An Acknowledgement to Parents

By Denine Pope, Family Engagement Contact, Factory Shoals Elementary School

The start of a new school year always has its ups and downs, but this year was unlike anything students, parents and teachers have ever seen.

Stay-at-home orders prompted by the coronavirus has tested the resilience and creativity of our teachers, but they also threw many parents and other caregivers into service to help the teachers in the educational process. You have abruptly become teachers, behavior specialists, guidance counselors, and so much more without any notice, preparation or training.

We might never be able to fully appreciate the difficulties that you undertook in order to make remote learning possible, but we would like to thank you for your efforts! Most of our schools were able to utilize online networks to maintain contact with most of our students, but we realize that the children still needed proctoring at home. Someone had to keep them on task, and often provide the individual attention they needed. We know you did your best to access the online material so your child could participate in virtual learning classes. We know that some of you may have had to learn the subjects along with your students, just so you could help them understand concepts and complete assignments. You were pressed into service at home, and have gone far beyond the expectations normally placed on you. We can’t entertain any illusions that this process has been easy, but we say THANK YOU.

Since families are spending more and more time together amid the present pandemic, we would like to encourage you in strengthening your family relationships. Research shows the powerful role that parent-child relationships play in children’s learning and development. Relationships are the foundation of learning and development, and they affect virtually all aspects of their development—intellectual, social, emotional, physical, behavioral, and moral.

A growing body of research also demonstrates that a certain five character strengths are as influential as IQ in determining life outcomes not only in school, but also in the workplace, and in areas such as health and criminality. Those five character strengths that positively influence young people’s social and emotional development are (you can also read more about them here):

1. expressing care (showing the child that you like and want the best for him or her);
2. challenging growth (helping the child continuously improve and stretch);
3. providing support (helping the child complete tasks and achieve goals);
4. sharing power (hearing the child’s voice and letting him or her share in making decisions); and
5. expanding possibility (broadening the child’s horizons and connecting him or her to new people and opportunities).

The study shows that the degree to which children experience these relational actions in their families is ten times more predictive of their development of key character strengths than demographic factors such as income, race or ethnicity and family structure.
Parent Engagement Tips for Virtual Learning
Submitted by the ESOL Department, Douglas County School System

We are so excited that November is here! November is Parent Engagement Month. Parent Engagement is a very important component of the U.S. school system. Understanding Parent Engagement and establishing expectations for how schools and families should collaborate to support the learning of each student is an action that leads to student success.

During this time of having a multitude of school instructional models, we are finding that virtual learning can be a challenge for everyone. To help you support your child as they work online there are a few things to keep in mind. Here are a few tips for helping your child learn at home.

Create a Learning Area
Your child is spending more time than usual on classwork. The place that usually works for your child to complete homework may not work for an entire school day. Create a location that is quiet and free from background noise as much as possible. Ensure the area has a good internet connection, and that an adult can still monitor the screen.

Set up Daily Routines
It is essential to create routines from the start. Construct the day into time slots and fill in with assignments that need to be completed. Children should continue to prepare for the day as if they are going to school. Make sure to keep a regular bedtime to avoid staying up late or sleeping too late in the morning.

Communicate with the Teacher Consistently
How is your child’s teacher communicating? Is the teacher using Google Classroom or ClassDojo to send messages? Send the teacher an email or a Dojo message if you and your child have questions. Communicating regularly with classroom teachers will help guarantee the success of your child’s education.

Be flexible and realize that you may need to adjust things as you go. Making small changes may have a significant impact on learning from home.

You can translate a Google Meet using the captions:
* Start or join a Google Meet.
* Click “Turn on Captions”.
* Right-click on the black area within the Meet screen. (This is where captions appear.)
* Click Translate from the drop down menu.
* A box will appear at the top of the screen.
* Click the three vertical dots in the top right corner of the box.
* Select a language from the list.
* All captions and the chat box will be translated.

Attention ESOL Parents:
Remember to have your child (ESOL student) log on to Lexia when they have time. Lexia is a wonderful way to assist your child with language acquisition. Lexia addresses the development of oral language, reading, spelling, and writing skills for students who are learning English. Students learning English will develop fundamental reading skills with the rest of their classmates and receive student-driven and teacher-directed personalized instruction. For more information, visit the Lexia Website. Additionally, ESOL students can also login to Nearpod to go on virtual field trips and develop vocabulary in a fun manner using hip-hop at Flocabulary.
Back To The Future

By Sacheen Cassy, Family Engagement Contact, Annette Winn Elementary School

With all things now technology based, it’s easy to lose sight of what our kids might be missing. I remember while growing up being in awe of billboards depicting pictures of the future, commercials hinting at a robotic age, and television shows and movies showing homes that can function by voice command. In school our teachers even stressed the importance of staying ahead so we can be competitive with other nations, the main vehicle being technology. Welcome to the age of technology… where typing classes are no longer needed, telephones are used more for non-talking functions, and your car can prevent an accident long before you realize you are veering into the next lane. Thanks to technology, an apple is not just a fruit, address books and stamps have been replaced by Facebook and FaceTime, and you don’t have to wait until Sunday nights to watch America’s Funniest Videos because there are a host of sites where you can get a good laugh at any moment of the day or night. This does not mean that you completely eliminate those other tools, resources and skills. It just means that you find ways to keep your children competitive by showing them multiple ways of doing things with or without technology.

Here are a few ideas to get you started. If you find some more ideas or create your own activities, please feel free to submit them to me here or your school’s Family Engagement Contact so we can compile a list of activities for our parents who are looking for suggestions.

Skills by Activity

**Cooking**
- Math skills, such as counting, fractions, sequencing (determining orders of events), measuring and shapes
- Problem-solving
- Increasing vocabulary
- Chemistry and science, including making predictions and understanding how food changes while cooking
- Geography, such as where different foods grow and why they grow best there
- Creativity
- Health lessons, such as understanding nutrition and the food groups, as well as appreciating the importance of safety and cleanliness
- Fine motor skills, through whisking, measuring, pouring, sifting, and rolling
- More info here.

Careers: Chef, Sous Chef, Restaurateur, Business man/woman, Farmer, Nutritionist, and more.

**Activity:** Try this [recipe](#) for easy Chocolate leaves. Substitute Mint leaves to kick it up a notch.

**Walking, Jogging or Running**
- Health lessons, such as connecting balancing what you eat with what you do.
- Goal-setting
- Time and pace
- Measuring distance
- Consistency
- Hydration and the importance of water for all living things and the human body

Careers: Professional Athlete, the Olympics, Runners, Trainer, PE Teacher, Coach, and more.

**Activity:** Red Light, Green Light
This classic running game is great for interval training as well as building physical endurance and listening skills.

**Stargazing**
- Calendar math
- Map skills
- Science: light and heat
- Distance
- Science: phases of the moon
- Astronomy


**Activity:** Have kids take photos of the moon as it cycles through its monthly phases. To make the photos more dramatic, frame them with foreground objects like your house or a tree, or maybe yourself—a lunar selfie. At the end of the month, create a collage using a free phone app like Instagram’s Layout. More info here.

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November is Parent Engagement Month! Get Involved!

Research suggests that family-school partnerships not only strengthen families and increase student achievement, but also improve schools and build healthy communities. Students with engaged families, regardless of demographics, are more likely to develop confidence, have better social skills, earn higher grades and test scores, have fewer behavior problems, graduate and go on to post-secondary studies.
**UPCOMING WORKSHOPS**

Parents of children being served with Title I funds may attend any workshop, regardless of location. Please note: ALL parent meetings and workshops for the Fall 2020 semester will be virtual. For additional meeting information, please contact your child’s school at the listed phone numbers below.

### Annette Winn Elementary School Parent Resource Center
3536 Bankhead Highway, Lithia Springs, GA 30122  
(770) 651-3100  awes.dcssga.org

**Understanding Testing and How You Can Help at Home (VIRTUAL)**  
Wednesday, December 2, 2020 at 6:00 PM and  
Thursday, December 3, 2020 at 10:00 AM  
The purpose of this workshop is to help parents understand the expectations of the different types of assessments given throughout the year. They will walk away with an understanding as to how to help at home.

### Beulah Elementary School Parent Resource Center
1150 Burnt Hickory Road, Douglasville, GA 30134  
(770) 651-3300  bees.dcssga.org

**Next parent workshop coming soon!**  
Visit the Parent Resource Center or see the next newsletter for more information.

### Burnett Elementary School Parent Resource Center
8277 Connally Drive, Douglasville, GA 30134  
(770) 651-3500  bues.dcssga.org

**Writing Expo (VIRTUAL)**  
Tuesday, December 8, 2020 at 5:30 PM  
Families will view the student’s writing, gain insight on how to help their child at home, and celebrate the progress that has been made.

### Chestnut Log Middle School Parent Resource Center
2544 Pope Road, Douglasville, GA 30135  
(770) 651-5100  clms.dcssga.org

**Homework/Study Skills (VIRTUAL)**  
Tuesday, November 17, 2020 at 6:00 PM  
The Homework and Study Skills workshop will provide and equip students and parents with the tools and strategies needed for academic success.

### Eastside Elementary School Parent Resource Center
8266 Connally Drive, Douglasville, GA 30134  
(770) 651-3800  eses.dcssga.org

**Writing for Success! (VIRTUAL)**  
Wednesday, November 18, 2020 at 5:30 PM  
Families will participate in writing activities designed to gain an understanding of academic writing strategies.

### Factory Shoals Elementary School Parent Resource Center
2375 Mount Vernon Road, Lithia Springs, GA 30122  
(770) 651-3900  fses.dcssga.org

**Next parent workshop coming soon!**  
Visit the Parent Resource Center or see the next newsletter for more information.

### Lithia Springs Elementary School Parent Resource Center
6946 Florence Drive, Lithia Springs, GA 30122  
(770) 651-4100  lses.dcssga.org

**Next parent workshop coming soon!**  
Visit the Parent Resource Center or see the next newsletter for more information.

### North Douglas Elementary School Parent Resource Center
1630 Dorris Road, Douglasville, GA 30134  
(770) 651-4800  ndes.dcssga.org

**Reading and Math—Ready, Set, GO! (VIRTUAL)**  
Thursday, November 5, 2020 at 6:00 PM  
North Douglas families will experience our Reading and Envision Math programs.

### Stewart Middle School Parent Resource Center
8138 Malone Street, Douglasville, GA 30134  
(770) 651-5400  sms.dcssga.org

**Literacy Night (VIRTUAL)**  
Wednesday, November 18, 2020 at 6:00 PM  
Join us to learn more about literacy and the importance of reading in middle school.

### Sweetwater Elementary School Parent Resource Center
2505 East County Line Road, Lithia Springs, GA 30122  
(770) 651-4600  swes.dcssga.org

**Social Studies Night (VIRTUAL)**  
Tuesday, December 15, 2020 at 6:00 PM  
Children will participate in games and activities that are based on the essential knowledge required at each grade level to meet the Georgia Performance Standards for Social studies.

### Turner Middle School Parent Resource Center
7101 Turner Drive, Lithia Springs, GA 30122  
(770) 651-5500  tms.dcssga.org

**STEM/Math Family Movie Night (VIRTUAL)**  
Thursday, November 12, 2020 at 6:00 PM  
Our STEM/Math Carnival will support different mathematical areas through games and activities. Our aim is to focus on basic math and logical concepts through entertaining and engaging families/students/teachers in an inviting atmosphere.

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If you need resources to help your child learn at home, contact your child’s school. There may be resources available in the Parent Resource Center!