

Four I's for Transformative Family Engagement in Arts Programming

Many schools lack adequate structures to support the arts in and out of school buildings. However, transformative family engagement—the shared effort of families, schools and community leaders to advance programs, practices and policies and empower every child—can be your tool to support arts education programs and policies. As your PTA emphasizes the arts as essential to child development, infuse family engagement into your approach for more meaningful impact.

Consider the Four 'I's of Transformative Family Engagement in your efforts. These principles will help you examine effective ways to engage families in arts education programs and help you develop a strategic understanding of how your PTA can make difference!

Four I's	Ask yourself:	Example
Inclusive: Embracing and valuing diverse perspectives	<p>How can we ensure our programs are accessible and welcoming to all families regardless of their backgrounds?</p> <p>How are you working to enhance programming to ensure families can access the arts (e.g., considering English proficiency, internet access, etc.)?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure your judges come from diverse backgrounds • Accept and encourage artwork that expresses cultural identity • Promote your program in a variety of ways that will reach and appeal to all families (social media, flyers, word of mouth, etc.) • Provide art supplies to students without access to tools and materials • Provide various (e.g., digital, translated, alternate times) opportunities for families to engage one another while learning about different forms of artwork • When planning events or programming, question your assumptions around access and equity (i.e., does everyone have equal access to this event?)
Individualized: Meeting the unique needs of every family and child.	<p>Are we working to ensure our arts programs are serving the needs of all students in the community (as opposed to only serving certain students or groups of students)?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use information gathered from families through survey or interviews to cater events to the needs of participating families • Host events at multiple times or record meetings to ensure all families have access • Create personalized invitations or a phone campaign to invite families specifically • Consider developing reoccurring programming that you can tailor to families over time

<p>Integrated: Connecting and aligning with the educational system</p>	<p>How can our arts programs connect to the topics and skills students are learning in school?</p> <p>How can we invite educators and other school staff to engage in our arts programming?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with teachers early in their planning process (March/April) to get buy-in and incorporate Reflections into curricula • Develop programming that coincides with curricula and/or grade-level standards • Host a series of events to ensure arts education is integrated into PTA programming • Work with teachers and administration, develop recorded or at-home programming for families to implement on their own
<p>Impactful: Empowering families to support their child's success</p>	<p>Are we soliciting feedback from students, families and/or teachers on how to improve our arts programs?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a surveys or interviews to gather information on current status of arts education • Develop measures for success and use those to improve arts programming • Develop an Arts Education Committee with parents and use the committee to incorporate family into your arts programming • Host interactive arts programming so families learn about the arts in practical ways