Building Family Partnerships Through Clarity, Access, and Relationships

Mountain View High School, Thompson School District

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During the 2025–2026 school year, Mountain View High School focused on strengthening family partnerships by making school systems more accessible, improving communication, and creating more intentional opportunities for two-way engagement with families. This work centered on building consistent systems that helped families feel welcomed, informed, and connected throughout the school year.

To kick the school year off, staff members made welcoming phone calls, giving families a way to begin the academic year by initiating positive relationships with staff. These conversations focused on introductions, support, encouragement, and helping families feel connected to the school community. The calls helped shift communication from being primarily reactive to more relationship-centered and proactive. Families frequently shared appreciation for hearing positive outreach from school staff early in the year, and staff reported that the early connections helped create stronger trust and more productive communication throughout the year.

That year, Mountain View rebranded its School Accountability Committee (SAC) into the Family School Partnership Committee. This rebrand pushed the SAC to move beyond traditional informational meetings to create a more collaborative partnership between families and the school. The committee included family members, staff, and administrators. The committee served as an ongoing feedback loop that directly informed school practices and family outreach efforts. Family feedback helped shape conference structures, communication supports, informational resources, and future engagement events. This process allowed the school to adjust throughout the year based on actual family experiences and needs rather than assumptions.

Mountain View High School also developed “Lion Bytes,” a series of short family support videos created to simplify high school systems and provide families with quick, accessible information they could revisit as needed. Videos focused on practical topics families identified as important, including Infinite Campus, Google Classroom, attendance, grades, credits, communication tools, and supporting students academically at home. The videos were shared through newsletters, social media, and school communication platforms, with translation support included when possible. By providing short, on-demand resources, the school was able to reduce confusion around school systems and increase family confidence in navigating high school processes.

Together, these practices helped strengthen communication and trust between families and the school while improving family access to important information and systems. The school observed increased family engagement with communication platforms, stronger participation in family events and feedback opportunities, and more consistent two-way communication throughout the year.

Most importantly, these efforts helped reinforce the belief that effective family partnership at the secondary level was not built through one event or program, but through ongoing systems that prioritized relationships, clarity, responsiveness, and access.