



PARENT/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

An Amazing Educational Partnership - Past, Present and Future

In an effort to increase college-going rates in Humboldt County; HCOE, HSU, CR, school districts, and community volunteers have been offering classes through a program called Parent Partners in Education. These classes give parents who speak limited English and/or parents who did not have the opportunity to attend college, information about educational opportunities for children and ways to support and encourage children's success in school. During these classes, parents frequently mentioned their desire to study English. They knew that increasing their own language proficiency would greatly benefit entire families.

The partnership came together to offer free ESL Community Education Classes with College of the Redwood providing the classes, neighborhood schools providing a way for parents to enroll in CR and study ESL with childcare just down the hall, HSU providing educational materials and HCOE providing childcare and snacks. HCOE's computer volunteers program added icing to the cake by refurbishing donated laptops to give away in drawings held at the end of each parent series and ESL course session. The response from parents was huge! CR could barely contract ESL teachers fast enough to meet the demand. (In one week, 90 interested parents signed up in South Fortuna!)



A parent class graduation at Alice Birney School in Eureka.

Next year, the transition to Common Core State Standards and assessments will require students to have digital proficiency, which puts children from wealthier, more educated families with computers in their homes at a distinct advantage. To meet this need, CR can offer a course which combines ESL with computer literacy. This class could be connected to an HCOE initiative to make digital devices and internet connectivity available to low-income families.

With help from community members and organizations, business sponsors, and volunteer refurbishers, we hope to provide many families with their first computer or tablet when they complete their combination ESL and computer literacy class. The partnership will work together to make another valuable educational opportunity available for the benefit of children and families in Humboldt County!

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