



**Hancock Place
School District**
Inspiring Excellence

**Innovative Ideas
for
Maximizing Community Engagement
in a
High Poverty District**

**MASA & MOSPRA
2016 Spring Conference
March 31, 2016**

Most Important Question: Why?

WHY is it important to maximize community engagement in high poverty school districts?



Brief Exercise

DATA AND DEMOGRAPHICS ON PAPER

Vs.

OUR COMMUNITY ON VIDEO



Where in the world is Hancock Place School District?

- South St. Louis County (LEMAY, MISSOURI)-- neighbors to St. Louis City Public, Mehlville, Bayless, Affton, and Lindbergh School Districts
- District Teachers: 108
- PreK-12 Student Enrollment: 1,529; •District Full Time Staff: 163
- Cost per pupil: \$11,781
- Tax Rate: \$5.5825
- Assessed Valuation: \$154,686,060
- Class Size Ratio: 19:1



Further demographic data....

African American	18%
White	66%
Asian	.6%
Multi-Racial	9%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	.07%
American Indian	.2%
Hispanic	6%



Further Demographics....

- 29 students identified as Homeless under McKinney-Vento
- 79.8838% FRL Count (Community Eligibility Provision)
- 44 students enrolled under residency waivers



Hancock Place Activity



Givens

- Community engagement can be broken down into countless sub-topics including engagement with families of students with disabilities; engagement with rural families; engagement with Native American families, etc.
- Poverty has absolutely zero correlation to one's intelligence
- Painting with a broad brush...exceptions to the rule

- HOWEVER....



Realities

- Barriers to learning exacerbated
- Do not assume.... "Parents do not care enough to come to conferences."
- Trickle down effect
- True empathy vs. sympathy



UNPOPULAR DATA

- 77.98 % designated Free/Reduced Lunch
- Single parent family homes
- Homeless (doubled up) families
- Only meal comes from the school
- Report alcohol or drug use at home
- Live off of Government or State Aid
- Lack a high school diploma or vocational training



Our Values:

The early years of a child's life are critical for optimal development and provide the foundation for success in school and in life.

Parents are their children's first and most influential teachers.



Parents as Teachers™
Affiliate

Our Vision:

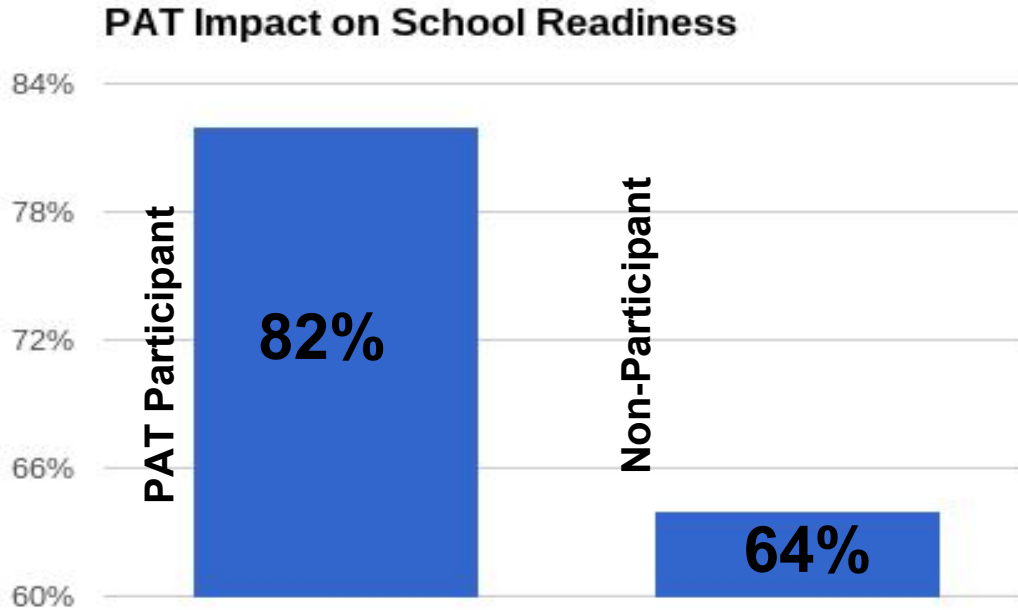
All children will learn, grow and develop to realize their full potential.

Our Mission:

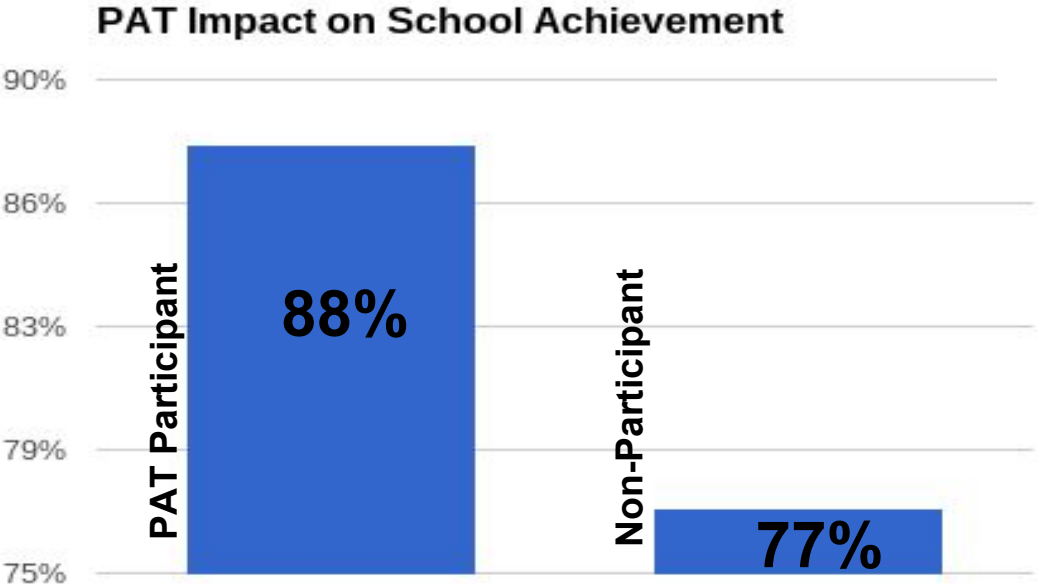
Parents as Teachers promotes the optimal early development, learning and health of children by supporting and engaging their parents and caregivers.



The Parents as Teachers program: its impact on school readiness and later school achievement



Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) Communication Arts Test Results on Low-Income 3rd Grade Students



Based on a report¹ by: Judy Pfannenstiel, M.A., President and Senior Research Associate, Research & Training Associates, Inc. Edward Zigler, Ph.D., Sterling Professor of Psychology, Emeritus, Yale University



Group Connections





- In 2009 the first Little Free Library was built in Wisconsin
- In January of 2016, the total number reached over 36,000

The Little Free Library



Promoting Literacy

Take a Book



Return a Book



No **BUTTS** about it, our families
need diapers!



The St. Louis Area Diaper Bank

- WIC & SNAP offer no allowance for diapers
- 1 out of every 3 moms in Missouri experience diaper need
- Diapers can represent 14% of the take home pay of a parent earning minimum wage



- 2,800 Diapers a Month
- Formula
- Clothes
- Books
- Toys



The Cub Closet



Hancock Place Early Childhood Center



Preschool Community Outreach

- FREE ½ day preschool offered to all of its residents
- 105 students
- Fully certified early childhood educators (3 regular ed. classrooms)
- Special School District Partnership (2 special ed. classrooms)
- One full day classroom (tuition)
- Nurse; PT; OT; Speech Services



Investing in Our Future

- **PARENTS AS TEACHERS**: Overall \$95K Budget....State Funding and reimbursements from neighboring district total \$65K
- HPDSD commits= 30K of operating funds to operate its Parents as Teachers Program

- **PRESCHOOL**: Overall \$419K budget... FREE half day program= \$0. Tuition based full-day = \$55K; Shared SSD costs= \$9K
- HPDSD commits= \$355K of operating funds to operate its Early Childhood Center



CRT....who is involved???

school counselors and social workers

police officers and deputy juvenile officers

Children's Division representative

Children's Service Fund representatives

Private therapists

Nurses

representatives from local churches

Salvation Army

Woman's Place

St. Vincent DePaul

P.A.T. directors

Legal Services of Eastern Missouri

Special School District

Specialized county units



Some students go home to this.....

Nearly $\frac{1}{4}$ of Missouri's children are hungry or at risk of hunger, placing the state 5th in the country among the states with the highest increase of hungry youth in recent years. Research shows this is a serious threat to children's health, growth and development, and may even harm young children's brain architecture.



Where am I sleeping tonight?

- Families are doubling up
- children sleeping with older kids
- children sleeping with adults
- back on the street at any time

In Missouri, 92,333 grandchildren are being raised by their grandparents.

10, 620 children are in foster care.

Missouri's homeless population rose 67% in 5 years.



Medical issues caused by living conditions

Why are our kids
getting sick so often?

Attendance at school
is decreased.



Lack of Parent involvement

I'm sorry my mom and dad couldn't make the meeting. They didn't have any way to get there.

Extensive research has shown that students achieve more in school when their parents are involved in their education.

It should be the goal of each school district to reach out to parents by communicating effectively with them and by **providing opportunities** for parents to learn how to assist their children.



Where are they studying???

I can't find my homework!

I tried to study last night,

but we had a lot going on!

St. Louis County Problem Properties Unit has reported an increase in....

- Families doubling up
- Mental health issues
- Drug usage
- Child abuse
- Unsafe living conditions



Community Response Team

Our goal.....

To identify and implement a process that involves school and community collaboration for the effective and efficient delivery of multidisciplinary services to students and families



CRT IN ACTION...

● **Home visits to understand their story**

- share information with team
- brainstorm for solutions
- share updated relevant resources
- connect the family to the resources (they don't need anymore phone #s)
- follow up with team as you hit additional "brick walls".

**It does not need to be the school counselor or social worker who takes the lead with every family.



Students...part of the solution



Parenting Classes = CHRISTMAS

- **164 children adopted for Christmas**
- **Their parents attended an Active Parenting Class or alternative class with our support agencies.**
- **Parents reported feeling more connected to the school after attending classes**
- **Parents reported feeling better about themselves and their families as they had opportunities to share their life experiences.**
- **Parents requested additional classes be offered relating to their immediate needs...**

examples: shopping for good deals, weatherization, drugs and alcohol pressures for kids, meal planning & cooking, surviving “gluten free” on a budget

