

Family Constituency Services

Denver Public Schools

Denver, CO



COLORADO
Department of Education

Denver Public Schools works to create strong family-school relationships utilizing open communication through their Family Constituency Services. This encourages families to call in to the district with questions or concerns that they may have. The process encourages healthy dialogue and the development of a supportive experience within the schools.

Family Constituency Services are provided on three levels. Tier 1 calls are considered inquiries that answer general district questions, can be transferred easily, or that clarify policies. Tier 2 calls are concerns or requests that require more intensive assistance. In these cases, the calls are assigned to specialists who gather additional information, and who then often facilitate a meeting between the caller and appropriate school leaders. In cases where a clear resolution isn't arrived at, a "Mediation" meeting can be scheduled to offer an opportunity for families and school leaders to rebuild relationships or reestablish communication. Tier 3 calls occur when a Specialist isn't able to satisfy the caller's needs or the school leader is not responsive, and must be escalated to the Senior Manager of Family Constituency Services or an Instructional Superintendent.

The district documents all interactions so that proactive measures can be taken to address any repeated questions or concerns, and also gives data necessary to make recommendations to leadership. The data can also be used to inform professional development, trainings, and workshops.

Having these open lines of communication ensure that families have a better understanding of policies and initiatives, and thus are able to more effectively support student achievement. Denver Public Schools believes that family and community partnering is critical to the success of every student and that students with families that are engaged are more likely to succeed academically.

Denver Public Schools has several recommendations for other districts that are considering this type of resource. They believe it is important to have a staff that is skilled in conflict management with a focus on equity and cultural responsiveness. Maintaining strong partnerships with other departments will help to access information quickly and efficiently, and educating other leaders about the service is also important.