



EnlightenMEnt Initiative

Program Name – EnlightenMEnt Initiative

Description of program

The EnlightenMEnt Initiative designates local churches as a resource for enlightenment and education. By this designation, the leader clearly asserts the ministry's commitment to education as a priority in the body – local and neighborhood. The ministry's Education point of contact (POC) will initiate relationships with selected education entities in the local church proximal community. These may include: the school system, education agencies, colleges, and universities, Duke TIP program, National Honor Society, to name a few. With leader support and approval, the POC will set aside space to reserve and display education material important to enlighten members. This may include: practice testing materials (SAT, ACT, FCAT/PARCC, etc), Financial Aid and Scholarship information, hands-on manipulatives, and reading books for various Lexile levels (reading levels).

Benefits of program

EnlightenMEnt Initiative is an avenue for local churches to build partnerships with local schools, community, families and parents, in particular. Through the EnlightenMEnt Initiative benefits are to:

- Establish access and dialogue with the community by providing families a one-on-one opportunity to gain answers to their questions regarding education opportunity and options
- Provide readiness and preparation for college entrance exams and standardized tests
- Help students develop the life-long skills and resources needed to be productive citizens
- Build a more positive community with the local church as a relevant entity for maximal access to education services
- Involve members of the home environment in student learning and support for the learner
- Ensure up-to-date changes are available to the community
- Empower families!

Preparation:

1. Conduct an Assessment Need Survey within the local church for input of what information families may find beneficial.
2. Gather resources from the local schools such as, books, reading strategy information, math fluency, handouts, manipulatives, etc.

3. Contact local colleges for financial aid and scholarship information.
3. Develop a schedule/rotation of teacher volunteers to ensure consistent availability is present.
4. Educational point of contact will network with local schools for collaboration, to include volunteerism.

Implementation Steps for EnlightenMEnt

1. Select a contact/lead person in your church and establish a group who will facilitate the process and act as your EnlightenMEnt point of contact (POC).
2. Determine where resources for the families will be placed in your facility.
3. Lead person will contact local schools for resources, and then gather and organize the resources based on grade levels. (When contacting the schools ask for the Curriculum Resource Teacher (CRT), Parent Resource Liaison, and or Parental Involvement Coordinator) Typically your Title I Schools or identified schools (based on economic status considering individual state) have a designated contact person. Your most helpful resource for EnlightenMEnt will be your child care teachers, tutors, and faculty who have resources to donate such as books, manipulatives, math fluency, handouts, and reading strategies. Also, don't hesitate to ask school/faculty for any materials they have that are simply not being used.
4. Develop a schedule designating when the EnlightenMEnt *center* is available to the public. Determine if it will be open weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, etc., and post the dates along with times/hours of operation.
5. As your EnlightenMEnt *center* begins to grow, and you recruit willing workers, expand your services by providing direct assistance to parents/guardians (listening, problem-solving, resource identification and referrals). Also, start offering information sessions for parents, school staff and community, and promote parent/professional partnerships.
6. If you are unsuccessful in gathering resources from the schools, contact local businesses and inquire by letter using your church letterhead [with the approval of your pastor] to ask those businesses to partner with the local church in its Education Initiative by providing donations. Make sure that the letter clearly states that the EnlightenMEnt *center* is an Education Initiative, created to provide the types of resources to families that will ultimately increase student achievement in your local community.

Please direct your questions to:

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