

Setting Goals with Parent Data

Mountain View Elementary School

Longmont, CO



“When a team of individuals share the belief that through their unified efforts they can overcome challenges and produce intended results, groups *are* more effective” (Donohoo, Hattie & Eells, 2018).



John Hattie and other education researchers have described the power of collective efficacy in the school setting: when groups of teachers believe in each other, plan together, and measure their impact, instruction and student achievement improve. This same concept can be applied to parent and family engagement. When a parent leadership team collaborates, sets goals, and measures their collective impact, family and community engagement and home-to-school communication will improve.

The Parent Leadership Team at Mountain View Elementary School in the St. Vrain Valley School District has seen this in action. In order to have a positive impact, the parents and staff on this team agreed that they should first assess the needs of the school’s parents and families. After conducting dozens of parent interviews, the team decided to develop a parent survey to get a broader response. The team worked through the following steps to develop this practice:

- **Getting clear about the purpose of your parent survey.** What information is needed in order to set goals, prioritize action steps and measure impact?
- **Writing three to five survey questions aligned to the purpose.** The more you ask, the more data you have to analyze. You can assess needs in as few as three questions.
- **Utilizing Google Forms or other digital platforms.** The use of technology to collect and tally results allows for accessible analysis and visualization. Google Forms can create charts and graphs that you can copy and paste into a report.
- **Being strategic when administering the survey.** A quick digital survey can be administered at parent-teacher conferences or a back-to-school night. Create a QR code so that parents can access the survey (in their primary language) on their smartphones, or have digital devices ready for parent to access.

With survey data from over 50% of the families, the team was able to assess the need and prioritize goals. The data indicated a need of families to better understand their children’s academics. As a result, the Parent Leadership Team organized monthly events for parents to visit with their child’s teacher in a group setting to learn about key academic skills.

Standard 4—Speaking Up for Every Child