



One of the most important goals of family-school partnering is working together to support student learning. However, offering support for the adults in the families is also an important piece to partnering that has an impact indirectly on the students. In order to offer this adult-focused support, Denver Public Schools has created the Center for Family Opportunity.

The goal of the Center for Family Opportunity is to help increase the self-sufficiency of adults in the school community by offering free services. These services include classes in career development and financial literacy, access to legal services, assistance with tax preparation, and educational opportunities. By collaborating with the community, the Center supports families by providing services that foster self-sufficiency and thus strengthen the families overall.

Denver Public Schools modeled their Center after a national model – centralizing best in the field resources at one location. Families can access multiple services in one spot, making it much easier for them. In addition to targeting adults with children in schools, the Center is open to any adult in the community, and courses are offered free of cost. The Center solicits feedback from participants in order to make sure that resources are meeting identified needs.

Offering these types of services helps to support family-school partnering efforts and student achievement. Adults who are active participants are more likely to attain employment, increase household income and decrease the likelihood of unplanned, disruptive moves. These outcomes in turn provide students with increased stability. Additionally, participating in educational opportunities helps parents to better support their children academically, and demonstrates their commitment and support of education.

Data gathered by the district indicates that they are reaching adults who may not otherwise be able to access these types of services. Only 16% of participants hold full-time employment, and about half report having not obtained a high school diploma. Additionally, half of the participants receive more than one service at the Center. This program is working to strengthen both individual members the school community, and the community as a whole.