

Creating Parent Friendly Needs Assessment: A Planning Guide

Use the template below to guide a small group discussion. Be sure to document ideas and success stories shared by your GEAR UP Colleagues.

What are some of the needs expressed by your parent community?

Have you conducted a needs assessment with your parent community in the past?

NO YES

If so, what method(s) did you use to collect that information?

What strategies did you use to ensure that ALL parents were heard?

Adapted from the *Parent Involvement Toolkit for School Leaders* from the website of the Fayette County Public Schools www.fcps.net/fcs/

Review the family engagement strategies listed below. Place a check mark in the column to indicate that your GEAR UP Program is implementing this activity, might implement this activity given the needs assessment results, or this activity is not applicable to your community.

Center for College Access and Success

Making College Real

Activity	Already implementing	Considering this Activity	N/A
Hold beginning of school kick-off events			
Make home visits or walks for success			
Host meetings in "neutral" community sites			
Survey parents with a needs assessment to find out their needs, interests, concerns, skills, and talents			
Invite parents to go on college visits/tours			
Provide relevant, meaningful incentives for parents to attend meetings			
Hire and train parent advocates who have the responsibility to communicate with other parents			
Use a variety of communication vehicles and formats			
Make sure information is disseminated in the parents' language of choice			
Establish a "safe haven" parent resource center where parents can meet and have access to information and each other			
Provide educational opportunities and workshops for parents			
Reach out specifically to fathers			
Develop strong, personal relationships with families in the community			
Develop partnerships with organizations that are trusted and used by parents			
Schedule meetings at times when parents can attend			
Take advantage of opportunities and events where parents are already likely to be in attendance to provide important GEAR UP information			
Offer opportunities for parents and students to attend meetings together			
Solicit the help of students to encourage their parents to attend meetings			
Solicit the help of other parents to encourage their friends & neighbors to attend GEAR UP and other school events			
Help educators learn the dominant local language			
Include a celebratory component to all meetings			
Issue personal invitations to parents to attend events			
Have parents be a part of the school decision making process			
Develop strong, trusting relationships with school administration and staff			
Discuss your results with your small group and jot down any ideas you learn, strategies you would like to try, and/or successes you have achieved.			

Adapted from the *Parent Involvement Toolkit for School Leaders* from the website of the Fayette County Public Schools www.fcps.net/fcs/

