

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Family and Community Engagement (FCE) Department in the Dallas Independent School District (ISD) develops and implements programs and strategies to engage parents and the community in collaborative parent, school, and community partnerships. The FCE Department received \$1,186,425 in Title I funds for the 2020-21 school year to support the Family Engagement program.¹ This was an increase from 2019-20 (\$1,062,425).

On March 13, 2020, in alignment with federal recommendations, the Governor of Texas issued a disaster proclamation certifying that the novel coronavirus, COVID-19, posed an imminent threat of disaster for all counties in the state of Texas. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Dallas ISD transitioned students to at-home learning on March 23 following spring break (March 16 – 20) until the end of the 2019-20 school year. In 2020-21, Dallas ISD delayed the start of the 2020-21 school year until September 8, 2020 and implemented at-home learning districtwide for the first four weeks. On October 22, 2020, the district announced that campuses would provide in-person and virtual learning throughout the rest of the school year, and parents could choose whether their children participated in in-person or virtual instruction. The FCE Department provided virtual programming in 2020-21; other COVID-19 related impacts are described in the relevant sections of the report.

The Family Engagement program continued several of its long-standing programs including the Campus Support Team (CST), Program Support Team (PST), and Fam Jams. The department also continued implementing the Whole School Model (WSM) framework on four campuses from 2019-20 (Cohort 1 Year 2) and five additional campuses in 2020-21 (Cohort 2), in partnership with the Flamboyant Foundation.²

PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the evaluation was to summarize the context, process, and outcome data of the Family Engagement programs for the 2020-21 school year. Additionally, the evaluator analyzed the program goals outlined in the 2020-21 Family Engagement Title I, Part A Project Workscope. The evaluator used program documents, interviews, attendance data, and survey data to evaluate the programs.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS/OUTCOMES

What programs did the Family Engagement program continue from 2019-20 to 2020-21?

Several Family Engagement programs provided in 2019-20 continued with some changes in 2020-21.³ The changes are outlined in this report. More detailed program descriptions are available in Garcia- Rincón (2020).

Campus Support Team

Five CST trainers/coaches (trainers) continued to support family engagement activities at the campus level in the 2020-21 school year. CST trainers reported to the Executive Director of the FCE department and were assigned to campuses by network. CST members provided monthly professional development (PD) to campus community liaisons/parent instructors/points of contact, campus-level resources and presentations (e.g., safe and welcoming environments, parent centers, etc.), collaborated with external organizations (in support of family engagement activities), and monitored the campus implementation of the district's Continuum to gauge progress of family engagement activities. In addition, CST trainers provided campus level support for the WSM that included implementation of the Family Engagement Leadership Teams (FELT), PD for teachers and staff members, teacher Home2Home Visits, and family listening interviews. Trainers also planned to provide on-going parent education sessions in each network in 2020-21, but the sessions did not happen because no vendor selection was made.

The FCE Department set the workscope goal that "80 percent of community liaisons/parent instructors/campus contacts will report via the annual satisfaction survey, conducted spring 2021, that the PD provided by the coaches assisted them in their jobs." A total of 228 surveys were completed, but the workscope-related question was not asked. Therefore, the goal could not be examined. However, 94 percent of respondents reported feeling well prepared to implement strategies and content from the session into practice.

In relation to the Continuum, FCE staff members set a second workscope goal that "50 percent of campuses will rate as Tier I on the Parent Engagement Continuum and at least 20 percent of campuses will rate as Tier II at the end

¹ The funding amounts were provided by Special Revenue Funds Management on 02/28/21.

² The Flamboyant foundation is a non-profit organization that provides family engagement support to public school systems.

³ The Latino Family Literacy Project and Adult Education Track programs were moved into the Bilingual Department for the 2020-21 school year.

of the 2020-21 academic year.” Data provided by CST members on June 9, 2021 showed that 223 campuses were rated on the Continuum. Of those, 16 percent were rated as Tier I and no schools were rated as Tier II. Thus, the goal was not met.

Program Support Team Coordinators

The PST Coordinators continued to support Family Engagement programs in 2020-21. Three of the Coordinators continued to plan and implement a broad range of family engagement activities at the district and network levels (e.g., Parent and Teacher Association/Parent and Teacher Organization efforts, parent conferences, Site-Based Decision-Making training, and Fam Jams). The fourth coordinator focused on supporting the five CST trainers with the coordination of Flamboyant PD, the Home2Home visits, and family listening interviews.

In August 2020, the PST Coordinators hosted the first Virtual Parent Conference (VPC) to prepare parents for the upcoming school year and review expectations for students returning to school either virtually or face-to-face during the COVID-19 pandemic. The conference provided a variety of sessions for six days during a two-week period (3 days per week; 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. each day). Attendance data provided by the PST members indicated that a total of 2,157 parents participated in the conference during week one and 2,197 parents participated during week two, for a combined total of 4,354 parent participants.⁴

VPC parent survey data showed that of the 726 respondents, 96 percent rated the conference sessions as “very good” or “good” and 97 percent would recommend the VPC to other Dallas ISD parents.⁵

What was the context of the Fam Jam sessions in 2020-21 and what were the associated outcomes?

Changes were made to the Fam Jams in 2020-21 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Instead of in-person Fam Jam events by network, they were held virtually for parents from each network, feeder pattern, or campus level within a network. Fam Jams were scaled down into smaller events but continued to offer student performances, community resources and information, workshop sessions on a variety of topics (e.g., Dallas ISD learning platforms, Social Emotional Learning, Mental Health, Cyberbullying, College Readiness, etc.), prizes, and the availability of Spanish interpreters.⁶ Fam Jams were held between November 2020 and May 2021. A total of six Fam Jams were conducted within feeder patterns, two were conducted by school level (elementary/secondary) within a network, and one was conducted for an entire network during the 2020-21 school year (Table 1).

FCE staff members set a third workscope goal that “400 parents will attend each network Fam Jam during the 2020-21 academic year.” Fam Jam attendance data showed that the total number of Fam Jam participants by network was below 400 (Table 1).⁷ Thus, the Fam Jam attendance goal was not met.

Table 1: 2020-21 Fam Jam Session Attendance by Network

Network	Session Types	Sessions <i>n</i>	Participants <i>n</i>
Central	ES and SS	2	353
Northeast	Network	1	122
Northwest	Feeder	2	182
Southeast	Feeder	1	245
Southwest	Feeder	3	267

Source: FCE Department, 05/12/21.
Note: Total *N* = 1,169 participants. ES = Elementary Schools. SS = Secondary Schools.

Surveys were administered to parents at the end of each Fam Jam event to collect feedback. The data were shared with the evaluator after all Fam Jams were completed.⁸ A total of 1,169 parents completed the Fam Jam surveys in 2020-21. A fourth workscope goal was that “80 percent of parents who respond to the survey will report that they learned how to support learning at home as a result of the event.” The question was not asked in the survey; therefore, the goal could not be examined. However, 99 percent of respondents indicated that the presenters’ knowledge of the topics presented was “good” or “very good.”

What was the context of the Flamboyant Fellowship project in the Dallas ISD in 2020-21 and what were the associated outcomes?

The Dallas ISD again hosted Summit E3, a community liaison/points of contact professional development summit in September 2020, presented by Flamboyant. The summit informed the community liaisons, parent instructors, counselors, and other points of contact about the WSM and provided sessions about a variety of topics, including family engagement strategies.

A total of 274 community liaisons, parent instructors, counselors, and other points of contact attended the E3 Summit.⁹ Summit feedback survey data provided by Family Engagement staff members indicated that of the total number of respondents (*N* = 166), 89 percent were “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with the summit.¹⁰

2020-21 Whole School Model

In 2020-21, the district continued implementing the WSM at the four elementary schools from 2019-20 (Cohort 1 Year 2) and added five additional campuses (one

⁴ Data provided 10/09/20.
⁵ Data provided by PST members on 10/09/20.
⁶ Although workshops were still offered, there were fewer workshop topics at each Fam Jam.

⁷ Data provided by PST members on 05/12/21.
⁸ Data provided on 05/12/21.
⁹ Data provided by Family Engagement staff members on 12/06/20.
¹⁰ Data provided on 12/06/20.

elementary and four middle schools; Cohort 2).¹¹ CST members helped campus staff members implement the four components of the WSM: 1) the FELT, 2) PD, 3) the Home2Home Visits, and 4) family listening interviews. FCE program staff members reported that campus staff members were overwhelmed, at least in part because of COVID-19. This impacted participation in PD, Home2Home visits, and family listening interviews.

FELT

The FELT worked at the campus level to lead all family engagement efforts. The team at each campus included the principal, two teachers, a community liaison (if available), and the CST trainer. Data provided by Family Engagement staff members showed that a total of 86 Cohort 1 Year 2 and 30 Cohort 2 FELT members attended FELT meetings in 2020-21.¹² The data were for elementary campuses only because middle school campuses chose not to have FELTs on their campuses in 2020-21.

Professional Development

In 2020-21, all teachers in Cohort 1 Year 2 were required to attend two PD sessions.¹³ The session topics were chosen according to campus need. Data provided by CST members showed that PD attendance was highest for teachers from Gonzales ES (100%; Building and Sustaining Trusting Relationships) and lowest for teachers from Saldivar ES (59%; Problem of Practice; Table 2).

Table 2: 2020-21 Cohort 1 Year 2 Teacher Professional Development Attendance

Campus	Bldng Sust			
	Trust Relation %	Academic Partnering %	Problem of Practice %	Commun Care %
Gonzales (N = 32)	100.0	93.7	-	-
McNair (N = 32)	75.0	84.4	-	-
Martinez (N = 47)	-	-	-	89.4
Saldivar (N = 70)	84.3	-	58.6	-

Source: FCE Department, 05/14/21.

Note: Bldng and Sust Trust Relation = Building and Sustaining Trusting Relationships; Commun Care = Community of Care. - = not applicable.

Cohort 2 teachers were expected to attend the three PDs provided to Cohort 1 teachers in 2019-20;¹⁴ however, they only received two PDs (Mindset/Home Visits and Family Listening Interviews) in 2020-21 because of loss of professional development days because of calendar changes due to COVID-19. PD attendance was highest for teachers from Alexander ES (95%; Mindset/Home Visits)

and Storey MS (89%; Family Listening Interviews). Attendance was lowest for MS teachers attending Mindset/Home Visits PD at OW Holmes, Storey, and Zumwalt (all 12% or less; Table 3).

Table 3: 2020-21 Cohort 2 Teacher Professional Development Attendance

Campus	Mindset/Hm Visits %	Fam Listen Interviews %
Alexander (N = 22)	95.4	81.8
Kennedy Curry (N = 52)	36.5	78.8
OW Holmes (N = 52)	1.9	69.2
Storey (N = 35)	11.4	88.6
Zumwalt (N = 33)	12.1	54.5

Source: FCE Department, 06/03/21.

Note: Mindset/Hm Visits = Mindset/Home2Home Visits; Fam Listen Interviews = Family Listening Interviews.

Flamboyant staff members created teacher feedback surveys for elementary and secondary level participants. Presenters administered the surveys after each PD session to each PD participant (including teachers, counselors, and principals).¹⁵ Survey results from all PD sessions were combined and analyzed using frequencies by campus level.¹⁶

Elementary level survey respondents (N= 242) were asked to rate their level of agreement to the statement, "I feel well-prepared to implement strategies and content from the sessions into my practice." Most respondents (95%) indicated that they agreed or strongly agreed that they were well prepared.¹⁷ Secondary level participants (N = 231) were asked to rate the relevance and quality of the training; 84 percent rated the relevance and quality of the training as "excellent" or "very good."

Home2Home Visits

In 2020-21, the Dallas ISD took over the Home Visit Project initiative from the Early Learning Department and changed the name to Home2Home Visits to reflect the virtual nature of visits this school year. The FCE Department was responsible for training all elementary and secondary teachers, tracking the visits, and paying for 100 secondary level teachers to conduct visits.¹⁸

Home2Home visit data, provided by program staff members on May 10, 2021, indicated that a total of 70 elementary teachers conducted a total of 574 Home2Home visits during the 2020-21 school year (Table 4).

The FCE Department set a workscope goal that, "On average, participating secondary teachers will conduct at least six home visits during the 2020-21 academic year." A

¹¹ The five Cohort 2 schools included Birdie Alexander Elementary School (ES), Kennedy Curry, O. W. Holmes, Boude Storey, and Sarah Zumwalt Middle Schools (MS).

¹² Data provided on 06/03/21.

¹³ Teachers from Martinez ES attended one PD in 2020-21.

¹⁴ PDs in 2019-20 included Mindset/Home Visits, Ongoing Communication, and Family Listening Interviews.

¹⁵ The attendance data reported in the tables are reflective only of teachers.

¹⁶ Survey items were not consistent for all PDs. The Problem of Practice PD survey contained fewer items than all other PDs. Family Listening Interview PD survey data were not available for Alexander ES.

¹⁷ Data provided on 05/11/21.

¹⁸ The Early Learning Department paid for elementary school level teachers and collected the data.

total of 31 secondary teachers conducted a total of 410 Home2Home visits for an average of 13 home visits per teacher (Table 4). Thus, the department met the goal.

Table 4: 2020-21 Home2Home Visits by Campus

Campus	Teachers <i>n</i>	Visits <i>n</i>	Average Number of Visits <i>n</i>
Elementary Level			
Alexander	11	110	10.0
Gonzales	28	373	13.3
Martinez	9	18	2.0
McNair	6	35	5.8
Saldivar	16	38	2.4
Total	70	574	8.2
Secondary Level			
Kennedy Curry	8	73	9.1
OW Holmes	5	64	12.8
Storey	12	167	13.9
Zumwalt	6	106	17.7
Total	31	410	13.2

Source: FCE Department, 05/10/21.

Family Listening Interviews

Family listening interviews were conducted virtually in spring 2021 to solicit feedback about family engagement, what parents wanted to see in the future, and about barriers to family engagement. Middle schools chose not to conduct family listening interviews. Thus, the Family Engagement workscope goal that “On average, participating secondary teachers will conduct at least three listening interviews during the 2020-21 academic year.” could not be examined.

Data provided by Family Engagement staff members indicated that a total of 17 teachers at three elementary level campuses, conducted a total of 48 family listening interviews for an average of three visits per teacher (Table 5).

Table 5: 2020-21 Elementary Family Listening Interviews by Campus

Campus	Teachers <i>n</i>	Visits <i>n</i>	Average Number of Visits <i>n</i>
Alexander	2	18	9.0
Gonzales	13	18	1.4
Martinez	-	-	-
McNair	-	-	-
Saldivar	2	12	6.0
Total	17	48	2.8

Source: FCE Department, 05/26/21.

Note: - = no interviews were conducted.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Ensure that workscope goals are included in surveys to measure activity outcomes in 2021-22. Workscope goals could not be examined for Parent Fam Jam feedback surveys or annual satisfaction surveys about campus support teams because the relevant questions were not included in the surveys. Future surveys should be aligned with departmental goals.

Ensure that all cohort groups implement all components of the Whole School Model in 2021-22. Middle schools chose not to have FELTs on their campuses or conduct family listening interviews, and teacher PD attendance was inconsistent. Mindset/Home2Home PD attendance for Cohort 2 teachers at OW Holmes, Storey, and Zumwalt were low (all 12% or less). If campuses choose to participate in the WSM, it is important that all components be implemented with fidelity to meet program objectives and allow for accurate comparisons.

REFERENCE

Garcia-Rincón, R. (2020). 2019-20 Evaluation of the Parent and Family Engagement Program. Dallas, TX. Dallas Independent School District.

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Rosemary Garcia-Rincon, B.S., Evaluation Analyst I

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For more information, please contact Program Evaluation at evaluation@dallasisd.org.