

# Ohio's State Personnel Development Grant Parent Teacher Partnerships

## *What is the Parent-Teacher Partnership Model?*

Strong parent-teacher partnerships, based on mutual respect and shared goals, have a positive effect on student learning. The Parent-Teacher Partnership model (PTP) brings together parents of students with disabilities and educators to discuss concepts of effective partnerships and experience honest, two-way communication. It is intended to lead to changes in parent and teacher knowledge, attitudes and dispositions necessary to establish and maintain effective parent-teacher relationships for the purpose of improving student outcomes. Ohio's Parent Teacher Partnerships model has been expanded to a state-wide, district and university model through the State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG).

## *University Model*

Based on the model developed at Bowling Green State University, pre-service educators are taught together with parents by an instructional team of a parent of a child with an exceptionality and university faculty member. In the course, pre-service educators learn from the experiences of parents of students with disabilities embedded in the class while studying concepts of effective home-school partnerships. Parents attend each class and students spend time outside of class learning from families with the intent of students experiencing the real inner workings of a family of a child with an exceptionality. Studies of the model indicate improved attitudes and understanding on the part of both students and parents (Handyside, L. M., Murray, M., M., & Mereoiu, M., 2012). Often negative preconceptions are transformed to trusting, empathetic and collaborative perspectives. Through SPDG, this model for pre-service education has been expanded to seven other Ohio universities. Grants for planning and implementation were awarded on a competitive basis. Each university established a planning team that included parents, developed a plan for a co-instructed class and a plan for sustaining the course after the grant period.

*"All of the feedback provided was positive!! Attendees were surprised that the roles between teacher and parent are similar. Parents were not aware that the teachers would be open to feedback. Many are excited about the doors this will open up for communication between the classroom and home."*

State Support Team Consultant

## *District Model*

Ohio's SPDG adapted the university Parent Teacher Partnerships model for implementation in local school districts. In this setting, a small group of family members and school staff (20 max.) come together to discuss concepts of partnership activities and the qualities of effective partnerships. Eight, 90 minute meetings are facilitated using content and activities based on both practical and relational strategies. Parent and teacher co-facilitators lead discussions and interactive activities aimed at building parent and teacher confidence and understanding of effective strategies for partnering.

### Session Topics:

- Parenting
- Communicating
- Volunteering
- Learning at home
- Decision-making
- Collaborating with the community

#### Source:

Epstein, Joyce L & Associates. (2009). School, Family, and Community Partnerships, (3rd ed.). CA: Corwin Press

- Communication
- Commitment
- Respect
- Equality
- Advocacy
- Professional Competence
- Trust

#### Source:

Turnbull, Ann, Turnbull, Rud, Erwin, Elizabeth J., Soodak, Leslie C., & Shogren, Karrie A. (2015). Families, Professionals, and Exceptionality (7th ed.). NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.

### System Connection

Ohio's design includes connecting Parent Teacher Partnerships to the districts' plan for continuous improvement. Each district participating in Ohio SPDG is implementing the Ohio Improvement Process (OIP), a continuous improvement system for change based on data analysis, development of a focused plan, and monitored and measured implementation. Shared leadership through a system of District, Building and Teacher-Based Teams is central to the implementation of the OIP. The Parent Teacher Partnerships effort in each district is linked to the system of improvement through the establishment of a feedback loop with Building and District Leadership Teams. Lessons learned, ideas for improvement and feedback from parents and teachers are provided to school leaders about how they can improve the schools' partnership practices. School leadership teams in turn, share information with parents and teachers.

*"The District Superintendent gave the welcome introduction, sharing just how the Parent Teacher Partnership aligned with their school district's vision and to the OIP! We have a great group of parents and teachers and are very excited to be learning together with them."*

State Support Team Consultant

### The State's Role

A work group of state partners guide the PTP including Ohio's Parent Training and Information Center, Bowling Green State University, The Ohio State University, the Ohio Department of Education, parents and regional support staff. The goal is to provide families and professionals an opportunity for honest and open, two-way communication towards school improvement and family well-being. With SPDG, state-level train the trainer events bring parents and teachers from 48 districts together with regional State Support Team coaches to develop the skills and knowledge necessary for facilitating the Parent Teacher Partnerships modules in school districts. Regional State Support Teams provide on-going coaching and expertise to parent-teacher co-facilitators teams and an on-line learning community provides a means for facilitators from across the state to stay connected and share their successes and challenges.

For more information about the Parent Teacher Partnerships model, contact [boone.32@osu.edu](mailto:boone.32@osu.edu) or click [here](#).