A New School Year

I hope you all have had some time over the summer to relax, refresh your soul and recharge! While I don't always enjoy the heat, summer is one of my favorite seasons simply because life seems to slow down a bit. Traffic is lighter, there's no school homework or a rush to go to bed early for school and evenings in my home tend to be full of more play and outside time which I treasure.

Our biggest summer adventure was an invasion of snakes in our chicken coop! Pictured to the left is a picture of my girls admiring one from afar. My girls learned a lot about these slithering creatures and the difference between venomous and non-venomous snakes! It was learning in disguise and they had lots of snake stories to share!

Back to School time to me is like beginning a New Year! I set new goals, try new ideas and routines in my home and feel like I'm starting each day renewed! I feel the same way professionally. I look forward to this upcoming 2019-2020 school year and working with all of you to increase Family Engagement awareness and training in our Region.

This month's Family Engagement Findings is packed! I hope you will use it as a resource and opportunity to stay on top of Family Engagement news!
ESC-20 Family & Community Engagement Symposium

There will **NOT** be an ESC-20 Family & Community Engagement Symposium during the 2019-2020 school year. Why?

- ESC-20 parent trainings and webinars have more parents & families/community members participating in these weekly sessions. My focus will continue to make these robust and centered on hot topics to support families and their involvement in their child's education.

- While many of you supported the 1 Day conference, I will continue to encourage you to consider supporting parents in a different way by making plans to attend ESC-20 trainings and/or webinars year round. Can you help provide transportation and bring the parents on a field trip? Can you host parents on your campus and participate via webinar?

- Our Bilingual/EL department will be sponsoring a Parent Institute as a part of their World Language Conference in November, so more information coming soon on that!

- The **TAPPestry Conference** (for parents/families/caregivers/professionals that have or work with children with special needs) will be on Saturday, February 15, 2020.

Parent Leadership Academy

The Parent Leadership Academy (collaborative partnership with ESC-20, SAISD and San Antonio College) is on hold for the 2019-2020 school year.

If you're interested in learning more about the Parent Leadership Academy and how you could duplicate this in your district, please reach out to me! I'd love to share and offer support!

District Level Family Engagement Networking

I was recently asked, "Why isn't there an opportunity in Region 20 for Family Engagement leaders to come together to share best practices and learn from each other?"

Good question! This spurred on more conversations and this interest was expressed among several other district level leaders.
So… I’d love to be a part of helping facilitate this and offer additional support for district level leaders that support Family Engagement initiatives.

The Family Engagement District Level Network Meeting is intended for administrators and professionals in a leadership role that supervise and direct Family Engagement initiatives at the district level.

Desired Outcomes:
- to share Family Engagement best practices across Region 20;
- to develop a deeper understanding of Family Engagement as an instructional strategy and how to support this district-wide; and
- more to be determined by participants.

This first meeting of the Family Engagement District Level Network Meeting will be to share current family engagement practices occurring across Region 20, including challenges.

This group will determine together future meeting dates and agendas.

*This meeting is held right after the first scheduled Family Engagement Network Meeting. Please bring your lunch or plan to purchase a lunch at Café 20.

Date: Tuesday, October 1st
Time: 12:00 p.m.--1:30 p.m.
Session # 61492
Register [HERE](#).

ESC-20's First Ever Family Engagement Cohort!

I’m excited to announce the following 3 District/Charters that were selected to participate in the Family Engagement Cohort in collaboration with Scholastic this school year! Congratulations!

- Hondo ISD Elementary and Intermediate Campuses
- Devine ISD Elementary and Intermediate Campuses
- Jubilee Lake View University Prep Campus

Goals and Objectives
Transforming Home-School Partnerships by...
- Assessing current Family Engagement efforts;
- Strengthening the foundation for building effective home-school partnerships; and
- Enhancing the capacity of educators and families to work together to support student learning.

I will be showcasing their Cohort work and progress each month.

Pictured to the right are Devine ISD and Jubilee Lake View leaders attending the orientation and introduction session. I forgot to take a picture of Hondo ISD leaders (sorry)!

Each campus will start the school year giving out a Family Engagement Assessment to all their families and instructional staff.
Ready, Willing and Able?

This summer I read this research report by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, *Ready, Willing and Able? Kansas City Parents Talk About How to Improve Schools and What They Can Do to Help*

It discusses three distinct groups of parents:

- **Potential Transformers** are poised for deeper action on education policy, though still on the sidelines. These parents say they would feel “very comfortable” serving on committees to decide school policies and advocating for school improvements by contacting public officials and the media. However, very few have been involved in these ways. Thirty-one percent of parents surveyed fall into this group.

- **School Helpers** are willing to get more involved in traditional ways. These parents are less comfortable with advocacy roles but say they could be more involved helping out directly at their children’s schools. School helpers say they feel “very comfortable” participating in traditional involvement activities, including volunteering during school trips, bakes sales or sporting events, or attending PTA meetings. Twenty-seven percent of parents surveyed fall into this group.

- **Help Seekers** are concerned about their children’s learning and are primarily looking for more guidance from their schools. These parents are unlikely advocates, and they feel they are already doing as much as they possibly can at their children’s school, yet all help seekers feel they have not yet succeeded in helping their children to do their best in school. At the same time, this group is more critical of their teachers and schools than other parents and more skeptical about most initiatives to improve parental involvement. Nineteen percent of parents surveyed fall in this group.

When we consider our approaches to engaging families, we often do not think of differentiating our approaches based on where the families are. Teachers differentiate based on student needs in their classroom and they offer varying types of supports and strategies...why is engaging families any different?

We tend to do a "one size fits all" approach to engaging families and wonder why not all families accept or participate in our "one size fits all" approach.

This article opened my mind to look beyond those "one size fits all" approaches that are common.

**The article also acknowledges:**

“Just over half (51 percent) of the Kansas City region’s parents acknowledge that they could be more involved at their child’s school if they tried harder, though parents are divided on how they prefer to be involved. Many parents (27 percent) say they could help out more in traditional ways at the schools their children attend and nearly a third (31 percent) seem ready to embrace broader roles in shaping how schools operate and advocating for policy reform. Some parents (19 percent) are primarily looking for more guidance from their schools on how to help their own children succeed. In addition to exploring the similarities and differences among parents, the report includes a set of concrete and practical measures that education leaders can employ to engage parents in more effective ways.”

**Recommendations for School Leaders are:**

They will also be forming their 10 member campus team to participate in the upcoming training sessions.
1. **Assure communication goes two ways.** Clear communication from educators on academic expectations, school policies and resources is important, but parents must also have the opportunity to bring their perspectives to the table.

2. **Begin by listening and addressing key concerns.** School leaders should identify the pressing concerns of parents and gain understanding of how they think and talk about them. When parents know their chief concerns are being addressed, they are most open to constructive involvement.

3. **Approach parents with a clear request.** Nearly one-quarter of parents surveyed say they haven’t been asked to volunteer or help out at their children's schools in the past year. School leaders should ask parents for help.

4. **Provide many and varied opportunities to engage.** When school leaders provide diverse opportunities for parental involvement, they have a greater chance of attracting parents of differing views and readiness.

Download and Read the Full Article [HERE!](#)

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**What I'm Reading Next.... Taking It To the Next Level**

This month I will focus my reading on *Taking It To the Next Level: Strengthening and Sustaining Family Engagement through Integrated, System Principles*

Taking it to the Next Level takes a hard look at the ways in which districts are moving from disjointed activities to involve parents to systemically integrated strategies

Join me in reading this article and I will share my takeaways next month!

Download it [HERE.](#)

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**Another Article I’ll Be Reading!**

*Attendance Playbook: Smart Solutions for Reducing Chronic Absenteeism*
Proposals Still Needed for the 2019 Statewide Parental Involvement Conference!

The submission deadline is Wednesday, August 21.

- Call for Proposal online: https://www.implanners.com/parents/proposals.php

Presentation topics include:
- Federal requirements (policy, compact, annual meeting, allowable use of funds, staff development, etc.)

Have you registered for the 2019 Statewide Parental Involvement Conference?


Conference Website

Conference Registration
- $160 per person until 10/22

Preconference Registration
- $100 per person until 10/22

Online Hotel Reservation

Host Hotel: Embassy Suites by Hilton San Marcos Hotel Conference Center (1001 E. McCarty Lane; San Marcos, TX 78666)
Best practices, especially at the secondary level
- Enriching parenting skills (discipline, math and literacy to help your child, helping child with homework, technology skills and apps to use with your child, etc.)
- Hot topics (college and career readiness, bullying, internet safety, school safety, etc.)

Proposals are needed for Spanish-speaking presentations.

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**Annual Meeting & Compliance Calendar**

You will want to download and review the resources below as you kick off a new school year!

- [2019-2020 Parent and Family Engagement Compliance Calendar](#)
- [Annual Title I Meeting Resources](#)

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**ESC-16 New Resources: Promising Practices**

ESC-16, Statewide Parent and Family Engagement Initiative has added a new resource to include promising practices from urban, suburban and rural school districts.

Check out the great ideas and practices that are occurring all over the State!

- [Promising Practices](#)

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**Community Resource Directory**

ESC-20's Community Resources organized by county!

Guadalupe County was added this summer!
This is a great page to share with families as they seek community supports.

Click the image below to access the resources or click here: [Community Resources](#)

If you have any additions I could add, please share!
I sent you a previous SMORE newsletter with ALL the information about ESC-20's 2019-2020 Parent Trainings and Webinars. Please share with your families!

You can view the SMORE again below.
In an effort to try to increase enrollment of particular Family Engagement Trainings for teachers and administrators, I have developed a one page flyer that highlights the trainings teachers and administrators would benefit from the most in understanding how to engage families more effectively.

Download the flyer below. Please share with the appropriate staff!

An electronic newsletter has also been created for you to share electronically. You can view it HERE or below.
Investing in children is not a luxury. It's a national necessity.

—Marian Wright Edelman
Questions? Comments? Feedback?

Let Kimberly know!

Please share any questions, comments or other feedback with Kimberly!

Your answer

Email Address

Click HERE if you can't access the form above and you'd like to leave Kimberly a comment, question or other feedback. Thanks!
Kimberly Baumgardner, Consultant, Family Engagement--Education Service Center, Region 20

Kimberly has worked in the field of special education for 19 years. She has been on staff at ESC-20 for 10 years. She spent 7 years as a special education curriculum specialist and is currently the Family Engagement Consultant.

Kimberly has become quite passionate about empowering families to be more involved in their child’s education and future as well as challenging and supporting schools to increase their efforts to involve families in their child’s educational journey and focus on Family Engagement as an instructional tool that improves student’s academic outcomes.

Kimberly enjoys living out in the country with her husband, Tyson and two daughters, Lynette & Lucy Sue.

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