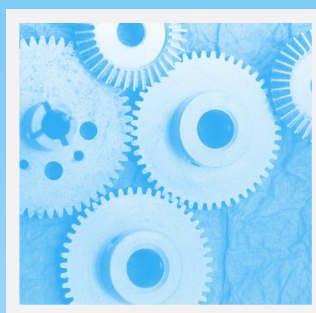


Draft
Illinois State Board of Education
Family Engagement Framework
A Guide for Illinois School Districts, Schools and Families



This guide brings together research, best practices, and program requirements and can be a resource for district/school leaders and families to use in planning, implementing, and evaluating family engagement practices that directly improve student outcomes.



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Acknowledgements

[Quick Links for Family Engagement Resources](#)

ISBE Family Engagement

English Language Learning

Early Childhood Education

Learning Supports

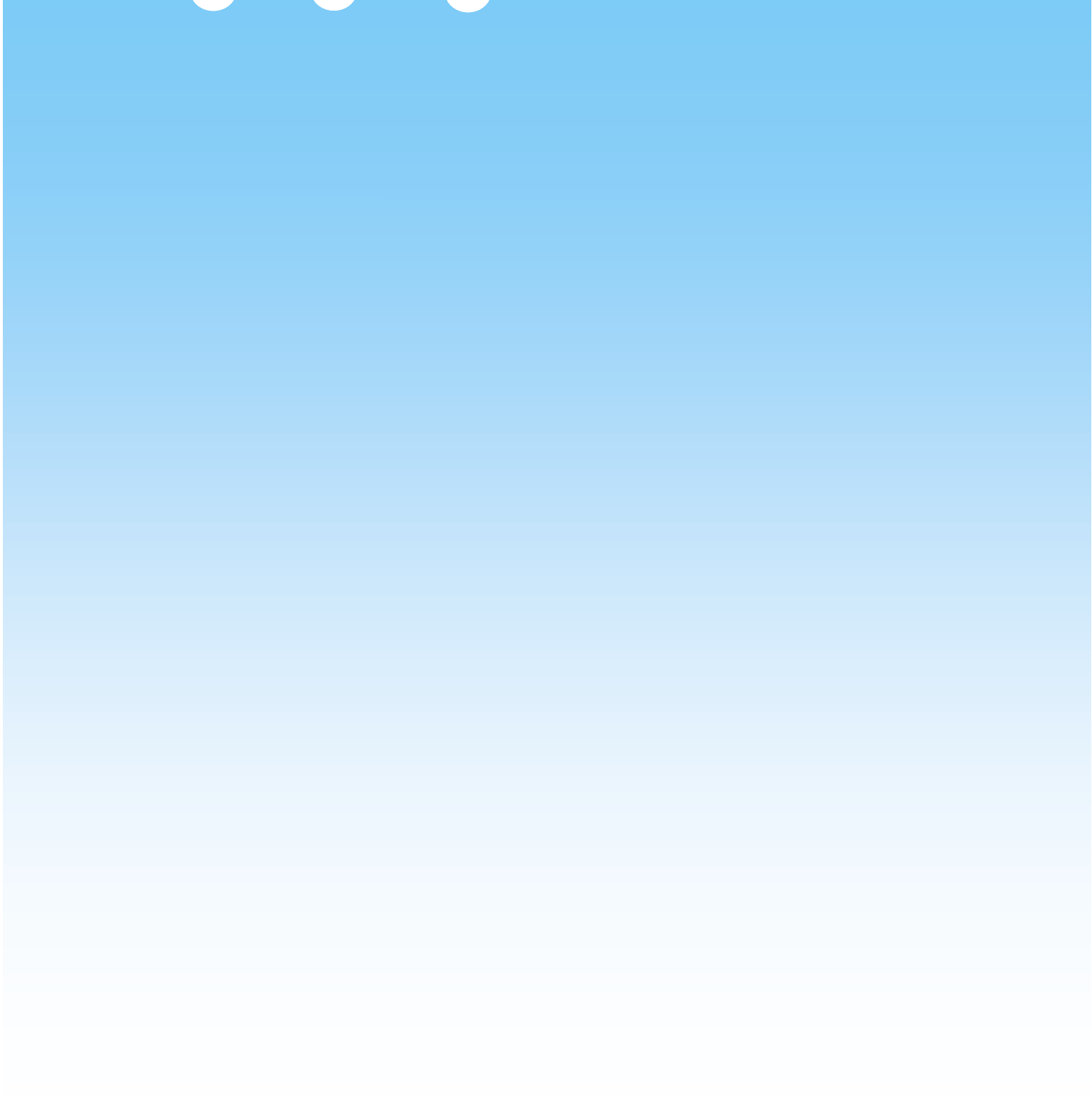
Special Education and Support
Services Division

Innovation and Improvement



The Family Engagement Framework Guide (Guide) was developed by an ISBE cross-divisional team and in partnership with the American Institutes for Research as well as the Academic Development Institute. The development of this guide was a collaborative effort to bring together research, best practices, legislative requirements and provide resources that integrate family engagement into the school improvement process. This tool is for school districts and schools to use in developing and expanding school-family partnerships to support student learning and healthy development.

Please share the Family Engagement Framework Guide with school board members, parent involvement coordinators, school administrators, coaches, families, and community partners to strengthen family engagement and build relationships among critical partners in the education of students.



Introduction

Purpose

The Family Engagement Framework Guide (Guide) was developed by an ISBE cross-divisional team and in partnership with the American Institutes for Research as well as the Academic Development Institute. The development of this guide was a collaborative effort to bring together research, best practices, legislative requirements and provide resources that integrate family engagement into the school improvement process. This tool is for school districts and schools to use in developing and expanding school-family partnerships to support student learning and healthy development.

Development Process

In 2009, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) convened a strategic planning meeting that led to the development of an internal committee charged with creating a research-based family engagement framework that was linked to the Eight Essential of Continuous School Improvement. The committee developed a multi-tiered crosswalk that examined the following:

- current research
- national models for family engagement, that included the National PTA and USDE framework for school/family partnerships
- federal and state requirements
- state assessment tools including the Five Essentials and Indicator 8 NCSEAM Survey
- Illinois Interactive Report Card family engagement indicators
- current agency practices, policies, and goals

The Illinois State Board of Education acknowledges that there are a number of quality family engagement frameworks and standards used across the nation. ISBE found strengths in many of these tools but found a need to expand and build upon the work, emphasizing evidence based practices that are **systemic, integrated, and sustainable**.

The synthesis of the research was a significant driver in the development of the family engagement principles. The principles provide the foundation for the required work needed to engage families in meaningful ways. The committee also worked to ensure that the framework connected to existing systems. Research clearly shows that when families, communities, and schools partner to build educational and

support systems for children, those systems are stronger and more effective.

Framework Components

Components of the Guide Include:

- Family Engagement Framework Overview
- Research Review
- Family Engagement Standards
- Integrating Family Engagement Matrix
- Legislative Requirements/References
- Summary, Future Implications and Field Notes

Overview

The overview provides a snapshot of the Framework and how districts and schools can engage families in supporting learning and healthy development. The overview begins with a visionary paragraph that describes family engagement and highlights that family engagement is not solely about activities but encompasses systems, practices, and policies that support family engagement efforts **for the purpose of improving student learning and healthy development**. Included in the overview is an introduction to why family engagement is important, where it takes place, and how some of the more significant evidence-based practices are organized under the following themes or principles: Developing a Family Engagement System, Building a Welcoming Environment, Enhancing Communication, and Including Parents in Decision-Making. The overview also highlights that the evidence based practices are ongoing, not hierarchical, and can overlap with other principles.

Research Review

ISBE spent a significant amount of time reviewing, analyzing, and synthesizing research on family engagement, giving more weight to more rigorous studies that demonstrated a statistically positive relationship between the practices and student outcomes. During the review process, it became apparent that there were some overarching themes or principles in which family engagement could be organized. The principles found to have more significant bodies of evidence include: Developing a Family Engagement System, Building a Welcoming and Supportive Environment, Enhancing Communication, and Including Parents in Decision Making. These became the foundation for the Framework.

Family Engagement Standards of Effective Practice

This component of the Guide provides more specific guidance to educators, families and communities as they plan, implement, and evaluate family engagement strategies. The best practices outlined are organized under the 4 principles and are more global in nature and all encompassing vs. specific to a certain population or federal/state requirement. The structure is as follows:

1. Principle (global)
 - 1A Standard (more specific)
 - 1A1 Descriptor (even greater specificity, however, not all standards have them)

Although these Standards of Effective Practice are helpful in providing guidance on how to engage families, they do not adequately address what content districts/schools should engage families around. The Integrating Family Engagement Matrix component brings together all of these pieces.

Integrating Family Engagement Matrix

The Integrating Family Engagement Matrix attempts to integrate family engagement best practices and legislative requirements with the work that is occurring across all aspects of building effective schools and as part of the continuous improvement process. This document specifically provides guiding questions for districts/schools to consider as they jointly plan, implement, and evaluate family engagement strategies across each of the 8 Essential Elements (Comprehensive Planning, Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, Leadership, Conditions for Learning, Professional Development, and Family and Community).

Legislative Requirements/References

There are a number of legislative requirements in place through Title I, Title III, IDEA, and the IL School Code. The Legislative Requirements/References component expands upon the required family engagement activities outlined in the Integrating Family Engagement Matrix component of the Guide. The Legislative Requirements are organized by the 8 Essential Elements and the citations for the specific laws and regulations follow each requirement. It is important to note that the requirements highlighted in the Guide are not all inclusive and the actual pieces of legislation should be referenced.

Summary, Future Implications and Field Notes

This component of the Guide stresses the importance of integrating family engagement with the continuous improvement process to ensure the work is goal-directed, positive, culturally responsive, respectful, systemic and comprehensive. In addition, this section points out that there are multiple pathways for engaging families and that regardless of the pathway chosen, activities should fit the unique context of the community. This component goes on to highlight how two different communities are approaching family engagement.

Next Steps

This guide is a foundational resource that can help districts, schools and communities with: developing common language for family engagement; improving coordination within systems, communities, districts, and schools; and strengthening capacity to leverage resources and partnerships. While the Illinois State Board of Education is excited to release the Family Engagement Framework Guide, this is only an initial step to improving family and school partnerships across the state of Illinois. To begin with, ISBE is in the process of identifying communication channels for dissemination of materials and developing a continuous feedback loop so that the field can provide input related to the Framework and professional development needs. ISBE also recognizes that in order to successfully support districts/schools with their efforts, integration of the Framework into existing systems and structures, including the Statewide System of Support, is essential. As additional materials and resources become available, ISBE will post them on their website and ensure that the field is informed.

Family Engagement Framework Overview

What is family engagement?

It is widely acknowledged that learning begins at birth and takes place in the home, school, and community. Meaningful family engagement is based on the premise that parents, educators, and community members share responsibility for the academic, physical, social, emotional, and behavioral development of youth. Family engagement is fostered through a deliberate process that is embraced throughout the school. It empowers adults to jointly support student growth, addresses any barriers to learning, and ensures college and career readiness. Foremost, effective family engagement systems, policies and practices are mindful of diverse school-communities that are rich in language, culture, and school experiences. They are responsive to student and family needs.

Why do we engage families?

The Illinois State Board of Education works to ensure that every student is prepared to succeed in careers and postsecondary education. Likewise, parents and communities also share the same desires for their children. When families, schools and communities partner in promoting learning and healthy development for all children, schools thrive and student outcomes increase. Research indicates that when parents are engaged with their children's education, whether in school or at home, students do better academically. Regardless of socio-economic background, students with involved parents are more likely to earn high grades and test scores, enroll in higher level programs, attend school regularly, show improved behavior, and develop better social skills (Henderson & Mapp, 2002).

For more research, see the Family Engagement Research Reviews beginning on page 7

¹ The term "parent" includes, in addition to a natural parent, a legal guardian or other person standing in *loco parentis* (such as a grandparent or stepparent with whom the child lives, or a person who is legally responsible for the child's welfare). [Section 9101(31), ESEA.]

Where do partnerships with families happen?

Integrating family engagement efforts with learning and healthy development is important to achieving positive student outcomes. Multiple opportunities exist for districts and schools to partner with families which include but are not limited to:

- promoting academic, physical, social, emotional, behavioral development and a positive school climate;
- engaging and re-engaging learners; and
- addressing barriers to learning.

Family engagement efforts are integrated and/or supported by the 8 Essential Elements for Effective Education. The elements provide a framework for building successful school systems and implementing a continuous school improvement process. The 8 Essential Elements adopted by ISBE's Statewide System of Support include: Comprehensive Planning, Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, Leadership, Conditions for Learning, Professional Development, and Family and Community. Families are engaged in activities related to:

- At-home learning opportunities
- Promoting family assets
- State, district, school, and classroom level opportunities
- Individual educational programming

To learn more, see Integrating Family Engagement Matrix beginning on page 23

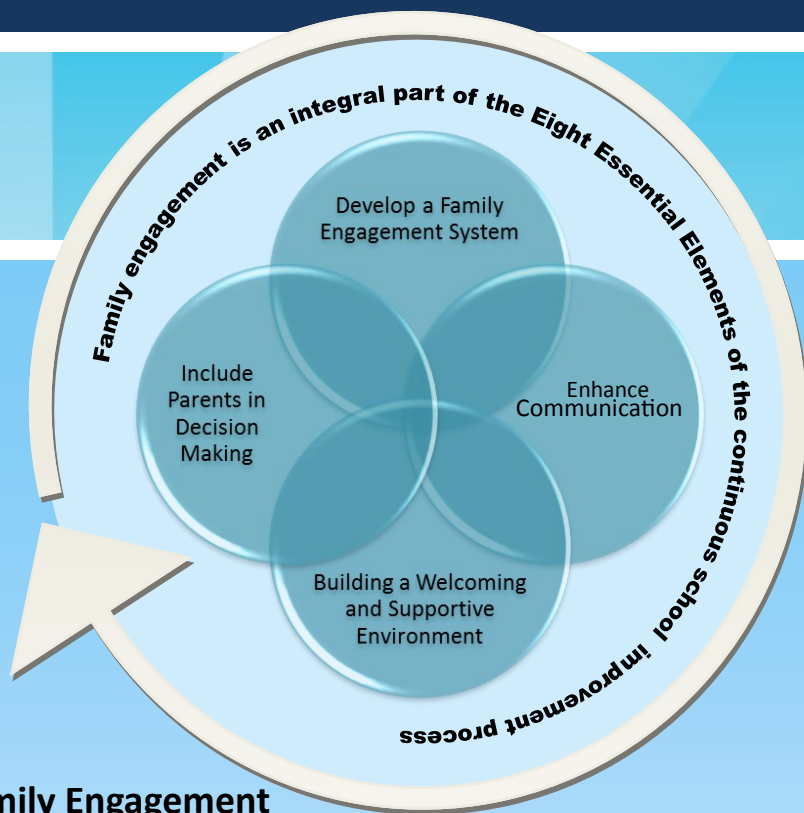
How to engage families

Families are engaged by developing family engagement systems, building welcoming and supportive environments, enhancing communication with parents, and including parents¹ in decision making. Effective family engagement efforts occur on an ongoing basis and are embedded in school policies and practices.

For more information, see the next page as well as the Family Engagement Standards of Effective Practice beginning on page 17

How to engage families cont.

Districts and schools partner with families by developing family engagement systems, building welcoming and supportive environments, enhancing communication and including parents in decision making. The ways families are engaged occur on a regular basis and are seen across the 8 Essential Elements of effective education. When families, communities, and schools partner to build educational and support systems for children, those systems are stronger and more effective.



Principles for Family Engagement

Develop a Family Engagement System

Standards Summary:

- Includes a shared vision that drives policies and practices
- Connects to district and school improvement process
- Coordinates and integrates into existing structures and processes
- Families' socio-cultural, linguistic, and educational needs are incorporated into improvement plans
- Provides support and guidance from leaders from development to implementation
- Allocates/reallocates resources
- Collects and utilizes data
- Builds capacity
- Partners with families
- Collaborates with community organizations

Build a Welcoming and Supportive Environment

Standards Summary:

- Acknowledges a shared responsibility for learning and healthy development of students
- Establishes relational trust
- Reaches out to families to support student learning and healthy development
- Responds to student and family needs
- Effectively engages families from diverse backgrounds
- Builds on family assets (*strength-based*)
- Shares student accomplishments with his/her family

Enhance Communication

Standards Summary:

- Promotes ongoing meaningful two-way exchange of information
- Ensures communication is clear and constructive
- Commits to making sure communication is accessible to all and in the languages of families
- Provides various approaches in which communication is relayed to families
- Provides information pertaining to parental rights
- Communicates about how families can enhance learning and healthy development, including information about their students' and schools' progress
- Communicates district/school/classroom policies and practices

Include Parents in Decision Making

Standards Summary:

- Empowers parents to be involved
- Solicits input from families includes parents in the district/school continuous improvement process
- Jointly develops and reviews programming for families to support learning and healthy development
- Engages parents to participate in problem solving discussions related to their child

Research Review: Developing a Family Engagement System

Substantial research findings reinforce the need for education systems to encourage and support parental involvement. Research has repeatedly demonstrated the positive impact parent involvement, whether in school or at home, has on academic outcomes. Regardless of socio-economic background, students with involved parents are more likely to earn high grades and test scores, enroll in higher level programs, attend school regularly, show improved behavior, and develop better social skills (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). In addition, when people across multiple contexts (e.g., family and school) foster the cognitive, social, emotional, and behavioral competencies of children and adolescents, youth development and outcomes improve (Benson, et.al, 2003; and Cook, et.al, 2002).

Unfortunately, a number of districts and schools have approached family engagement in a random and piecemeal way, often times leading to family engagement efforts that are fragmented and marginalized, resulting in less than desirable outcomes. There is now emerging evidence that when districts and schools develop systemic structures that strategically encourage meaningful family and community engagement as an integral part of school improvement efforts, there is significant impact on student learning and how schools function (Blank, Berg, & Melaville, 2006; Bryk, et.al, 2010, and Marschall, 2006). Weiss et.al, concurs that family engagement should be **systemic, integrated, and sustained**. In order to achieve this, family engagement must be: a core component of educational goals; embedded into existing structures and processes to meet these goals; and operated with adequate resources to ensure that effective strategies can be implemented with fidelity and sustained (2010).

Commitment to Family Engagement

Paramount to a successful family engagement system is the district's and school's commitment to family engagement. A study of Department of Defense schools showed that a culture which fosters shared responsibility for all students and stakeholders and a "corporate commitment" to supporting families improves safety and well-being for all students. This study also revealed that the achievement gap among white students and students of color is lower among DoD schools than in the states (Smrekar, Gurthrie, Owens & Sims, 2001). Another study by Lopez, et.al, 2001, found that the primary

reason schools were successful in involving migrant families was that school personnel were individually and systemically committed to meeting the various needs of the families. Districts and schools can begin to express this commitment by jointly developing a vision/mission for family engagement that is shared with all stakeholders and drives policies and practices.

Leadership

Effective partnerships are created when district and school leadership set the tone and expectations for meaningful partnerships with families and support is provided through both policy and practice (Blank et al., 2006; Bryk et al., 2010; and Fege, 2006). Administrators could demonstrate this by: allocating and reallocating resources for family engagement efforts; ensuring family engagement policies are updated; embedding family engagement efforts into the district/school improvement process; finding ways to integrate family engagement efforts into existing systems, policies and practices; modeling positive interactions with families; and ensuring that programming is in place to build the capacity of staff and families to effectively partner with each other to improve student outcomes.

Capacity Building

Many administrators, teachers and pupil support personnel enter the education system with little to no training on how to engage families to further support student learning and healthy development. Likewise, families often find it difficult to partner with schools in a meaningful way for various reasons. Some of these reasons may relate to a limited understanding of: student/family expectations, how they can support student learning and healthy development, and how schools operate. Therefore, it is necessary to train school personnel and parents to increase their capacity to work together.

Core elements of a professional development system for family engagement include: standards; curriculum that advances skills, knowledge and attitudes; collaboration among various stakeholders; continuing professional development; and evaluation for learning and continuous improvement (Casper et.al, 2011). Researchers have also identified core implementation components that support practitioners, such

as educators, in high-fidelity behavior. These components (also called “implementation drivers”) include but are not limited to in-service training and ongoing coaching and consultation (Fixen & Blase, 1993). Professional development on family engagement should also adhere to these implementation components with a content focus on:

- Developing family engagement systems
- Building welcoming and supportive environments
- Enhancing communication with families
- Including parents in the decision making process

In addition, data should be utilized to determine professional development needs pertaining to family engagement and family engagement strategies should be incorporated into professional development opportunities across all areas of focus. Of particular importance is assessing cultural biases and developing professional development opportunities to address them. Biases, even unconscious ones, by educators can discourage families from participating and harm any existing partnerships between educators and families (Barajas & Ronnkvist, 2007; Fram, Miller-Cribbs, & Van Horn, 2007).

Families will also present capacity building needs related to engagement that should be addressed. Research has found that parents’ personal self-efficacy has a significant impact on whether or not they will engage in activities that support their children’s learning and healthy development (Eccles & Harold, 1996; Grolnick et al., 1997; Sheldon, 2002; Bandura et al., 1996; and Shumow & Lomax, 2002). Personal self-efficacy refers to a parent’s belief that he/she has the necessary knowledge and skill sets required by the activity as well as the belief that it will result in positive outcomes for his/her child.

Districts and school personnel can help build self-efficacy by:

- promoting family assets, including their cultural and linguistic backgrounds
- helping parents understand and interpret rules, laws, and policies related to their rights and responsibilities in their child(ren)’s education
- showing family members how they can support learning at home
- helping parents understand data and how it is used to inform instruction

Community Partnership

Community organizations can be a critical resource in supporting student learning and healthy development. A large body of research has demonstrated that community-based parent support programs, operated in a family-centered manner, increase parents’ self-efficacy and competence (Dunst, et.al, 2006; and Dunst, et.al, 2008). This research also indicates that community-based parent support programs can positively impact the social and emotional development of young children (Dunst and Trivette, 2005; and Layzer, et.al, 2001).

A number of community organizations and districts are increasingly partnering together to leverage their resources to address student learning and healthy development and promote family engagement. As a result of these efforts, families are more connected to both schools and these community organizations and efforts are more coordinated across multiple settings. Research is revealing that the community schools model, specifically, has increased family engagement and has improved student learning, attendance, behavior, and development (Coalition for Community Schools, 2009).

Accountability

According to Epstein, in order for family engagement efforts to have the greatest impact and to ensure sustainability, strategies for collecting and analyzing family engagement data must be part of the processes for continual and ongoing improvement (2007). Not only do district and school personnel need to have access to the data, but they also need to have the capacity to use family engagement data in a meaningful way. Likewise, research is starting to show that when district and school personnel help parents understand student and school-wide data in a way that leads to increased knowledge and informed action, family engagement increases and student outcomes improve (Taveras, et.al 2010).

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Research Review: Building a Welcoming Environment

Although many districts and schools recognize the importance of family engagement in supporting the learning and healthy development of students, many struggle with how to engage families. The saying “if you build it, they will come” does not ring true for many family engagement activities and it is not because parents do not care about their children’s education (Mapp, 2003; Delgado-Gaitan, 2004; Quiocho & Daoud, 2006).

So, why do families become engaged? One contributing factor is a welcoming and supportive environment. According to research by Hoover-Dempsey, et al. (2005), a welcoming environment is one of the most influential indicators of family engagement. Schools that cultivate relational trust, actively reach out to families, respond to family and student needs, and give attention to cultural-sensitivity (all components of a welcoming and supportive environment) have higher levels of family engagement (Bryk, et al., 2010, Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2001).

Relational Trust

Researchers have found that cultivating relational trust is essential to building a welcoming and supportive environment. In addition, relational trust is foundational for school professionals, parents, and community leaders to initiate and sustain efforts at building the essential supports for school improvement. When relational trust is present and school personnel feel supported, they feel safe to try new practices and reach out to parents (Bryk, et al., 2010). A longitudinal study of over 400 elementary schools in Chicago found that relational trust can be established through respectful interactions, personal regard for others, and the demonstration of competence in core role responsibilities and personal integrity. The following behaviors were present in schools with high levels of relational trust:

- genuine listening to what each person has to say and taking other people’s views into account in subsequent actions;
- when disagreements occur, opinions were respected;
- people extending themselves beyond the formal requirements of a job definition or a union contract;
- transparency;
- reaching out to others;
- competency in core role responsibilities; and
- follow through on commitments.

Outreach

Another key motivator to parents’ decisions to become involved is receiving invitations from teachers. Epstein and colleagues (Epstein, & Van Voorhis, 2001, Dauber & Epstein, 1993, Kohl, et al., 2002) found that teacher attitudes about parents and teacher invitations to parents had a significant impact on parents’ decisions to become involved, especially for parents from lower-socioeconomic backgrounds, Latino families, and those whose children are enrolled in English-as-a second-language programs (Griffith, 2001, Closson, et al., 2004). According to Henderson and Mapp, when teachers reported high levels of outreach to parents, test scores improved at a significantly higher rate than when teachers reported low levels of outreach (2002). In one study of high-risk elementary students (Kohl, et al., 2002), there were strong positive links between teacher outreach efforts and parents’ decisions to become involved. They found several key components to involvement. Parents were more likely to be involved when they:

- enjoyed talking with the teacher;
- were comfortable asking questions; and
- had the belief that the teacher really cared about their child and was interested in their suggestions and ideas about the child’s learning.

Other studies have found that when invitations are specific, targeted, and within the range of activities that parents could reasonably manage; parents were more likely to be productively involved in student homework (Balli, et al., 1998). Invitations from teachers to attend parent workshops have also resulted in increased levels of parent involvement and improved outcomes for students in math and reading (Pratt, et al., 1992).

Responsiveness

Parents’ perceptions related to the time, energy, skills, and knowledge necessary to support their child’s learning have significant influence on parents’ decisions to become involved. Socio-economic backgrounds and family cultures and circumstances also play a role in involvement. Families experiencing circumstances in which resources are scarce, family values and priorities differ from the school system, and knowledge of school expectations and policies is limited face additional barriers to involvement.

Research has shown that when schools are responsive to family needs, they have higher levels of family engagement. Family engagement strategies should reflect careful consideration to the diverse populations served (Colombo, 2006) and give specific attention to family members' time and their financial or educational limitations so that partnerships can form and thrive (Mantzicopoulos, 2003; McWayne et al., 2004). Likewise, in order for partnerships to cultivate, attention to cultural-sensitivity is necessary (Quiocho & Daoud, 2006; Wong & Hughes, 2006, Valdes, 1999). Districts and schools can improve responsiveness and parental involvement by:

- learning about the children and families in their community;
- utilizing a strength-base approach when responding to student and family needs; and
- inviting parents from diverse background to participate in specific and targeted activities.

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Notes

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Research Review: Enhancing Communication

According to a study by Christenson, et al., most effective interventions to promote academic and social development of children are those where parents and school personnel work together to implement interventions utilizing a two-way exchange of information and those involving communication between school and home (1997). Paramount to effective communication are the beliefs that: supporting student learning and healthy development is a shared responsibility; all parents can positively impact student outcomes; and parental input and diverse perspectives are valuable (Souto-Manning, M & Swick, K, 2006; Swick, 2003). In addition, when families are engaged in ways that are linked to learning and healthy development, students make greater gains (Henderson, and Mapp, 2002). District and school personnel can support this by sharing information and having a dialogue with parents about:

- the Common Core and IL Learning Standards
- the curriculum used to address the standards
- expectations and classroom activities
- the strategies teachers are using to promote students' academic, physical, social, emotional, and behavioral development
- how parents can enhance student learning and healthy development
- the types of summative and formative assessments that will be used each year
- school-wide data and the implications
- their students' and school's progress
- any academic, physical, social, emotional, or behavioral concerns in a timely manner
- any strategies that have been implemented to address barrier(s) to learning

Epstein, M., et al. suggests that teachers proactively communicate with families before any problems are identified. Recommendations include:

- sending positive emails or notes home that highlight the student's strengths;
- providing a parent signature log with the child's homework assignments;
- communicating regularly by phone; and
- inviting parents to participate in school events.

However, when social, emotional, behavioral or academic

concerns are identified, teachers need to communicate these concerns to the parent and describe any strategies implemented in the classroom to address the barrier(s) to learning. The teacher should also invite the family in solving any school related concerns (2008).

Cultural Considerations

It is critical that programs use communication practices that are sensitive to the diverse language and cultural backgrounds of the families they serve. Sohn and Wang (2006) found that Korean born mothers, even those who spoke English well, had difficulty communicating with teachers face-to-face. Due to their strong reading and English grammar skills, their preference was to communicate with teachers through email or program letters. Rous et al. (2003) also found that families who do not speak English well may have difficulty understanding phone conversations as they are unable to rely on non-verbal cues. Lastly, DuPraw and Axner (1997) and Rous et al. (2003) found vast cultural differences in communication styles and nonverbal behavior across families in their studies. These differences, however, should not be viewed as insurmountable barriers. Awareness of cultural differences, as well as similarities, can help people communicate with each other more effectively.

References and Resources

Christenson, S. L., Hurley, C. M., Sheridan, S. M., & Fenstermacher, K. (1997). Parents' and school psychologists' perspectives on parent involvement activities. *School Psychology Review, 26*, 111-130.

DuPraw, M.E. & Axner, M. (1997). Toward a more perfect union in an age of diversity: Working on common cross-cultural communication challenges. Retrieved from <http://www.pbs.org/ampu/crosscult.html>.

Epstein, M., Atkins, M., Cullinan, D., Kutash, K., and Weaver, R. (2008). *Reducing Behavior Problems in the Elementary School Classroom: A Practice Guide* (NCEE #2008-012). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved from <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/publications/practiceguides>.

Research Review: Include Parents in Decision-Making

More research is now emerging that indicates that when parents are included in the decision making process, parental involvement increases and student outcomes improve. Henderson and Mapp found that when parents advocate for their children, their children are more confident at school, take on more and achieve more (2002). A study on Conjoint Behavioral Consultation in which a structured, detailed, and collaborative approach (between schools and families) to decision making and intervention implementation was investigated, findings revealed the process to be effective in addressing various developmental concerns for at-risk children in Head-Start settings (Sheridan, Clarke, Marti, Burt, Rohlk, 2005). In addition, Walber, et al. found that when parents, teachers, administrators, and program developers collaborate in the development of parent involvement programs, student achievement significantly increased (1981).

The empirical research on parental involvement in school decision making is somewhat limited. There are, however, some studies that indicate that taking parental input into account when making school-wide decisions may result in increased parental involvement (Bryk, Sebring, Allensworth, Luppescu, & Easton, 2010). This may be due to the higher levels of relational trust that occur when including parents in the decision-making process. District and school personnel can solicit parental input through parent forums, dialogue, and surveys.

Educators are in a position to promote parental input in the decision-making process for individual students. Likewise, input can be solicited and taken into account when considering school improvement efforts. District and school personnel can play a significant role in empowering parents to be involved in the decision-making process. Lopez recommends that educators empower parents by enhancing their understanding of data to promote change (2002, Spring).

References and Resources

Bryk, A.S., Sebring, P.B., Allensworth, E., Luppescu, S., & Easton, J.Q. (2010). *Organizing Schools for Improvement: Lessons from Chicago*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Henderson, A. T., & Mapp, K. L. (2002). *A new wave of evidence: The impact of school, family, and community connections on student achievement*. Austin, TX: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, National Center for Family & Community Connections with Schools. Retrieved June 10, 2013 from <http://www.sedl.org/connections/resources/evidence.pdf>.

Lopez, M.E. (2002, Spring). Learning from Families, The evaluation exchange: A Periodical on Emerging Strategies in Evaluation, Volume VIII, Number 1. Retrieved on July 12, 2013 from <http://www.hfrp.org/evaluation/the-evaluation-exchange/issue-archive/family-support/learning-from-families>.

Sheridan, S., Clarke, B., Marti, D., Burt, J., & Rohlk, A. (2005). *Conjoint Behavioral Consultation: A Model to Facilitate Meaningful Partnerships for Families and Schools*, University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

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Notes

Family Engagement Standards for Effective Practice

The Illinois State Board of Education developed Family Engagement Standards of Effective Practice to provide guidance to educators, districts, schools, families, and communities as they plan, implement, and evaluate family engagement strategies.

These Standards are advisory in nature.

The Family Engagement Standards of Effective Practice were based on research and are organized as follows:

Principles

All of the Standards fall under 4 main Principles.

1. **Districts/schools develop a family engagement system that cultivates and empowers adults to jointly support student growth, address any barriers to learning, and ensure college and career readiness.**
2. **District and school personnel foster a welcoming environment for families that is responsive to student and family needs.**
3. **District and school personnel engage in ongoing and meaningful two-way-exchanges of information with families to support student learning and healthy development.**
4. **District and school personnel include parents in the decision-making process.**

Standards

The Standards are more specific statements but still fairly global in nature.

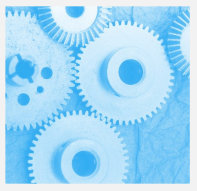
Descriptors

Some, but not all, Standards have Descriptors which provide even greater specificity.

Family engagement must be linked to learning and healthy development

In order to make positive impact on student achievement and school improvement, family engagement systems, policies and practices must be linked to learning and healthy development. For more information on how, please refer to the “Integrating Family Engagement Matrix”. The matrix is intended to provide more specific guidance to educators, districts, schools, families, and communities as they plan, implement, and evaluate family engagement strategies across multiple areas (8 Essential Elements) to support student achievement and close academic achievement gaps.

Principle 1: Develop a Family Engagement System



Districts/schools develop a family engagement system that cultivates and empowers adults to jointly support student growth, address any barriers to learning, and ensure college and career readiness.

Standards:

- 1A. A jointly developed **vision/mission for family engagement** is shared with all stakeholders and drives policies and practices.
- 1B. Family engagement system, policies and practices are embedded into the district/school **continuous improvement process**.
 - 1B.1. Family engagement system, policies and practices are **coordinated and integrated** into existing structures and processes.
- 1C. Families' socio-cultural, linguistic, and educational needs are assessed, acknowledged and incorporated into the district/school improvement plan.
- 1D. District and school **leadership support** the development and implementation of an effective family engagement system that is mindful of diverse school-communities and responsive to student and family needs.
 - 1D.1. District and school leadership understand the important role families play in the educational process and the impact family engagement has on student outcomes.
 - 1D.2. District and school leadership understand and promote the implementation of required and effective family engagement practices.
 - 1D.3. District and school leadership model positive interactions with parents.
 - 1D.4. District and school leadership **allocate/reallocate resources** for family engagement efforts.
 - 1D.5. District and school leadership recognize the significance of native language and culture to support student learning and strives to build a culture of equity and inclusiveness for linguistically and culturally diverse populations.
- 1E. The implementation of family engagement efforts is **monitored and evaluated** through an on-going data collection system.
 - 1E.1. District and school personnel strategically collect and analyze necessary data to answer key questions that will drive improvements in family engagement efforts.
 - 1E.2. District and school personnel have access to timely and useful family engagement data.
 - 1E.3. District and school personnel have the capacity to use family engagement data in a meaningful way.
- 1F. District and school personnel **build the capacity of staff** to effectively engage families in supporting student learning and healthy development.
 - 1F.1. Data is utilized to determine professional development needs pertaining to family engagement.
 - 1F.2. Professional development efforts incorporate effective family engagement practices.
 - 1F.3. Effective professional development strategies are utilized to build the capacity of district/school personnel.
 - 1F.4. Districts/schools build the cultural proficiency of staff in order to effectively engage parents from diverse backgrounds.
- 1G. District and school personnel **build the capacity of families** to meaningfully engage in activities that support student learning and healthy development.
 - 1G.1. District and school personnel help build the capacity of parents to support learning at home.
 - 1G.2. District and school personnel help parents understand data and how it is used to inform instruction.

Principle 3: Enhance Communication



District and school personnel engage in ongoing and meaningful two-way-exchanges of information with families to support student learning and healthy development.

Standards:

3A. District and school personnel ensure that communication is clear, constructive, and ongoing.

3A.1. District and school personnel make certain that communication is **accessible to all and in the languages of families**.

3A.2. District and school personnel use a variety of ways to communicate with families.

3B. District and school personnel provide information pertaining to parental rights.

3C. District and school personnel ensure that communication is **linked to student learning and healthy development**.

3C.1. District and school personnel share information about how standards and curriculum are used by teachers.

3C.2. District and school personnel help families understand student expectations and classroom activities.

3C.3. Teachers inform parents of the strategies they are using to promote students' academic, physical, social, emotional, and behavioral development.

3C.4. District and school personnel communicate with families about how they can enhance student learning and healthy development.

3C.5. District and school personnel inform parents of the types of summative and formative assessments that will be used each year.

3C.6. District and school personnel share school-wide data with families and communities.

3C.7. District and school personnel communicate regularly with parents about their students' and school's progress.

3C.8. District and school personnel communicate with

parents about any academic, physical, social, emotional, or behavioral concerns in a timely manner.

3C.9. District and school personnel share with parents any strategies implemented to address barriers to learning.

3D. District and school personnel communicate district/school/classroom policies and practices.



Notes

Integrating Family Engagement Matrix

Integrating family engagement efforts across all educational areas (8 Essential Elements) and linking them to learning and healthy development are paramount to achieving positive student outcomes.

The 8 Essential Elements include Comprehensive Planning; Leadership; Curriculum; Instruction; Assessment; Professional Development; Conditions for Learning; Family and Community.

This matrix highlights the relationship of best practices as well as the legislative requirements for family engagement with the 8 Essential Elements for Effective Education and offers guiding questions for districts/schools to consider as they jointly plan, implement, and evaluate family engagement efforts across all educational areas.

Comprehensive Planning

8 Essential Elements	Guiding Questions for Integrating Family Engagement Efforts	Family Engagement Standards of Effective Practice	Legislative Requirements/References
<p><u>Comprehensive Planning</u></p> <p>Comprehensive planning is the process of engaging community stakeholders to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect and analyze data; • Define district or school goals; • Identify management structures; • Research effective strategies and activities to meet those goals; • Develop methods to implement the strategies and activities; and • Evaluate the success of that implementation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is district/school-wide data shared with parents in a meaningful way? • How do families provide input on school improvement efforts? • Is data on family engagement collected by the district/school? • Are family engagement indicators assessed by the district/school improvement team? • Are family engagement indicators selected and addressed by the district/school improvement team? • What is currently known about cultural groups and linguistic minorities in your district and how does the district learn about these groups? • How are family engagement systems, policies and practices coordinated and integrated into existing structures and processes? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family input is solicited and taken into account when developing district and school improvement plans. (<i>Standard 4B.</i>) • Family engagement efforts are embedded into the continuous improvement process. (<i>Standard 1B.</i>) • Families’ socio-cultural, linguistic, and educational needs are assessed, acknowledged and incorporated into the district/school improvement plan. (<i>Standard 1C.</i>) • Family engagement system, policies and practices are coordinated and integrated into existing structures and processes. (<i>Standard 1B.1.</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct parent input meetings and/or surveys with the required response rate (for Special Education Self-Review) [20 USC 1416(a)(3)(A)] • Coordinate and integrate parent involvement strategies [20 USC 6318(a)(2)(D)] • Coordinate and integrate parent involvement activities [20 USC 6318(e)(4)] • Provide coordination, technical assistance, and other support to school staff for including families as participants in local educational agency (LEA) and school governance and decision making [20 United States Code (USC) 6318(a)(2)(B)]. • Evaluate the content and effectiveness of the parent involvement policy [Refers specifically to Title I, 20 USC 6318(a)(2)(E)] <div data-bbox="1235 1734 1528 1927" style="background-color: #1a3d4d; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p>To review the full legislative requirements/ references, go to page 32.</p> </div>

Leadership

8 Essential Elements	Guiding Questions for Integrating Family Engagement Efforts	Family Engagement Standards of Effective Practice	Legislative Requirements/References
<p><u>Leadership</u></p> <p>Leaders create and sustain organizational direction, expectations, and a system that promotes excellence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a family engagement system been developed? • Do policies and practices reflect effective family engagement strategies? How are required and effective family engagement practices promoted by district/school leadership? • How does the district/school leadership leverage their partnerships with families to improve student outcomes? • Are resources allocated for the implementation of a family engagement system? • Are positive interactions with families modeled by the district/school leadership? • How is cultural knowledge about families integrated and updated in policies and practices? • Is input solicited from parents and taken it into account when making decisions for school improvement? • Is the family engagement system evaluated and is data used for continuous improvement? • What measures do districts/schools take to promote transparency and accountability? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District and school leadership understand the important role families play in the educational process and the impact family engagement has on student outcomes. <i>(Standard 1D.1.)</i> • District and school leadership support the development and implementation of an effective family engagement system. <i>(Standard 1D.)</i> • District and school leadership understand and promote the implementation of required and effective family engagement practices. <i>(Standard 1D.3.)</i> • District and school leadership leverage their partnerships with families to improve student outcomes. <i>(Standard 1H.1.)</i> • District and school leadership allocate/reallocate resources for family engagement efforts. <i>(Standard 1D.4.)</i> • District and school leadership model positive interactions with families. <i>(Standard 1D.2.)</i> • District and school leadership recognize the significance of native language and culture to support student learning and strive to build a culture of equity and inclusiveness for linguistically and culturally diverse populations. <i>(Standard 1D.5.)</i> • District and school personnel solicit input from families and take it into account when making decisions. <i>(Standard 4B.)</i> • The implementation of family engagement efforts is monitored and evaluated through an on-going data collection system. <i>(Standard 1E.)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult parents as programs are being developed [20 USC 7424 (c)]. • Send notice of and hold regular meetings to obtain recommendations of parents of English learners [20 USC 7012(e) (2)]. • Provide parents with timely information about schools and students in a language and format that they can understand [20 USC 6318(f)]. • Provide parent involvement policy to parents in an understandable and uniform format [20 USC 6318(a)(2) and (f)]. • Inform parents of English learners how they can be involved in the education of their children [20 USC 7012(e) (1)]. • Meet parent notification requirements (20 USC 7012(b)) • Conduct parent input meetings and/or surveys with the required response rate ([20 USC 1416(a) (3)(A)]. • Provide other reasonable support for parent involvement activities as parents may request [20 USC 6318(e)(14)]. • Ensure administrators meet parental involvement requirements before they receive their certificates and endorsements. (105 ILCS 5/21-7.1) <div style="background-color: #2c4e64; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;"> <p>To review the full legislative requirements/ references, go to page 32.</p> </div>



Notes

Curriculum

8 Essential Elements	Guiding Questions for Integrating Family Engagement Efforts	Family Engagement Standards of Effective Practice	Legislative Requirements/References
<p><u>Curriculum</u> A school or district curriculum is an educational plan that defines what the expectations are for the content, knowledge, and skills to be learned as well as the resources to be employed for documenting student progress and achievement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are families supported in becoming knowledgeable about the curriculum, standards, and expectations for their children? • Do families have an opportunity to provide input on the curriculum? • What venues and systems are being utilized to keep families regularly informed of classroom activities and assignments? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District and school personnel ensure that communication is linked to student learning and healthy development. (<i>Standard 3C.</i>) • District and school personnel share information about how standards and curriculum are used by teachers. (<i>Standard 3C.1.</i>) • District and school leadership regard families as valuable sources of knowledge and information to enhance curriculum and instruction. (<i>Standard 1H.3.</i>) • District and school personnel help families understand student expectations and classroom activities. (<i>Standard 3C.2.</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform parents of English learners how they can be involved in the education of their children [20 USC 7012€ (1)]. <div style="background-color: #1a3d4d; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;"> <p>To review the full legislative requirements/ references, go to page 32.</p> </div>

Assessment

8 Essential Elements	Guiding Questions for Integrating Family Engagement Efforts	Family Engagement Standards of Effective Practice	Legislative Requirements/References
<p><u>Assessment</u> Assessment is the process of judging and measuring the students' acquisition of the intended content, knowledge, and skills as set out in the curriculum.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is information about assessments shared with parents? • How are parent opinions/ observations invited? • How do district/school personnel help parents understand the data? • How are non-English speaking parents supported in understanding assessment information? • How often do teachers communicate with parents about their students' progress? • Do teachers inform parents of student accomplishments as well as issues? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District and school personnel inform parents of the types of summative and formative assessments that will be used each year. (Standard 3C.5.) • District and school personnel invite parent opinions/ observations. (Standard 4B.) • District and school personnel share school-wide data with families and communities. (Standard 3C.6.) • District and school personnel help parents understand data and how it is used to inform instruction. (Standard 1G.2.) • District and school personnel communicate regularly with parents about their students' and school's progress. (Standard 3C.7.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training and resources to parents on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • content standards; • academic achievement standards; • academic assessment; • parent involvement requirements; • monitoring academic progress; • working with teachers. [20 USC 6318(e)(1)] • Parents have the right to request an independent educational evaluation of their child at district expense when they disagree with the evaluation conducted. • [23 IAC 226.180, Independent Educational Evaluation] • [Section 14-8.02 (b) of the School Code, (105 ILCS 5/14-8.02)] <div style="background-color: #1a3d4d; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;"> <p>To review the full legislative requirements/ references, go to page 32.</p> </div>

Instruction

8 Essential Elements	Guiding Questions for Integrating Family Engagement Efforts	Family Engagement Standards of Effective Practice	Legislative Requirements/References
<p><u>Instruction</u> Instruction refers to how teachers implement purposeful, planned methods, strategies, and activities to teach curriculum so students achieve mastery of standards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are families supported in developing skills that further enhance their children’s learning? • What tools and resources are provided to support at home learning? • Do district and school personnel solicit input from families to enhance student engagement? • Do district/school personnel communicate concerns to parents in a timely manner? • Are parents included in the problem-solving process? • Do district/school personnel consult with families if situations of cross-cultural or linguistic conflict happen in the school/classroom? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers inform parents of the strategies they are using to promote students’ academic, physical, social, emotional, and behavioral development. (Standard 3C.3.) • District and school personnel help build the capacity of parents to support learning at home. (Standard 1G.1.) • District and school personnel regard families as valuable sources of knowledge and information to enhance curriculum and instruction. (Standard 1H.3.) • District and school personnel communicate with parents about any academic, physical, social, emotional, or behavioral concerns in a timely manner. (Standard 3C.8.) • District and school personnel share with parents any strategies implemented to address barrier(s) to learning. (Standard 3C.9.) • District and school personnel encourage parents to participate in any problem-solving discussions related to their child. (Standard 4E.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training and resources to parents on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • content standards; • academic achievement standards; • academic assessment; • parent involvement requirements; • monitoring academic progress; • working with teachers. [20 USC 6318(e)(1)] • Provide information to families [20 USC 6318(e)(1)] and materials and training to help parents work with their children [20 USC 6318(e)(2); 20 USC 6381d(2),(4),(7)] • Conduct other activities to encourage and support parents, including parent resource centers [20 USC 6381(e)(4)]. • Student Achievement has been prepared with review and advice from appropriate parent/community advisory committees [20 USC 6312(g)(1)(B)(2), 20 USC 7012]. <div style="background-color: #1a3d4d; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;"> <p>To review the full legislative requirements/ references, go to page 32.</p> </div>



Notes

Conditions for Learning

8 Essential Elements	Guiding Questions for Integrating Family Engagement Efforts	Family Engagement Standards of Effective Practice	Legislative Requirements/References
<p><u>Conditions for Learning</u> Conditions for Learning are the factors that ensure an optimal learning environment that promotes healthy development; addresses barriers to teaching and learning; and supports student motivation and re-engages the disengaged student.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well do district/school personnel know the children and families in the community? Are they aware and do they acknowledge the assets as well as the risk factors in the community? • Are families listened to? Are their opinions taken into account? • How do district/school personnel show that they care about the well-being of their students, their families, and the community? • How do district/school personnel positively respond to families from different cultures? • What accommodations (e.g. translation services, interpreter) are available to ensure that all families can engage in the educational process? • What community resources are available to promote family assets and enable family engagement in the educational process? • How do districts/schools/ share classroom policies and practices with parents? How often are they shared? • Are parents aware of the strategies teachers use to promote learning and healthy development? • Are parents given multiple opportunities to provide input and engage in activities that support their students' learning and healthy development? • Are procedures in place that allow for family participation in classroom activities? • How often do district/school personnel personally reach out to families and extend an invitation? • What strategies are used to further develop the capacity of families to support their students' learning and healthy development? • Do district/school personnel communicate concerns to parents in a timely manner? Are parents included in the problem-solving process? • Does your school survey parents on school climate? • How do district/school personnel support parents' understanding of rules, laws, and policies for family engagement? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District and school personnel learn about the children and families in the community. (Standard 2D.1.) • District and school personnel develop relational trust with families and community members. (Standard 2B.) • District and school personnel effectively engage parents from diverse backgrounds. (Standard 2D.2.) • District and school personnel make certain that communication is accessible to all and in the languages of families. (Standard 3A.1.) • District and school personnel promote family assets, including their cultural and linguistic backgrounds. (Standard 1G.3.) • District and school personnel partner with community organizations to enhance family engagement efforts. (Standard 1I.) • District and school personnel communicate district/school/ classroom policies and practices. (Standard 3D.) • Teachers inform parents of the strategies they are using to promote students' academic, physical, social, emotional, and behavioral development. (Standard 3C.3.) • District and school personnel reach out to families to support student learning and healthy development. (Standard 2C.) • District/school personnel communicate with parents about any academic, physical, social, emotional, or behavioral concerns in a timely manner. (Standard 3C.8.) • District and school personnel share with parents any strategies implemented to address barrier(s) to learning. (Standard 3C.9.) • District and school personnel encourage parents to participate in any problem-solving discussions related to their child. (Standard 4E.) • Districts and schools invite parent opinions on school climate. (Standard 4B.1.) • District and school personnel build the capacity of parents to understand and interpret rules, laws, and policies for family engagement. (Standard 1G.4.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information to families [20 USC 6318(e)(1)] and materials and training to help parents work with their children [20 USC 6318(e)(2); 20 USC 6381d(2),(4),(7)]; Conduct other activities to encourage and support parents, including parent resource centers [20 USC 6381(e)(4)]. • Provide parents with timely information about schools and students in a language and format that they can understand [20 USC 6318(f)]. • Provide parent involvement policy to parents in an understandable and uniform format [20 USC 6318(a)(2) and (f)]. • Conduct parent input meetings and/or surveys with the required response rate (for Special Education Self-Review) [20 USC 1416(a)(3)(A)] • Involve family and community members representative of the student population [20 USC 1400 § 650]. • Provide opportunities for the participation of parents who are economically disadvantaged, have limited English proficiency, have disabilities, are migratory, or have children with disabilities [20 USC 6318(a)(2)(E)]. • Permit employed parents and guardians who are unable to meet with educators because of a work conflict the right to an allotment of time during the school year to attend necessary educational or behavioral conferences at the school their children attend. (820 ILCS 147/5)

To review the full legislative requirements/ references, go to page 32.

Family and Community

8 Essential Elements	Guiding Questions for Integrating Family Engagement Efforts	Family Engagement Standards of Effective Practice	Legislative Requirements/References
<p>Family and Community Stakeholders maintain significant involvement in the development, implementation, plan review, parent involvement practices and compacts, and ongoing communications about student achievement. Family activities provide academic enrichment and learning support to help students meet state learning standards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the district’s vision/mission for family engagement? Was it jointly developed with families? How is it shared with stakeholders? • How are family engagement practices embedded within the district/school improvement process? • How does the district/school ensure that the family engagement system policies and practices are coordinated and integrated into existing structures and processes? • How are required and effective family engagement practices promoted by district/school leadership? • Are adequate resources available for the implementation of a family engagement system? • How are family engagement efforts monitored and evaluated? • What professional development opportunities are currently available? Are they aligned with effective family engagement practices? • How are families supported in developing skills that enhance their children’s learning? • How do district/school personnel support parents’ understanding of rules, laws, and policies for family engagement? • Are parents given multiple opportunities to provide input and engage in activities that support their students’ learning? • What community resources are available to promote family assets and enable family engagement in the educational process? • What strategies are utilized to foster a welcoming environment for families? • In what ways do district and school personnel reach out to families? • What communication strategies are utilized to engage parents in the educational process? • Is communication accessible to all? Are translation services and interpreters available as needed? • Are families included in the decision-making process? • Do parent leaders jointly develop parent involvement programming with district/school personnel? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A jointly developed vision/mission for family engagement is shared with all stakeholders and drives policies and practices. (Standard 1A.) • Family engagement system, policies and practices are embedded into the district/school continuous improvement process. (Standard 1B.) • Family engagement system, policies and practices are coordinated and integrated into existing structures and processes. (Standard 1B.1.) • District and school leadership support the development and implementation of an effective family engagement system that is mindful of diverse school-communities and responsive to student and family needs. (Standard 1D.) • District and school leadership allocate/reallocate resources for family engagement efforts. (Standard 1D.4.) • The implementation of family engagement efforts is monitored and evaluated through an on-going data collection system. (Standard 1E.) • District and school personnel build the capacity of staff to effectively engage families in student learning and healthy development. (Standard 1F.) • District and school personnel build the capacity of families to meaningfully engage in activities that support student learning and healthy development. (Standard 1G.) • District and school personnel partner with families to support student learning and healthy development. (Standard 1H.) • District and school personnel partner with community organizations to enhance family engagement efforts. (Standard 1I) • District and school personnel foster a welcoming environment that is responsive to student and family needs. (Principle 2) • District and school personnel engage in ongoing, meaningful two-way-exchanges with families to support student learning and healthy development. (Principle 3) • District and school personnel include parents in the decision-making process. (Principle 4) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and review with and distribute to parents a written parent involvement policy [20 USC 6318(a)(2)] • Include parents in the decisions regarding how funds are allotted for parent involvement activities [20 USC 6318(3)(8)]. • Provide coordination, technical assistance, and other support to school staff for including families as participants in local educational agency (LEA) and school governance and decision making [20 USC 6318(a)(2)(B)]. • Involve family and community members representative of the student population [20 USC 1400 § 650]. • Provide targeted training and resources to advisory committee members [20 USC 6312(g)(4)] • A school district may utilize up to two days allowed by law for teachers’ institutes to conduct parental institutes for the parents and guardians of children attending the district. 105 ILCS 5/10-22.18d) (from Ch. 122, par. 10-22.18d) • School districts shall provide for the maximum practical involvement of parents of children in transitional bilingual education programs. (105 ILCS 5/14C-10) • A copy of the procedural safeguards available to the parents of a child with a disability shall be given to the parents at least once a year. [34 CFR 300.504] • A parent of a student with a disability is an IEP team member and participates in the development of the IEP. [34 CFR 300.321] • The IEP Team must demonstrate that they considered the concerns of the parents for enhancing the education of their child. [34 CFR 300.324] <div data-bbox="1240 1745 1531 1934" style="background-color: #1a3d4d; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p>To review the full legislative requirements/ references, go to page 32.</p> </div>

Legislative Requirements/References

The Legislative Requirements/References of the Family Engagement Framework describes specific mandated school and/or district actions that fall under each Essential Element. Citations for specific laws and regulations follow each required activity.

Comprehensive Planning

Conduct parent input meetings and/or surveys with the required response rate (for Special Education Self-Review). [20 USC 1416(a)(3)(A)]

Coordinate and integrate parent involvement strategies under

- Title I;
- Head Start/Early Head Start;
- Even Start;
- Parents as Teachers;
- Home Interaction Program for Preschool Youngsters; state preschools. [20 USC 6318(a)(2)(D)]

Provide coordination, technical assistance, and other support to school staff for including families as participants in local educational agency (LEA) and school governance and decision making. [20 United States Code (USC) 6318(a)(2)(B)]

Evaluate the content and effectiveness of the parent involvement policy:

- Identify barriers to participation, especially for diverse parents.
- Use findings to design more effective strategies.
- Revise parent involvement policies, as needed. [Refers specifically to Title I, 20 USC 6318(a)(2)(E)]

Coordinate and integrate parent involvement activities with

- public preschool;
- other public educational programs;
- parent resource centers. [20 USC 6318(e)(4)]

Disclaimer: Please note that this is not an exhaustive list of legislative requirements. Districts and schools should reference the actual regulations to ensure adherence to the law.

Leadership

Consult parents as programs are being developed. [20 USC 7424(c)]

Send notice of and hold regular meetings to obtain recommendations of parents of English learners. [20 USC 7012(e)(2)]

Provide parents with timely information about schools and students in a language and format that they can understand. [20 USC 6318(f)]

Provide parent involvement policy to parents in an understandable and uniform format. [20 USC 6318(a)(2) and (f)]

Inform parents of English learners how they can be involved in the education of their children. [20 USC 7012(e)(1)]

Meet parent notification requirements (under Titles I, III, IX, and X; Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act; and IDEA). [20 USC 7012(b)]

Conduct parent input meetings and/or surveys with the required response rate (for Special Education Self-Review). [20 USC 1416(a)(3)(A)]

Provide other reasonable support for parent involvement activities as parents may request. [20 USC 6318(e)(14)]

No administrative certificates and endorsements will be issued only to those who have: (i) an understanding of the knowledge called for in establishing productive parent-school relationships and of the procedures fostering the involvement which such relationships demand; As used in this subsection: "establishing productive parent-school relationships" means the ability to maintain effective communication between parents and school personnel, to encourage parental involvement in schooling, and to motivate school personnel to engage parents in encouraging student achievement, including the development of programs and policies which serve to accomplish this purpose. [(105 ILCS 5/21-7.1)]

Curriculum

Inform parents of English learners how they can be involved in the education of their children.

[20 USC 7012(e)(1)]

Instruction

Provide training and resources to parents on

- content standards;
- academic achievement standards;
- academic assessment;
- parent involvement requirements;
- monitoring academic progress;
- working with teachers.

[20 USC 6318(e)(1)]

Provide information to families [20 USC 6318(e)(1)] and materials and training to help parents work with their children [20 USC 6318(e)(2); 20 USC 6381d(2),(4),(7)]; Conduct other activities to encourage and support parents, including parent resource centers. [20 USC 6381(e)(4)]

Student Achievement has been prepared with review and advice from appropriate parent/community advisory committees. 20 USC 6312(g)(1)(B)(2), 20 USC 7012]

Special Education Legislative Mandates:

Agency shall obtain informed consent from the parent prior to providing any special education and related services. [34 CFR 300.300, Parental Consent]

IEP teams consider the strengths of the child and the concerns of the parents when developing IEP activities and goals. [34 CFR 300.322, Parent Participation]

A parent may revoke consent for the district to provide special education services at any time after the initial consent for services has been provided. Revocation may be provided orally or in writing. [23 IAC 226.540; 34 CFR 300.300, Parental Consent]

Assessment

Provide training and resources to parents on

- content standards;
- academic achievement standards;
- academic assessment;
- parent involvement requirements;
- monitoring academic progress;
- working with teachers.

[20 USC 6318(e)(1)]

Special Education Legislative Mandates:

Parents have the right to request an independent educational evaluation of their child at district expense when they disagree with the evaluation conducted.

[23 IAC 226.180, Independent Educational Evaluation]

[Section 14-8.02 (b) of the School Code, (105 ILCS 5/14-8.02)]

[34 CFR 300.502, Independent Educational Evaluation]

- Parent may request an initial evaluation to determine a child's eligibility for special education services.
- Agency proposing to conduct an initial evaluation to determine child's eligibility for special education shall obtain informed consent from the parent prior to the evaluation being conducted (unless the conditions under 34 CFR 300.302[a][2] for a ward of the State are met) [23 IAC 226.110, Evaluation Procedures] [34 CFR 300.300, Parental Consent] [34 CFR 300.301, Initial Evaluation] [Section 14-8.02 of the School Code, (105 ILCS 5/14-8.02)]

Agency shall provide notice to parents about any proposed evaluation procedures. [23 IAC 226.110, Evaluation Procedures]

Agency shall make reasonable effort to obtain consent prior to conducting a *re-evaluation*. Agency must document reasonable efforts to obtain consent. [34 CFR 300.300, Parental Consent]

Professional Development

Educate staff in the value of parent involvement, outreach to parents, communication with parents, partnering, implementing parent programs, and building ties between parents and the school. [20 USC 6318(e)(3)]

Conditions for Learning

Provide information to families [20 USC 6318(e)(1)] and materials and training to help parents work with their children [20 USC 6318(e)(2); 20 USC 6381d(2),(4),(7)]; Conduct other activities to encourage and support parents, including parent resource centers. [20 USC 6381(e)(4)]

Provide parents with timely information about schools and students in a language and format that they can understand [20 USC 6318(f)]

Provide parent involvement policy to parents in an understandable and uniform format. [20 USC 6318(a)(2) and (f)]

Conduct parent input meetings and/or surveys with the required response rate (for Special Education Self-Review). [20 USC 1416(a)(3)(A)]

Involve family and community members representative of the student population. [20 USC 1400 § 650]

Provide opportunities for the participation of parents who are economically disadvantaged, have limited English proficiency, have disabilities, are migratory, or have children with disabilities. [20 USC 6318(a)(2)(E)]

The General Assembly of the State of Illinois finds that the basis of a strong economy is an educational system reliant upon parental involvement. The intent of this Act is to permit employed parents and guardians who are unable to meet with educators because of a work conflict the right to an allotment of time during the school year to attend necessary educational or behavioral conferences at the school their children attend. [820 ILCS 147/5]

Special Education Legislative Mandates:

The school must notify parents of students with disabilities immediately if their child receives a suspension, and provide the parents with a full statement of the reasons for the suspension, and their right to a review of the decision. [105 ILCS 5/10-22.6, Suspension or Expulsion of Pupils]

School personnel can consider a change of placement for a student with a disability that violates a code of student conduct. [34 C.F.R. 300.530(a), Authority of School Personnel]

Family and Community

Develop and review with and distribute to parents a written parent involvement policy [20 USC 6318(a)(2)] describing how the LEA will:

- involve parents in program planning, review, and activities
- build capacity for parent involvement;
- coordinate and integrate parent involvement strategies across programs;
- conduct an annual evaluation of the impact of the parent involvement policy, including
- improvement in academic achievement;
- barriers to parent participation;
- strategies for effective parent involvement.

Include parents in the decisions regarding how funds are allotted for parent involvement activities. [20 USC 6318(3)(8)]

Provide coordination, technical assistance, and other support to school staff for including families as participants in local educational agency (LEA) and school governance and decision making. [20 USC 6318(a)(2)(B)]

Involve family and community members representative of the student population. [20 USC 1400 § 650]

Provide targeted training and resources to advisory committee members. [20 USC 6312(g)(4)]

A school district may utilize up to two days allowed by law for teachers' institutes to conduct parental institutes for the parents and guardians of children attending the district. Parental institutes shall provide information on such topics as the district shall deem necessary to achieve the following purposes:

- Enhance parental involvement in the education of the district's students; (2) Improve parental communication and involvement with the district;
 - Enhance parental knowledge of child development, district programs, school conditions, and societal problems threatening students; and
 - Improve parental skill development.
- (105 ILCS 5/10-22.18d) (from Ch. 122, par. 10-22.18d)

School districts shall provide for the maximum practical involvement of parents of children in transitional bilingual education programs. Each school district shall, accordingly, establish a parent advisory committee which affords parents the opportunity effectively to express their views and which ensures that such programs are planned, operated, and evaluated with the involvement of, and in consultation with, parents of children served by the programs. Such committees shall be composed of parents of children enrolled in transitional bilingual education programs, transitional bilingual education teachers, counselors, and representatives from community groups; provided, however, that a majority of each committee shall be parents of children enrolled in the transitional bilingual education program. Once established, these committees shall autonomously carry out their affairs, including the election of officers and the establishment of internal rules, guidelines, and procedures. (105 ILCS 5/14C-10)

Special Education Legislative Mandates:

A copy of the procedural safeguards available to the parents of a child with a disability shall be given to the parents at least once a year. [34 CFR 300.504]

A parent of a student with a disability is an IEP team member and participates in the development of the IEP. [34 CFR 300.321]

Agency must take steps to ensure that a parent of a student with a disability is present at each IEP meeting and offered the opportunity to participate. [34 CFR 300.322]

The IEP Team must demonstrate that they considered the concerns of the parents for enhancing the education of their child. [34 CFR 300.324]

Agency must take whatever action is necessary to ensure that the parent understands the proceeding of the IEP meeting, including arranging for an interpreter for parents with deafness or whose native language is other than English. [23 IAC 226.530]

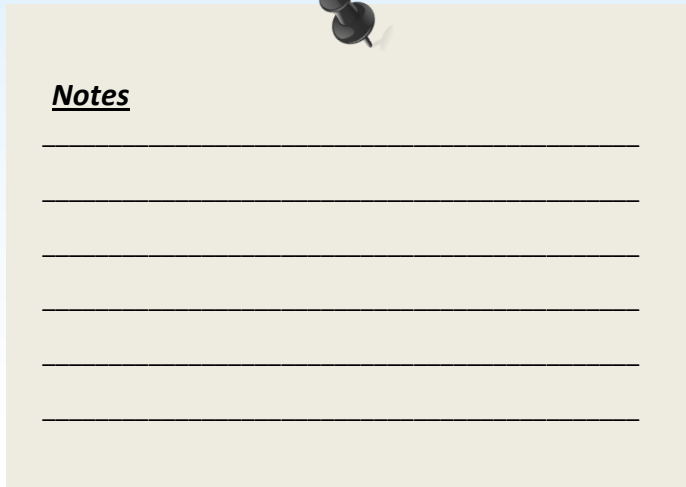
Agency must obtain a one-time written consent from the parent prior to accessing the child’s or the parent’s public

benefits or insurance for the first time. Agency must provide written notification to the child’s parents, explaining all of the protections available to parents under Part B, as described in 34 CFR §300.154(d)(2)(v), *before* accessing public benefits or insurance for the first time and annually thereafter. [34 CFR 300.154(d)]

Schools must provide custodial and non-custodial parents access to their children’s records unless there is a court order, law, or legal document (such as a divorce decree or custody order) that terminates a parent’s rights. [34 CFR 300.613, Access Rights] [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), (20 U.S.C. 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99)] [Illinois School Student Records Act, 105 ILCS 10/1 and following]

The rights and responsibilities for special education services that are given to parents will belong to the student at age 18. In addition, the district must inform the parents and student of the student’s right to delegate decision-making to another adult individual.

At least one year before turning 18, the parents and the student will receive notices in writing from the school about the change. [23 IAC 226.690, Transfer of Parental Rights] [105 ILCS 5/14-6-10, Transfer of Parental Rights at the Age of Majority]



Notes

Summary, Future Implications and Field Notes

Regardless of the particular strategies that districts, schools and community and family leaders choose, the necessary ingredients for success include a commitment toward integrating the four principles of family engagement. When families are engaged in meaningful ways, districts and schools are more readily able to meet student achievement and healthy development goals, leverage resources, build effective relationships between parents and teachers, develop on-going community support for school and district improvement, and meet federal and state requirements for family engagement.

Integrating family engagement within the school improvement process will help to ensure the work is goal-directed, positive, culturally responsive, respectful, systemic and comprehensive. The Family Engagement framework can be used in the development of district/school improvement plans, identifying professional development opportunities for staff and governing bodies, and approaches to providing services, programs and activities. It can be used to inform community partners about family engagement goals and the importance of those goals for promoting learning and healthy development. When families are an integral partner in learning, communities thrive.

There are multiple pathways districts and schools can take as they attempt to enhance their family engagement efforts. Regardless of the pathway chosen, strategies and activities should fit the unique context of their community. Following are two summaries of how a district and a community-based organization took different approaches to build pathways toward meaningful family engagement. These stories are meant to provide snapshots of how they integrated effective family engagement practices across various educational areas to address their community's needs.



The Logan Square Neighborhood Association's program at Monroe Elementary trained parent tutors to help children during their after school homework help time.

Field Notes

Engaging Families to Make Pathways for Student Achievement

In Evanston School District 65, families are being engaged in multiple ways. Core engagement activities include:

- Monthly family nights where parents come together to learn about afterschool programming. They also engage in peer exchange in learning about supporting youth development and academic success.
- Special events for parents to help them prepare for important moments from parent teacher conferences to the transition between fifth and sixth and eighth and ninth grades.
- In addition, family counseling by the district's trained therapists is available for families (both youth and their parents) dealing with family challenges ranging from divorce to social and economic hardship.
- On a broader level, the district is in the process of expanding its engagement efforts as part of the move toward community schools at some of the after school sites where the district has been able to recruit additional support.

The first step toward developing community schools at Nichols and Chute will be engaging and repositioning parents as leaders in the schools. The Evanston school district's approach to family engagement will build on best practices like those documented by Soo Hong in her new book "A Cord of Three Strands: A New Approach to Parent Engagement in Schools" (Harvard Education Press, 2011). This research shows that community organizing practices are most effective at authentically engaging parents as partners in the community school.

Plans for engaging families include:

- Involving parents in open conversations about their interests, motivations, goals and challenges (e.g., Café y Conversación)
- Developing activities that invite parents into schools in specific ways that build on their strengths (e.g., Parent Mentors)
- Promoting parental leadership in schools by creating new spaces for leadership (e.g., Community School Action Team)
- Transforming school culture so that teachers and administrators view families as co-owners and co-authors of the school and community experience (e.g., Community Immersion Institute for Teachers)

In doing family engagement work, the Evanston school district hopes to achieve improved academic performance in core subject areas, increased involvement of all parents (especially low-income parents) in school committees and events, improved youth social competence, enhanced family relationships, enhanced school culture and an increase in the number of low-income parents feeling valued and included in school life.

Field Notes

Engaging Families in Meaningful Ways

Since 1999, Springfield Urban League has successfully engaged parents of program participants in the educational process of their children. They have hosted family reading nights, a family self-defense series, and numerous speakers and subject matter experts. Their Teen REACH program and Freedom School programs also have parent involvement components. Since the inception of its after school programs, they have been concerned with not only offering programs and activities but also with being impactful.

During their planning meetings for the current 21st CCLC grant, they discussed how they could move from parent involvement to parent engagement. In order to be more intentional, they discovered that they needed to do a few things differently in order to achieve the desired results:

- Make sure that staff know the difference between parent engagement and parent involvement. Both are important. Both are necessary. Parent involvement encompasses the activities that they developed and planned, but parent engagement gave parents a voice and ownership in the process.
- Make sure that they bring activities that are relevant to the needs of their parents by asking them what they want to see, and involve them in the planning process.
- Articulate expectations in the beginning.
- Treat “parents as partners” in their child’s education. They often heard this term, but they would forget to include parents as they planned for them and their children—the Urban League invited them only after they had planned and mapped out everything.
- Measure the impact. They are still working on this one.

This year, they have had several successful parent engagement events. One of their notable events was a financial literacy night at Lanphier High School. During conversations with the site coordinator, several parents had mentioned financial issues related to the economy. As a result, the site coordinator involved a couple of parents in helping to plan a family financial literacy night. Modern Woodmen of America came to speak with parents about financial planning, budgeting, and other related topics. In addition, there was a financial literacy portion geared toward teenagers. Students who were seniors were gathered in a separate area to discuss financial aid. In addition, students worked on several scholarship applications. Let’s not forget food! Food was donated by Outback Steakhouse. Close to 50 parents attended the event. Parents and students were extremely pleased. Springfield Urban League is excited about the relationships and trust that they continue to nurture and grow with their families.



Quad Cities, IL—Immigrant families who have children enrolled in Quad Cities Lights ON Afterschool program participate in adult education classes provided in partnership with professors from St. Ambrose University.

Search for the Family Engagement Framework Guide at <http://www.isbe.net>.
For more information on family and parent involvement opportunities at your district/school, contact



