

PSC-ED-OUS

**Moderator: Marco Davis
December 18, 2013
1:00 pm CT**

Coordinator: Welcome and thank you for standing by. At this time all participants are in listen only mode. After the presentation, we will conduct a question and answer session.

To ask a question, please press Star and then 1. This call is being recorded. If you have any objections, you may disconnect at this point. Now I will turn the meeting over to your host Mr. Marco Davis. Sir, you may begin.

Marco Davis: Thank you (Nicole). Good afternoon everyone and thank you for joining us. My name is Marco Davis. I'm the Deputy Director of the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics.

And I'm joined by my colleagues Emmanuel Caudillo and Maribel Duran here at the Initiative. We appreciate you all joining us this afternoon for today's Webinar. Two quick business matters. I would like to inform and remind you that this Webinar is off the record and not for press purposes.

I would also like to let you know that this Webinar -- including the Q&A discussion will be recorded and the recording and transcript along with the

slide presentation will be posted to the Initiatives Web site after the call to make the information available for anyone who was unable to join us for the live Webinar.

The agenda for today's call will go as follows -- in a moment I will introduce our first speaker. Our first speaker who will present for up to 15 minutes. And then I'll introduce our second speaker who will also present for up to 15 minutes. And we will have those accompanying slides progressing through on WebEx and/or the PDF that you should have received with your confirmation.

After those two presentations we will open the floor for Q&A for the remainder of the hour. The operator will come back on at that point to provide guidance on how you can get into the queue to ask a question. And now onto our discussion today on family engagement.

The importance of a family's role in a child's academic, social, and emotional development is widely accepted and encouraged throughout the education sector. The Obama Administration sees family engagement as a critical component of improving academic achievement for all students.

As a result, family engagement has been incorporated into many of the US Department of Education's grants and other programs. For example, family engagement is identified as a required component of the School Improvement Grants program through which the department was able to award more than \$4 billion to some of the lowest performing schools in the nation for significant turnaround and improvement work.

My colleagues here at Ed worked with our presenter to gain a better understanding of family engagement when developing that program. Similarly, the department's investing in innovation -- also known as the I3

Program -- lists family engagement as one of its absolute priorities for consideration of a grant application.

And our second presenter was recently awarded a grant to expand its work in this area. So we're very excited to hear from our two presenters. And without any further ado, we shall begin.

Our first presenter is Maria Paredes she is the Senior Program Associate at West Ed. And she'll be discussing the academic parent teacher teams or APTT model. Maria?

Maria Paredes: Good afternoon. Thank you everybody. And I am pleased to be with you this afternoon and share with you what academic parent teacher teams are. I am in Phoenix and it's beautiful here. So it's a great day to have this conversation.

The first thing that I wanted to tell you is academic parent teacher teams - I developed this model in 2009. At this time I was the director of community education for the Creighton Elementary School District in Phoenix, AZ.

My biggest responsibility was the - was to create meaningful and impactful family engagement in all schools. And after much research and thinking about this topic and having a passion for family engagement I realized that there was a big piece missing in schools.

And that is a system for how families and teachers communicate and collaborate on an ongoing basis in a way that is proactive and focused on academic development. The next slide please.

So what are academic parent teacher teams? First of all, I always want to make clear that academic parent teacher teams is a repurposing of the

traditional parent teacher conference. We don't want to add this to what we already doing with parents in the way of parent teacher conferences.

This is an updated model if you like. And it's classroom based and it's teacher lead. So teachers take charge, take control over developing a classroom community and team with all the parents of their students.

The objective -- what are we trying to accomplish with academic parent teacher teams that we can't - that we haven't been able to do with traditional parent teacher conferences?

Well, first and foremost is it's a system. It's a way of organizing and planning ahead for how parents and teachers are going to become partners. In my opinion and it professionalizes family engagement in a way that we have not seen before.

And it's prioritized how parents and teachers communicate. Through professional development -- and we'll talk about this a little bit later -- but through professional development teachers can come more capable and more confident about engaging families and having ongoing collaboration in communication.

And as families and teachers and schools adjust through time, and then we develop this very strong culture where everybody understands their role and responsibility in the - in student academic development. The next slide please.

So the academic parent teacher team model has two components. And remember this is - this component takes the place of parent teacher conferences. So we have three 75 minute team meetings. So the teacher

invites all of the parents in their class together for an hour and 15 minutes three times per year.

And then in addition, there is one 30 minute individual session each year between the teacher, the family, and the student. Of course, parents may request additional individual meetings -- and that's fine. But this model is based on the absolute component.

In developing this model I feel that one of the missing links in family engagement in our schools is bringing all of the parents in the class together. They have so much in common. They are working for the same achievement goals. Their children are attending class together. They share the same teacher.

They share the same grade level objectives and achievement goals. And bringing everyone together and developing that really strong classroom team is a huge advantage of a parent and teacher team.

So we do that three times. We develop partners. We try to develop this really close relationships between parents and between parents and teacher. The next slide please.

This next slide gives you an idea of how these meetings are organized during the year. We start out a year as soon as school starts -- within the first three weeks of the start of school we hold our first team meeting. So we invite all the parents together.

Then that is followed by the individual meeting because now there is all this background that parents have and the teachers have that is included in the

individual discussion. The next session, of course, is another team meeting in early December or in January.

And then the last is a spring team meeting -- which is normally held around March or beginning of April. Again, these are absolute components. And each of these components have essential elements. But that's beyond the scope of this short Webinar.

But I just wanted to give you an idea of how this works during the school year. The next slide please.

During the (unintelligible) meetings -- especially during team meetings -- we really focused on making sure that parents get to know one another, that they develop relationships, that teachers are able to help parents understand what the most important skills are that their children will be learning and practicing that year.

We want parents to be very clear on what kids are learning in the classroom. We also want parents to know how their child is doing in each specific skill that has been selected as a focus for parent teacher collaboration. So for example, if at the beginning of the year we're focusing on developing reading fluency, parents are going to know -- and at the first meeting how their child is doing in reading fluency.

They're going to have those results at hand and be able to understand how the children obtained those scores and what that means moving forward. The idea of sharing actionable data with families is at the center - at the heart of the APTT model.

We want families to understand how we assess students. And we also want them to understand that children will be learning and focusing on that skill throughout the year. And that is why we're sharing benchmark now so that they can see the progress as they support their child at home and as the year progresses.

We also -- during APTT meetings where the teacher models activities that parents are going to be practicing at home with their children. The teacher provides materials that parents will also be taking home with them for practice. Parents get to practice the activity with other parents in the class and get to know them as colleagues - as learners.

And after the process is completed, the parents get a chance to learn how to set more goals. And the smart goals are, of course, goals that give us a framework for how we're going to be successful -- what we are going to do when we're going to do it and how we're going to do it and who's going to be responsible.

So all of this, again, APTT meetings is a way for teachers to provide parents with new information, to build parents capacity, to share information on an ongoing basis, and to create a really strong classroom team that works together, that supports one another for the purpose of driving achievement for all students in the class. Next slide please.

Academic parent teacher teams is a paradigm shift. It's a big change. And because it is a big change, it really requires time for adaptation. It requires a great deal of support for teachers and school administrators. One of the things at the West Ed leader in family engagement and the APTT model -- we support - the way we support is schools is we provide professional development.

We help school administrators plan for and be ready for APTT implementation. We create year long action plans so that all activities related to APTT are integrated into the school calendar and into teacher's time.

We provide coaching for teachers and principals and everybody else who is involved in implementing this model. We also want to make sure that we reflect on implementation that we do and then we talk about it. We improve. We refine practice as we go through the year and then in subsequent years.

The other thing that's really important is that we collect data every step of the way. In the APTT model we collect data from families, from students, from teachers. We do focus groups. And we keep track of the progress that students are making toward meeting the goals that their families set doing academic parent teacher team meeting.

We also want to make sure that we understand how teachers are developing in this system of family engagement and how we can support their development and growth as they engage families to be more effective in that area. Next please.

This slide made in order to illustrate the importance of doing the groundwork before we adopt the APTT model and before we can implement the APTT model. There's a lot of work that happens prior to the professional development and the implementation of this.

So I thought that this slide illustrated how important all that readiness and awareness is to actually having a - implementing APTT with success, having the schedule in the parent meetings and having the big components there and essential elements.

It's just a small part compared to all the work that we do to make sure that teachers are supported, that we are prepared, the materials are ready, that there is a thorough parent invitation campaign that is created in order to ensure high parent attendance.

This is all part of the readiness process and the behind the scenes work that gets done very early in the year or even before the actual year starts so that we can ensure - to (unintelligible) to the model. It's a successful implementation and good results for parents and students. Next slide please.

APTT model is - it's about improving, refining, providing families with more knowledge and skill, and helping families feel confident and capable when supporting their children at home. We want to make sure that teachers feel like they have the skills and the knowledge and the tools to engage families in a meaningful way

We want to make sure that families -- when they come to our schools -- that they know exactly what their roles and responsibilities are in helping support their child's academic development. And we also want to make sure that schools understand that sometimes with family engagement less is more.

We really need to choose the types of activities and the types of effort for family outreach that are directly linked with student learning, academic development, and the things that are going to set up that student for success year after year.

And the families feel like the school is providing them with the exact tools they need to do that work at home. We're not asking parents to teach. We're asking parents to support student learning through practice of these skills that

children are learning in the classroom. If parents know what the child is learning and parents understand where the child is in terms of data, then they are better able to support practice and create a home environment -- and they have it -- that are conducive to academic success. The next slide please.

Academic parent teacher teams is growing rapidly. In 2009 I started this model with nine brave teachers that allowed me to - that were willing to partner with me in testing this model.

And now -- just a few years later -- we have about 14 states and over 2,000 classrooms participating in academic parent teacher teams. And the need for this is growing because I think that we have been needing a model that is based on research and the things that we know makes sense for improving schools, for improving instruction, for improving assessment and curriculum, for improving how teachers work together.

All of those are lessons that we have learned thus far from the research and development are directly applied to family engagement in the APTT model. Next slide please.

That concludes my introduction -- my very, very basic introduction of APTT - of the APTT models we do. And I appreciate your time in listening to my part. Thanks.

Marcos Davis: Thank you so much Maria. That was, I think, very helpful, very informative piece. So we will move right on forward into our second presenters. And then like I said, afterwards we'll be able to open it up for question and answer for questions either for Maria or for our next two presenters. And we'll get into some good discussion on some of this great work being one.

So moving on now I will turn the mike over to Aurelio and Lourdes Flores who is the Senior Education Associate at the Intercultural Development Research Association -- IDRA -- and to Aurelio Montemayor, who is a parent leader with their program -- which is called PTA Comunitario. Aurelio and Lourdes.

Lourdes Flores: Thank you. As I (unintelligible) mentioned about our PTA Comunitario, first I want to share about (unintelligible). That we are a (unintelligible) development program. We are based - or we base ourselves on the needs of the program - the community.

And we're very much focusing education. For about 25 years we have developed the programs that have attended each of the families that we serve. And we offer leadership sessions to adults, to children and youth.

And our goal is to be able to help the families achieve - to accomplish their goals in education. And we know and we understand the importance of collaboration and so with the help and with the support of ITRA and with other agencies, we have been able - and we are able to continue supporting healthy families and children by (unintelligible) education.

Aurelio Montemayor: IDRA - the Intercultural Development Research Association was founded 40 years ago by Dr. Jose Cardenas who left the superintendency of the poorest school district in Texas to start this organization. To inform the people of the State of Texas that we had a very inequitable way of funding our schools.

Along the way we've taken on being both advocates or good policy, but also we've done teacher training, curriculum develop, and evaluation and family leadership and education. I've been the point person for family leadership at IDRA now for a good while.

And 15 years ago in our work we went to the valley, South Texas, and met a Sister (Jerry Noughton) who had started this organization -- over 25 years ago actually -- who was doing excellent work in the poorest unincorporated communities called (Colonias) in South Texas.

As we worked with them - our work is totally in education. We want to have public neighborhood schools that work for all children. And we saw that ARISE had put education on the front burner. They dealt with issues -- jobs, health, housing -- but also we established strong relationships because of their advocacy for all their children to get the best possible education.

During that period I was appointed to the national PTA board and then elected for 2 years. So between 2006 and 2010 I served on the board of an organization that was very new to me. In our work with Title 1 schools around the country, we had not seen PTA to be a viable organization for most of these families.

Once on the board I started exploring things. Where in our work there could be a coming together of what the PTA does -- and has done -- and what families need in the barrios. So I approached Lourdes -- who at that time was president of one of the four centers.

She was president of South Tower - the South Tower Center. And it took me two years to convince that yes, they could start an organization. It would be a bona fide PTA, but it would follow the pattern of how ARISE does things.

Their interest is not in raising funds nor in typical membership. And so Lourdes, do you want to say why you have been to organize the new PTA?

Lourdes Flores: Yes. And we can move onto the next slide. One of the reasons that, I think, that most of our families and - that I under - you know, I understood about these PTA was that it was more focused on fundraising. And that it was also focused - or for people that, you know, where, perhaps, closer to the school.

Or that they understood, you know, more about the school system and how it works and how it was, you know, like more from the inside of the school. So that didn't feel very comfortable for me and for our families as, you know, coordinators here.

And it felt like we were going to - our families were - our parents were going to be, you know, put aside and not really paid attention to. But after - when, you know, two years as Aurelio mentioned, and we started talking more about this concept and what - that we could apply - we could do a community PTA really based on the principles and the activities of ARISE to connect it.

And the idea about having something that was not really connected to directly to a school, but instead more in general in (Colonia) -- where are serving -- and something that could be directed by the women or by the parents of our community that we're working with.

And that it will be something also that would be in the language that the parents could understand. And also focus on the needs, again, the importance of the needs of the community. I understand the value and the importance of, you know, doing some fundraising for a particular need in school.

But it was, for me, the idea was to be more focused on the parent and what were their concerns? What were their difficulties that they were having? And so things like, you know, how do go to the school and ask (unintelligible) my child having problems with a specific task, was also not a point.

It needed to be something that was going to be more general that was - that is affecting other children and that was going to be helping children to be able to succeed in school. And so then after that we decided if that could be, you know, approached and those will be the seeds for the sessions -- the leadership sessions that would be given to the community PTA. I said well, yes, why not?

You know, it's something that we need. And it's something that is very much in education and the family engagement that we want to happen. So then we decided to go ahead and say yes. Let's proceed and let's continue with this. Another important thing was when we had the constant - our very first meeting -- as you can see on one of the pictures to your left.

And then on my right hand side there's a - the first president of the community PTA. And this is one of the first sessions that we had. When we talked to them and told them and said well, do you want your child to go to college? And of course, everyone raised their hands. And then what do you think are the things that are affecting or that would be stopping you from your kid going to school?

And so then things such as, like, how do I make sure that start taking the right courses? How do I make sure that they're going - that, you know, that the school provides -- what is it? Tutoring or after school programs. And things like that. The parents started talking and then that's how we based ourselves.

And well, these are the things that we need to talk about. And these are the things that we want. IDRA -- in our areas -- who come down here and help us give these sessions to us the parents so that we can better be prepared for the

session and as parents to be able - to understand more how the system - or how things are working in school. And then be able to better help our kids.

We want to create a bridge. We want to be able to create a bridge between the school, the parent, the community, ourselves, as an organization. And so then the focus is always making sure that our students succeed.

And so as I said, when we first - after those things, these principles or these activities, then, you know, when we came to an understanding and, you know, we saying yes - an agreement to this. We said, well, then go ahead. Let's continue. Let's go ahead. And then let's register.

And so, you know, and the thing up to '09. We became an official state of sport - state approved PTA. The next slide.

And this was very, very exciting for our parents - for ourselves. And because, again, this was lead by the women. It was the first Spanish speaking PTA. It was something that was very new to us. And it was something that we were helping form - the parents were helping us form.

Aurelio Montemayor: You know, next slide. The process has been started in spring of 2009. And now this PTA is in its fifth year. There's a monthly meeting. That bald guy in the picture is me. Lourdes is to my right. These are the typical meeting. We get 25 - 30. We've had as many as over 100 parents this year in our meeting -- parents and students.

And so in this monthly process information has been key. It's interesting. When we - I was hearing about the academic parent teacher teams, how actionable data is important. The actionable data has been critical for these families. Right now, for example, we have policy issues in Texas that they're -

they might reinstate the old tracking system and Voc Ed and put students of color into very limited kind of curriculum so they're not prepared for college.

And these parents are (unintelligible). And this is what our meetings are about. They get information. They take on projects to inform the other parents, to and approach schools saying what is going to happen to our children? Our children are college material. Treat them as such. So next slide.

ARISE is part of a very important network -- in the valley -- of community organizations called Equal Voice. And when the sister organizations heard about this, several others formed. Two in Brownsville -- in the southern tip of Texas. (Fuerto Juan Diego) and (Manuel Mano) formed their PTO Comunitario's. And (Manuel Mano) is starting a second one.

So ideas started spreading. The other community organizations liked it. Next slide. Lourdes, you want to talk about that (unintelligible)?

Lourdes Flores: Yes. Let me say that when the parents also started talking and started going into the schools and visiting the schools, the one thing that from, you know, from their sharing was that there's a feeling - very comfortable after going through (unintelligible). You know, learning how a (unintelligible) particular issue and going to school, going to the teacher and talking to them more.

And on a specific issue, they were starting to feel very comfortable to talk, you know, to their teachers. And also there was, like, when they would go to meetings they were start to, they're starting to feel more in tune to the conversation and understanding more.

Being able to make comments and being able to ask questions more. What is it? More in tune with what's being said. And also when we - so then the group

-- the community PTA -- invited Dr. (King) -- from the (PSJ) district -- to a supper here in one of our buildings - one of our centers.

And a lot of parents came to be able to present to them about the community PTA and what we want to do, what we're doing, and it was very - having to hear him, you know, speak about their goals, to speak about their - that the interest that they have to be able to involve the parents and also to be able to make, again, that connection and be able to recognizing them as parents -- how important it is that they continue to be in contact with the school.

Aurelio Montemayor: If you see on that picture -- on the far left bottom corner is (Eva Carranza).

At that meeting she very respectfully said, Dr. (King), we're glad you're speaking to us. You heard about who we are. But in some of your schools, they really haven't opened their doors to us, so we hope that now the doors will be open to us when we go to visit your campuses.

Lourdes Flores: And then I also want to say that from that we also invited Dr. (Laredo) from the (unintelligible). From the (Benna) District. And also it was - we had a similar meeting with a dinner. It was - I remember it was in December -- around this time.

And from that -- if we move to the next slide -- we were very excited from that conversation because on that he -- Dr. (Laredo) -- what is it? Community start to bringing the administrator -- administrators from his office and from his school.

And everyone really had an opportunity to be able to share on both parties, to visit and to talk about being at the table talking about the same level of the things. And it was (unintelligible) again in the education and inviting one

another to be present both at school and hear in the community. So it was a very successful meeting.

Marco Davis: Okay. And Lourdes, this is Marco. Just wanted to let you we've got just a couple minutes left for your presentation before we need to open it up for Q&A.

Aurelio Montemayor: Okay That center there where they had that breakfast was (unintelligible) Center. Next slide. The youth are also very involved. This is the area right outside of the sports center offices. We had a meeting with 80 students who were hearing about the same policy issues that their parents had heard in the morning.

It had to do with the severe cut in the paid budget two years ago. So that this community organization is vitally in concern, vitally involved in important policy issues. Next slide.

I'm going to have my colleague (Hector Bojorquez) co-director of this project speak very briefly to the objectives.

(Hector Bojorquez): Yes, hello. In the PTA Comunitario we have three main objectives. There are (unintelligible). One is to establish - objective 1 is to establish five PTA Comunitarios in each of five South Texas public school districts with a minimum of 20 active members in each organization.

We're all getting close. We have right now three active - three PTA Comunitarios and three new ones. We have four years in which to get the other two.

We have - our second objective is to establish a partnership between each of the PTA Comunitarios and schools and their surround area. Two campuses per year for a total of four campuses in each of those five school districts over four years.

Now the third objective is really the most important one. It's to facilitate the design and execution by partners of at least one educational leadership project and form by actionable data for each PTA Comunitario and partner school.

Basically meaning that once parents in each of the PTA Comunitarios have seen actionable data and/or data concerning policy, that then they take up the idea to go into a school and have - conduct the leadership project -- an educational leadership project about what their concerns are that has been spurned by the actual data. That's it.

Marco Davis: Wonderful. Wonderful. Thank you so much. So now we will open the floor for Q&A in case folks have questions for either of our sets of presenters. (Nicole), if you could give folks instructions on how to ask questions.

Coordinator: Thank you. We will now begin the question and answer session. If you would like to ask a question, please press Star 1. Please unmute your phone and record your name clearly when prompted. Your name is required to introduce your question. To withdraw your request, press Star 2.

One moment please for the first question. All right. Our first question is coming from Mr. Eric Hernandez. Sir, your line is open.

Eric Hernandez: Hi. My name is Eric Hernandez. I'm currently a Fellow in the House Democratic Caucus in Congress. And I had a question for Lourdes. So with the PTA Comunitarios organizations expanding and, kind of, from a

grassroots perspective I guess -- my question is how in communities where you may have parents who work on very different schedules, very vigorous schedules, how are you able to be -- gratefully so -- as successful as you have been with the PTA Comunitarios.

And are there any challenges are major issues that you're finding that are common between expanding the organization - kind of its chapters of the organization.

Aurelio Montemayor: Well the core, the success of (unintelligible) has to do with the connection to families and their outreach. They visit hundreds of families every week in the poorest (Colonias). So they have a very vital connection. But that's also the challenge -- both for PTA and for school districts -- for their outreach to do authentic community connection like ARISE does. Lourdes?

Lourdes Flores: As when we were mentioning or I was mentioning about attending the needs, we have seen that, you know, as parents -- most of them - the mothers to be the ones that are - get the majority that are involved. And so we have some sessions in the morning where the parents -- most of the parents or - that are able to attend.

But another thing is that at (unintelligible) also from - mother's themselves, they have said that the important of the whole family coming together. And so from that we have been able to have evening gatherings from (unintelligible), you know.

So it's the whole family. Where they come in the evenings where - when the after the husband or after the mother, you know, in some cases -- are the parents are not able to attend in morning, they come in the evening. And so we have had a lot of success with that because - so then we alternate having

sessions in the morning or having sessions in the evening according to, again, the need of the family.

And always making sure that we're extending or we're making sure that we're visiting all the families in the community. Also our organization -- ARISE -- as I mentioned, it's a grassroots community. And so we're right here, right in the community where our families are.

Aurelio Montemayor: The traditional PTA way of organizing an organization is very different. And in fact, traditional PTA members sometimes have trouble with this model because it's not school. And flows from what the parents want. So we don't care too much about (Robert) (unintelligible). We do have meetings with objectives.

But it is not an easy model to transfer because the experience is not there. Tier 1 parent outreach workers are used to thinking of 31 bodies in a room and I succeeded rather than the quality of the reality between the school personnel and families. So it is a challenge.

Man: But there's - if I may say something. There's actually more freedom of what a community based organization can do than what a school can do. Schools often very much will find themselves having their own sets of barriers as to why they can't have multiple meetings in the morning or in the afternoon or with different languages or yes - or bilingual.

They'll have their own sets of challenges that really are the ones that have been putting barriers traditionally. Whereas a community based organization that is so intimately tied to the community is not working with any of those assumption and already has answered some of those challenges by the mere fact of what they do.

(Rick Hernandez): Thank you. Thank you very much.

Lourdes Flores: That is very relevant I have to say, is the trust that we have built in the 25 years that we be here in the community - the trust that the community has, you know, I said an organization is also (unintelligible).

(Rick Hernandez): Great. Thank you very much.

Marco Davis: Next question.

Coordinator: Thank you. The next question is coming from Ms. (Melissa Vilas). Ma'am, your line is open.

(Melissa Vilas): Hi. Thank you. I wanted to see if there was any data or research around attempts to utilize social media for family engagement.

Aurelio Montemayor: Don't know about the research. But we use it. The young people are more accessible, like, with their phones and then the adults, certainly, in the (Colonias). Although, for example, we've had quite a few Webinars that families participate in.

It's having the availability of the equipment in the home, a good internet connection and stuff like that. In some of the (Colonias) that is a challenge. So with the young people and the college age students, it's a little easier. But with the families that ARISE works with, the face to face and it's a powerful (unintelligible).

(Maria Paredes): This is (Maria Paredes). The only way that I have social media or technology use or incorporated into family engagement is is very often some principles

have adopted the idea of sending weekly messages through text messages so that families receive that over their phone. Also emails alerting them of what's happening in the school and what's coming up.

And in some cases I actually learned of a very interesting concept that is a lot like Facebook, but it's exclusively for the schools and each classroom is basically a group.

And then the principle has access and view over all the different classrooms and what communication is going on between the teachers and the families and how teachers are providing families with timely alerts and new information and ideas for activities, ideas for projects in the community, opportunities for free, interesting things happening in the museums and the universities, at the community center, at the Boys and Girls Club, and so on.

So I believe that this is really improving within the last two to three years. But it is improving and a lot of - I like (unintelligible) conception is very - the current conception is that families in Title 1 schools have little access to technology.

More and more we know that most families have Smartphone's and that they do access the messages and the other social media.

Marco Davis: Great. Thank you folks. Unless there's another comment, we can go to the next question.

Coordinator: Thank you. We have another question coming for (Octavia Obama). Your line is open.

(Octavia Obama): Hello. Can you hear me?

Group: Yes.

(Octavia Obama): This is Madame Attorney General (Octavia Obama). And I'm also campaigning for the US Senate. And I'm also asking for a Federal investment from the Obama Administration for (unintelligible) or (LC) school. But what I'm asking right now is that I went to a meeting yesterday for the NFL CIO I mean for the AFL-CIO.

And minimum wages is not \$10 all across the board. And it's supposed to because it's mandated. I discovered that there are - that they have employees that are making \$7.25 per hour and \$8.25 per hour. And it's supposed to be \$10. So there's major lawsuits there.

Man: So they're in connection to the family engagement.

(Octavia Obama): Yes. Well, the reason I'm saying this is because you said that this is for the Hispanic community so I wanted to ask (ASO-CIO) what was the nationality of those people that were making \$7.25 an and \$8.25 per hour so that we can make sure that there's no discrimination going on there.

They based nationality. Do you know what I'm saying?

Marco Davis: Right. However this seminar we're talking about right now, this Webinar is on family engagement and engaging families in schools. So I think we're going to have to move onto the next question that would be a little more on topic. We're certainly happy to talk to you if you'd like to send us an email at whieeh@ed.gov on other subjects in terms of your investigation on that issue.

We're absolutely concerned about discrimination. It's just that we've only got a few minutes left and we want to give time for our presenters to be able to discuss on their topic. So thanks very much and operator, if we could move onto the next question.

Coordinator: The next question is coming from (Anhera Chester Jones). Your line is open.

Marco Davis: Next question.

Coordinator: Okay. We do have another question coming from (Sierra Riocha). Your line is now open.

(Sierra Riocha): Hi. Thank you. I work with the National (unintelligible) Association. And one of the key components is family engagement. So I'm just wondering if you currently work with your local (unintelligible) programs or plan to. And, you know, I guess to hope to support them for the strong transition between families to the public schools.

Maria Paredes. This is Maria Paredes. And I think that preparing parents - helping parents understand how to support strong child development in academics and in social and emotional development for young children is absolutely critical. We know that the transition into kinder - and how well prepared children come into kindergarten is so important to their future success.

And so with the academic parent teacher team meetings, we are working with some early childhood programs so that they have a more structured way of providing family with skills and information and confidence about academic, social, and emotional development for zero to five.

And the major focus, of course, is preparing the parent - helping parents be able to turn this skills and activities into activities that they do as a family , language development, building vocabulary, and all of the other development areas that help children feel successful as they transition from early childhood programs into kindergarten.

But again, the focus is on building family capacity so that homes become a place where children experience enriching opportunity with the parents and siblings on an ongoing basis that support their development.

Aurelio Montemayor: One of the principles that Sister (Jerry Noughton) had when she started to work in this organization 25 years ago was to start to provide services where they didn't exist. And so they had early childhood programs until Head Start came into some of the areas.

The PTA Comunitario parents had children all the way from birth to college age. And so what PTA helped them is weave together their concern, their view of the needs for their children. So Head Start is included in that. Although the families haven't gone to visit the Head Start centers. They are present in the organizations.

Man: I also think one of the very interesting things that the PTA Comunitario -- and in general, the community based organizations in the valley -- have shown is that there is a fountain of riches - a front of knowledge that the families carry with them already that has been really untapped by the schools and even by Head Start itself -- which, I think, is something that the educational system could learn from.

That there is already a lot of riches there that just haven't been tapped. And if we are - go to them and ask them what it is that they can - that we can learn from them, we're going to get a lot more bang for our buck.

The assets that these families contain are awesome, all of them -- with the least education, the poorest of the poor, their passion for their children to get the best possible education.

So we're not there to fix what's broken. We're there to draw on the embarrassment of riches as they exist in these (Colonias). Right (unintelligible)?

Maria Paredes: I agree. This is Maria Paredes. I agree 100% with Aurelio and his team as to how important it is to tap on the front of knowledge that parents bring with them and how much information they have and the love that they have for their children.

And pair that up with the demands of building a strong academic foundation.

Marco Davis: Great. Thank you Maria. Just this is Marco. Just to let folks know, Lourdes was disconnected by accident. But she's dialing back in. So she'll hopefully be rejoining us in just a moment. Thanks folks. If we can go onto the next question. We have, I think time for maybe two more questions.

Coordinator: Thank you. The next question is coming from Mr. (Chester Martinez). Sir, you line is open.

(Chester Martinez): Hello. I have a question. If funding continued to be a barrier to effective implementation of the APTT program, what funding streams have other states used to implement the program?

Maria Paredes: That's a good question. There are several programs that really require - demand family engagement as part of the accountability process. And some of that is, of course, Title 1 funds that 1% has to be allocated for family engagements.

And let's see -- Title 3 -- which is for English language learners -- that there is a family engagement piece there. There's a family engagement piece in 21st Century -- or after school - before and after and school program. That demand is strong family engagement component made of Americans.

There are - many feature professional development can also be a stream for - or funding for building future capacity to engage families. And of course, community grants. But I think what's most important is to create a strong plan and a system for family engagement and use funding from all of those different sources to create one strong system in the school.

That everybody can take - I would say can - that everybody can report as part of their accomplishment. We accomplish more that way than just piecemealing funding from the (unintelligible).

Marco Davis: Great. Thank you. Operator, we can go onto another question.

Coordinator: Thank you. The next question is coming from Ms. (Alexandria) (Unintelligible). Ma'am, your line is open. Ms. (Alexandria). You're on speakerphone. (Unintelligible).

(Alexandria): This is (Alexandria).

Marco Davis: We can hear you now.

(Alexandria): Good afternoon. I'd like to applaud West Ed. I think what you're with the APTT model is great. And also with regards to the PTA Comunitario, I have been involved with PTA for a number of years at every level. And for you to establish a community PTA, I applaud you.

I mean as a huge lift. And I'd like to know a little bit more about how you could possibly be utilized as a mode throughout the country on how to go about establishing these community PTA's. Talk a little bit more about some of the challenges and obstacles and how you overcame them.

Is there a way to get in touch with you to speak more in depthly?

Aurelio Montemayor: Yes. You got the email addresses. One for Lourdes and for me on the slide. If you could visit our Web site www.idra.org. And go to Family Engagement. You'll find a lot of information. You can contact me personally. My email is on that first slide -- A-U-R-E-L-I-O.M-O-N-T-E-M-A-Y-O-R at IDRA.org.

(Alexandria): Got it. And I thank you all so much for being on the call today and for setting such a huge example. I really appreciate it.

Maria Paredes: Thank you.

Aurelio Montemayor: Thank you.

Marco Davis: Thank you. We do have time for another. We actually went through pretty fast. So we do have time for another question or two. Operator if you can, go ahead.

Coordinator: Thank you. The next question is coming from Ms. (Lisa Ferrara). Ma'am, your line is open. Ms. (Ferrara)?

(Lisa Ferrara): Yes. My question is in regards one of the very first slides that you had in regards to the APTT model. You show that you have in your implementation timeline your very first team meeting is in the early fall and then you have (unintelligible) October and November. And then you follow through the year in winter and spring with two team meetings.

How do you go about following through on the individual session that was held in October and November? Is there feedback, follow-up on how the (unintelligible) and individual session was (unintelligible) at the beginning of the year?

Maria Paredes: So actually it's interesting because the individual meeting - it's actually a follow-up. And in that follow-up, to see how families are doing based on the information and the skills and the new knowledge they gained during the team meeting that the attended at the beginning of the year.

So then the individual session is really more focused on let's see how you're progressing. Do you have challenges? Are you practicing your activity from an ongoing basis? Do you know how much your child has progressed? Showing families updated data and progress reports for the child, building stronger relationships.

Maybe connecting the child when it's necessary to additional services and resources available in the school or in the community. And making sure the parents are supported by the school -- that they're connected with the right resources and then prepare to come to next team meeting -- which is, again, where sees that data will be shared and more information on the skills.

And helping families navigate the next steps in meeting the academic demands of the child. So individual meeting basically is actually a way of connecting between team meetings and making sure that parents - the teacher is following up with the parents to ensure that they are able to meet - that they're on track with meeting the goal they set together during the team meetings.

(Lisa Farrera): So if they need a follow-up or they're still being challenged with (unintelligible) after the winter or the fall, is there any follow up? How would you go about that process?

Maria Paredes: Individual meetings - parents are - I think parents are -- in any school environment -- they really have - the teachers in APTT, we encourage teachers to let parents know that they can set up an appointment any time.

This just happens to be the framework for the model - for the APTT model. But the parents really are - have the freedom and the ability to set up other individual appointments if they see it be important for their family.

So that's - this is just the minimum. This is the minimum for the model. More when families and teachers feel that it is important and necessary.

(Lisa Ferrara): Okay. Thank you so much.

Maria Paredes: Sure.

Marco Davis: Great. And operator, if we have another question. And this, I think, will be the final question. But go ahead.

Coordinator: Thank you. The next question is coming from Mr. (Eddy Williams). Sir, your line is open.

(Eddy Williams): Yes. It looks like I'm having some feedback from my school announcements. But can you hear me clearly?

Marco Davis: Yes.

(Eddy Williams): Okay I was just wanting to ask a question about the APTT program. It sounds like an excellent system. And we have some excellent systems here at our - system as well. But we can't get over that initial barrier of getting the families into the school. Did you do anything specific to get the, you know, to encourage the parents, you know, to remove fear for coming into the school?

Maria Paredes: You know, that's a great question. And that, I think, is a concern that is shared among many educators. Part of what (Whisa) does in supporting professional development and planning with the school team and with features is to develop an invitation and outreach plan.

And we put a lot of different points of contact into place. Sometimes the plan includes 10 or 15 actions that will be taken to make sure - including the student in making sure the families are present.

And helping the families understand the difference between what they are going to participate in during APTT -- what they're going to learn, what they're going to share, what they're going to be able to share with other parents in the ways of front of knowledge.

And to make sure that parents are prepared. That this is not just an irregular meeting, that this is, in fact, the process the school has selected to - for parents and teachers to collaborate and communicate to drive student achievement.

(Eddy Williams): Okay. Good. Sounds like a lot of pre work that needs to be done.

Maria Paredes: Yes. Exactly.

(Eddy Williams): Thank you.

Marco Davis: Great.

Maria Paredes: Oh, you're welcome.

Marco Davis: Great. Well, we're just about out of time for our Webinar. I do want to thank everyone who joined us. For those of you who had questions and were not able to ask them -- if you had questions directly - specifically for either Maria with the APTT program or for Aurelio and Lourdes for the PTA Comunitario program. Their contact info is on the slide presentation that you should have received as a PDF.

It's the same slides that we just went through on WebEX. So you should have their contact information there. Additionally, if you're unable to reach folks through that or have more general questions of the initiative, you can reach us at our email address -- which is the same email address you used to RSVP for this Webinar -- which is W-H-I-E-E-H at ED -- at E-D.gov. Dot G-O-V.

So with that, we - I want to thank your presenters once again for joining us. As I mentioned at the top of the call, the transcript and audio recording of this and the slides will be available shortly on our Website. We need a few days.

We're heading into the holidays, but we will do our best to get them formatted and up on the Website as soon as possible.

So feel free to check back to the Initiative Web site should you need - want to share that with your colleagues. Thank you to the presenters for their time, for their expertise, for their tremendous work in the community to help advance academic achievement for Latino students throughout the country.

And we look forward to you joining us again for our Monday Webinar -- I'm sorry. Our January Webinar -- which will take place in January. And keep an eye out for details on that Webinar. With that, thank you everyone. Enjoy your holidays and end of the year. And we will be in touch again soon.

Group: Thank you.

Coordinator: That concludes today's conference. Thank you for participating. You may now disconnect.

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