

PARENT ATTENDANCE TASK FORCE

Meeting Report

Good morning parents, our meeting took place this past October 7 at the office of Parent and Community Services (PCS).

As the title says, this is a working group composed of parents from various Local Districts throughout LAUSD, with the support of PCS personnel as well as Elsy Rosado, Director of Pupil Services, and Betsy Lara, Coordinator of Family Source Partnership Program. By the way, the name of the group was changed; last year it was known as the Parent Attendance Committee; also, the personnel from the District is new too. The meeting felt like an overview of last year's work and like we are going through a transitional period. Nonetheless, there was also great information and multiple resources, which we are sharing here.

Ms. Rosado and Ms. Lara presented some goals, like; engage parents as partners in our children's education, provide a safe place to be heard, give an opportunity to make recommendations about attendance, and establish a working relationship. They also provided their road map which consists of providing training and tools for the members of the task force to share at various Local District events, like the Title I study groups, and at the school sites. Everything with the expected result of increase knowledge by all stakeholders, especially parents, increase their engagement and increase the attendance which leads to a better academic achievement.

They shared the efforts that have been made in order to improve the communication between the District, the schools and the parents, like blackboard connect messages, both, in English and Spanish, more parent friendly letters, and trying to keep parents informed of absences by their students in real time through the parent portal, with the help of parent centers and family source counselors. They also shared some practices to improve attendance, like home visits, which in any given month, PSA counselors complete between 800 and 1500. Also by forming partnerships with outside organizations like, Family Source, Youth Source, Communities in Schools, Local Businesses, Baby2Baby, and the city of Los Angeles Mayor's Office, to cite some.

They gave some examples of what can be done, like 25, 50, 75 and 100 day celebrations, incentives like pizza parties and other activities. They mentioned the attendance awareness week that happens one week before spring break, where schools conduct different activities in order to promote attendance and encourage students to attend all week. They informed us of an upcoming new training based on a calendar and that will teach us how to track our own children attendance.

Parents; with the daily endeavors that our children go through, the hard work they put in, day in and day out; the struggles some encounter, the frustration and anxiety some of them feel; if they are absent from the classroom, all of these will multiply. We are one of the keys and first resources they have to become successful, by making sure they go to school, preferably on time, well rested (by sleeping early) and with their homework done. We can't control what happens in the classroom, we can only be vigilant, but we can control what happens at home, and everything starts with attendance.

“The best heritage we can give our children, is a good education”

The Parent Attendance Task Force is looking for more dedicated and involved parents who are willing to share their bright ideas, we know you can be one of them, please volunteer.

Attached are the dates of the upcoming meetings and the address where they take place, as well as, other resources mentioned before.

Respectfully submitted by:

Juan Godínez

Local District Central