

# Parent Leadership Team Project

St. Vrain Valley School District

Longmont, CO



**COLORADO**  
Department of Education

When considering supporting students in schools, teachers and administrators are often viewed as the most important influences. However, it is critical to also remember that parents and families play a significant role in students' education. In order to address the importance of families in partnerships, the St. Vrain Valley School District is currently implementing the Parent Leadership Team Project in five of their schools, with support from the Colorado Statewide Parent Coalition.

This project has two overarching goals: to build teams of parent leaders and educators in order to improve partnerships, and to use these teams to both design and test partnership practices that can be used in the schools. The work of these teams aligns with the National Standards for Family-School Partnerships, including implementing the standards of creating a welcoming environment and communicating effectively. Teams also implement strategies to address academic needs of students.

These Parent Leadership Teams are implemented in two phases throughout the school year. In the first phase, the Principal and Liaison for the school recruits a team that represents the demographic of the school. The teams are given orientation and trainings, and then begin their action planning to identify partnership needs. The second phase of the project involves implementing the action plan, meeting monthly, and evaluating the success of their plans.

Evaluating this project overall has shown great outcomes, as well as areas that improvements can continue to be made. While team-training attendance for two of the teams needed improvement, this revealed a need for more support in recruiting team members. Of those that attended the training, 100% reported that it was helpful for creating action plans. Parent surveys were conducted in each of the five schools, with varied rate of return. This also helped to highlight the need for further support in how to involve teachers and principals.

These teams have begun to see encouraging success in St. Vrain, and those involved have advice for other schools that may be considering similar projects. It is important to have support from district leaders in order to implement the project in a variety of schools, and the principal of these schools also needs to be committed to family-school partnerships. Finally, a parent liaison is needed, at least part-time, to coordinate the recruitment and trainings of team members. While there have been some challenges along the way, it is evident that the Parent Leadership Team Project is a beneficial to promote and sustain family-school-community partnering focused on positive student outcomes.