



2020 Family Engagement Lab Teacher Pilot Grant Program

Deadline: February 24, 2020

Pilot Grant Description:

Family Engagement Lab (FEL) is offering an exciting opportunity for K-5 ELA educators interested in improving equitable outcomes for students by *igniting the power of families to get their children excited about learning.*

FEL is seeking K-5 ELA teachers in Jefferson and Orleans Parishes to pilot FASTalk in their classroom for 8 weeks. Your participation will not only benefit students and families. You will help us identify how FASTalk can effectively enhance family engagement for diverse families, with an emphasis on high-need students (Economically Disadvantaged, English Learner, and Special Education).

The pilot period is from Feb 28 - May 22. Participants of the pilot grant will be asked to use FASTalk in their class for 8 weeks, test future features and enhancements, and share feedback. Enrolled families will receive weekly ELA curriculum-aligned text messages, *in their preferred language*, containing easy and simple strategies to help support literacy skills at home.

The estimated time commitment for participating teachers is 3-5 hours in total. Participating teachers will receive during the pilot:

- Up to \$125 in stipends
- Access to FASTalk, an evidence-based family engagement tool, at no cost
- Professional development on family engagement
- Dedicated implementation support throughout the pilot

The findings of this pilot will be used to inform scalability, future product enhancements, and best practices to build teachers' capacity and improve student achievement through family engagement with FASTalk.

This pilot grant has been made possible by the generous support of Baptist Community Ministries.

Who is Eligible

ELA K-5 teachers in Jefferson and Orleans Parish in Louisiana are eligible to apply. Applicants should be full-time classroom teachers at the time of application submission and for the length of the pilot program.

Pilot Program Timeline & Commitment

The classroom community, including teachers, families, and school leaders, will be asked to actively participate in the 14-week pilot program, with 8 weeks of FASTalk messages, with the following responsibilities:

Application Due Date	Monday Feb 24, 2020 5PM Central	Teachers: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Submit application APPLICATION FORM (<15 minutes)
Award notification	On or before Wednesday, Feb 26, 2020	Upon approval of the application by FEL, applicants will be notified by email and will be asked to provide ELA curriculum pacing information. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teachers submit ELA curriculum pacing information (e.g. weekly lesson plan) to hannah@familyengagementlab.org or upload to Dropbox
Pilot program Kickoff/ Training Webinar	Friday Feb 28, 2020 4 - 5PM Central	In this 1-hour webinar, all participating teachers will receive a fun, informational session on improving academic achievement through family engagement. This engaging session will cover an overview of FEL's evidence-based FASTalk tool and how it can bridge the school-home link with your students' families. Teachers will also receive recruitment resources and information to share with families.
Family Recruitment	Feb 28, 2020 - March 13, 2020	Teachers will distribute and collect invitational flyers to recruit >50% of students' families to enroll in FASTalk. Additional compensation will be provided for recruiting >75% of the class to enroll in FASTalk.
Rostering	By Friday, March 13, 2020	Teachers will provide FASTalk team with a spreadsheet containing student contact information for consented families: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Student Name- Student Grade- Parent/Caregiver Name

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parent/Caregiver phone number - Parent/Caregiver preferred language <p>Teachers may manually enter the student contact information into their FASTalk.org Teacher account, or securely upload the spreadsheet to the Dropbox folder.</p>
Implementation	8 Weeks of FASTalk messages: March 23, 2020 May 15, 2020	<p>The FASTalk team pre-configures class rosters and loads pre-scheduled ELA text messages to go out to families.</p> <p>Families will be asked via text to complete a very brief, pre-pilot online survey during the first week of implementation</p> <p>Teachers will provide mid-pilot feedback via brief online surveys.</p>
Close out	May 15, 2020- May 22, 2020	<p>Teachers and families will provide post-pilot feedback via brief online surveys.</p> <p>Teachers will share their experience on social media (Facebook, Twitter).</p> <p>Teachers may be invited to participate in an additional 15-minute phone interview for detailed feedback (additional compensation will be provided).</p>

Teacher Requirements

Stipends will be awarded in the amount of up to \$125 over the pilot grant. Stipends are to be used for the classroom as an Amazon gift card, or for family engagement efforts (e.g. end of the year family pizza party). Applicants must be willing to share user feedback with FEL team and committed to participating in the following pilot program requirements

- Attend 1 hour FASTalk teacher training webinar (live or recorded) (\$20)
- Complete initial intake survey, mid- and post- program surveys (\$20)
- Recruit >50% of students' families to receive FASTalk text messages (\$50)
- (Optional) Recruit >75% of students' families to receive FASTalk text messages (\$25)
- Share your experience on social media (Facebook, Twitter)
- (Optional) 15-minute phone interview (\$10)

Application

In order to apply, interested candidates must complete the following by **5PM Central Time on Monday, February 24th**:

- Complete this [APPLICATION FORM](#) (approximately 15 minutes)

Final selection of pilot grant program participants will be made by the FEL team. Applicants will be notified by email on or before **Wednesday, February 26th** if you have been accepted to participate in the pilot program.

Background:

Educators concerned with equity know that effective family engagement is critical to improving educational outcomes for underserved students. Research shows that students whose families are actively engaged in their learning are more likely to succeed. However, schools and teachers often struggle to engage all families.

Family Engagement Lab (FEL)'s mission is to help schools ignite the power of diverse families to support students' academic, social, and emotional success.

FASTalk is currently used across 15 Louisiana school systems. The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) recognizes FASTalk as an evidence-based solution to support high-quality curriculum adoption and student literacy outcomes through family engagement.

FASTalk has demonstrated positive impact on teachers, families, and students in underserved communities. In studies of Oakland, CA schools serving low-income and English Learner students, FASTalk helped **four times more** Kindergarteners who recognized less than 25% of their letters and sounds in the fall meet midyear literacy benchmarks. For K students whose parents did not share a common language with their child's teacher, grades improved by 1.6 to 2.8 more months.

How FASTalk Works:

Here is an overview of FASTalk's features:

- Weekly parent-child simple and fun learning activities aligned to ELA curriculum
- Easy for teachers: pre-scheduled texts that are automatically sent
- FASTalk does not use the teacher's cell phone number
- Accessible for families: translated messages over SMS (no smartphone needed)
- Support for 100+ languages
- Chat feature for entire class or individual parents

Watch this short video to see how FASTalk works for teachers and families:

<https://vimeo.com/343734801>

Contact: Please contact Hannah Lee, Sr. Project Manager (hannah@familyengagementlab.org) if you have any questions about this opportunity.