

Encouraging Notes Facilitator's Guide

Audience

Intended for family members and staff.

Purpose

Encouraging Notes provides an opportunity for families, a favorite staff member or other trusted adult to write a note of encouragement to a student who is preparing to take an important assessment.

Logistics

It is important to plan ahead and have a strategy in place to collect a note for EVERY student taking the assessment.

- Identify the testing event encouraging notes will be collected for.
- Determine when the encouraging note will be given to students (i.e., math assessment, reading assessment, etc) and gather up to date class lists.
 - It is probably not realistic to collect a note for every student more than once.
- Plan how and when to distribute the blank notes to families. Many schools set up a station during parent-teacher conferences or at another pre-assessment event. By collecting notes on-site, there is a greater chance for participation and materials and postage costs can be kept at a minimum.
 - Set up the station in a high-traffic location, usually near the main entrance.
 - Have staff members remind families to visit the table before they leave.
 - Use volunteers, other staff and interpreters to assist at the table.
 - If you cannot secure an interpreter for the table, make sure you have instructions for the encouraging notes translated and available at the table.
- Notify school staff about the encouraging note logistics plan, due dates, expectations, delivery of notes, etc.
- Ensure that EVERY student taking that assessment receives an encouraging note.
 - Many times it may be necessary for school staff to write an encouraging note to a student when a note from the family cannot be obtained.

Materials

For on-site collection

- Tables and chairs
- Plenty of pens
- Postcards, stationary (Dollar stores have a nice collection of inexpensive stationary.)
- Envelopes for each letter
- Envelope labels with student names and the name of the teacher who will be distributing the encouraging note.
- Up-to-date class list to use to check off student names as letters are collected
- List of encouraging note phrase ideas, including translations. This resource is available on the Family Engagement portal under the Assessments tab.
- Collection box for notes



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Encouraging Note Collection

This information should be provided to the staff members or volunteers who cover the table during Parent-Teacher Conferences or other event where the encouraging notes will be collected. Feel free to change the information to fit your schools needs.

Helpful hints for collecting encouraging notes

- Make sure tables and chairs are set up in a high-traffic location.
- Welcome families and ask the student to kindly step aside for a moment. (If possible, we want to keep the notes a secret.)
- Briefly explain that the notes are being collected for every student and will be distributed prior to the assessment.
- Ask that they write a few encouraging words on the provided stationary/postcard for their student.
- Have the list of encouraging note phrase ideas at the table. *This resource is available on the Family Engagement portal under the Assessments tab.*
- When the family member has completed their note, use a pre-printed label with the student's name and teacher OR write the student's name and teacher on the outside of the envelope.
- Thank the family member for their time.
- Check off the name of the student on the provided class list.
- Place the completed note/envelope in the collection box.

Additional Resources

These resources are available on the Family Engagement portal under the Assessments tab.

- Help your student succeed – Encouraging Notes Phrase Ideas
- Kansas State Assessment Schedule flyer
- Encouraging note stationary/postcard samples

