New Jersey Department of Education

Educational Partnerships

Parent Academy for Student Success (PASS)

Benefits of Home/School Academic Partnerships and How the PASS Model Contribute to Student Success

We have all heard it; we all agree with it; we all believe it; and we all want it to occur in our education community …. What is it? Specific home/school partnerships that increase student achievement.

Designing home/school partnerships to support student learning is not a luxury -- it is an integral component of student achievement. Currently, there are many changes in teaching and learning; one change must be increased student achievement.

When parents are informed about what and how students learn at school, students achieve more; *that* is the genesis of the New Jersey Parent Academy for Student Success (PASS) model.

The PASS model is constructed from a half century of research and professional studies which provide evidence that when schools inform parents about teaching and learning *inside* the classroom, parents can better support learning *outside* of the classroom.

- When parents understand the learning expectations students achieve; better grades, higher test scores, easier transitions to the next grade level, better attendance, higher graduation rates, higher motivation to learn, and success rates in college and careers.
- In school, students take more responsibility for their own learning, show more curiosity and innovation, are more organized and self-disciplined, consistently complete their homework, have higher class participation rates, have less suspensions for disciplinary reasons,
- In addition, children from diverse cultural backgrounds tend to do better when parents and professionals work together to bridge the gap between the culture at home and the culture in school.

In professional fieldwork across the country with thousands of teachers and administrators in elementary, middle, and high schools, educators want to know how to work with families in positive ways. Consistently, they say that they are not sure how to develop powerful programs.

Many parents deeply care about their child's education but do not know where to start. Most parents want to know how to help their children succeed in school. They want to know how to recognize if their child is learning and how to communicate with professional educators about that level of achievement.

It is incumbent on the school leader and staff to make sure that they are fostering an environment where parents can feel comfortable to ask questions or provide feedback.

Below are some benefits of implementing the PASS model.

- Students want to succeed in school, but they often need guidance and encouragement from many sources. Different needs and interests can be met in research-based and goal-linked programs of home/school partnerships that encourage all who are interested in children to work effectively together.

- The PASS model is easily adaptable to any K-12 grade level.

- Academic partnerships between home/school boost student achievement and give students a better chance to succeed with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS).

- All PASS components and practices are geared toward lowering barriers to home/school collaboration.

- PASS materials include suggested supports and activities to help educators and parents discuss key topics and themes.

- Participation in PASS activities creates a common language and understanding among all stakeholders clarifying ideas and discussions;

- PASS provides a suggested structure for all New Jersey districts and schools wherein that have the flexibility to design and strengthen programs and policies that will support parents and families to guide their children's learning, from preschool through high school.

- Implementing the suggested PASS model will allow educators to share what effective teaching and learning looks like in a CCSS classroom. Parents will have the opportunity to learn how CCSS classrooms:
  - Empower every learner to take ownership of their learning,
  - Emphasize the application of knowledge and skills to real world problems,
  - Value the differences each learner brings to the learning experience,
  - Leverage rapidly changing learning environments by recognizing the possibilities that the tools bring to maximize learning and engage learners.
  - Foster students' curiosity, creativity, innovation, problem solving, global literacy, communication, and interpersonal skills, and
  - Provide students with meaningful opportunities to understand technology and be able to synthesize information across disciplines.

- The focus of the CCSS shifts from teachers' teaching to learners' learning. This allows teachers to become more creative and personalize learning for students with a range of individual differences.

- Teaching and learning in every CCSS classroom includes:

• Collaboration • Communication • Creativity and innovation • Critical thinking and problem solving • Support for English language learners • Enrichment and support for diverse learners	• Engagement with families and communities • Respect for individual differences • Exploration of multiple perspectives • Technology use in teaching and learning • Use of data to support learning

- PASS implementation is aligned with student learning standards:
  - Common Core State Standards (CCSS),
  - Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS)

- PASS implementation is designed to compliment other parent involvement programs

- PASS implementation is aligned with professional standards, such as:
  - NJ Professional Standards for Teachers and School Leaders,
  - Interstate School Leader Licensure Consortium (ISLLC),
  - Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC),
  - National Parent and Family Involvement Standards, etc.

- Home/school learning partnerships developed at the academies add value to parent-teacher conferences and provide a framework for personalized student learning strategies.

- As students grow, and their learning moves forward, recommended academy topics increase in rigor and provide the basis for personalized strategies and learning goals for student success.

- PASS is not a one-way communication from schools to parents, nor is it a mandated program from the state.

- The state recognizes that parents and educators may have limited time to prepare and implement a comprehensive, intensive program for their entire education community. Sometimes neither parents nor educators know how to begin conversations about meaningful strategies for academic success. In addition, there may be a dependence on traditional parent involvement efforts such as volunteering, fundraising, meeting attendance, passing school budgets, chaperoning field trips an activities – all of which are important to every school community, but none of which have shown evidence of boosting student achievement. Therefore, NJDOE will support the capacity of educators and families to implement the suggested PASS model. PASS activities focus only on academics and home/school working together to improve student success. Suggested tools for adaptation and continued state support will serve to enable a sustained movement toward active academic partnerships between home/school.

- PASS support materials include several communication and engagement activities aimed at increasing understanding of the common core among parents so that they are empowered to become true partners in their children's education and success.

- Visual: Home/school communication is like a house. In most houses we have a:
  - **Front porch** - These are the events that are happening at school like Open House, PTA/PTO meetings, and other big events.
  - **Family room** - This is where parents can learn more about school work, homework, and other important elements of learning that are happening in their child's classroom.
  - **Kitchen** - Where do most people gravitate at a party? The kitchen. It's a place for those private conversations about how their child is doing. What are his/her strengths and where do his/her need help? The kitchen is where parents can find out the individual needs of their children.

- Educators can assure parents that their support doesn't mean re-teaching subject matter; rather, it is about becoming informed about the new expectations for learning and supporting students as they demonstration that learning in new ways.

- Students can achieve more when there is a strong home/school partnership based on student learning.

Sources with Multiple Research Studies and Evidence

Harvard Family Research Project http://www.hfrp.org/family-involvement

Johns Hopkins University - Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships National Network of Partnership Schools - Joyce Epstein

A New Wave of Evidence, Anne T. Henderson, Karen L. Mapp: A report from Southwest Educational Development Laboratory. http://www.nea.org/tools/17360.htm

The Evidence Continues to Grow: Parent Involvement Improves Student Achievement. Henderson, Anne T., Ed. An Annotated Bibliography. http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED315199

EIRC and NEA http://0-eric.ed.gov.opac.msmc.edu/?q=parent+involvement

National PTA National Standards Implementation Guide
http://www.pta.org/programs/content.cfm?itemnumber=1804&navItemNumber=3339 **and**
http://www.pta.org/search/searchresults.cfm