

Best Practices Conference For Parents 2020 Session Summaries

Advisory Councils- Primary (PreK-5th)

- Food available
- Combine or tag along with another event
- Put a slide in classroom Back to School Night slideshows- get the word out
- Text/Email Blast
- Put on the Marquee with dates. Be sure parents know it is open
- Translators available for meetings in needed areas (Bilingual parents or staff members)
- Lots of variety in meetings- monthly or quarterly, evenings/afternoons, on teacher workdays
- Put out feelers for topics before meetings, then chairman/principal approve agenda before meeting
- Provide a kid area, let parents know feelings on kid attendances
- Put time in agenda for teacher talk, principal talk, community school
- Positive things in the school
- Open share topics come from community
- Student Council participation- 5th grade on up
- Have representation from subdivisions or communities or do representatives by grade level. Sometimes a community can have a representative that is from another community, such as from feeder schools.
- Create an email for PAC for parents to email concerns
- Post minutes from meetings.

Advisory Councils- Secondary (6-12th)

- Good Councils-
 - Get information from Administration
 - Cover kudos and good news, not just problems
 - Guest Speakers
 - Get feedback from members, ideas, thoughts
 - Address rumors, issues, and concerns, including those brought up at the meeting.
- Recruiting-
 - New parent orientation
 - Back to School Night
 - Have principal publish dates and topics
 - Personal phone calls to invite parents

Critical to successful advisory council is a principal open to input, allows for open discussion

Fundraising (PreK-5th)

- Fall Festival- charge vendors, have a bounce house entry fee
- Bake Sale
- Fun Run/Color Run
- Boosterthon
- Partner with other schools
- Sponsors with businesses- restaurants, dentists,
- Ring, American Girl, TKD
- Chuck E Cheese- 20%
- Chipotle 33%
- Gameboard Night
- Popcorn Friday
- Basket Raffles
- Facebook Page for the PTO/PTA
- School Dance
- Pictures

- Holiday Shop (Penguin Patch)
- PWCPTO/PTA Ideashare – Facebook Page

Fundraising (6th-12th)

- Saunders Middle School- Bingo Night, donated baskets (themed), pre ordered food for sale, parent involvement for donations, Sign Up Genius to keep organized. Check to see who in school owns business
- Woodbridge Middle- Chili Cook off. Entry fee covers spoon. Raffles- Parent and business donations. Sign Up Genius. Music and Dancing, games
- Benton- Making tracks for technology. Painted paw print on the wall. Parents help paint. Options for paw locations.
- Forest Park- Accepts cards for payments. Parents are charged the surcharge fee.
- Colgan- sells ornaments-color changes by year. Spring dance with souvenirs, yard signs for graduation, sign up genius for food and drink donations.
- Osborn Park- Online PTO meetings
- Brentsville – Santa breakfast workshop before parade, academic booster club, money, spring art show at a restaurant. Student art, purchase tickets that includes lunch. Auction off parking, front graduation seats, football packages.

School Enrichment Activities (PreK-5th)

- Robotics
- Girls on the Run
- Chorus
- Teacher vs parent led activities
- Drama
- Yoga
- Coding
- Activities offered by grade
- Books and Basketball- 30 minutes reading/homework and then 30 minutes of basketball skill
- Chess Club
- Partnerships with other organizations (ie. Dominion Women- ODU Links)
- Art Club
- SPARK- provides grants
- PTO sponsorships of before/after programs
- Rockridge 101- educated parents on activities and find possible volunteers
- Counselor led groups for boys and girls
- Organizations come in and provide activities (ex. soccer) and charge parents
- Dad Breakfasts/Muffins w/Mom
- Gardening Club
- Math 24

School Enrichment Activities (6-12th)

- PWCS Webpage
- Mentoring- Establishing Portfolio and Resume
- Naviance- A tool to connect students to colleges and technical schools. Allows students to create a portfolio
- Woodbridge Middle- Same Gender Program, Peer Observations, Scheduling Workshops- Parent involvement in creating student schedules
- Funneling to Focusing- a teaching technique, helps teachers ask questions that get students to want to learn more by asking questions that foster creative thoughts from students.
- Marstellar Middle School- Academic Boot Camps, Academic Community Engagement Activities
- Pennington- Consolidated Club Sign Ups- to help communicate how to join clubs, when/where clubs start and end.
- Survey Monkey to post club schedules
- Activity buses- encourage your school principal to finance if possible.
- Woodbridge Middle- Visa Card Program

- Student Led Conferences
- Seminoles of the Month- rewarding student character

Business Partnerships

- Get a 501c3 Tax Exempt Number
- Identify your purpose and ask
- Use Social Media- messages, boards
- Title 1- some guidance and other staff ask.
- Kohls Cares- a volunteer program where Kohls has employees volunteer
- Walmart
- Target
- Elite Island Resorts
- Foundations
- In-kind giving

Parental and Community Engagement

- Get people in the door- Food, Friends, Incentives (raffles, etc), parent camps, make people feel useful.
- Hang out in the pick-up line and talk to families
- Meet and learn in the community. Not an official school function but families meet somewhere in the community.
- Email group
- Support group for volunteers
- Offer translation services with headsets.
- Offer Babysitting
- Training session.
- Make it a comfortable space.
- Make personal connections- don't just email, but call
- Create specific and time limited opportunities
- Look for creative options to engage non-English speakers
- Do a PDSA (Plan, Do, Study, Act) to assess what your school's needs are
- Educate families about engagement- what is involved, the benefits
- Parent Liaison- someone whose job is to communicate with parents
- Middle and High Schools- makes sure parents know what opportunities exist. Many parents feel that they are not wanted in middle school.
- Watch Dog Program- Program that encourages fathers and other male figures to volunteer in the school. Advertise in both the fall and the spring. Offer participants half day options.