

## **Achieving Parental Support**

### **Course Outline**

#### **Course Description**

The 21st century holds a new outlook on how and why we should be making parental contact an important part of our everyday jobs as educators. Many of the original gospels that dealt with this topic were written in a world that has evolved. Families have changed as well as the demographics of our populations. Teachers must be educated about the families that exist in society today and the ramifications of how that translates to parental contact and communication. This course will offer ways teachers and parents may communicate using the latest technology and social media sites. The latest articles that debate how and when parents should be involved will be shared and reflected upon.

#### **Objectives**

- Compare the types of families that exist in the 21st century.
- Determine the most effective ways to reach out to different families.
- Formulate how family structures affect the students in their charge.
- Explore the history of how families dealt with education in the past and how it reflects on today's practices.
- Develop a thorough understanding of what is meant in this day and age concerning family "diversity".
- Assess the best ways to communicate to those parents who speak little English.
- Compare different perspectives on parenting and how the different styles of parenting can affect the teacher's effectiveness.
- Discuss of the various views that exist concerning how parents view the role of the teacher.
- Compare and contrast work and time constraints for both parents and teachers.
- Explain how parents can serve as partners to the teachers.
- Compile a variety of ways of communicating with families.
- Explain ways technology has changed and how this fosters better communication.
- Explain parental involvement.
- Explain the benefits of parental involvement.
- Examine strategies that will allow parents to understand their role when it comes to homework.
- Discuss the basic strategies of planning and implementing successful programs for this purpose.
- Explore the reaction of family members upon learning of their child's disabilities and the impact it has on the family.
- Determine the educational obstacles that exist for children who are neglected or abused or witness domestic violence.

## **Curriculum Design & Time Requirements**

Achieving Parental Support a three credit graduate level course or forty-five professional development hours taught on weekends or over five full days. The following methodologies are used during the course: lectures, readings, group discussions, and assignments.

## **Course Materials**

The required text for this course is Parents and Teachers Working Together by Brett J. Novick . In addition to the required textbook, links to supplemental reading material will be provided.

## **Session Outline**

### **Introduction**

#### **Contents:**

- Course Overview
- Introduction Assignment

### **Session 1: Gaining an Understanding of Family Dynamics**

#### **Contents:**

- Historical perspective of the family Understand the blended families and how they affect how we reach out to the parents.
- Family structures that exist in the 21st century
- Impact of divorce on a child's behavior and academic achievement
- Four factors that need to be considered when strategizing home-school relations
- Functional and dysfunctional families and how that impacts what we do

### **Session 2: Family Diversity: Why We Need to Change What We Do**

#### **Contents:**

- Traditional family post WWII vs. the families that exist today
- Gay, lesbian, or transgender parents and the obstacles that the children may face
- Characteristics of families of various origins Describe religious diversity and
- Single mother and grandparent led families

### **Session 3: Whose Job is it anyway? Seeking the Perspectives of Both Teachers and Parents**

#### **Contents:**

- Obstacles which exist for non-custodial parents
- Viewpoints that exist about teachers and parents
- Roles of both parent and teacher in a child's upbringing
- Changing roles of both parents and teachers in the 21st century schools
- Strategies to deal with parents who are sensitive and defensive
- Overcome obstacles when parents are either wary of school or too invasive

### **Session 4: The Latest Views on Parental Involvement in Schools**

#### **Contents:**

- Family, school, community connections
- Define parental involvement
- Benefits of parental involvement for all involved
- Parents role in homework
- Creating a successful parent involvement program

- Roles of fathers in school and its impact on achievement

### **Session 5: Understanding the Dynamics of Winning Communication Strategies**

#### **Contents:**

- The importance of paralanguage
- Creating clear boundaries
- Active listening practice
- Computer programs and social media sites to increase parental support
- Benefits of early contacts with parents

### **Session 6: Best Practice - Phone calls, Parent-Teacher Conferences, and Back to School Nights**

#### **Contents:**

- Introduction phone call
- Open house and back to school night
- Video or Skype conferences
- Steps to defuse a conference gone awry

### **Session 7: Dealing with Families who have Children with Disabilities**

#### **Contents:**

- Parental involvement and disabled children
- Feeling for families upon learning of their child's disability
- Family involvement models for special education
- Inclusion and how families can support their children
- Perspectives of family members.
- Document information needed for IEP's and end of the year evaluations

### **Session 8: Tough Stuff - Information that Creates an Awareness for Students Living in Poverty or Abusive Homes**

#### **Contents:**

- Common nature of family violence and the impact it has on students
- Impact of violence in the home on achievement
- Role of the teacher in recording and reporting suspected abuse
- Community support groups
- Dynamics of poverty
- Effects of homelessness on children

### **Session 9: Models of Family Involvement**

#### **Contents:**

- Family involvement models
- Partnerships that target school violence and bullying
- The need to keep the schools safe from intruders and bullies
- Getting fathers to take an active role

### **Session 10: Parental Rights, Educational Law, and Advocating for Families**

#### **Contents:**

- Compulsory laws
- Religion debate between schools and families
- Student rights and school rights

- Public policies
- Educators as resources for families

## Grading

Assignments	Points	Grading Scale	
Group and Classroom Participation	30	93 - 100	<b>A</b>
Written Assignments	40	85 - 92	<b>B</b>
Final Integration Project	20	77 - 84	<b>C</b>
<b>Total Points</b>	<b>100</b>		

## Student Requirements

1. Participation: Attend all class sessions for the requisite number of hours (45) and actively participate in all class activities.
2. Assignments: Complete all readings, questions and reflection assignments.
3. Final project

## Student Academic Integrity

Participants guarantee that all academic class work is original. Any academic dishonesty or plagiarism (to take ideas, writings, etc. from another and offer them as one's own), is a violation of student academic behavior standards as outlined by our partnering colleges and universities and is subject to academic disciplinary action.