Peer-to-Peer Learning Conversation

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*”Partnering for Program Sustainability”*

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***What are your worries about Program Sustainability?***

1. Keeping adults excited when funding stops and they no longer receive pay. How to transition to using more volunteers.
2. Keeping program quality at the same level when funding stops. Which areas can be cut?
3. Retaining the amount of parent and community engagement.

***What strategies do you already have in place?***

1. Parent engagement: outreach to a local community college program to provide EL classes for parents. This involved jointly writing a grant for funding.
2. Community engagement:
   * Connect with community partners to find funding opportunities and go in as partners.
   * Connect with community and school community. Start a thespian group by connecting with a local theatre company and a middle/high school teacher who teaches drama.
   * Connect with local coordinating council to access local resources.
3. Public Relations:

* Connect with the district program to collaborate in fundraising efforts and to build community awareness.
* Increase public awareness about our activities, outcomes achieved, and the benefits to students and families.

1. Create a Sustainability Committee with the sole purpose of creating partnerships, finding funding sources, and increasing public awareness.
2. Remain open to new partnerships such as local Education Foundations.
3. Don’t wait until funding dries up – start efforts now!
4. Take advantage of available STEM grants.

***What would you like to get in place? Timeline?***

1. Plans to submit a proposal to CTE and have at least one student-run business going. We currently have auto-shop and culinary programs which could be good sources.
2. Continue to increase awareness in the community of the program’s impact on student outcomes and value.

***How can you partner with organizations in your community?***

1. Partner with local businesses that have funds to allow internships and are willing for their employees to volunteer in programs. Stress that this benefits the businesses by educating the workforce as well as benefiting the after school program.
2. Partner with community agencies such as the library to offer volunteers and other services.
3. Partner with the School District to create public relations materials such as a video promoting the program.

***When to charge fees for program participation – if ever.***

1. Many programs do not charge fees because of the high number of families in poverty who are unable to pay.
2. Some programs will charge for special programs/clubs such as archery club which requires expensive equipment. Families are asked to pay a small amount (on a sliding scale) to help offset costs.
3. Other programs ask families to pay on a sliding scale with the thought that paying a small sum will increase buy-in and possibly attendance.
4. One program began by not charging fees the first year and then charging during the second year. This was based on a sliding scale and offered scholarships to families unable to pay. There were still many families who withdrew their students.

***According to Pete:***

Fees may be charged -- sliding fee scale is important -- needs to be well-designed -- and they must only be used for the approved activities in the grant proposal -- and there’s an accounting element -- the grantee must be able to demonstrate that no student has been unable to participate due to the fee structure.

*Once the grant has sunsetted -- yes -- the fees are the decision of the non-federal program. A caveat -- the fees charged cannot be "bankrolled" for future use.*

***Pete can get the exact language for you if you e-mail him about that.***