**Facilitator Notes on Day-Long Family Engagement Workshop**

**Engaging Families During the Transition to High School**

The primary goal of this workshop is to equip school teams to make significant progress in making a family engagement plan for their school that includes a focus on the transition to high school. It gives participants a background understanding of the importance of ninth grade for high school graduation and postsecondary outcomes, and the importance of working with families to support them as they seek to support their teens. This session includes many ideas for planning useful and effective family engagement activities focused on the transition to high school, as well as a significant block of time in the afternoon for teams to make progress in their planning. It works best in a large room with tables for school teams of 4-6 members.

**Agenda**

9:00 am Welcome /Introductions

9:20 am What Does Family Engagement Look Like?

9:40 am Keeping Equity and Student Outcome Goals Front and Center

10:00 am Secondary Family Engagement Best Practices - School & Parent Panel and Q&A

10:50 pm Group Discussions of Article on” Sending Parents Useful Information”

11:10 am Smoothing the Transition to High School – Video clip and discussion

12:00 Noon Lunch

12:45 PM A Continuous Improvement Approach to Family Engagement

1:00 pm Team Reflection on Recent Family Engagement Activity

1:45 pm Re-designing and Co-constructing Your Next Family Engagement Transition Activities

2:45 pm Team Presentations

3:30 pm Adjourn

**What does family engagement look like? -**  In this icebreaker activity, the facilitator shows a short video clip and asks participants to write down on post-its ideas about what family engagement should be like. Participants place their post-its on big poster sheets around the room. (Slides 3-5; slide 5 has translations of the Spanish in the video; important to pretest technology!). Facilitator can moderate brief large group sharing time.

**Focusing on the Goal of Family Engagement: Student Success** Facilitator shares research findings about the importance of attendance and course passing in 9th grade for successful high school outcomes (Slides 6-10). Then facilitator introduces the questions about how schools can work to improve attendance and course passing rates- (Slides 11-12). If possible, have each school team discuss trends in their own school data on attendance and course failure (particularly for 8th and 9th graders). School teams at tables then brainstorm together about family engagement steps that could lead to improved student outcomes.

**Best practices in secondary school family engagement: Panel. (Slide 13)** Facilitator plans ahead and recruits volunteer school leaders in advance to share specific family engagement practices focused on the high school transition. Facilitator then leads group Q&A and discussion about each mini-presentation and general discussion after all have presented.

**Sending parents useful information (Slides 15-17)** Facilitator distributes copy of short article “Sending Parents Useful Information” to each participant. After all have time to finish reading, small groups engage in discussion of the article using the discussion questions on slide 16-17 (provided as handout on website).

**Smoothing the Transition to High School (Video clip and discussion, Slides 18-19).** Facilitator plays clip (test in advance) and encourages small group discussion using the provided questions (also on handout posted on website).

LUNCH

**Continuous Improvement Approach (Slides 21-29)** Facilitator introduces the need for continuous improvement with the cartoon slide, noting the irony: when we are too busy to focus on improvement, we often do things the long and hard way. Facilitator introduces the idea of the cycle of inquiry, in which teams PLAN-DO-STUDY-ACT: plan to introduce a change, collect information about how it works when they do it so they can study the results and decide if the change is likely to lead to improvement.

SLIDE 30 -- Facilitator discusses how we can apply this approach to our family engagement work and asks school teams to spend time reflecting on a specific family engagement activity from the recent past, using the PDSA approach and/or the guiding questions from Family Engagement Reflection Tool (or use versions provided for both HS and MS teams from Workshop Version 1 posted on website). If time, it is good to have several teams share out with large group their conclusions from discussion.

**Family Engagement Action Planning (Slides 31-32)** -- The final workshop segment provides time for school teams to get a solid start on their family engagement planning. Facilitator should emphasize the importance of linking family engagement plan to the school improvement plan. Facilitator can also introduce the available tools (those besides the planning form are posted as handouts for Version 1 workshop on the website):

* A planning form that helps teams align their family engagement work with student outcomes emphasized in the school improvement plan.
* Planning calendars
* Ideas for family engagement events and strategies (including survey list of parent information needs, example parent brochure, activity lists/examples)

See all the resources on the “School Teams” and “Resources to Share with Families” sections of the website as well.

**If time permits, have several groups share their plans.**

**WRAP UP (Slide 33)**

Wrap-up should emphasize that district leaders will follow up with support, and that additional shorter meetings throughout the year will keep teams from schools connected in a networked learning community. Regular (monthly) family engagement emails also keep ideas flowing and school teams connected.