



**Creating a College-going Culture:  
The Power of Parental Engagement  
Programs**

**Joni Petschauer**

Director, WNC Network for Access and Success  
Appalachian State University

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**VISION**

To empower parents and families to support  
the education of their children while  
encouraging regular communication with the  
school community



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**A GAIN FOR ALL**

- Educators / Administrators (staff development)
- Becoming proactive rather than over reactive
  - Establishing regular communication with parents
  - Learning how your school invites parents and families to participate



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### A GAIN FOR ALL



Parents – as individual adults

- Learning about community resources such as housing options, childcare, and support groups
- Building networks for employment
- Demystifying the school and uncovering the college-going process
- Understanding basic money management and how to pay for college

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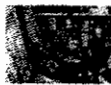
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### A GAIN FOR ALL



Parents – as teachers of children

- Demonstrating how to communicate with teachers and administrators
- Taking necessary steps to prepare for postsecondary education – the college going culture
- Engaging in volunteer opportunities
- Developing skills for conflict resolution
- Recognizing the signs of substance abuse

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### A GAIN FOR ALL

Children

- Seeing their parents engaged in their schools
- Observing their parents interest in education
- Meeting other students and educational leaders
- Becoming familiar with new expectations



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**THE CURRICULUM**

- Session 101  
Orientation to the Parent Institute:  
Building a College-Going Culture
- Session 102  
Communication
- Session 103  
Child development strategies
- Session 104  
Proactive parenting
- Session 205  
Engaging your child
- Session 206  
Promoting success within the school
- Session 307  
Transition back into the schools
- Session 308  
Goal setting
- Session 309  
Finals (Evaluation) and Graduation
- Session 410  
The road to college – a visit

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**The School**



- Small town – furniture/textile industry – 13.1% unemployment (September 2009)
- Middle school with 656 students
- 85.07% Free and Reduced Lunch
- 74% non white; 26% white
  - Of the non white – 59% black; 34% Hispanic; 7% Asian

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**The Plan**

- 9 monthly meetings 6-8:00 pm
- 30-45 minute gathering with snack or light meal with parents/families/children/facilitators
- 1 hour presentation/activity with parents and children (separately conducted)
- 15 minute conclusion with parents and children together
- 1 day long college visit for parents

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### What Worked

- Asking parents to think about what they wanted to know at the beginning of the program; creating mini-presentations on those concerns and integrating them into the program
- Monthly meetings
- Someone responsible for working with children
- A little food and drink
- Working in the library



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### What We Learned

- Look at the demographics – we needed to create a Spanish version of the curriculum
- Consistency matters – same day/time each month
- Organization is critical – materials need a binder
- Call on local resources – but don't let them "talk" – they have to do something – HANDS ON! – name tags

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Joni Webb Petschauer  
Director  
Western NC Network for Access and Success  
ASU Box 32154  
Appalachian State University  
Boone, NC 28608  
[petschaerjw@appstate.edu](mailto:petschaerjw@appstate.edu)  
828-262-3878

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