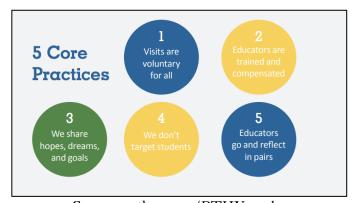
Teacher Home Visit Project—A Model for Home Visits

Benefits and Purposes of Home Visits

- o Breaking down barriers and misconceptions (possibly implicit biases)
 - Urban schools—teachers often do not live and work in communities where they teach
- Allaying suspicions of teachers by families
- Empowering parents
 - Turns the table—the teachers are the outsiders now
 - Parents shift to seeing themselves as assets rather than outsiders—valued players in their children's education
- o Broadening teachers' ideas of parent involvement
- o Teachers and parents supporting each other's efforts

Must Do's [non-negotiables from the standpoint of the THVP]

- o Participation is <u>voluntary</u> [teachers, staff members, families]
- Teachers and staff members are trained/compensated [Title 1 parent engagement mandate; foundation funding for seed money]
- o Goal of the visit is relationship-building
 - Not about attendance or struggles in school
 - o Build a relationship with the families. Positive; supportive.
 - No paperwork!! [CPS, police write notes. Families may be wary of note-taking by outsiders] Take any notes afterward
- Visit in pairs [liability/safety, translator, one active listener and one person taking the lead; both ought to be trained, but sometimes an apprentice model; reflect together afterward]
- NOT targeted at low-performing students or those with behavior challenges—visit everyone [long-lasting, sustainable, edifying]



Source: pthvp.org/PTHVworks

The Visit:

- Beforehand
 - O Phone call to set the appointment "I'm _____'s teacher. Would like to come visit. I am a better teacher when I know families. May I come by?"
 - who am I, what's the purpose, who's coming with me, how long will I be there, make it clear that you are not targeting certain students
 - stay positive and allow for options in addition to meeting in the home (like a nearby park or community center; attending the child's activity)
 - Suggest times, set a date and time, say that you'll call the day before to confirm (and then make sure that you do!)
- > During—Listening and Learning
 - o Introductions and purpose of the visit (to build the relationship and learn from the family—not about academics, per se)
 - Ask open-ended questions (e.g. What does the family do for fun? What was schooling like for the parents? What are some family traditions? . . .)
 - o What questions do you have for me?
 - How best to contact this year (in both directions)?
 - o Invitation to an upcoming event at the school or in the classroom

Barriers

- language
 - There are generally linguistic brokers in families—ask if there is. Try not to use the student him/herself. InterpreTalk or Google Translate can help.
- o fears
 - personal safety
 - >20 years, many many thousands of visits → never had someone harmed
 - if you're freaked out, gracefully bow out and reschedule in a neutral location
 - mandated reporting of danger to child—family is asking for help! [you've called and asked, you've confirmed, they've invited you in]
 - dogs, smoke, tv
 - FEAR FROM PARENTS: You are coming to take their children away.
- o cultural barriers
 - nothing teaches more than going to sit in someone's living room and having a conversation
- o assumptions
 - schools <u>and</u> families often make judgments that are deep [race, SES, and gender] and **negative**; rarely get challenged