



Coffee Chat

with the Diverse Learners Cooperative



Engaging Families First

- Friday, July 31st
- 8:30 - 8:45am CST



Diverse Learners COOPERATIVE



The Diverse Learners Cooperative connects teachers and leaders with professional **learning, resources,** and **networks** to improve outcomes for diverse learners + increase teacher and leader retention

Today's Mission

To discuss **strategies** teachers and leaders can use to build **authentic relationships** with families so that **all students can be successful** this year.



Family Engagement in the Time of COVID-19...



Connecting with Families

- Seek to understand their experience



CONNECT WITH FAMILIES: Sample Phone Call Script for Case Managers



We recommend keeping track of family contacts in communication log, or using a [survey](#) to record responses indicating families' needs.



"Hello, this is <your name> calling from <school's name>, is this the parent or guardian of <student's name>?"

- If yes, continue.
 - If no, ask to speak with the parent/guardian.



"I am so glad I reached you. I'm calling to see how your family is doing, and ask a few questions about what support I can provide for you at home. Is now a good time to talk?"

- If yes, proceed to the next sentence starter.
 - If no, ask when may be a good time to call back.
 - Record the rescheduled call date in the parent/guardian communication log



"I've been thinking about your family, and want to make sure you're all well. How are things going at home?"

- Ask whether parents have access to necessary resources (food, shelter, transportation)
 - If not, give information about local services providing these needs.
 - For example, your district may be delivering meals to students via school bus routes or at mobile pick-up sites
- Ask about the student's responses to the transition
 - Any emotional changes? (e.g. anxiety)
 - Any challenges with behavior? (e.g. following directions, following a schedule or checklist)
- Remember to be an active, empathetic listener – parents may be overwhelmed juggling new routines and demands at home with children, work, and school



"I also wanted to call to find out what resources you might need as we get ready for online learning to start on <date>."



- Ask:
 - **Personal** questions to build connection
 - **Logistical** questions to address needs and challenges

Flamboyan Foundation Guidance: Good questions to ask

TIPS + TOOLS FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES



No matter what approach your school is taking to distance learning, make the effort to first connect with families before implementing learning goals. Find out what your families' specific situations are during this time, and what their needs and goals are for their children. That information will drive what learning at home will look like.

- **Start with a friendly connection.** Though you may have a lot of information to share, make a positive connection with the student or parent first. "I miss (student name)! How are you doing? What have you been doing during these days?"
- **Be prepared and be specific.** Know what questions you are going to ask ahead of time. Write them down so you can be sure to cover them all. Instead of asking, "What do you need?" Say, "I'm making sure all of our families know where they can get food assistance if they need it. Do you where you can go?" Or "Have you heard of the (insert your city's helpline here)?"
- **Ask about access to technology.** What technology does the student use at home? Is it a family computer, a phone, a tablet, and is it connected to the internet?
- **Ask what their preferred way to connect is.** Is it via text, phone, or email? If it's by phone, is there a preferred day or time for you to call them? Make a note of it.



Creating a Space at the Table for Parents

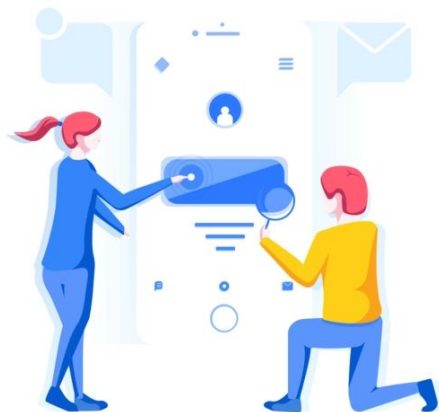
- A safe place to share
- Seek out parent leaders
- Prioritize diverse learner families
- Solicit feedback



WhatsApp





- Identifying barriers can lead to creative solutions



Serving Students with Disabilities during Periods of Remote or Blended Learning
Sample Remote Family Engagement Brainstorming Tool

Questions to Consider as You Re-imagine Family Engagement for the Remote Learning Context:

- How will you provide parents, including those of students with disabilities, opportunities to engage with members of the IEP team and other staff while protecting confidentiality and student data and ensuring the health and safety of all parties?
- How can you use the tools in this toolkit to offer parents and students equity of voice and provide them with evidence that they have already been heard?
- How can the shift to remote or blending learning increase school leaders' and general educators' understanding that students with disabilities are general education students first?
- How can you change family engagement from something you offer TO or FOR families into something you do WITH families?

	Schoolwide Events and Initiatives	Sharing Student Progress with All Families	IEP Team Communication and Processes
Receiving Information 	Barrier:	Barrier:	Barrier:
	Solution:	Solution:	Solution:
Being Heard 	Barrier:	Barrier:	Barrier:
	Solution:	Solution:	Solution:



Create Clear Channels of Two Way Communication

- Do parents know where to go to get information?
- Communicate in various ways
- How can parents communicate with the school team?



VS



Engage families in the IEP Process

Specific to students who need specialized supports,

- Begin the conversation early
- Incorporate family concerns & ideas into the plan
- Share a draft and ask for feedback
- Amplify family voices in the meeting
- Share progress and ask for input often
- Be available and responsive



Serving Students with Disabilities during Periods of Remote or Blended Learning
Sample Family Input Form

Student Name		Date	
Parent Name		Parent Email/Phone	
Student Grade		Homeroom Teacher	

Section 1: Engaging in Remote Learning					
	Not at all concerned	Slightly concerned	Somewhat concerned	Quite concerned	Extremely concerned
How concerned are you about your student's learning while their school building is closed?					
How concerned are you about your student's social or emotional well-being during remote learning?					
How much time is your student participating in learning activities from their school?	No or almost no time	Not enough time	Just enough time	A little too much time	Far too much time
What best describes your student's typical internet access?	No internet access	Intermittent access	Access with a smartphone only	Access is reliable, but slow	Reliable high-speed internet
Section 2: Special Education Services					
	Unsure	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
In the past week, I have received the support I need from my student's school to help with schoolwork and IEP services.					
The lessons and activities my student is receiving help them to reach their IEP goals.					
My student is receiving appropriate behavioral supports and/or interventions during remote learning.					
The accommodations and/or modifications in my					



Equip Parents to Be Successful

- Provide trainings and resources
- Follow up
- Remember - **Parents want their children to succeed!**



Family Check-In		
Student:		
Family members assisting with distance learning:		
Teacher(s):		
Date:		
1. Revisit Family Support Plan		
a. Successes?		
b. Challenges?		
2. Discuss goals from previous week		
a. Successes?		
b. Challenges?		
3. Identify student goals for upcoming week:		
	Activity 1	Activity 2
Goal 1:		
Goal 2:		
(adjust # of goals and activities as needed)		
4. Family support for upcoming week:		
Area of need	Resources, strategies, or actions	

Let's hear from you.





Thank you!

www.diverselearnerscoop.com/covid19

Join us here next time for:

Bridging the EL Assessment Gap

- August 7th
- 8:30 - 8:45am CST