



Advancing Parent Professional Leadership in Education

A.P.P.L.E. Notes



The A.P.P.L.E. Project had its second Institute.

A.P.P.L.E Leadership Institute

In October 2006, the Advancing Parent/Professional Leadership in Education (APPLE) Project held a 3 day Leadership Development Institute for five school districts. The Institute took place in Marlboro, MA. Each district sent a team of parents whose children have IEPs and one Special Education Professional from each school district. The school districts which participated in the Institute were, **Billerica, Canton, Gardner, Grafton and Medfield**. Three Special Education Directors came as part of their district's team. The faculty included Rich Robison, Executive Director of the Federation for Children with Special Needs, and co-director of the APPLE project; Barbara Popper, the co-director of APPLE; and Marilyn Gutierrez-Wilson of the Federation's PTI and APPLE projects. In addition, faculty included Roberto Chene of New Mexico whose special area is conflict resolution; Kathleen Osta, of North Carolina, a specialist in communication strategies, and Cassie Johnston of PAVE, the Washington state PTI who conducts training in True Colors™, a method of helping individuals find their learning styles. The evaluations of the Institute have been very positive.

All participants completed an evaluation form about the Institute for the Federation's use that indicated some key events. They noted: working with their team members on action planning, efforts to enhance collaboration, gaining motivation toward beginning a new PAC, dialogue between SPED administrators and parent team agreeing to the barriers and looking to change, setting goals, and forming relationships.

• Here are a few comments from the participants from the Institute:

- I think that what I thought while I was there has changed. It went quickly with a lot of information. While I was there I felt that I was like a sponge. I did not have time to process a lot of what was happening at the time. I have found myself thinking a lot about it since then.
- Really thought "Respectful Conversations" was helpful & left an impression.
- The breakout session on planning our district's PAC goals
- Communication, listening to others stories, diversity, colors, all the speakers
- Opportunities to utilize learning in our team groups.
- The sessions were excellent on a personal level. As far as helping to collaborate with our SPED dept. we didn't discuss these specific problems.
- Structure & facilitation during team planning session
- The pyramid & the communication styles
- All of the sessions pieces were like building blocks that brought us to the key events for me & my team-the team action planning





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The APPLE project has sent the school district teams their finalized Team Action Plans to help them increase parent involvement in their PACs over the next year. We will be available to work with them during that time and will incorporate their ideas into future Institutes. We are now working with **Reading, Cohasset, Wilbraham/Hampden & are looking for 2 more towns** to recruit parents from their communities to attend a fall 2007 Institute. We are available to talk with PAC chairs or the SPED director from any interested towns.

If you would like to share your stories, an article, or any ideas you may have, or wish to join our new listserv, please call or email **Marilyn Gutierrez-Wilson** (marilyng@fcsn.org) or call **(800) 493-2338 x 351**.
Check out our website for more details: www.fcsn.org/APPLE

