Families as Partners and Leaders

Building Capacity Through Engagement

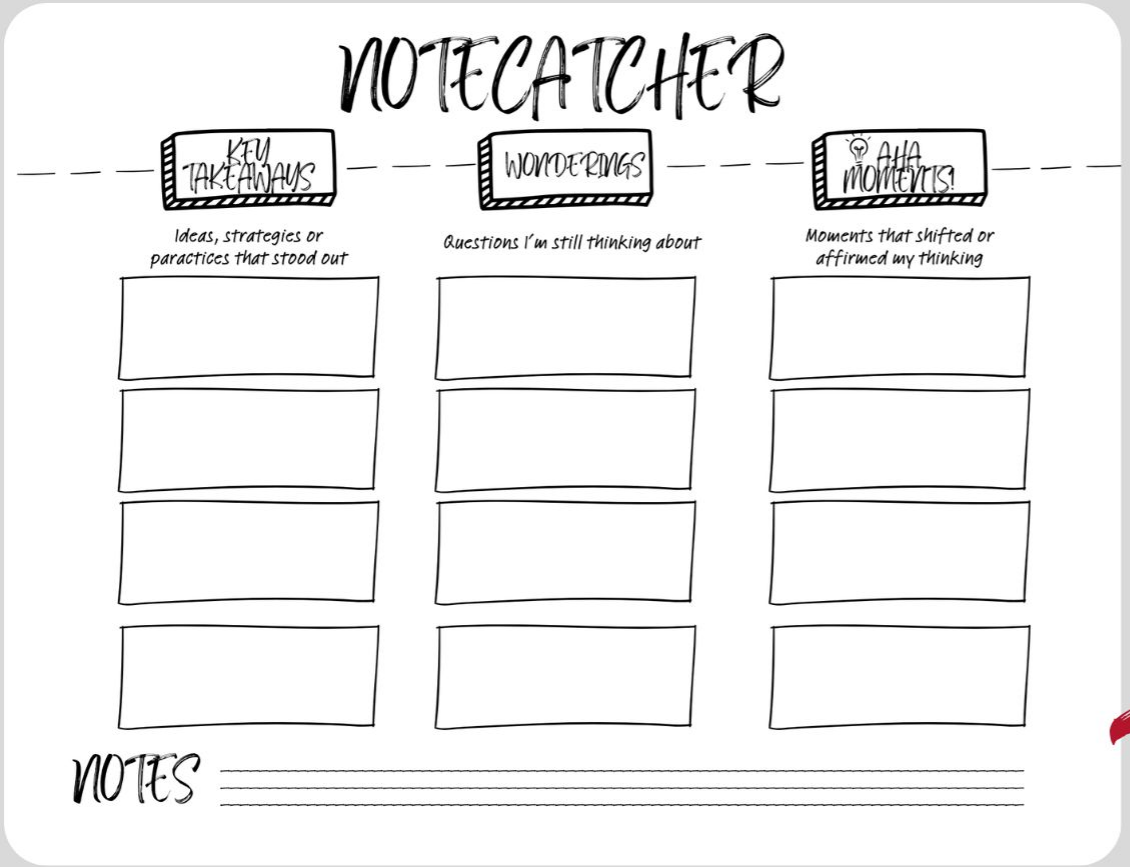


Objectives

By the end of this workshop you will:

- Explain why family and community engagement is a core education reform strategy
- Identify the key components of effective staff-family partnerships
- Examine the role of parent ambassadors in engaging diverse families
- Develop actionable steps for equitable family engagement




NOTECATCHER
KEY TAKEAWAYS
WONDERINGS
AHA MOMENTS!
Ideas, strategies or practices that stood out
Questions I'm still thinking about
Moments that shifted or affirmed my thinking
NOTES

Take Notes

"If you skip over the step of building authentic and trusting relationships with your families and the community. Then all of those wonderful initiatives that you attempt to put into place don't have a strong foundation on which to sit."

Dr. Karen Mapp



"Family engagement is a full, equal, and equitable partnership among families, educators, and community partners to promote children's learning from birth through college and career."

Connecticut State Department of Education, 2018

Partner with families as leaders:

- Building trust
- Honoring family assets
- Creating inclusive environments that invite meaningful participation



Family and Community Engagement

Family and community engagement greatly increases the likelihood that students will learn and thrive. Students are more prepared for school, more likely to achieve, and more likely to graduate when they are supported by schools, families, and communities working together in a coordinated manner. Schools will be more effective at engaging families and communities when they move toward systemic, integrated, and sustained engagement.

California Department of EDUCATION

Family and Community Engagement

“building meaningful, equitable, and collaborative relationships and partnerships between schools, families, and the wider community to improve student outcomes, ensure cultural and linguistic responsiveness, and foster trust. It is a shared responsibility where all parties contribute their unique strengths and expertise in a two-way, goal-oriented relationship.”



Family and Community Engagement

When schools actively listen to what their students and families want from them, they find that both constituencies often describe the features of a community schools-schools that are safe, challenging, welcoming, and engaging.

LESSON 5
Twenty Years, Ten Lessons

California Community Schools Framework

Four Pillars

Integrated Student Supports, which can support student success by meeting their academic, physical, social-emotional, and mental health needs.

Family and Community Engagement, which involves actively tapping the expertise and knowledge of family and community members to serve as true partners in supporting and educating students.

Collaborative Leadership and Practices for Educators and Administrators that establish a culture of professional learning, collective trust, and shared responsibility for outcomes in a manner that includes students, families, and community members.

Extended Learning Time and Opportunities that include academic support, enrichment, and real-world learning opportunities (e.g., internships, project-based learning).

Four Key Conditions for Learning

Supportive environmental conditions that foster strong relationships and community.

Productive instructional strategies that support motivation, competence, and self-directed learning.

Social and emotional learning (SEL) that fosters skills, habits, and mindsets that enable academic progress, efficacy, and productive behavior.

System of supports that enable healthy development, respond to student needs, and address learning barriers.

Four Cornerstone Commitments

Assets-Driven and Strength-Based Practice: Community schools view students, their families and their community through the lens of their assets and strengths and value the collective wisdom derived from experience, family, history and culture and language.

Racially-Just and Restorative School Climates: Community schools commit to creating, nourishing and sustaining school climates that are centered in the embrace of and support for all students in the totality of school interactions.

Powerful, Culturally Proficient and Relevant Instruction: Community schools commit to be driven by teaching and learning that is relevant to, inclusive of and centered in the wisdom, history, culture and experience of students, families and communities.

Shared Decision Making and Participatory Practices: Community schools all share a commitment to authentic and dynamic shared leadership in all aspects of school governance and operations.

Four Proven Practices

Community Asset Mapping and Gap Analysis: An essential element for successful community school efforts are strategies to engage school and community interest holders in a coherent process of identifying and curating assets and wisdoms throughout the community.

Integrating and Aligning with other relevant Programs: Community schools are intentionally situated in a suite of CA initiatives (e.g., Multi-tiered Systems of Support, mental health services, expanded learning time, universal TK, etc.) that stand to transform public education throughout the State. Practices also align, integrate and cross stitch with other education justice and equity initiatives at the district and school site level.

Site-Based and LEA-Based Advisory Councils: School site-based and LEA-based advisory councils (often called shared decision-making councils or teams)engaged interest holders including students, staff, families, and community members in determining the focus and direction of the community school effort.

Community School Coordinator: A coordinator who is responsible for the overall implementation of community school processes, programs, partnerships and strategies at the school site.

What is a community school?

"A community school is any school serving pre-Kindergarten through high school students using a "whole-child" approach, with "an integrated focus on academics, health and social services, youth and community development, and community engagement."

As a school improvement strategy, community school initiatives enable the local school district and school to work closely with educators, students, and families to understand and address the unique needs, assets, and aspirations of the school community."

California Community Schools Framework 2022

Creating welcoming & culturally responsive school communities



RELATIONAL TRUST

Respect • Competence• Integrity• Personal Regard

1. Am I seeking input and listening carefully to what all families have to say? ***(Respect)***
2. Am I demonstrating to families that I am competent and I am honoring their roles as caretakers ***(Competence)***
3. Do I keep my word with families? ***(Integrity)***
4. Do I show families that I value and care about them as people? ***(Personal regard)***

Dr. Eyal Bergman's questions for examining relational trust



BUILDING CONNECTIONS

Relational Entry Points, Beyond Events

Informal community mixers that foster relationship building

- Family Winter Mixer
- Hooked on LCAP
- Book Club

Sharing Cultural Knowledge

Inviting families to share

- Cultural Parent created/led presentations to school/community

Co-Create

Co-create opportunities that invite families to actively participate

- Community voice circles
- Co-plan/ designing

The following slides showcases a model of a Parent Ambassador program implemented by Savanna High School.

Use the planning tool located in the materials to support you in creating your own!

Savanna PARENT AMBASSADORS

EST. 2014

Leveraging Parents to Support Student Success


Parent Ambassador Blueprint
VISION & PURPOSE
INVOLVEMENT TO
GOALS:
KEY EVENTS TO LAUNCH PROGRAM
SYSTEMS YOU WILL PUT IN PLACE
□ATTENDANCE TRACKING
□COMMUNICATION SYSTEM (REMIND, EMAIL, ETC.)
□SERVICE HOUR TRACKING
□MEETING CALENDAR
TIMELINE
RESOURCES:
Vision & purpose
Why do you want to create a Parent Ambassador
(Think about student outcomes, family engagem
Involvement to Leadership
How will your Ambassador program shift famili
leadership?
KNOWLEDGE
LEADERSHIP
IDENTITY
Program Structure
What will you application/onboardin
What steps will families take to become Amba
(Applicaction,volunteer clearance, contract, e
Describe your process:
Program Structure
Commitmen
Required service hours per year:
Length of commitment:
Meeting frequency:
Required trainings (if any):
Program Structure
Learning O
School Leadership Roles:
Workshops:
Leadership Academy Sessions:
Other:
Program Structure
Belonging/Com
Pinning Ceremony
Senior Recognition
Family Potlucka
Additional Notes

Let's Plan!

Trifold

Padres Embajadores de Savanna

Beneficios
-Prioridad durante las inscripciones
-Gafete Personalizado
-Consultación individual sobre selección
-Asientos VIP para la Graduación
(para padres del Grado 12)

Requerimientos:
-50 horas de servicio
-Asistir a Open House y Back to School Night
-Asistir a Talleres de Padres
-Asistir a juntas mensuales

Beneficios:
-Prioridad durante las inscripciones
-Gafete Personalizado
-Rebel Gear GRATIS
-Asientos VIP para la Graduación + 5 boletos adicionales (para padres del Gr 12)
-Anuario GRATIS (para miembros EJECUTIVOS Grado 12)
-Lider de grupos de Embajadores

Requerimientos:
-100 horas de servicio :
-Acordar a ser Educador de Padres
- Ser Padre Embajador ACTIVO por dos años y/o mantener una posición de Liderazgo (SSC, WASC, ELAC, DELAC, PTSA)
Asistir a juntas mensuales

Padres Embajadores Ejecutivos

EN QUÉ NIVEL QUIERE ESTAR?

SCAN ME



Savanna Parent Ambassadors

Benefits:
-Priority Registration
-Personalized Badge
-VIP seating at Graduation
(for Senior parents)

Requirements:
-50 hours of service
-Attend Open House and Back to School Night
-Attend Grade Level Workshops/Parenting Workshops
-Attend monthly meetings

Benefits:
-Priority Registration
-Personalized Badge
-FREE Rebel Spirit Gear
-VIP seating at Graduation + 5 extra seats (for Senior parents)
-FREE yearbook (for Senior EXEC Board)
Leader of Ambassador Groups

Requirements:
-100 hours of service :
-Agree to be a Parent Educator
-Two years as ACTIVE Parent Ambassador and/or Hold a Leadership Position (SSC, WASC, ELAC, DELAC, PTSA)
Attend monthly meetings

Executive Parent Ambassadors

WHAT LEVEL WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE?

SCAN ME





Why Get Involved?

Benefits of Being Involved

Improvement in test scores, grades, and graduation rates

Increase in attendance and completed homework

Increase in motivation and improvement in self esteem.

Improves your relationship and communication with your child

Mission

The Parent Ambassador Program will support the school community in order to meet the needs of our families and students. Parent Ambassadors will understand the education system with great detail and depth to ensure their child is college, career and life ready for the 21st century.



Purpose

- Increase family engagement.
- Increase parent presence at school.
- Create a strong parent network.
- Strengthen family/school relationships





Activity

From Involvement To Leadership

Reflection

(Individually)

- When families show up to your campus, what are they typically asked to do?
- Is it compliance based or leadership based?

Pair Share

(In pairs or triads)

Volunteer vs. Ambassador Model

- How does the Ambassador role increase knowledge, leadership and identity?
- How does it build capacity for both staff and families?



Onboarding Process

- Read and sign Ambassador Contract
- Fill out Volunteer Application (and sign up for volunteer orientation)
- Sign up to Remind group
- Submit your service hours via Google Form

BECOMING A PARENT AMBASSADOR

1 COMPLETE INTEREST FORM



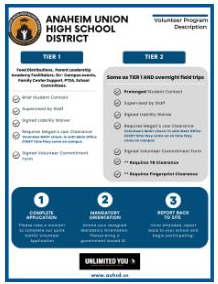
Scan QR Code!

2 APPLY AS A VOLUNTEER

New AUHSD Volunteer Process!
(For current and new volunteers)

Apply via: **AUHSD Website**

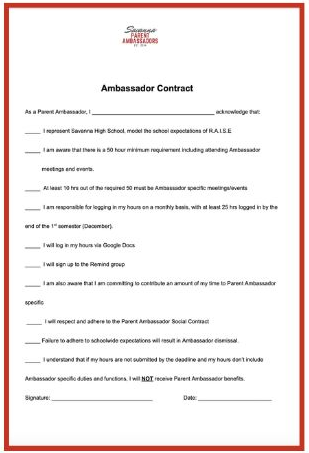
Tier 1 required; *Tier 2 optional*.



Click the image to learn about the tiers!

3 READ & SIGN AMBASSADOR CONTRACT

Submit to FACES to officially be part of the Program!



Ambassador Contract

As a Parent Ambassador, I _____ acknowledge that:

____ I represent Savanna High School, model the school expectations of R.A.I.S.E

____ I am aware that there is a 50 hour minimum requirement including attending Ambassador meetings and events.

____ At least 10 hrs out of the required 50 must be Ambassador specific meetings/events

____ I am responsible for logging in my hours on a monthly basis, with at least 25 hrs logged in by the end of the 1st semester (December).

____ I will log in my hours via Google Docs.

____ I will sign up to the Remind group

____ I am also aware that I am committing to contribute an amount of my time to Parent Ambassador specific

____ I will respect and adhere to the Parent Ambassador Social Contract

____ Failure to adhere to schoolwide expectations will result in Ambassador dismissal.

____ I understand that if my hours are not submitted by the deadline and my hours don't include Ambassador specific duties and functions, I will NOT receive Parent Ambassador benefits.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

ENG | SPAN



Commitment

- 50 Hours of volunteer hours (which also include Ambassador specific events)
- Minimum 2 yr commitment for Senior Benefits and to apply for Executive Board*
- Attend Ambassador Meetings (morning or evening/4 per year)
- Volunteer Hours Log (Google Form online)
- Attend AUHSD's Parent Leadership Academy and Leadership Summits
- Parent Involvement Opportunities: ELAC, SSC, Parent Leadership Academy, Parent Nights, Open House, BTS Night, Parenting Classes, Coffee with the Principal, Parent Learning Walks, extra curricular activity events, etc.

AS A *Parent Ambassador*

GET INFORMATION ON UPCOMING EVENTS BY JOINING OUR CHAT VIA *REMIND* APP!

Send a text to

81010

Text this message

@savanna1

SHARE/SIGN UP TO VOLUNTEER/ PARTICIPATE IN EVENTS VIA *REMIND*!



Savanna
PARENT
AMBASSADORS
EST. 2014

SUBMIT YOUR SERVICE HOURS (GOOGLE FORM) BY THE END OF EACH SEMESTER!

Scan QR Code!



Responsibilities

- They represent parent community at our campus
- Once identified as Ambassadors, they are called to represent during different functions
- They represent the parent voice in different spaces
- They are leaders and they are the connection for other parents to get involved

Changes at the School Level

- Ambassadors are seen not only as leaders by school staff, but by other parents as well
- Growth of parent network
- Growth in parent participation
- Increased parent presence on campus
- Increased collaboration between parents and teachers



Benefits

- Personalized Name Badge
- Opportunity to develop as a leader and work closely with school administration
- 4 Additional tickets for Graduation
- VIP seating @ Graduation (for Senior parents who served as Ambassadors for min. of 2 yrs)
- Priority Registration during Summer Registration!
- Priority Opportunities for Exclusive Events



Being Involved in your student's education!



Data

- This 2025-26 school year, the program has 60 Parent Ambassadors & 8 Executive Parent Ambassadors

- The program began at Savanna High School in 2014.
- It started with 4 parents!

Accomplishments

The group has presented at the school, District, county and national level including:

- **Presenting to teachers / staff PD**
- **Orange County Dept of Ed (OCDE)**
- **DELAC at AUHSD**
- **Puente Convention at UCR**
- **CABE (California Assoc. of Bilingual Ed) in 2016 and 2019**
- **Anaheim Collaborative Parent Summit @ Fullerton College**
- **GEAR UP Conference in Washington**

It is now an expectation that every school in AUHSD has a Parent Ambassador Program

Pair Share

- What resonated with you?
- What is challenging your thinking?
- What can serve as inspiration for your work?

Year at a Glance

- Intro General Meeting
- Winter Family Potluck
- New Ambassador Pinning Ceremony & Senior Ambassador Recognition
- Ambassador Spring Meeting
- Parent Ambassador Teacher/Staff Recognition
- Senior Parent Ambassador Craft Session
- End of the Year Celebration!

Events/Perks Ideas

- Create opportunities to build community among group: Paint/Craft session, mixers (ice cream social, winter family potluck, end of year nacho bar, tshirt/swag creating, etc)
- Opportunities to collaborate with student groups & community partners (hot chocolate giveaway, sno cone giveaway, movie nights, teacher/staff recognitions)
- Opportunities specific to Senior/8th Gr Ambassadors: Craft Session, VIP graduation experience (VIP seating, additional grad tickets, VIP pass/lanyard, swag bag with item created by their student)
- Parent Ambassador Parking Placard



The Road Ahead...

Year 1

- Small group of committted parents
- Co-create contract and mission statement
- Defined service hours (ex. 30-50 hrs)
- Visible recognition
- Basic data tracking (google form, paper forms)

Year 5

- 30+ Ambassadors
- Established Executive Ambassador Board
- Formal mentoring of new Ambassadors.
- Ambassadors co-presenting
- Collaborating with student groups/community partners
- Representation @ District level

Year 10

- Distictwide Ambassador Program
- Seasoned Executive Ambassadors serving as mentors
- Established a training curriculum
- Collaborate with Ambassadors from other school

What will yours look like?



Activity

Build your 1st Year Blueprint!

Building your Program

Commitment Structure

- Application process
- Hours required
- Length of commitment
- Leadership Pathway (Exec Board)?
- Contract?

Learning/Leadership Opportunities

- Leadership Academies
- Workshops
- Shared leadership spaces (SSC, ELAC)

Service Opportunities

- School functions
- VAPA and Sports events

Building Community

- Pinning Ceremony
- Family Potluck Mixer



bit.ly/SHSAMBASSADORS

Contact Us

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What are we trying to accomplish?

"The long-term measure of success for the CCSPP is the establishment and expansion of learning supports, learning opportunities, community-rooted and culturally relevant instructional practices, positive and nurturing school climates, and strong partnerships that better serve the needs of students and families, resulting in improved student outcomes."

2023-24 California Community Schools Partnership program: Implementation Grant