997) studied 8,000 high school students in nine high schools in Wisconsin and California and found that when parents were involved in their teen's schooling, students reported higher grades in school. Parental involvement showed consistently positive results, regardless of the education level of the parent.
- Parents play a critically important role in their child's academic achievement and social-emotional development (Comer, 1980; Eccles & Harold, 1996).

Family Involvement Research Activity

- Activity directions
- Activity
- Activity feedback

Expanded Learning Opportunities: Reaching the Whole Child

- Social-Emotional Well Being
- Academic Success
- Physical Health and Fitness
- Interests and Hobbies

Gaining Families' Acceptance

- The high school expanded learning program should be perceived as a positive place by families
- Family activities should be things that adults want to do and/or supports them in bettering themselves
- Look for family leaders; they will guide others families
- Survey families about their interests—face-to-face, electronically.

Family Involvement Survey Components

- Anonymous
- Incentives
- Administer after the program is operational
- Short one-page survey
- On-line or paper and pencil
- Perceptions about program first
- Interests
- Volunteering should be a separate form

A Family Involvement Basics

- Establishing a parent/community advisory committee that meets regularly
- Creating a yearly family handbook that include such things as a calendar, program guidelines, staff names, how to help children in school
- Offering educational experiences for families and sharing community resources
- Collecting feedback from families about program strengths and weaknesses and needs

Effective Strategies for Family Involvement

- Homework/Tutoring Contracts—with families; Center for Afterschool Education at Foundations (Weisburd, 2007); should student do homework at the program, how student works best, does student need assistance
- College Application Assistance—informational sessions to discuss the college application process
- Personalized Learning Plan—for struggling students; the plan can include technology and community resources/support

High School Family Programs

- After School Matters (ASM) of Chicago—Project-based focus on careers and college preparation; regular updates to parents about student progress, community updates, e-newsletters
- Breakthrough Collaborative—National and international locations, launches middle and high school students on the pathway to college and a career in education; parent/teacher conferences, student/parent orientation, family reunions
- Young Audience Arts for Learning—Located in 20 states; students work with professional artists to learn, create and take part in the arts; family nights include arts appreciation, productions, presentations

Program Development Activity

- Look at the survey results as a team
- Data speaks the truth
- What is evident?
- What is doable?
- What is effective?
- Plan accordingly
- Present plan

Family Component Questions and Discussion

- What about...
- Will this work...
- We tried, but...
- If we did this again we would...