






Family-School Partnerships in Special Education

December 8, 2010

SOUTH CENTRAL REGION - FORUM FEEDBACK

A World Café style forum was held in Merrimack NH on December 8th, 2010. Three guided questions were used to lead to collaborative discussion about expanding Family-School Partnerships in Special Education and to choose three topics the participants felt they would like more information about or already have strategies that they would like to share with others. The participants represented Families, Schools and Community Members from the Amherst, Derry, Hampstead, Hudson, Litchfield, Londonderry, Manchester, Merrimack, Mont Vernon, Nashua, and Salem School Districts.

Throughout this school year, NH Connections will facilitate a discussion on each of the following topics. At these events participants will share and learn about other ideas and resources to support expanding family/school partnerships.

-  Topic 1 **Communication that is multi modal, two way, and meaningful**
-  Topic 2 **Resources that are accessible, relevant, and family friendly**
-  Topic 3 **Training to promote understanding and better outcomes**

Please join us as we continue to explore these topics. We need your participation to ensure the success and the effectiveness of the events. New Hampshire Connections will share the discussions and partnership work through our website –

www.nhconnections.org , electronic newsletters and information sheets.

To host a topical discussion or to share strategies about one of the topics, please contact Joe Hatch, South Central Region Facilitator. (603) 848-4251 or jhatch@picnh.org

NH Connections is a project of the Parent Information Center
Funded by the NH Department of Education Bureau of Special Education

www.nhconnections.org

Highlights from the South Central Family/School Partnership Forum

The three “Guided Questions” used at the Forum were:

1. What things are happening in your schools/school district to involve families?
2. What areas or topics about expanding family/school partnerships do you think your schools/school district need help with?
3. What do families and schools need to do, to expand family/school partnerships?

Communication that is multi modal, two way, and meaningful

- Opportunities to discuss and share success stories and what is working.
- Communication between parents and schools especially at transition points.
- Learn ways to re-engage disengaged parents.
- Feedback needed on the parent involvement survey to improve outcomes.
- Videotape events, use public television for trainings, disability awareness, etc. to make more accessible and reach a wider audience.
- Communicating and reaching culturally diverse families making all feel welcome and invited.
- Strategies to improve written and other communication modes with families and funding for it.
- Standard language so everyone can be on the same page.

Resources that are accessible, relevant, and family friendly

- Find out what information families need.
- Organized binder given to parents with resources; tips; business card holder; information to keep.
- Resources on Response to Intervention- **RtI** & Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports -**PBIS**.
- Information on what to expect when you have a child with a disability; in elementary, middle, and high school; and also after high school/adult life.
- Various ways to access information; tri-folds, websites, webinars, television, email, blogs, etc.
- Monthly Special Education Director meeting to share resources.

Training to promote understanding and better outcomes

- Opportunities for training for parents, teachers, and para-professionals.
- Using data with Response to Intervention and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports.
- Collaboration between districts on trainings, i.e. seven districts trained on post high school transition- Facilitated by the UNH’s Institute on Disability covering finances, person centered planning, speakers, classes, fostering parent to parent connections.
- Parents need to understand the Special Education process.
- Training strategies on programs used in school so parents can reinforce learning at home.

Thank You to all who helped plan and contributed to the forum.
Your support shows how much you value Family/School partnerships.