

A MATRIX OF PARENT OPPORTUNITIES AND COMMUNITY RESPONSIBILITIES

Parent Engagement in Discovery

A core value of Discovery is parent engagement. Parents are now actively involved as members and leaders of the collaborative and various committees. The collaboratives continue to explore a variety of strategies reaching more parents and moving beyond parent involvement to parents as decision-making partners on issues that affect the early school success of young children.

The Memorial Fund views parent engagement as an ongoing process where parents execute multiple roles and have a myriad of responsibilities to their children, families and community. Sustained change cannot happen without the active engagement of all parents and in particular those whose children are most at-risk. Parent engagement is not an isolated strategy or tactic, it is not a linear process, and one size does not fit all. Moreover, parents cannot act alone as advocates for their children and change agents. Discovery communities have accepted the responsibility for maintaining a system of opportunities for parents to actively exercise their civic and parental responsibilities. The collaborative is the accountability mechanism, insuring that community and parents are engaged in a partnership where children are at the center and family roles are acknowledged and respected.

The honeycomb at the right depicts a matrix of parent opportunities and community responsibilities that would be present in a Discovery community. Each “chamber” represents a key component. The “walls” are permeable so parents can enter from where ever they are and move to wherever they need and want to go. As Discovery partners we continue to be responsible for maintaining the delicate balance between accountability and responsibility and creating a community infrastructure for the equitable distribution of resources among parents, professionals and systems on behalf of young children.

