

**Region V Parent Engagement Initiative  
Summary Evaluation Report  
Shortened Version**

Prepared by  
Bill Conrad, Ed.D.  
Director of Assessment and Accountability

Santa Clara County Office of Education

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## Introduction

The vision and goals of the Region V Parent Education Initiative is to inform parents about a child's educational needs to increase academic achievement by.

- Conducting parent engagement trainings to develop parent leaders.
- Developing and implementing a resource-based parent engagement model.
- Supporting schools in creating parent and community partnership plans.
- Collecting data, analyzing, interpreting, and reporting project outcomes to support county wide strategic planning.

The Santa Clara County Region V Parent Engagement Initiative team provided three conferences with Region V Santa Clara County Districts during the 2010-2011 school year that included:

- A Parent Engagement Conference with a focus on special education hosted at the Santa Clara County Office of Education on September 25, 2010 with 184 participants
- A Parent Engagement Conference with a focus on academic success co-hosted at San Jose Unified School District's administrative offices on January 29, 2011 with 461 participants
- A Parent Engagement Conference with a focus on effective strategies to support students' success co-hosted at Mountain View-Whisman School District's Crittenden Middle School on March 5, 2011 with 241 participants

An additional 80 follow-up workshops were offered to 2,116 primarily parent participants (duplicated) from 18 Region V school districts during the 2010-2011 school year. The attached chart summarizes the total number of (duplicated) participants and workshops offered at each district. Moreland School District provided a series of 7 workshops in the fall that focused on age appropriate child development and effective discipline strategies. Workshop sessions included discussions on health and wellness topics that support a healthy school climate with role plays on how a parent can support their child with school related policy issues. Parents also created make-and-take activities to support their child's learning at home. Parents learned how common core standards can be integrated into home-based academic enrichment activities.

Campbell School District's Even Start Program used 14 different parent education workshop series of topics to support the parent education component of the program in 24 weekly 2 hour classes. The parents completed a series of Active Parenting Junior Workshops that included healthy school climate role plays and make-and-take academic enrichment activities. Parent also participated in a series of health and wellness activities that included an introduction to bullying, stress management, enhancing your child's health, the importance of elementary nutrition, and 10 strategies to improve your child's self-esteem. The Santa Clara County Office of Education's Learning Multimedia Center (LMC) provided trainings to parents on how to check-out and use educational materials at home and how to create educational learning aides with lesson plans. The final sessions focused on parents becoming teacher leaders in the classroom by developing a lesson plan and presenting it in two different classrooms after added reflection, class discussions, and increased scaffolding of the lesson plan with literacy activities (i.e. reading books with an art or math project and asking questions related to the task to expand informational text knowledge using common core standards). Parents will celebrate the milestone success of performing in the classroom as a teacher leader when each receives a picture of himself/herself performing in this role.

During the spring, each Santa Clara County District evaluated their level of parent engagement activities during the past year per the attached chart. As of May 13, 21 of the 32 county districts completed a survey with a level of implementation rubric. Of the 22 districts that completed the survey, 2 districts reported that they have implemented a comprehensive level of parent engagement, 8 districts indicated that they are at the emerging

level of implementation, 11 districts are at the awareness level, and 1 district did not indicate a level of implementation at this time. A three day Elementary Train-of-Trainers and a three day Secondary Trainer-of-Trainers series of trainings will be offered in June to district leadership teams of parents and staff (see attached chart for confirmed registrations). All participants will become certified by Santa Clara County Office of Education as parent engagement training leaders. Added follow-up coaching sessions will be scheduled at school sites as professional development for teachers and extended training for parent training leaders in effective facilitation skills and strategic program development and evaluation.<sup>1</sup>

## Evaluation

The Assessment and Accountability Department of the Santa Clara County Office of Education was asked to conduct an evaluation of the Parent Engagement Initiative. The purpose of the evaluation was to measure parents' perceived change in their knowledge, skills, application of skills, and self efficacy in effectively supporting their children's academic learning, and their own personal/career development, after participating in various SCCOE-sponsored workshops pertaining to:

- Age appropriate child development and effective discipline strategies
- Health and wellness at home that supports a healthy school climate
- Academic support strategies (pedagogy) and activities (content) to support children's learning at home that align to common core standards

Key questions to be answered by the evaluation were:

1. To what extent did parents' knowledge of and skills in the following areas increase/improve as a result of participating in the Parent Engagement Initiative?
  - a. Age appropriate child development and effective discipline strategies
  - b. Health and wellness at home that supports a healthy school climate
  - c. Academic support strategies (pedagogy) and activities (content) to support children's learning at home that align to common core standards
2. How/to what extent are parents able to apply their new knowledge and skills in the following areas as a result of participating in the Parent Engagement Initiative?
  - a. Age appropriate child development and effective discipline strategies
  - b. Health and wellness at home that supports a healthy school climate
  - c. Academic support strategies (pedagogy) and activities (content) to support children's learning at home that align to common core standards
3. To what extent does participation in the Region V Parent Engagement Initiative improve opportunities for parents to engage in personal and job development?
4. What are the recommendations for improving the implementation of the Parent Engagement Initiative?

Methods for collecting evaluation data included participant surveys after select workshops and participant focus groups.

## Key Findings

1. **Parents believed that the workshops increased their overall ability to address the academic, discipline, nutrition, and safety needs of their children.**

Evidence Sample 1: I feel more secure about myself. (Campbell)

Evidence Sample 2: This program changed my life completely. Not just me, she taught how to help my husband. (Campbell)

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<sup>1</sup> The Introduction to this paper was contributed by Dr. Mary Ann Burke, Director, Categorical and Special Programs.

**2. Some parents come to the workshop with a high level knowledge and expectation for their children especially related to academic standards.**

Evidence Sample 1: The academic section was extremely helpful. In the future, would like more extensive coverage of academic standards. In my child's case, I learned the academic standards and realized that my child was to learn multiplication by the fourth grade and he did not know them yet, I went to speak to the teacher about this and she said the children were already supposed to know this. (Moreland)

Evidence Sample 2: When I entered here I didn't know anything about education, nothing. I feel that I'm going slowly, but I feel more secure about myself. With the experience of my classmate, she knows how to talk and I know that one day I will be able to do it. I feel more secure.

**3. Parents report that they learned multiple and specific strategies that they could use to support their children's academic, discipline, and health and wellness needs.**

Evidence Sample 1: I learned what things my child should know at the kindergarten level, so I focused on practicing reading and writing with them. We read a book and then I have him write down what he liked about the story. (Moreland)

Evidence Sample 2: – I serve more fruits and vegetables and balanced meals. (Campbell)

Evidence Sample 3: We made little trees and numbers and the numbers have little ducks. I say put the numbers on each things. And the little one likes to do that. And she counts 1, 2, 3. And the song about the ducks she knows. (Campbell)

**4. Parents report that the advantage of attending multiple sessions is valuable because it provides opportunities to not only learn new strategies but to practice them and then collaborate with other parents to improve these strategies.**

Evidence Sample 1: The opportunity to practice at home and discuss the following week. (Moreland)

Evidence Sample 2: For example, when I wanted my children to eat more fruits and vegetable, one classmate's tip was to put a plate on the table with fruits and vegetables. And when my children are hungry these things are on the table. They can take something from the table. Other ladies had other suggestions, which I was able to practice at home. (Campbell)

**5. While there is evidence of parents learning, practicing, and discussing specific practices, many of the parents report success of the initiative in general terms. There is not as much general or specific strategy support for the area of parent career development.**

Evidence Sample 1: I learned to be more affectionate and remind them more often that I love them. I learned that this motivates them to do well in school. (Moreland)

Evidence Sample 2: Each workshop provides us with opportunities to improve on how to be parents and to change our skills from failing to improving. (Campbell)

Evidence Sample Parent Professional Development: I think, I don't know if it helped, but now we aren't working, we are focused on school, (Campbell)

**6. Parent Recommendations**

- Would have liked the classes to be two or three times a week, or longer if once a week. (Moreland)
- Would have liked classes to be done entirely in Spanish because it would cut down the time and provided the opportunity to cover more material. (Moreland)

- Would have liked to have more encouragement to persuade more parents to attend the classes. (Moreland)
- Some of the strategies are designed more towards younger children and did not translate well to the older children, such as time out. (Moreland)
- I think that there is 1 subject should be in two sections. So we learn it and practice it at home and we can grab it. (Campbell)
- The Pace may be going a little too fast. We come back tomorrow for our class in English. We don't have a constant class from the day before. We don't process the information. Because tomorrow we do other things and more activities. (Campbell)

### Overall Recommendations

Following are the recommendations resulting from the evaluation of the Region V Parent Engagement Initiative:

1. This project should move from a very successful exploratory phase to one of more systemic implementation that better aligns the curriculum with the project goals through a rigorous and disciplined process that engages representatives from the key stakeholder groups.
2. Provide a clear statement of the learning objectives of each conference and workshop and align the content to those objectives. This will help inform participants about what they can expect to learn at each session they attend.
3. Differentiate curriculum so it better supports the needs of older students.
4. Build on and enhance the opportunities for parents to learn fewer key strategies in depth with multiple opportunities for parents to practice these strategies at home and then collaborate with parents and workshop leaders at subsequent workshops to improve the implementation of the strategies.
5. Better integrate the highly successful Saturday seminars with the regular workshops scheduled within school districts.
6. Develop a more leadership-driven system to recruit parents to participate in both Saturday Workshops and school district workshops.
7. Develop a system to help monitor how the workshops influence a wider community audience including spouses and siblings within households.