Using Technology to Engage Parents/Families to Support their Student

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Purpose of Workshop

In this workshop we will:

- Discuss communication tools to not just communicate with but to also engage parents/families that can be used from:
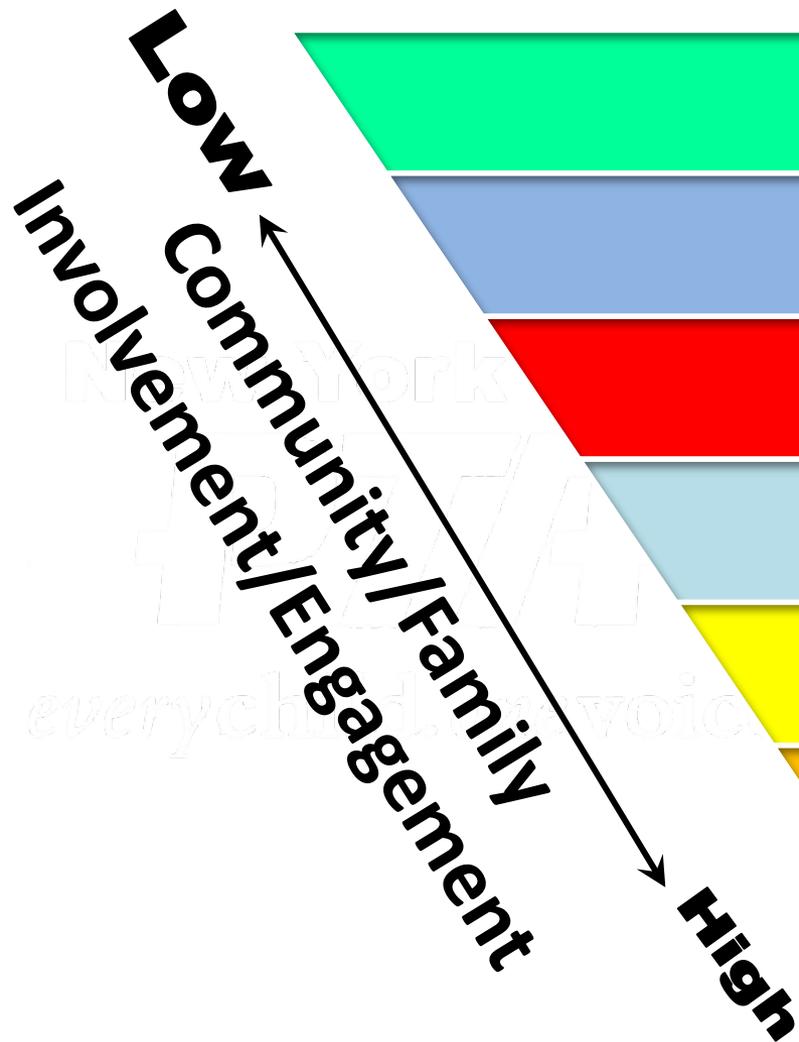   - School/District Level
    - Classroom Level

District/School Communication

What electronic Communication tools/methods does your school district use?

- Emails
- Texts
- Website
- Newsletters
- Blogs
- Videos
- Social Media
- Mobile Phone App

Do Parents and Principals Agree?

What is the most effective way for teachers to communicate information to parents about class activities or academic progress?	Principals	Parents
Personal emails	**65%**	**70%**
Text message	**45%**	**52%**
Face-to-face meetings	**67%**	**37%**
Personal phone calls	**70%**	**36%**
Handwritten notes	**22%**	**28%**
Push thru mobile app to phone	**22%**	**24%**
Auto phone messages	**29%**	**21%**
School portal	**34%**	**20%**

Source: Speak Up Research Project for Digital Learning, 2016 Findings - the results of the authentic, unfiltered views of 514,351 K-12 students, parents, and educators from around the world, including 29,309 parents.

Do Parents and Principals Agree?

Parents & principals agree on top 2 most effective forms of **school/district-to-home** communications: Email and auto phone messages.

Take note:
- Elementary school parents (45%) are more interested in face-to-face (F2F) meetings than high school parents (30%).
- Tech-savvy parents favor digital communications by almost 2:1 compared to parents with beginner tech skills.
- There is no differences in parents' interest in using text messages for communications by demographics or grade of child in school.

Source: Speak Up Research Project for Digital Learning, 2016 Findings - the results of the authentic, unfiltered views of 514,351 K-12 students, parents, and educators from around the world, including 29,309 parents.

Do Parents and Principals Agree?

Big disconnect though on website and social media effectiveness:

- While more than half of principals said Facebook is effective; just 24% of parents agreed.
- Nearly half of principals said websites are effective for teacher communications; just 19% of parents agreed.

Source: Speak Up Research Project for Digital Learning, 2016 Findings - the results of the authentic, unfiltered views of 514,351 K-12 students, parents, and educators from around the world, including 29,309 parents.

Do Parents and Principals Agree?

While 66% of parents are satisfied with teacher to home communications, there are big differences by grade levels.

Parents of students in...	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Somewhat satisfied	Very satisfied
Elementary School	14%	11%	33%	42%
Middle School	21%	18%	38%	23%
High School	24%	23%	35%	19%

Source: Speak Up Research Project for Digital Learning, 2016 Findings - the results of the authentic, unfiltered views of 514,351 K-12 students, parents, and educators from around the world, including 29,309 parents.

Teacher's View on Classroom Technology

- **Teachers' views on the usage of Internet:**
- Most of the educators say that the Internet has a major impact on education. Let's see how they use it.
- 92% of teachers access content, resources and other materials.
- 69% share ideas with other teachers.
- 67% interact with parents and 57% interact with students.

Source: EdTech Review-What Teachers and Parents Feel About Technology in the Classroom; September 2013

Parent's View on Classroom Technology

Parent's view on Classroom Technology:

- 87% of parents say that effective implementation of technology is important for their child's success and 50% label it as extremely important.

- 64% of parents were happy about their child's school, that it was doing a good job of using technology to enhance student achievement.

Source: EdTech Review-What Teachers and Parents Feel About Technology in the Classroom; September 2013

Consequences of Device-Oriented Learning

- 76% of teachers say, "Search engines have conditioned students to expect to be able to find information quickly and easily".
- More than 50% of parents support the fact that technology has increased students' engagement, provided personalized learning and improved home to school communication.
- 71% of teachers agreed that today's digital technologies discourage students from finding and using a wide range of resources for their research.

Source: EdTech Review-What Teachers and Parents Feel About Technology in the Classroom; September 2013

Classroom to Parent Communication

What Communication tools/methods do you use in the classroom to communicate AND engage:

- Create a classroom social media account (twitter, Instagram) (*Check with your district on social media policies as well as photo permission policies.*)

Source: Education to the Core blog post by Emily; USING TECHNOLOGY TO ENCOURAGE PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION; *February 19, 2016*

Classroom to Parent Communication

- Send reminders (ie. Remind App)
- Create and regularly update a classroom website (website had these sections: About The Teacher, Classroom Expectations, Class Calendar, Homework Help, Agenda)
- Save trees – send electronic news (ie. Mail Chimp or other free services)

Source: Education to the Core blog post by Emily; USING TECHNOLOGY TO ENCOURAGE PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION; *February 19, 2016*

Classroom to Parent Communication

- Classroom Blogs
- Making sure parent portals are up-to-date
- In-person

From Communication to Engagement

- Use as many two-way technologies as possible.
- Encourage student projects that engage families, ie. Videos or family surveys that require parents to engage.
- Be available and willing to talk.
- Invite parents/families into the classroom to volunteer if your environment allows.
- Utilize your PTAs as partners to engage families in some of your projects.

From Communication to Engagement

- Who can share examples of what works in your classrooms to engage your parents/families?
  - Elementary
  - Middle
  - High School

From Communication to Engagement

- Who can share examples apps you use to engage your parents/families?
  - Elementary
  - Middle
  - High School

In Conclusion…

- The more you can communicate with your parents/families with and/or about technology, the more engaged they can become in helping their students.
- Two-way communication is easier with technology tools – but does not replace talking in-person when needed!
- You need communication to engage parents/families – partner with your PTAs to help spread your messages.