



PARENT•TEACHER
HOME VISIT PROJECT

5735 47th Avenue #236
Sacramento, CA 95824
916.448.5290

home-visits@sbcglobal.net

or visit

www.pthvp.org

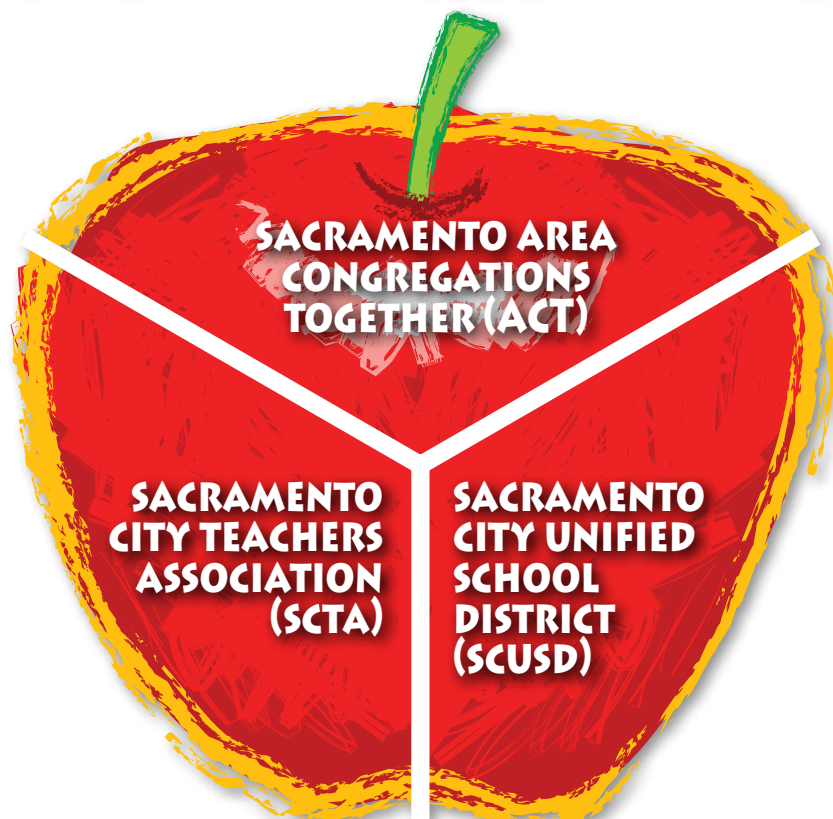
THE PARENT/TEACHER HOME VISIT PROJECT

is an inexpensive and easily replicated model of family engagement that has been proven to end the cycle of blame between families and school staff by building trust and respect, instilling cultural competency and increasing personal and professional capacity for all involved.

The increased communication, trust and support between families and teachers via home visits result in:

- Increased student attendance rates.
- Increased student test scores.
- Decreased suspension and expulsion rates.
- Decreased vandalism at school site.

THE PARENT/TEACHER HOME VISIT PROJECT PARTNERS



This extraordinary partnership between a **faith based community organizing group**, a **local teachers union** and a **school district** began in 1998 as an effort to address the cycle of blame that existed between parents and site personnel at several Sacramento schools where there was a pervasive history of low student achievement, high levels of poverty, and where high percentages of children entered school as English learners.



RECOGNITION OF OUR EFFORTS

CALIFORNIA STATE GOLD AWARD

2007 for work supporting students, teachers and public education.

INNOVATIVE FAMILY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR SYSTEMATIC EDUCATION REFORM

2010 by National School Family and Community Engagement Working Group.

BRIGHT IDEA AWARD

2010 by Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation at the John F. Kennedy School of Govt., Harvard University.

WHAT OTHERS HAVE TO SAY:

"I urge all communities to study (this project) and use it as a model for their own home visit programs."

Richard Riley, former US Secretary of Education

"This project is one of the best in the nation."

Carolyn Doggett, Executive Director, California Teachers Association

Named as one of the ten "Big Ideas for Better Schools" in EDUTOPIA

(a publication from the George Lucas Foundation, Sept. 2005 edition)

SINCE 1998, THE PARENT/TEACHER HOME VISIT PROJECT HAS BEEN REGULARLY FEATURED IN NATIONAL AND STATEWIDE MEDIA INCLUDING:

- ▶ Time Magazine
- ▶ Cable News Network (CNN)
- ▶ Education Week
- ▶ The Urban Educator
- ▶ EDUTOPIA
- ▶ Newsday
- ▶ Education Organizing
- ▶ The Star Bulletin
- ▶ St. Louis Post Dispatch
- ▶ San Antonio Express News
- ▶ National Public Radio stories
- ▶ ABC World News Tonight
- ▶ Education World
- ▶ Teacher Magazine
- ▶ The Sacramento Bee
- ▶ HOY Nuéva York
- ▶ The Institute for Teaching
- ▶ Cable in the Classroom
- ▶ The Plain Dealer
- ▶ The Boston Globe
- ▶ And many other books, blogs and publications.



A LITTLE MORE BACKGROUND

The concept behind the Parent/Teacher Home Visit Project is simple. Rather than blaming each other, teachers and parents come together, in a unique setting, as equal partners, to build trust and form a relationship where they can take the time to share dreams, expectations, experiences, and tools regarding the child's academic success. Once a relationship is formed, the partners are empowered, finding accountability with each other to make the necessary changes to insure that students experience academic and social success.

OUR PROJECT MEMBERS BELIEVE:

- ▶ Parents and teachers are equally important co-educators given that the parent is the expert on the individual child while the teacher is the expert on the curriculum that must be mastered for success.
- ▶ Before important information about academic status can be effectively shared, positive communication and trust must be established.
- ▶ All students and families should be visited -if possible- because targeting only challenging students perpetuates cycles of mistrust.
- ▶ All parents have the ability to assist their child in their academic success. Effective parent involvement can happen in every home—especially in light of the educational research about the types of family and community engagement impacting student success.
- ▶ This project should be voluntary for all involved and teachers should be compensated for their time.
- ▶ Home visits provide unique and meaningful opportunities for cross cultural learning that can better engage families, staff and students in the educational experience.





THE PARENT / TEACHER HOME VISIT MODEL

- 1 FALL—FIRST VISIT**
Focus = Relationship
Building and Listening

- 2 EVENT INVITATION**
And Continued School
Outreach

- 3 SPRING—
SECOND VISIT**
Focus = Capacity
Building and
Information



- 4 SECONDARY
SCHOOL VISITS**

Visits take place during key transitional times such as the summer before 7th or 9th grade, just before or after the high school exit exam testing, or in the summer before 12th grade for students who are on track to graduate but have not made college or career plans.



EXAMPLES OF HOME VISITS ACROSS THE K-12 SPECTRUM

PRESCHOOL/KINDERGARTEN READINESS:

Preschool and kindergarten teachers team up or share information for home visits with fam-

ilies of students transition-
ing into kindergarten. Since
many preschools already do
their own home visits and/or
significant family outreach,
this effort should continue
to be built upon to increase
comfort levels, share expecta-
tions for parents and families,
and help positively shape

every-one's experience—setting the tone for
future years. Significant research in the area to
show importance of parent's guidance in early
years, the importance of offering meaning-
ful ways to participate in a child's education,
and the importance of creating meaningful
partnerships between families and school and
prevents isolation for families and burnout for
staff.

ELEMENTARY CLASS HOME VISITS:

Most popular model because self-contained
classroom structure is particularly well suited
to the home visit model. Students are often
leery at first, but then as visits take place,
excitement grows. In the younger years, often
a focus during the visit on the developmental
progress of the child (is my child supposed
to be doing this?).. Honest and clear con-
versations needed regard-ing the difference
between a child "doing well, making progress,
meeting standards" etc. Many teachers like
to bring something with them— no matter
how simple (ie: school magnet with academic
calendar and school phone number). Follow-
ing visits and initial relationship building, it is
important to provide additional district and
community resources as needed. Have staff
share common themes coming out of home
visits and follow up with school meetings that
directly address those concerns. Parents really
appreciate whole child perspective.

ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOL TRANSITION:

Elementary school teachers from a neighbor-
hood elementary school can share information
or team up with colleagues at the local middle
school to conduct home visits for incoming
sixth/seventh graders. This encourages col-
laboration and improves communications
between participating elementary and middle
school teachers. Most districts have the lists of
incoming students available in the spring, but
sharing information can sometimes be chal-
lenging between schools, especially in non uni-
fied districts. Parents report needing to know
information before it is too late— opening up
lines of communication is vital in these years.

MIDDLE SCHOOL HOME VISITS:

The transition into middle school provides a
positive and powerful opportunity to recon-
nect school, families and students. However,
the logistics of visits get more complicated in
middle and high school. Breaking down groups
by small learning communities, subject matter
classes, home rooms, etc to get a 20:1 staff
ra-tion is critical to success. At this educational
stage, we find that it is also more important
to state clearly with families the reasons
and time of visit. Students and families have
greater concerns that this could be a nega-
tive conference type visit. Questions often
arise about the real reason for visit— judging
family, etc. More likely to begin having con-
flicts between staff and student perspectives.
Support from administration and peers really
important at this stage as are addressing time
and safety concerns of staff. Parent to parent
testimonies also really helpful.



EXAMPLES OF HOME VISITS ACROSS THE K-12 SPECTRUM

MIDDLE / HIGH SCHOOL TRANSITION

Like the other transitional visits, ideally you would have a person from both schools. However, this is not necessary and often it is a team from the receiving school who conducts the visits. Here, teachers visit the homes of their students before school starts, providing them with an opportunity to meet students and their parents/guardians and to discuss hopes, dreams, and concerns about the transition to high school. In these visits, home visiting teams benefit from including counselors, small learning community leaders or the school administrators.

HIGH SCHOOL SUCCESS AND CALIFORNIA HIGH SCHOOL EXIT EXAM (CAHSEE)

High school home visits can be broken down in many ways at the high school level. For example, schools with houses or small learning communities can use those structures to determine which staff will visit which students. You can also choose to be more strategic, but have to be careful about the “targeting perception”. One positive example in was in Sacramento where home visits were utilized to used to boost overall high school success by visiting tenth graders who just learned that they did not pass the exit exam on their first attempt. However, the focus was not on the failure but on the possibilities and pathways for success. School staff shared student test/achievement/course data and parents, students, and staff shared their dreams for high school success. Parents, students, and staff signed compacts. At the end of each visit, students, staff, and parents agreed on strategies for insuring good communication and utilization of all available school resources to support the student’s successful completion of high school.

MIDDLE / HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY MEETINGS:

Several middle and high schools in California have adapted the home visit model for community meetings where teachers step out and meet with small numbers of families at homes, libraries, community centers, etc. These intimate settings allow larger schools to implement the model in a logistically manageable way. The focus is still on building relationships and it is important to have families be part of setting the agenda and engaged in conversations at the meetings.

CAREER OR COLLEGE READINESS VISITS

The last visit in the secondary school home visit spectrum takes place in the summer before– or early fall of– 12th grade. This visit is for students/families where the student is on track to graduate but has not yet made career or college plans. These visits have been very successful in their early stages and have been primarily led by high school counselors.



EXAMPLES OF COMMUNITIES ADOPTING AND ADAPTING OUR MODEL

ALASKA

Anchorage, AK

Contact: Anchorage School District

Linda Carlson

Carlson_Linda@asdk12.org

CALIFORNIA

Sacramento and other locations, CA

Contact: Parent/Teacher Home Visit Project (PTHVP)

Carrie Rose, Executive Director

home-visits@sbcglobal.net

COLORADO

Denver, CO

Contact: Fairview Elementary School

Norma Giron (Principal)

Norma_Giron@dpsk12.org

or Don Diehl (Lead Teacher)

Donald_Diehl@dpsk12.org

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Washington, DC

Contact: Nathan Driskell,

Program Associate

ndriskell@flamboyantfoundation.org

IOWA

Iowa City, IA

Contact: Iowa PIRC

Ron Mirr

rmirr@mac.com

MINNESOTA

St. Paul, MN

Contact: Nick Faber, Teacher

nfabe@mac.com

MASSACHUSETTS

Springfield MA

Contact: Pioneer Valley Project

Fred Rose, Executive Director

fredrose.pvp2@verizon.net

New Bedford, MA

Contact: Interfaith Action of Southern Massachusetts (UIA)

Daniel Lesser

uiaorganizer@gmail.com

MONTANA

Great Falls, MT

Contact: Great Falls Public Schools

Sally Mathers, Federal Programs Director

sally_mathers@gfps.k12.mt.us

Helena, Libby and other locations, MT

Contact: Montana PIRC

Kristi Gough, Director

kgough@wordinc.org

NEVADA

Reno, NV

Contact: Nevada PIRC and Washoe County School District

D'Lisa Crain, PIRC Director

dcrain@washoe.k12.nv.us

OHIO

Columbus and other locations, OH

Contact: Ohio Children's Foundation

Peggy Calestro, Vice President

OCFKIDS@aol.com

VIRGINIA

Arlington, VA

Contact: Wakefield High School

Debbie Polhemus

Deborah_polhemus@apsva.us

THE RESEARCH

NATIONAL RESEARCH ON PARENT ENGAGEMENT

Organizing Schools for Improvement
Lessons from Chicago (2010)

Anthony S. Bryk, Penny Bender Sebring,
Elaine Allensworth, Stuart Luppescu, and
John Q. Easton

Beyond the Bake Sale, The Essential Guide
to Family-School Partnerships, Anne Hen-
derson, Karen Mapp, Vivian Johnson and
Don Davies (2006) and *A New Wave of*
Evidence Anne Henderson & Karen Mapp
(2002)

Harvard Family Research Project Family
Involvement Publications and Resources
(updated 2008)

Joyce Epstein's Six Types of Parent In-
volvement, School and Family Partner-ships,
Johns Hopkins University (1992)

Elementary and Secondary Education Act;
US Department of Education

KEY FINDINGS

- ✓ There are five elements of successful and sus-
tainable school reform: school leadership, profes-
sional capacity, instruction, learning climate, and
parent and community ties. Maximum outcomes
in any one of these areas rely on attention and
resources invested in all of these elements.
- ✓ Decades of research show that when parents
and teachers work together, students do better
academically and socially.
- ✓ The definition of meaningful parent involve-
ment is much broader than originally believed
and is just as important in middle and high
school as early years.
- ✓ Families of all backgrounds support their chil-
dren's learning at home.
- ✓ The most critical parent involvement is what
happens in the home but parents may need spe-
cific information on how to help and what to do.

PARENT/TEACHER HOME VISIT PROJECT RESEARCH

A) Dr. Geni Cowan, California State
University at Sacramento (CSUS) -
3 year study on 14 home visit pilot
schools (1998-2001)

B) EMT Associates, Inc.— statewide
evaluation of home visit project partner-
ship's training and materials (2003)

C) Paul Tuss, Center for Student Assess-
ment and Program Accountability,
Sacramento County Office of Education
(2007)

D) Our non profit and national col-
leagues are developing a uniform
national k-12 home visit data
collection instrument and system
(launch set for 2011-2012 school year).

KEY FINDINGS

- A) "Student performance has improved over
the three years of the project's implementation;
parental involvement has increased, and
communication between home and school has
been enhanced."
- B) Widespread implementation of the program,
Increase in the number of teachers involved per
site Successful dissemination of materials and
subsequent trainings following initial training
sessions. Participants perceiving benefits
including increased parental involvement,
improved parent/teacher relationships and
improved academic achievement.
- C) "Within one year of its inception, the CAHSEE
Home Visit Pilot Project has been associated
with positive attitudinal shifts among students
and parents toward school and the future,
as well as with positive behavioral changes
associated with improved academic outcomes."
Follow up showed visited students graduated at
high rates at one pilot site and transitional visits
positively impacted student performance
across sites.

ADDITIONAL WEBSITES AND RESOURCES

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| 1. The Parent/Teacher Home Visit Project | www.pthvp.org |
| 2. California Teachers Association | www.cta.org |
| 3. People Improving Communities through Organizing | www.pico.org |
| 4. National Parent and Teacher Association | www.pta.org |
| 5. National Education Association | www.nea.org |
| 6. National Network of Partnership Schools | www.partnershipschools.org |
| 7. US Dept. of Education Partnership for Family Involvement in Education | pfie.ed.gov |
| 8. National Coalition of Parent Involvement in Education (NCPIE) | www.ncpie.org |
| 9. California Parent Center | www.parent.sdsu.edu |
| 10. Communities in Schools | www.cisnet.org |
| 11. Harvard Family Resource Project | www.hfrp.org |
| 12. American Federation of Teachers | www.aft.org |
| 13. Public Education Network | www.publiceducation.org |

OTHER RESOURCES:

1. *Families, Schools, and the Adolescent* by Nancy E. Hill and Ruth K. Chao (2010)
2. *Building Parent Engagement in Schools*, Larry Ferlazzo and Lorie Hammond (2009)
3. *Beyond the Bake Sale* by A. Henderson, K. Mapp, V. Johnson and D. Davies (2007)
4. *Building Engaged Schools* by Gary Gordon with Steve Crabtree (2006)
5. *The Culturally Proficient School* by R. Lindsey, L. Roberts, and F. Campbell Jones (2005)
6. *The Essential Conversation* by Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot (2003)
7. *Achievement Matters* by Hugh Price, National Urban League (2002)
8. *I Know My Child Can Do Better* by Anne Rambo, PhD (2001)
9. *Building Successful Partnerships* by the National PTA (2000)
10. *The War Against Parents* by Sylvia Ann Hewlett and Cornel West (1998)
11. *Savage Inequalities* by Jonathan Kozol (1991)
12. *Parent Power* by Sherry Ferguson and Lawrence Mazin (1989)
13. *Principles of Leadership Development* (PICO)