Optional Share Your Plans Survey—Key Findings

Thank you for taking the optional Share Your Plans survey so we can get a snapshot of some current School of Excellence work. Here are some key takeaways.

Of those that completed the optional survey, 30% of PTAs are choosing to focus on Standard 1: Welcoming all Families from the National Standards for Family-School Partnerships:

Of those that completed the survey, 46% are choosing to focus on Inclusivity as one of the Four ’I’s for Transformative Family Engagement:

Here are some spotlight stories to share. We hope they are inspirational as you continue to implement your School of Excellence plans, measure success and communicate results back to your school communities:

Through their School of Excellence journey, Ridgecrest Elementary School PTA in Florida is focused on Supporting Student Success (Standard 3) by engaging students and parents in academic programs through an integrated approach. Students involved in planning events will learn money management, budgeting, teamwork, leadership skills, delegation, collaboration, flexibility, problem solving and tolerance. Ridgecrest Elementary School PTA will measure their progress with the School of Excellence program surveys (Step 6), participation numbers, new PTA members, positive feedback from teachers, an increase in social media and an increase in funding by both individuals and businesses. Ridgecrest Elementary School PTA hopes that the increase in family engagement will attract more talent to their team and improve parent, teacher, school staff and student connections making positive changes to the school infrastructure.
Through their School of Excellence program, Floranada Elementary PTA in Florida has chosen to target the problem of student hunger and unnecessary waste of food items by creating a school Share Table. The student council then created a video to share with the school and taught their peers about their Share Table rules and procedures. The PTA sent information out to parents through the Principals email list, their PTA membership email database, and through several social media avenues (Facebook, Twitter, Dojo, etc.). Through the new program, students are able to drop unwanted food items from the school cafeteria onto their Share Table when they leave the lunch line. Any student—whether they purchased lunch from the cafeteria or brought a packed lunch from home—is able to come to Share Table and take an additional item to eat. Volunteers manage the Share Table every day and all additional items are donated twice a week to Feeding South Florida who distribute to their many food banks and feeding facilities. Floranada Elementary PTA will measure their progress from an initial audit of food items where they found 254 perfectly good, unopened food items in the trash for one day of lunch. This impactful program is having positive impact by empowering children to share and not waste food, allowing those in need to leave lunch with a full stomach and not be singled out for wanting more, and Collaborating with Community (Standard 6) by bringing in volunteers every day. Most importantly it is creating an awareness of hunger issues and food waste.

Through their School of Excellence program, Forest Ridge Elementary School PTA in Maryland chose to support the arts and increase access to arts programs. The PTA wanted to increase access to underserved students by creating more free and affordable quality arts educational opportunities. They will measure their progress by the number of participants in the Drama Club, the number of students during in-school assemblies, and the number of attendees (students and families) at their Culture Fest celebration. Forest Ridge Elementary PTA is hoping that the investment in family engagement will create a more inclusive environment for families who may have financial challenges and may not otherwise have been able to make connections within the school and the surrounding community. Also, through the increased access to affordable or free programs, the PTA also hopes to increase awareness of PTA-sponsored activities and the importance of participating in the PTA.

Through their School of Excellence program, Manchester Elementary PTA in South Carolina is focusing on the health and safety of all students by informing families of when to keep a child home from school when they are sick, how to stay healthy (e.g., sending home step-by-step instructions on the proper way to wash hands) and teaching students what to do during a fire, intruder, or natural disaster (e.g., increasing drills). They will measure progress through surveys and dialog with more parents. They will also be looking for a decline of sick children and an increase in attendance rates.

Through their School of Excellence program, Christa McAuliffe Elementary School PTA in Texas chose to focus on improving educational outcomes and Supporting Student Success (Standard 3) because the Excellence team found that responses to the survey questions in that area were lower than expected. In response, they have developed a three-step integrated Action Plan that was communicated to the school community via social media, an email to all families, and a call-out from the principal to all families and, every month, will communicate progress on the action plan via these same three communication channels. They will use the Final Survey (Step 6) to see if their "Always" and "Frequently" responses have improved.
In addition, the PTA will host a STEM-theme night, a "For the Love of Reading" night and a "Museum Night" focusing on history/science/social studies, etc. They have seen increased attendance at these events and have received positive feedback from parents. Parents have provided particularly strong feedback with newfound information on how to access student grades and TEKS (state academic standards) in real time. The PTA hopes that increasing family presence at the school through our events and increasing family engagement with academics by equipping parents to access grades/curriculum will result in more consistent and robust extension of learning within the home.

Here are the top resources that our program participants are finding most helpful:

- Roadmap to Excellence
- National Standards for Family-School Partnerships
- The School of Excellence Toolkit, Steps, Survey and Program Materials
- Webinars, e-Learning and Programs Information
- The Diversity & Inclusion Toolkit
- Information about Previous Designees
- PTA Connected for Internet Safety Information
- PTA.org
- Center for Family Engagement and the Four ‘I’s
- STEM Resources
- SMARTIE Goals
- DIY Kit for Membership Growth
- Third Party Websites like the CDC
- Parent Guides
- Webinars

Keep up the great work with Step 5 as you implement your School of Excellence plans. Do not hesitate to reach out to Excellence@PTA.org with any questions along the way!