Parent/School Partnering Course: Building a Partnership for Success

Purpose

Sometimes it's hard for parents to understand how to effectively partner with their child's teacher and school to ensure the best learning outcomes. Parent services provide parents with knowledge and tools to communicate effectively, to understand the constraints school staff face, and to build the kind of partnership that will create win/win outcomes for children.

…seeing their positive intentions and actions, and amplifying that, is a much more effective strategy than focusing on what you don't want…

Philosophy

At SEEDS, we believe that establishing a partnership begins with two parties feeling responsible for the success of a mutual purpose. Parents need the tools and information to be able to establish relationships with teachers and other relevant school staff that build a common sense of purpose and that open authentic communication about the real issues and concerns each partner has in constructive ways that build trust and motivation to make the partnership work.

Two things are needed to build and sustain such partnerships. One is an ability to clarify the thoughts, feelings and intentions that both parties have; to not get caught up in the stories and sense-making that are a normal part of social

What are some of the services and information SEEDS offers?

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1. sample flow chart of a school district "chain of command"

2. who to talk to when you have a concern

3. checklist of what to think about before you make the first call

4. how to share concerns in ways that invite support

5. what to do before your first face to face meeting

6. win/win model

7. golden rules of triangles

8. how to avoid some common relationship pitfalls

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interaction, but to ensure that perceptions get tested so that people are dealing with what's real and not what they have made up in their heads. The second is that partnerships work best when people look for and align with the positive intentions that others hold. Learning to exert influence by focusing on what you want more of from your partners, seeing their positive intentions and actions, and amplifying that, is a much more effective strategy than focusing on what you don't want or don't like and complaining about it.

Learning Objectives

Understand who controls what…

- understand what the Ministry of Education controls and how school districts are funded
- appreciate what constraints school systems work with (union contracts, legal requirements, legislation)

Understand the chain of command

- learn the difference between political and administrative roles
- learn how school districts are organized
- understand the principal's role and the budget s/he controls

Increase the chances your kid will get what s/he needs

- learn how to get clear in your own thinking
- learn how to get clear about your intentions and wants
- learn how to listen and what to listen for
- understand the process of finding win/win solutions

Understand how to get the school system on your side

- learn about describing your experience and understanding the experience of others (experience cube)
- learn about appreciative change process and how to use it
- learn about triangulation and how to avoid it

If things go sideways, how do you get back on track?

- when you have a problem, first see the teacher etc.
- learn how to be descriptive, not judgmental

Your Instructor…

Carmen Farrell

Carmen's career started as a junior researcher with the Royal Commission on Education, and eventually became part of the executive team at the Coquitlam School District, responsible for community relations and development.

As a mother of a boy with developmental challenges, she knows firsthand what it's like to advocate for your child. She can teach you how the school system works, what strategies are likely to succeed, and how to avoid making things worse.

A leadership trainer with Clear Learning Ltd., she utilizes models from the Clear Leadership course for collaboration and partnerships

- learn more about appreciative process and
- see the good intentions of others

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