School Action Plan 2023

Fall 2023 Update:
Whittier PTA is 1 of 9 Illinois schools who have earned the School of Excellence Distinction! Read More HERE

I. Introduction:

In the Fall of 2022, Whittier Elementary applied for the National PTA's School of Excellence Program. As required, a baseline survey was distributed to identify priority areas within the school community. Survey responses were submitted to National PTA, then evaluated within their frameworks for Standards for Family-School Partnerships and 4 I's of Family Engagement. A Focus Area and Main Objective were determined by response data and assigned from National PTA preset categories, , as listed below.

Three themes emerged from Whittier's data that address community concerns and align within National PTA's framework: (1) Continuing/strengthening efforts around accessibility and inclusion, (2) Digital/internet safety and (3) School violence prevention (Active Intruder Drills).

Goals were developed around these 3 areas, as reflective of community responses and aligned with National PTA guidelines.

II. School Action Plan Overview:

Focus Area: Ensure Health & Safety of Students

Main Objective: To support students' emotional and mental well-being

Long-Term Goal: Provide relevant and accessible PTA programming, events and volunteer opportunities that are safe, welcoming and inclusive to the needs of all students, parents/guardians and staff.

- **Short-Term Goal 1.** Better understand the needs and perspectives around inclusion and accessibility.
- **Short-Term Goal 2.** Provide learning opportunities for parents/guardians.

III. References/Background

See below for more information on the program and National Standards

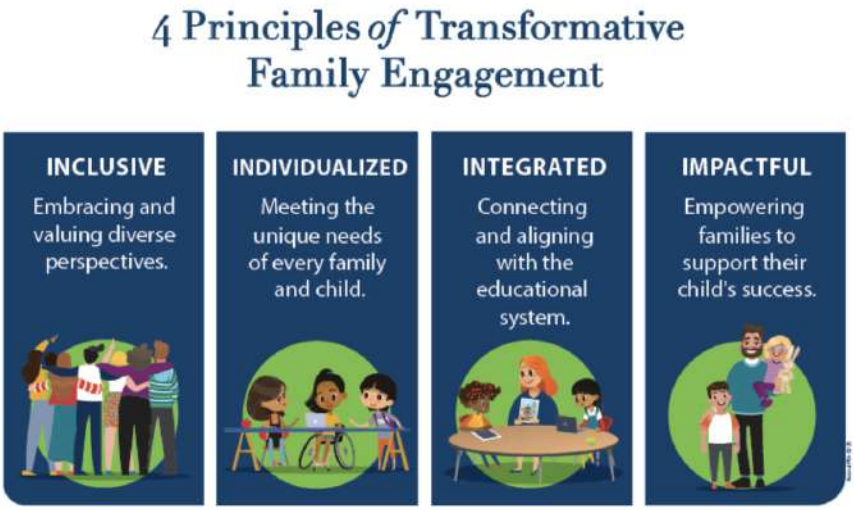
★ The School of Excellence Program aims to:

- Provide a framework for PTAs to implement best practices in family engagement to strengthen family-school partnerships.
- Build inclusive and welcoming school communities where all families contribute to enriching the educational experience and overall well-being for all students.
- Help PTAs attract new, action-oriented PTA members who want to focus on the issues that affect our children the most.
- Provide step-by-step guidance and networking opportunities for PTAs to gain support and feedback, identify and reach goals and earn recognition (National PTA School of Excellence, 2023).

★ National PTA Standards for Family-School Partnerships

PTA's National Standards for Family-School Partnerships set the bar for how schools and parent organizations should work together to support student success. Families are essential partners to providing a high-quality education for every student. Students whose families are engaged are more likely to attend school, avoid discipline problems, achieve at higher levels and graduate. Family engagement also helps schools, research suggests it is equally as important as school leadership or a rigorous curriculum to predict school improvement (National Standards for School and Family Partnerships, National PTA, 2023).

★ National PTA's Center for Family Engagement "4 I's"



Through a focus on grassroots leadership development, the Center for Family Engagement aims to embed transformative family engagement practices, programs and policies across the educational system so that every parent is treated as a valuable partner in their child's education (4 I's of Transformative Family Engagement, National PTA 2023).