

Investing in Social Infrastructure: **Families And Schools Together (FAST)** and the Economic Stimulus Package

- We propose a **\$1 billion investment in the Families And Schools Together (FAST) program** as part of the economic stimulus package. This funding would directly **generate 22,000 jobs across 1000 schools and serves 100,000 families with 1.2 million family members.**
- Evaluations of 1900 FAST implementations across 48 states and 8 countries have found that **FAST significantly increases parent involvement in schools; improves child school performance and reduces delinquency**; increases social capital among parents; and leads to improved child-parent and student-teacher interaction by building protective factors for children and families.
- FAST can absorb funding and scale up rapidly through **its existing network of 300 certified FAST trainers nationwide.** This network can train staff and launch new FAST sites at a rate of 125 per quarter, meaning that all 1000 schools can be active within two years of the initiative's launch.
- At its heart, **FAST is based on the principle that every parent loves their child.** FAST works to empower parents to help their children succeed by enabling positive interactions with their children, building relationships with other parents, and connecting parents to the broader community through local schools.
- An evidence-based program, FAST brings multi-family groups to structured weekly gatherings at schools in a two-month program that ends with a graduation ceremony. **Unusually high among family-based programs, FAST has a retention rate of 80%**—across diverse sites including inner-city, suburban, and rural schools, Indian reservations, and among immigrant populations and in multiple languages.
- FAST has been **cited as an evidence-based model by independent federal bodies** and peer-review organizations including the DHHS Center for Mental Health Services; DOJ's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; the Harvard School of Education; the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention; and the U.S. Department of Education. FAST is the subject of a large body of peer-reviewed published social science research documenting its statistically significant impact on children, parents, and schools.

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