The Parent Involvement Project
High-Quality Family Learning Experiences

The PARENT INVOLVEMENT PROJECT (PIP), which works collaboratively with parents, schools, and communities, is an innovative and multifaceted parent education program offered to school districts and addresses the needs of underserved families beginning when children enter preschool.

Research shows that when parents and other adult family members meaningfully engage in children's learning, they play a vital role in enabling children to succeed in school and later in life (see Related Research on next page). PIP nurtures parents' critical role as their child's first and most important teachers.

An evaluation study found that parents value the family learning experiences that PIP provides.

PIP supports parents through a model of four closely linked and integrated components, as depicted in this graphic.

**PIP Components**

**Parent Participation in Their Children's Classroom**
- Parents engage in meaningful and skill-enhancing activities with their child and other children in the context of the classroom.
- Caring and supportive teachers model positive and responsive adult-child interactions for parents to practice in the classroom and at home.

**Parent Education Workshops**
- Presenters, often community members from public agencies, who have expertise in their subject matter, provide strategies and guidance for parents to support children's learning and development across four domains: cognitive, language and literacy, social-emotional, and physical development and health.
- Parents are encouraged to actively participate at each workshop to make it a more engaging experience.

**Home Visits**
- PIP Home Visitors develop warm, mutually respectful relationships with families to enhance parent-teacher-child connections and communication.
- Home visits focus on supporting parenting skills and practices to support children's early learning.

**Enrichment Activities**
- Field trips and school-site presentations build on children's curiosity and enable parents and children to share learning experiences away from the classroom.
- Activities leverage community resources, link to classroom learning, and are designed to be interesting, enjoyable, and to encourage families to seek these kinds of activities on their own.

**How PIP Works**
- Parents sign a Parent Agreement at the beginning of the school year and commit to participate in the child's classroom one session each month, attend not less than eight parent education workshops, host six home visits, participate in enrichment activities as their schedules permit, and regularly practice the parenting skills they have learned.
- A district administrator, who has oversight of the preschool program, serves as the PIP Program Supervisor and works to maintain the quality of PIP activities while aligning them with the regular educational program.
- The PIP Facilitator, who, working collaboratively with district staff, manages the day-to-day aspects of what PIP provides.
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» The PIP Home Visitor focuses on the home-visit component, linking the knowledge and skills parents acquire through the parent education workshops and classroom participation.

» Teachers encourage parents’ participation in the classroom and communicate regularly with PIP staff regarding the needs of individual children and families.

» PIP’s strongest advocates may be school principals and district administrators who can attest to how well the PIP components are being implemented, build enthusiasm among school staff, and help instill a strong culture for parent participation.

WestEd’s Role in Supporting the Parent Involvement Project

Critical to PIP’s success are the direction and oversight that WestEd brings to the project’s implementation and administration. Specifically, WestEd:

» oversees PIP implementation at each participating school district to ensure program fidelity;

» provides ongoing support and guidance in consultation with district PIP Program Supervisors;

» provides a platform for sharing experiences and ideas and for encouraging innovation;

» advises in the selection, hiring, and supervision of PIP Facilitators and PIP Home Visitors;

» provides professional development opportunities for PIP staff to enhance the quality of implementation;

» initiates and supports district efforts to sustain parent learning and family engagement as children transition to kindergarten and beyond; and

» evaluates project performance to validate outcomes and identify areas for quality improvement.

Related Research

The following research speaks to the importance of the parent-child relationship in the home and school:


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About WestEd

WestEd is a nonpartisan, nonprofit research, development, and service agency that partners with education and other communities throughout the United States and abroad to promote excellence, achieve equity, and improve learning for children, youth, and adults. WestEd has more than a dozen offices nationwide, from Massachusetts, Vermont and Georgia, to Illinois, Arizona and California, with headquarters in San Francisco. For more information, visit WestEd.org or call 415.565.3000.