

# Families as Partners Parent Camp

Fall 2016

## Families as Partners Initiative



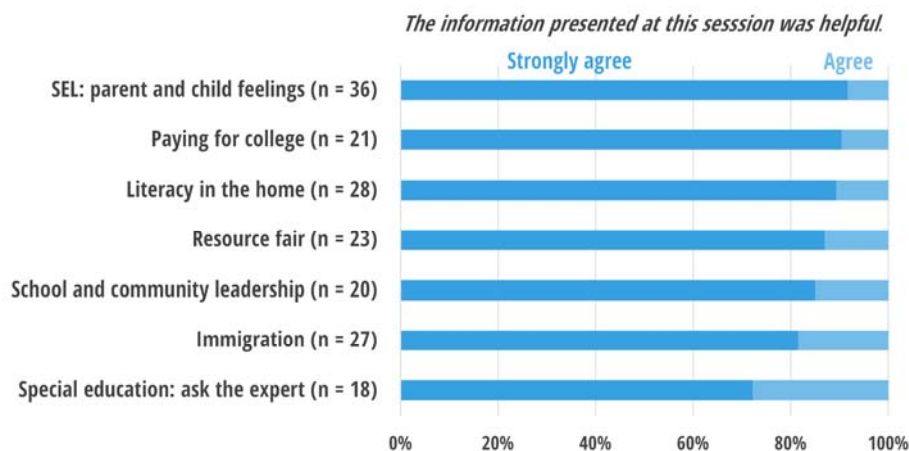
In 2016, the district was awarded a 3-year grant from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation to expand parent engagement and community involvement. The initiative is grounded in the principle that authentic engagement occurs when families and school staff build trusting relationships and work together as partners. Activities during the first year of the initiative build upon lessons learned during the 2015–2016 planning phase that took place at five schools in the Rundberg area (Hart, McBee, Padrón, Read, and Wooldridge). At each school, a think tank comprising school staff, parents, and community members leads the engagement and development process for its campus. In years 2 and 3 of the initiative, up to a total of 10 additional Austin Independent School District (AISD) schools will be added, with the goal of building sustainable family and school leadership capacity.

On November 12, 2016, the Families as Partners Initiative hosted its first parent camp at Padrón Elementary School for families of five schools in North Austin (Hart Elementary, McBee Elementary, Padrón Elementary, Lucy Read Pre-Kindergarten Center, and Wooldridge Elementary). Forty-six parents attended the event, which was facilitated by staff from the participating schools and local community agencies.

Childcare was provided while the parents attended three 45-minute training sessions on topics of their choice. The training sessions discussed the following topics: social and emotional learning (SEL), paying for college, literacy in the home, school and community leadership, immigration, and special education. After attending training sessions, parents ate lunch as they listened to guest speaker Jamie Turcios-Villalta, a first-generation student from the University of Texas at Austin and recipient of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals. The event concluded with a resource fair, and parents had the opportunity to visit tables hosted by representatives from local community agencies, such as Central Texas Food Bank, Austin Public Library, and Randolph Brooks Federal Credit Union.

An exit survey administered to parents indicated that the training sessions and resource fair were very well received (Figure 1). When asked to list something they learned during the camp, parents stated things such as, “strategies to help my child with his emotions” and “techniques to be a better reader to my child.” Moreover, all parents demonstrated an eagerness to learn more at future parent camps, particularly about topics pertaining to parenting skills, computer skills, and nutrition. Program coordinators are taking this into consideration as they plan for the next parent camp, scheduled for May 2017.

Figure 1.  
All attendees agreed that the information presented at the parent camp was helpful.



Source. Fall 2016 Families as Partners Initiative parent camp exit survey