

# Bridging the Gap

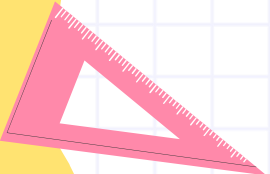
Supporting Students  
Through Change

Thursday, April 24 | 6-7:30 pm




**FEDERAL WAY**  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS





# Together We Grow: Family Strategies for Social & Emotional Support During School Changes



# Welcoming Activity

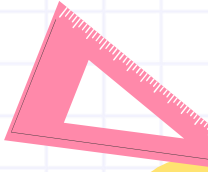
As you think about your child's upcoming school change, what feeling(s) does it bring up for you?

Turn & Talk: *What are you most concerned or excited about for your child's school transition?*



# Learning Together

- Impact of School Transitions & Getting Prepared
- Supporting Your Child's Mental & Emotional Well-being
- Conversations & Activities to Build Resilience



# FWPS Strategic Plan

## One of Our Core Beliefs:

We believe that are families are critical partners in each child's learning.

## Pillar 2

**SAFE CLIMATE AND STRONG  
RELATIONSHIPS WITH  
FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY**

Our second Pillar recognizes that  
**"SCHOOLS CAN'T DO IT ALONE."**

## Goal

# 2

*Whole Child:*

**THRIVING, CONFIDENT,  
RESPONSIBLE INDIVIDUALS**

Every student scholar will be empowered and prepared to develop personal responsibility in order to be positive, productive members of society.

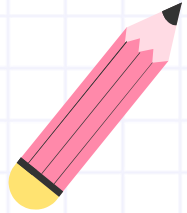
## Vision for Excellence and Equity:

Each and every scholar will...

- Be seen, heard, valued and celebrated for who they are
- Be socially and emotionally safe at school



# Impact of School Transitions



## Emotionally

- Roller coaster of feelings
- Excitement for new beginning, fear/ anxiety of unknown
- May look like: irritability, mood swings, withdrawal, somatic complaints (stomachache, headache)

## Socially

- Worries about fitting in, making friends
- Pressure to conform or feeling lonely

# Social & Emotional Well-being



## School

- ❑ Schoolwide: Social Emotional Learning Curriculum, PK-12
- ❑ School Counselors
- ❑ Extracurricular Activities
- ❑ Positive acknowledgement and feedback
- ❑ Pay attention to changes in behavior, attendance, engagement

## Home/ Community

- ❑ Encourage social connection
- ❑ Model how to build positive connections/ relationship
- ❑ Monitor child's emotional well-being
- ❑ Pay attention to changes in behavior, attendance, engagement
- ❑ Model healthy coping mechanisms
- ❑ Provide praise, encouragement and celebrate child's effort & wins!

# Scenario: Transition Anxiety

*Setting: Two weeks before school starts, your child becomes increasingly quiet and withdrawn*

You notice your child having trouble sleeping and expressing physical complaints like stomach aches. When asked about the upcoming school year, they give short answers and quickly change the subject.



What would you do?



# Talking About School Transitions

**When to prepare and start conversations?**

➡ Towards the end of the current school year and during summer

**What should we talk about? Ongoing, open communication.**

- Talk about which friends they might want to see during summer/ keep in touch with
- Ask open-ended questions about the start of the upcoming school year.
- Validate and acknowledge your child's feelings ahead of the school transition

How are you feeling about...?

It's okay to feel that way. That's how a lot of kids feel.

What are you most worried/ anxious (or excited) about?

What questions do you have?

What's on your mind?

# Before the School Transition

- ✓ Visit the school before the first day
- ✓ Try to connect with a few peers/ families- summer programs or neighborhood connections
- ✓ Create a consistent daily/ weekly routine to provide as much stability as possible leading into the new school year



**Set realistic expectations ahead of time:**

Talk about what the first days/ weeks might look like.

Help your child set achievable goals.

Plan a small family connection time or reward at the end of the first day or first week to celebrate and share good things.

# Set Up Routines

## What should we do to prepare?

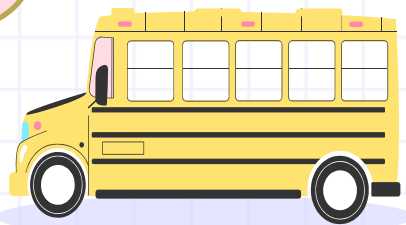
- Set up **routines** for before and after school, consistency provides a sense of stability during change
- Allow your child more independence to make decisions as they get older = more buy in!

How do you want to be woken up in the morning?

How long do you think it will take you to get ready for school?

If you need at least 8 hours of sleep, what time should you head to bed?

Let's talk about your plan for when you get home after school.



# Supportive Conversations



Child opens up communication...

(Think or ask: *What are they needing in the moment?*)



## Problem-Solving

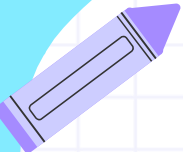

1. Actively listen
2. Ask: What do you think you/ we can do about...?
3. Break down problem into smaller parts
4. Help brainstorm solutions

## Emotional Support

1. Let child talk it out
2. Acknowledge their feelings & experience
3. Empathize with your child

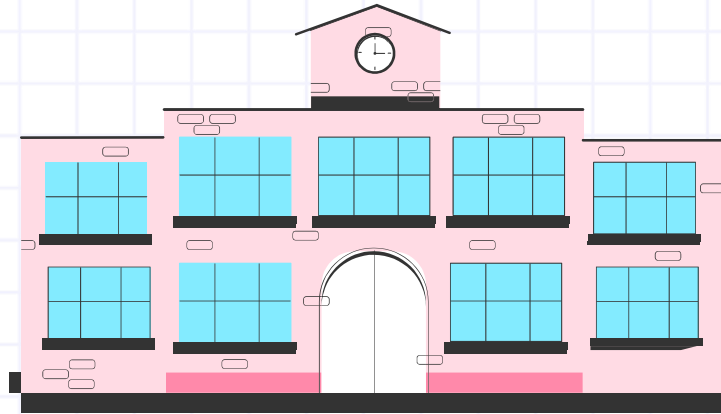
## Identity

1. Encourage social connections
2. Ask about peers, interests, activities- clubs, sports
3. Practice or role-play how to approach new peers



# Time for Questions & Scenario Practice

What is on your mind about your  
child's transition to a new school?



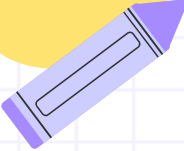
# Scenario: Building Confidence

*Setting: After the first week at the new school, your child expresses self-doubt.*



Your child comes home saying things like "I'm not smart enough" or "Everyone else seems to know what they're doing." They're comparing themselves to others and feeling inadequate.

What would you do?



# Scenario: Social Changes

*Setting: During the first month, your child struggles with changing friendship dynamics at school.*

Your child feels caught between maintaining old friendships and forming new ones. They're worried about lunch time, group projects, and feeling like they don't belong anywhere.

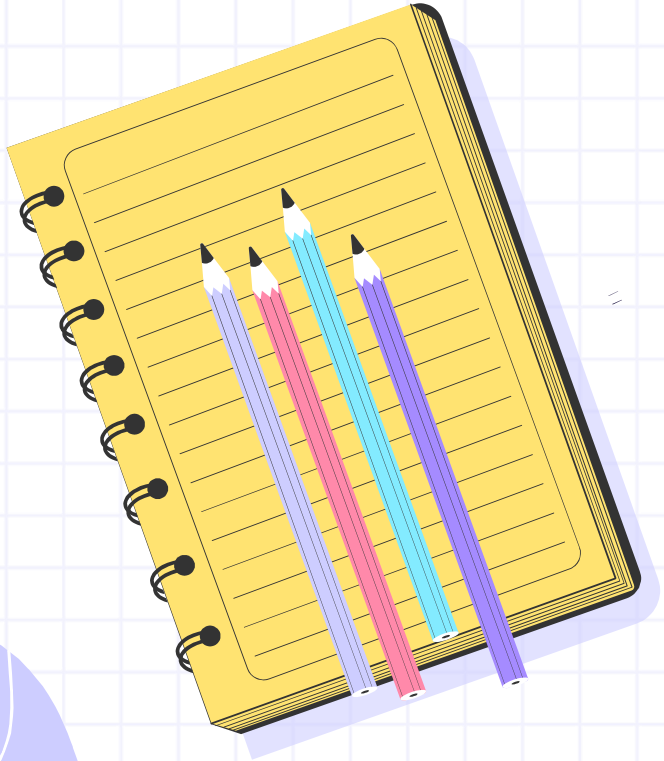


What would you do?





# Thanks!



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# Feedback Survey

**Please help us improve by sharing your feedback about today's event through a 3-minute survey:**

*Encuesta posterior al evento: ¡Ayúdenos a mejorar!*

*Sau buổi sự kiện: Hãy giúp chúng tôi cải thiện!*

Опрос мнения по окончании мероприятия:  
Помогите нам учесть недочёты!

پست-نظرسنجی : رویداد به ما کمک می کند  
بهبود یابیم!



**Scan the QR code or, Visit:**  
[www.fwps.org/FamilyAcademySurvey](http://www.fwps.org/FamilyAcademySurvey)

## Please make your way to your next breakout session

6:55-7:30 pm

- Ready, Set, Kindergarten!
- Future Ready: How Your Digital Footprint Shapes Opportunities
- What Happens When the Bus Stops? Supporting Secondary Transitions for Scholars with IEPs
- Navigating Change: Empowering Scholars for Successful Transitions
- Together We Grow: Family Strategies for Emotional Support in School Changes
- Family Tech Empowerment: Helping Families Navigate District Tools
- Ready, Set, Register: How to Enroll in College Classes