

NEXT STEPS

- Seek approval to include PTA informational flyers with district registration information for all incoming students including transfers.
- Request district-wide standard for acknowledging donors and sponsors in school communications and at events.
- Ensure there is a clear method for families and community members to share input and provide feedback on events, and build in time at meetings and events for attendees to make connections with each other.
- Share about volunteer opportunities and opportunities for participation with community members.



WINTON WOODS
CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Ensuring *all students* achieve their highest potential



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my family my employer for their support and flexibility while I worked on this project. I would also like to thank WWCS D Director of Communications and Community Engagement, Jeffrey Riel, for encouraging me to apply and for his support of this project. Thank you to the WWCSPTA board and all of our volunteers and members for your support of students and families, and for allowing me to grow my own sense of belonging. Thank you to the WWCS D staff and administration for what you do everyday to build connection and belonging in our schools, and the work you are doing to foster that in the broader community.



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

Increasing Community Belonging with the PTA



**THE OHIO STATE
UNIVERSITY/Ohio Statewide
Family Engagement Center**

**Margaret
Hamilton County, OH**

INTRODUCTION/NEED ADDRESSED

I am a parent leader at Winton Woods City Schools. I am Branch Supervisor of Youth Services at a local library that serves the district, and PTA secretary. I am passionate about youth literacy, family and community engagement. I wanted to become a parent leader in order to be more strategic in community engagement efforts and the ways I support the school district.

At recent community conversations in the district, I heard an expressed need for an increase in connection between community members and a desire for a greater sense of belonging. Research indicates that increased community connection and belonging improves attendance, increases academic achievement, reduces behavioral issues, and enhances mental health.

GOAL and OBJECTIVES

The goal of the project is to provide an opportunity for connection and building a sense of belonging through involvement with the PTA.

This will be accomplished by:

1. Increased awareness: Ensure that any school communication about PTA-sponsored events includes an acknowledgement.
2. Streamlined communications: Reduce information overload by sending a single monthly newsletter with clear section headings allowing readers to quickly skim to determine which information is relevant to them.
3. Two-way communication: Include clear, consistent opportunities for families and community members to share input and feedback.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN DESCRIPTION

Develop Communication Plan (Weeks 1-5)

- Meet with the PTA executive board and District Communication Director to propose monthly newsletter and other communication plan components.
- Develop newsletter templates for print, social media, and district electronic communication channels (which automatically translate into over 190 languages).
- Seek approval from Early Childhood School to include PTA informational flyers in the fall orientation packet.

Prepare First Communications (Weeks 6-11)

- Develop Back to School newsletter.
- Prepare and deliver bilingual English/Spanish membership and event flyers.

Launch Updated Communications (Weeks 12-13)

- Launch monthly newsletter and share via district channels and on community social media pages and community bulletin boards.
- Attend back to school events with printed newsletter and informational flyers.

Evaluation and Sustainability (Weeks 14-25)

- Track new memberships, volunteer sign-ups and meeting and event attendance data and compare to previous year data.
- Request family, educator and community feedback through the newsletter and in informal interviews.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Increased Family and Community Engagement

- Attendance at PTA meetings and events will increase.
- Family and community volunteerism will increase.

Increased Awareness of PTA Role in Schools

- Families and educators will report knowledge of PTA sponsorship of school activities.
- Educators will report knowledge of how to request PTA support.

Increased Connection and Belonging

- Those participating in PTA events as attendees or volunteers will report making new connections with other families and community members.
- Participants will report a greater sense of belonging in the schools and community.

EXPECTED CHALLENGES

Language and Technology Barriers

- With over 30 languages spoken in the district, any communication plan can only go so far.
- Not all families have access to or utilize district electronic communication tools.

Information Overload and Schedule Conflicts

- Individuals encounter a massive amount of information on a daily basis, and any additional communications may contribute to overwhelm.
- Meeting and event times may conflict with other obligations and priorities.