

Beginning of the School Year Toolkit

A beginning of the school year “toolkit” can serve as a way to ensure teachers collect all necessary information from families right away. It can include many different elements including welcome letters, surveys, and other activities for families to complete. It’s important to make it clear to families that you value them immensely, and that gathering this information will help you best communicate with them and support their child.

Possible elements to include:

- Introductory phone call
- Home visit
- Welcome letter
- First Day of School letter
- Parent questionnaire
- Student questionnaire
- Family hopes & dreams sheet
- Home visit interest form
- Home language form
- Other documents/forms that are helpful for your class

Timeline:

- Before school begins: call all families to introduce yourself, set up a home visit if you feel comfortable, send welcome letter
- First day of school: Send home first day letter, parent survey and student survey
- End of first week of school: Send home any other forms or surveys
- Second week of school: Send home family hopes & dreams sheet

Teachers:

- Make it a homework assignment for students to complete their survey and turn in a completed survey from their parent
- Be concise and clear in all forms and surveys sent home
- Use what makes sense for you, your families, and your classroom! There is no perfect recipe for a universal beginning of the school year “toolkit.”

School Leaders:

- Support teachers by setting aside time for them to make welcome phone calls during professional development week
- Recognize teachers for completing home visits and starting to establish relationships with families at the very beginning of the school year
- Allow ‘expert’ teachers to provide models and/or lead workshops during PD sessions on ways to connect with families at the beginning of the school year

Please see documents in folder for sample elements of a beginning of the school year toolkit.
