**Parent Mentor Program:**
Family Engagement “With Us”, Not “To Us”

**Program Description:**
The Parent Mentor (PM) program both engages parents and guardians in their children’s education and develops true educational partners and school/community leaders. Participants commit to a year-long school volunteer experience guided by weekly professional and personal development trainings. These include classroom management; academic and English Language Learner (ELL) teaching strategies; health and wellness; financial security; and job skills.

**Participant Training**
The program focuses on increasing parents’ capacity to engage and support not only their classrooms, but also their own children. Training topics and activities have included:

- **Capabilities:** Goal setting and attainment support, parenting classes, CPR/AED/First Aid, Trauma Informed Classroom, Sexual Abuse, Career/College Readiness, Preventing “Summer Slide”
- **Connections:** Team-Building, Ice Breakers, Stress Management, Self-Care Heart Mapping by LALELA, Ripple Effect Mapping Evaluation Process
- **Cognition:** Training and support with Eagle County Schools’ disciplines of multi-lingualism, math, literacy, Exceptional Students, SPED
- **Confidence:** Identification, communication, and utilization of strengths, leadership opportunities, English exercises, PTA/PTO involvement, Heart Mapping Social/Emotional Art Project, Ripple Effect Mapping Data Collection

**Strategic Partnership**
The Parent Mentor program has become a critical partner to the success of the Eagle County School District. The program assists the district in its goal to consistently grow levels of engaged and participating families, in both high-impact (academic) and low-impact (social) focused school activities, where the participants are representative of all segments of our community:

- Primary grade classroom volunteerism
- Involvement in school leadership: participation in PTA/PTO
- Participation and leadership in school events
- Pipeline for ECS staff recruitment

**Resources**
Logan Square Neighborhood Association’s Parent Mentor Program

Valley Settlement Project’s Parent Mentor Program
https://www.valleysettlement.org/programs/community-programs-2/parent-mentors/

Department of Education’s Partners in Education:
A Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family–School Partnerships

The Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA)
http://www.idra.org/families-and-communities/

Epstein’s Framework of Six Types of Parent Involvement

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**Innovation & Individualization**
Over the past 20 years, YP365 has built trust with both local families and community partners. With this trust, we can dialogue honestly and clearly about the needs of our youth and families. As a result, the program has begun to incorporate:

- ‘Tiered program participation’ which allows parents to choose a level of commitment that honors their family or work responsibilities and ensures successful program completion.
- ‘Shadow a Parent Mentor’ which has allowed PM participants to take on a leadership role in welcoming and sharing their experience with other parents. The effort strives to increase family comfort with their school building and grow their understanding of the necessity of family involvement.

“Ms. Carmen is an amazing asset to my classroom. Thanks to her dedication, passion and patience- 100% of my students achieved their goal for the end of the year benchmark.” –Danielle Abramowitz, Kindergarten teacher at Avon Elementary School.