

PIRC Conference Highlights

Parent Expectations for PIRCs

Parents need PIRCs to be:

- Relevant
- Effective
- A statewide resource
- Go beyond what is expected
- Have a presence within the most challenging title 1 schools

PIRC Conference

- **A few highlights**

1. State Teams

2. Disconnected Perceptions

3. Engaging the “hard to reach” parents and families

Effective State Teams

- Effective PIRC sponsored teams have the power to change the face of public education in their states.
- Team members
 - **PIRCs, Parents, Teachers**
 - **Parents Liaisons**
 - **Federal and State Education officials**
 - **PTAs**

Disconnect of Perceptions

- Sometimes parent support groups believe their programs are serving their targeted population.

however

- Parent surveys may indicate the parent group has missed the mark – not provided the intended service.
- Perceptions must become aligned, gaps erased.

Engaging hard to reach parents, families and caregivers

- Parents and families attending your conferences, workshops and meetings because they saw a flyer are not the hard to reach parents.

Engaging Hard to reach parents

- Many of the hard to reach parents live in challenging rural and urban communities.
- Challenges may include abuse, neglect, gangs, drugs, violence unemployment and underemployment.
- Most parents and families in these challenging areas are the PIRCs Title 1 constituents.

PIRC Program Description

- **“PIRCs are to use at least half of their funds to serve areas with high concentrations of low – income children”**

Engaging Hard to reach parents

- The hard to reach Title 1 parent or caregiver may be:
 - **Just released from jail**
 - **Struggling to get free of drugs**
 - **Unemployed**
 - **Working 10-12 hours a day and /or 2 jobs**
 - **Not willing to come out after dark.**
 - **Struggling to get their children out of foster care**

Engaging Hard to reach parents

- Places where hard to reach parents can be found:
 - Community drug rehab centers
 - Unemployment offices
 - Foster care offices
 - Community meeting places
 - Religious gathering places

Engaging Hard to reach parents

- The PIRC challenges to engaging hard to reach parents and families:

Funding limitations

Staff and time restraints

Engaging Hard to reach parents

- Some PIRCs are using the two tried and proven methods of multiplying their resources through the Train the Trainer model and building a successful partnership network.

Engaging Hard to reach parents

- PIRC limited capacity prevents direct contact at the various challenging locations.

However

- Every one of the above locations has some type of staff training for their constituents and may welcome PIRC developed educational workshops to be presented by their paid or volunteer staff.

Engaging Hard to reach parents

- **PIRCs are already developing community partnerships, why not develop partnerships with your:**
 - **state foster care office**
 - **state juvenile services office**
 - **religious centers**
 - **PTAs**
 - **Community centers**

Successful Effort

- **The Maryland PIRC has engaged foster parents with a partnership between the Maryland Foster Parent Association (MFPA), State Department of Education and Maryland PTA. The multiplier effect of using a MFPA as a trainer has the potential to reach the care providers of the 10,000 at risk students in Maryland.**

Future Plans

- The Maryland PIRC will have direct and indirect access to over 200,000 PTA members as well as thousands of non-PTA members. In partnership with MD PTA the PIRC will conduct Title 1 parent engagement workshops, write Title 1 informational pieces for MD PTA web site and newsletter and will have the option of a non cost Train the Trainers effort.

Engaging hard to reach parents

- The Train the Trainer concept combined with the building successful partnerships program are just two efforts that can be used to engage a population of hard to reach parents.

National Efforts

- National PTA has a successful Train the Trainers program. After receiving the training 3 years ago I have had the opportunity to provide training to over 1,700 hundred parents in 5 jurisdictions.

National Effort

- National PTA has an Urban Engagement Initiative. The program will engage parents within targeted cities. This will be a vehicle to reach parents in challenging areas. Part of the effort will include a train the trainers effort. Contact NPTA for details.

Three highlights from the PIRC Conference

- Build effective state teams.
- Close gaps in perceptions of service.
- Engage hard to reach parents and families through partnerships.