



Community Schools: Thinking Outside the Box for Family & Community Engagement

Dr. Fernanda M. Brendefur, Principal

Maritza Romero, Community Schools Coordinator

Whittier Elementary School, Boise School District



Welcome & Introductions

What is a Community School?

*Definition taken from the Coalition for Community Schools

Using schools as hubs, community schools bring educators, families and community partners together to offer a range of opportunities, supports and services to children and youth as well as their families and communities.

Community schools:

- ▶ *Provide expanded learning opportunities that are motivating and engaging during the school day and in the summer;*
 - ▶ *Offer essential health and social supports*
- ▶ *Engage families and communities as assets in the lives of children and youth.*



Community Engagement



Health and Social Support



Family Engagement



History of Community Schools in the Boise School District

- Dr. Don Coberly, BSD Superintendent, visited Salt Lake City Community Schools.
- Dr. Anne Farris & Lisa Roberts visited Vancouver Community Schools.
- District administration discovered Boise schools had been doing this for a long time but not in a coordinated and strategic manner.
- Created a vision and mission and took their plan to the School Board who approved it unanimously.
- Allocated funding to hire 4 Community Schools Coordinators for 4 elementary schools.
- The number one objective is to increase student achievement by helping to remove barriers to learning.



Dr. Donna Beegle's Research on Poverty

*Taken from See Poverty...Be the Difference!

- ▶ Background: Dr. Beegle grew up in generational poverty. Family was migrant farm workers and often homeless. She dropped out of school, got married, and was pregnant by 17. Later, went on to get her GED, associates, bachelors, masters and doctoral degree.
- ▶ Social Context: "*Meanings are in people.*" Get to know the people you are serving, know their stories and the contexts they are living in.
- ▶ Asset Theory: Communities have a unique combination of gifts, skills, talents, and abilities that can be harnessed and utilized to strengthen the community.
- ▶ Building Relationships: Relationships must be based on the principal of finding common ground. You do this by sharing experiences, stories and feelings. One must move away from boundaries that keep people at a distance.



Activities:


Personal Narrative and Paying the Bills

- 1. Personal Narrative:** For this activity, you will compare your personal narrative to that of Dr. Donna Beegle's. Read her story on the left hand side of the handout and write down your story on the right hand side. Be prepared to share with your table and the larger group.
- 2. Paying the Bills:** What financial decisions would you make if you didn't have enough money to pay the bills? Examine the handout and decide what bills you will pay with the amount of money you have. Discuss as a table why you are making those choices. Be prepared to share.



Homework Diner

Video




Whittier's Journey

1. Visit existing community schools
 2. Attend the Community Schools National Conference
 3. Create a district vision and mission
 4. Hire a Community Schools Coordinator
 5. Survey parents and community members
 6. Enhance existing partnerships and programs/activities
 7. Create new partnerships and programs/activities
- 



The Role of the Community Schools Coordinator

- ▶ Planning, organizing, and delivering resources
 - ▶ Enhance pathways to learning
 - ▶ Opportunities for student enrichment and parent engagement
 - ▶ Connect with families and share community resources
 - ▶ Build and maintain partnerships between schools and the community
 - ▶ Coordinate and monitor programs and activities
 - ▶ Document needs of students and families
 - ▶ Resource Advocate
 - ▶ Sharing the vision for community schools
- 



Community Partners



- Vineyard Church
- Mexican Consulate
- Southwest Rotary Club
- Idaho State University
- Boise State University
- Garden City Community Health Advisory Board
- Boise Bicycle Project
- Assistance league of Boise
- Boys & Girls Club
- YMCA
- Whittier PTO
- Longfellow PTO
- United Way
- Guisela Bahruth
- Idaho Food Bank
- Girl Scouts of America



Current Family & Community Supports

- ▶ Idaho Foodbank mobile food pantry
- ▶ Idaho Foodbank cooking and nutrition classes
- ▶ English language development classes
- ▶ Dental Van
- ▶ Christmas gifts for students
- ▶ La Posada Night
- ▶ Math Night
- ▶ STEM/Reading Night
- ▶ After school soccer teams (K-6 grades)
- ▶ Vision Girl Scout self esteem program



Future Family & Community Supports

- 
- Counseling Services
 - Ready Set Go! Back-to-school program
 - Idaho State University Health Fair
 - GED classes
 - Financial literacy classes
 - Love & Logic classes
 - Spanish classes for parents
 - After school science camps
 - Summer math camps
 - Operation school bell
 - Operation warmth



Family Literacy Program

Video



Questions?

Thank You!



Contact Information



Dr. Fernanda M. Brendefur
Whittier Elementary School

Email:

fernanda.brendefur@boiseschools.org

Phone: 208-854-6630

Maritza Romero
Whittier Elementary School

Email:

maritza.romero@boiseschools.org

Phone: 208-854-6630