

Parent engagement is the number 1 driver of literacy and success!

How do YOU define parent engagement? _____

Describe your relationship with parents now: _____

What role do parents play in your classroom.....school? _____

Define your goal. How does your relationship with parents look in the future? What is their role? _____

What single biggest thing is holding you back? _____

What are you going to **STOP**? _____

What are you going to **CONTINUE**? _____

What are you going to **START**? _____

How are you going to encourage open conversation?	How are you going to include all families?
How are you going to make it relevant?	How are you going to keep it simple?

What is your plan for the rest of this year? _____

What is your plan for next year? _____





Best Practices:

- **Open Conversation** – Build trust and relationship through open, two-way dialogue.
- **Inclusion** – Give every member a voice regardless of economic situation or preferred language.
- **Consistency** – Let staff and parents know the communication medium and stick to it.
- **Relevance** – Share relevant information; 3 yr old parents don't need dates for Kinder readiness testing! ☺
- **Mobile** – 95% of parents want to be contacted via mobile. 95%. What's your plan?
- **Simplicity** – 5 methods for answering who, what, when where, why is 4 too many.
- **Positivity** – Celebrate student success often and openly – this alone will build tremendous rapport!

Key Tips for Success:

- Set the stage and **lead by example** – let everyone know how communication will be handled and follow your plan.
- Don't be afraid to **phase out old methods** (but do it with empathy!) – There will always be people who are very happy and very angry. Teachers are more likely to buy in if expectations are consolidated and streamlined.
- **Make it fun!** Praise staff and parents alike who are modeling your desired behaviors.

Planning and Strategy:

- How does technology fit into your plan? REST!
 - R – Reach: How will you reach everyone? (mobile, translation, etc)
 - E – Easy / Exciting: What will your community start AND continue?
 - S – Standardize / Systemic: What will connect your entire community and eliminate work / confusion?
 - T – Two way: How will you engage in two way conversation and create partnership?
- Do you have a plan for mobile?
- What role do you want parents to take at the class, age, and school level?
- What is your goal for touchpoints in a month? In a year?
- Who are your hardest to reach families and how will you inform them of engagement plan?
- How will you use each medium?
 - Paper, Website, Email, Social Networks, Other?
- Who are your teacher leaders for modeling communication?
- What will you share publicly vs. privately?
- What analytics or measures will you use for goals and assessment?

Ways to engage families digitally:

- Teacher post lesson plans, key topics, needs, and goals for the week
- Room parent weekly post (Monday) of the upcoming events for the week and any needs for volunteers
- School director weekly post on current events, reminders, and accomplishments
- "Glimpse into classrooms" through photos and text: accomplishments, students at work, projects...
- Suggestions for parents to support their child's progress – videos, etc. – ask parents to comment with thoughts!
- Opportunities for volunteering and donations
- Request input regarding procedures and events – what do parents want to see?
- Get suggestions for upcoming topics parents want to hear more about
- **Calendar reminders** (each day, week, month, year) for special days, events, topics
- **Direct emails** for specific parent questions or personal conversation
- Share best practices with staff
- Share community involvement and parent education opportunities
- Share presentations and information from parent meetings for those who could not attend
- Encourage parent to take a picture of a take home assignment and share it with the class
- Spread positivity – Show your happy students and hard work often!!

Join our best practices group - Email info@livingtree.com for your invitation!

