

# COVID-19 Personalized Phone Calls Home

## Denver Public Schools

### Denver, CO



In Denver Public Schools (DPS), the office of Family and Community Engagement (FACE) fosters a school community that is educated, engaged, and empowered to share the responsibility in creating thriving schools where Every Child Succeeds.

As COVID-19 emerged through our DPS communities, the district wanted to provide additional support. Like many districts, staff began to send surveys to families about how the district and schools could better assist during this time as well as provide food and technology for students. School-based staff made an extra effort to call, text, or email families to see if they needed any further support. At times, however, there was still no response or schools did not have the capacity to do this outreach. Common themes from these surveys and data from school staff led to the realization that schools needed the extra capacity to connect families directly to resources as well as to make additional efforts to attempt to reach families who were not engaging in remote learning.

In the midst of the pandemic, DPS Superintendent Susana Cordova and the FACE office led and assisted in completing individualized calls from central office staff to make sure that families understood that as a district we are here to connect and provide any needed resources to them. The Assessment, Reporting and Data Support and Impact Office provided family contact information from schools who sent data about who they reached, who they were not able to reach, and those that needed the extra level of engagement. FACE staff created a google form where staff members would fill out information of all families contacted and what resources were requested from each of the families. In each call, central office staff made sure that families understood what resources were available internally and externally, connected them if requested, and reiterated to families to not hesitate to call back in the future if they are in need of any resources.

As FACE staff continue to call families individually, families express gratitude and shock that district staff are calling to check on their wellbeing. In these calls, many families say they appreciate having the opportunity to talk to someone about how they are feeling or asking questions not related to education. Some family members have also shared some of their hardships on how they are struggling to make ends meet. Many of the families continue to ask what next year will look like. The FACE staff understand that a lot of these questions are still up in the air, but it is their duty to make sure all families feel supported and heard.

A FACE staff member shares: “As we continue walking families through these unprecedented times, it is very critical for us to continue open lines of communication and a deep foundation in collaboration across DPS departments, educators, and families to understand the current realities of our community. We understand that families engage in different and meaningful ways which is why we are documenting all of the feedback we are receiving from families and providing it to district leadership. As the FACE department, we hope that these personalized engagement calls help us bridge that connection between school and home for the student’s future success!”