



Illinois State Board of Education

Family Engagement Foundational Services Facilitator Guide

# ISBE Family Engagement Framework Training



Materials Updated 5/8/2015

**This program is fully (100%) funded by the United States Department of Education using No Child Left Behind, Title I Part A Funds, through a grant from the Illinois State Board of Education, Statewide System of Support funds.**

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## Overview

Over 30 years of research shows that when families support student learning and healthy development, students 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. Additionally, when families, schools and communities partner in promoting learning and healthy development for all children, schools thrive and student outcomes increase (Henderson & Mapp, 2002).

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) along with many districts and schools across the state recognize the important role families play in supporting children's learning and healthy development. However, district and school personnel have reported that they need additional support in how to work more effectively with parents. In response to this need, ISBE:

- developed an agency-wide vision for family engagement;
- developed a framework and several tools to help school and districts think about how they can create meaningful partnership with families;
- dedicated an entire day to family engagement at the 2015 ESEA/NCLB Conference;
- identified family engagement as a focus area for Foundational Services in 2015; and
- developed professional development and tools that align with the newly developed framework.

***Meaningful Family Engagement** is based on the premise that parents, educators, and community members **share responsibility** for youth development. It is fostered through a deliberate process and embraced throughout the school community. It empowers adults to **jointly support** student growth address barriers to learning and is mindful of diverse school-communities and responsive to student and family needs.*

ISBE will continue to allocate resources to support professional development providers as well as district and school personnel as they build and or strengthen their partnerships with families.

## Purpose

This Family Engagement Foundational Services Facilitator Guide was designed to provide additional guidance and resources to professional development providers as they prepare for and deliver this training.

## How to Use the Facilitator Guide

The Facilitator Guide includes a description, information on intended audience, expected outcomes, a facilitator's checklist, and guidance on the preparation and delivery of all content and activities. Any handouts needed for the facilitation of learning during the training will be accessible at [www.iarrs.org](http://www.iarrs.org).

## Citations

Henderson, A., & Mapp, L. K. 2002. *A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement, Annual Synthesis 2002*. Austin, TX: SEDL.

## Facilitation Process

Area Coordinators and Regional Office of Education (ROE) Service Providers will be expected to intentionally foster a supportive and resource rich learning environment during this training by promoting inclusive practices that encourage participation.

Inclusive Strategies may include:

- Ice Breakers
- The use of name tags/tents to easily identify participants by name
- Establishing group norms that include respect, listen for understanding, and other inclusive practices
- The use of inclusive language (e.g., Do others have additional thoughts or ideas that build upon Shelly's contribution?)
- Modeling inclusive practices

## Modeling Expectations

A facilitator keeps the group moving, and always towards its (not the facilitator's) stated goals. By listening, observing and using intuition, a facilitator should be aware of individual needs and desires. While the group focuses on the task, the facilitator's focus is not only on the process but also the people.

An effective facilitator must also hold certain values and attitudes. To be most productive, the group must share these same values. A facilitator should demonstrate the following values and attitudes help foster them in the group:

- **Respect and Empathy:** All ideas are important. No idea or individual is more important than another.
- **Cooperation:** Group members must work together to reach the group's goals. A facilitator cannot force individuals to work together but can create an environment for it to happen.
- **Honesty:** The facilitator and the group need to be honest and open about their feelings, values and priorities.
- **Responsibility:** The facilitator assumes responsibility for his or her actions, which ultimately affect the content, participation and process of the session. The group must assume responsibility for the solutions and their implications.
- **Flexibility:** The facilitator will be sensitive to the needs of individuals and adjust the process and schedule as required.

## Providing a Resource Rich and Supportive Learning Environment

This training provides a foundational level of support for facilitators in developing and expanding school-family partnerships. This training is aligned to the Illinois State Board of Education's Family Engagement Framework. The framework includes principles and standards that establish a foundation for developing meaningful engagement with families.

In addition to this training there are a number of resources and supports available to facilitators. Resources that align with the ISBE Family Engagement Framework can be found at [www.iarss.org](http://www.iarss.org). These resources bring together research, promising practices, and a consolidation of key program

requirements to provide districts, schools, and families with tools to assist with the planning, implementation, and evaluation of family engagement practices.

In addition to these resources, facilitators are invited to participate in monthly update sessions. These sessions provide participants an opportunity for deeper discussion around shared experiences and expertise related to family engagement. Attendance for the monthly update sessions is expected. The sessions will focus on special topics that are relevant to this work and updates on new resources/tools will be provided. In addition, new training modules may be delivered during these meetings. Call-in sessions are held on a monthly basis. To learn more, access the calendar for the family engagement monthly update sessions at [www.iarss.org](http://www.iarss.org).

### **Integrating Adult Learning Practices**

Part of being an effective facilitator involves understanding how adults learn best (Lieb, 1991). Adult learning is a theory that holds a set of assumptions about how adults learn. It emphasizes the value of the process of learning. It uses approaches to learning that are **problem-based and collaborative** rather than didactic, and also emphasizes more **equality between the teacher and learner**.

There are some similarities in the adult and child classroom, although adults generally have distinctly different motivations to engage in learning. Adults are generally more:

- internally motivated and self-directed
- bring life experiences and knowledge to learning experiences
- goal oriented
- relevancy oriented
- practical
- like to be respected

The adult learning model (Knowles 1978) reflects these differences from traditional teacher-centered models of child and adolescent education. Facilitators should be familiar with the adult learning theory as a foundation to develop effective lessons and delivering them in a manner best suited to the learner.

Adult learning theory is founded on the principles that effective training is:

**Relevant** – The content and activities should be relevant to the experience or intended experience of the adult learner. Whereas children and adolescents will attempt to learn content isolated from its application, adults learn best when they see the relevance of the taught concept to their experience.

**Engaged** – The adult learner retains knowledge and concepts more readily if they are engaged in the process of discovery and exploration rather than being the recipient of information.

**Active** – The learning process should be active and replicate, as closely as possible, the environment within which the skill or knowledge will be applied. Rather than memorizing code sections, adults would retain and apply knowledge more effectively if they worked to discover the content, and then were able to practice its application in a simulation or scenario.

**Learner-centered** – The traditional classroom taught concepts and prepared participants to pass tests and other measures of their progress. Unfortunately, the participants' retention of that knowledge was often nominal beyond the confines of the class. The emerging intent of the training is to produce the most effective outcomes possible; to see learners apply skills in a real-world setting. The focus on the learner acquiring knowledge is a critical step in effective training.

### **Facilitating from an Asset-Based Perspective**

Facilitators are strongly encouraged to utilize an asset or strength-based approach during the training. Participants have a wealth of experience and skill sets that can be leveraged to advance their learning, *as well as the learning of the facilitator*. It is important to not only acknowledge the participants as valuable resources, but to also utilize the collective group to further each other's thinking and produce innovative and effective solutions to address problems.

Examples of phrases or questions that promote an asset or strength-based approach include:

- Let's see what the group thinks about the challenge you have encountered. Does anyone have any suggestions that may help resolve this issue?
- It sounds like your team has a lot of experience in.... Can you share with the larger group the process your team used to...?

Facilitating from an asset-based perspective helps promote self-efficacy and participants may begin to link their personal assets to those assets in a school, community and beyond. Most importantly, working from an asset-based perspective helps a group drive the development process themselves by identifying and mobilizing existing, but often unrecognized assets and thereby responding to and creating local opportunities. For instance when a school starts to ask what can parents offer as opposed to what they need, there is a greater opportunity for families and schools alike to build valuable partnerships.

## Training Overview

This training provides foundational information, resources and tools to help build meaningful partnerships with families that are linked to learning and healthy development. It provides an opportunity to develop a common language for family engagement; improve coordination within systems, communities, districts, and schools; and strengthens capacity to leverage resources and partnerships. The intended audience is as follows: Area Coordinators, ROE-based service providers, and district and school personnel. This training is designed to build the capacity of participants in building effective partnerships with families that is linked to learning and healthy development.

## Expected Outcomes

<b>Family Engagement</b>
I can identify meaningful and effective practices of family engagement in districts/schools.
<b>Family Engagement Framework – Knowledge level targets</b>
I can explain the purpose and components of ISBE’s Family Engagement Framework.
I can identify best practices that lead to meaningful family engagement.
I can summarize how family engagement is mutually beneficial to all stakeholders.
<b>Family Engagement Reasoning/Skills</b>
I can demonstrate how to utilize the Family Engagement Framework.
<b>Family Engagement Resources and Materials</b>
I can identify and share resources and materials that align with the Family Engagement Framework.
I can access the research related to the ISBE Family Engagement Framework
I can locate the legislative requirements related to family engagement.

## Facilitator's Checklist

- ☐ Preparation
  - ☐ Read the following:
    - ☐ Family Engagement Framework Guide
    - ☐ Family Engagement Facilitator Guide for **Family Engagement Framework Training**
  - ☐ Read the agenda and facilitator's notes for each activity
  - ☐ Review the PowerPoint
  - ☐ Review handouts for selected activities
  - ☐ Make photocopies for handouts
  - ☐ Gather materials needed
  - ☐ Make table tents of family engagement definition
- ☐ Materials Needed
  - ☐ PowerPoint presentation
  - ☐ Internet Connection
  - ☐ LCD Projector
  - ☐ Speakers
  - ☐ Laptop
  - ☐ Chart Paper
  - ☐ Markers
  - ☐ Name Tents
  - ☐ Post-It Notes
  - ☐ Table Tents of family engagement definition
- ☐ Handouts
  - ☐ Please make sure these materials are printed or accessible electronically.
  - ☐ Pre and Post Surveys
  - ☐ ISBE Family Engagement Framework Guide (or view electronically)
  - ☐ Parent Café Recipe
  - ☐ Parent Café Questions (one per group)
  - ☐ Parent Café Agreements (one per group)



## **ISBE Family Engagement (FE) Framework Training**

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### **Agenda**

5 minutes	Welcome and Introductions
10 minutes	FE Foundational Services
5 minutes	Norming Activity
10 minutes	FE Context Activity
5 minutes	Evolution of FE
15 minutes	Framework Introduction
5 minutes	Principle One
5 minutes	Principle Two
5 minutes	Principle Three
5 minutes	Principle Four
30 minutes	Unpacking the Standards
10 minutes	High Impact Strategies
10 minutes	Resources
10 minutes	Post-survey and Closing Statements

## **Preparation**

- Read the Family Engagement Framework Guide and review the PowerPoint and all activities for this training.
- Practice delivery of content.
- Make sure the room is welcoming.
  - All handouts, snacks, post-it notes, name tents, table tents with family engagement definition, markers and other amenities are on the table(s).
  - The seats are positioned so that everyone can see their teammates and easily move his/her chair to see the screen.
- Write “Parking Lot” on flip chart paper.
- Have multiple sheets of chart paper available to take notes.
- Encourage districts/schools to register/attend as teams.

## **Registration**

- Provide name tents
- Provide handouts/materials

## **Pre-Training Activities**

If possible, individually:

- Welcome each participant before the training begins.
- Introduce self.
- Share logistics (e.g., location of restrooms, materials, etc.).
- Share pre-post survey. Explain that these are the targets for the One Day Training. Ask them to only complete the “pre” column. Explain that the purpose of this pre-post survey is to examine individual growth.
- Ask participants to sit with their district/school team.

If it is not possible to individually greet and share the above information, facilitators should allow additional time in the agenda to deliver the pre-training activities to the whole group.

# ISBE Family Engagement Framework

## Welcome and Introductions (5 minutes)

Present slides (1-4)

## Family Engagement and Foundational Services (10 minutes)

Present Foundation Services PowerPoint ([http://iarss.org/?page\\_id=1173](http://iarss.org/?page_id=1173))

## Norming Activity (5 minutes)

Materials: paper, chart paper and markers

Show Slide: 6

Introduce Norming Activity

Talking Points

- In order for this group to gain the most from this professional development experience, we need to ensure a safe learning environment. Characteristics of a safe learning environment include: listen for understanding, respect each other, talk from your own experience, silence your cell phones, and refrain from using put-downs of yourself or others, etc. *Note: You may want to already have these characteristics written on chart paper.*
- What are some additional needs that you may have in order to fully participate in group activities or discussions? *Add these to the chart paper.*
- This list of “needs” is also referred to as group norms. Is everyone agreeable with these norms?

*Note: You may wish to add an expectation about using the “Parking Lot” for questions that cannot be immediately addressed. Refer back to these group norms as needed.*

Talking Points

- Although most of you are attending as teams and may already work well together, it is important to establish and revisit your team norms to ensure that everyone has the same expectations for how to behave and move the work forward. Revisiting norms is especially important when circumstances change (e.g., there is a change in the team’s purpose/function, a new member joins).

## Family Engagement Context (10 minutes)

Materials: chart paper and markers

Show Slide: 7

1. Present the questions from slide 7 to the group.
2. Ask participants to respond to the questions and record their answers. (spend no more than 5 minutes):
  - What do you know about the families in your community? What skills, talents and resources do they offer the school/district?
  - What are some general thoughts you have about the family engagement efforts your district/school has implemented?
  - What have been some of the biggest challenges or barriers faced in regards to family engagement?

- What have been some of the greatest successes you've had in regards to family engagement?
1. Highlight any trends/similarities in the responses.

Ask the group if there are any critical observations during this activity. Record the observations.

### **Evolution of Family Engagement (5 minutes)**

Present slides 8-13

### **Framework Overview (5 minutes)**

Present slides: 14-20

### **Principle One: Developing a Family Engagement System (5 minutes)**

Present slides: 21-23

### **Principle Two: Building a Welcoming Environment (5 minutes)**

Present slides: 24-27

### **Principle Three: Enhancing Communication (5 minutes)**

Present slides: 28-32

### **Principle Four: Including Parents in the Decision-Making Process (5 minutes)**

Present slide: 33

### **Unpacking the Standards through the Parent Café Process (30 minutes)**

For groups of 10 or more participants, complete the parent café activity only. For groups with less than 10 participants, first complete the unpacking the standards activity that begins on page 14 and then provide a walkthrough of the parent café process (slides 35-36 and the Parent Café Recipe handout) as a strategy to engage parents in the decision-making process in a non-threatening way. Groups with less than 10 participants will not actually participate in the parent café activity.

### **Parent Café Activity (For groups of 12 or more participants only)**

#### **Materials:**

- Parent café recipe
- Parent café agreements
- Parent café questions
- Chart paper
- Markers
- Principle Four standards on page 24 of the ISBE Family Engagement Framework Guide

#### **Talking Points**

- The parent café is an opportunity for parents, teachers, school leaders, community members and other stakeholders to engage in a conversational process with others around topics that impact student learning and healthy development.
- It creates a safe space that stimulates learning and further action.

- The parent café offers an easy to follow format for guiding parents in strength-based conversations centered on sharing ideas and successes related to supporting their child's learning.
- I am going to show you how a mini café works by engaging you in the process.

Present slide: 35

Pass out the recipe and handouts for a parent café.

Show slide: 36

#### Talking Points

- Let's take a couple minutes to review the recipe. This recipe is a condensed version of how to facilitate a parent café. You can find a link to the complete guide at [www.isbe.net/family-engagement](http://www.isbe.net/family-engagement). After you have read the recipe, I will host a mini café so you can get a sense of what it looks like and how it is set up.
- Typically a café starts with an ice breaker that allows the participants to get to know each other. Since time is limited and you have been engaged in a couple of norming activities, we will not do this important step today.

Do the following things while the group is reading the instructions.

1. Group participants into 4 tables.
2. Place the parent café question on each table.
3. Provide chart paper and markers for each group.
4. Ask the group to identify a host and a recorder.
5. Give the host and recorder their instructions.

#### Taking Points

- Now in your groups, the host will recap the principles, read the question at your table and also the café agreements. The host will ensure everyone has the opportunity to contribute and is mindful of the café agreements.
- As you are talking, please record your thoughts on the chart paper. You can use words or pictures. These notes will be useful for the next group.
- You will have 2-3 minutes for each question. Please begin your conversations now.

After the allotted time has passed, ask the groups to rotate. The host stays at the table they were at throughout the duration of the café. Please make sure to tell them to go to a different table and to mix up so that the same people from the previous table are not at the next table.

#### Talking Points

- The host will once again recap the principle, read the question and the agreements. They will also recap what the previous group said.
- You will have 2-3 minutes for each question. Please begin your conversations now.

After the allotted time has passed, ask the groups to rotate for the third time. The host stays at the table they were at throughout the duration of the café. Please make sure to tell them to go to a different table and to mix up so that the same people from the previous table are not at the next table.

#### Talking Points

- The host will once again read the question and the agreements. They will also recap what the previous group said.
- You will have 2-3 minutes for each question. Please begin your conversations now.
- Ask the host to read aloud the responses.

After the allotted time has passed, ask the groups to rotate for the last time. The host stays at the table they were at throughout the duration of the café. Please make sure to tell them to go to a different table and to mix up so that the same people from the previous table are not at the next table.

#### Talking Points

- The host will once again read the question and the agreements. They will also recap what the previous group said.
- You will have 2-3 minutes for each question. Please begin your conversations now.
- Ask the host to read aloud the responses

As the host is sharing, briefly record what is shared on chart paper. Make a point to highlight the similarities in what was shared. Ask participants to share what they feel about the process and record their responses.

#### Processing Question

- What are the possible benefits to using this approach with parents?

#### **Unpacking the Standards Activity (Do this activity only if you have a group of 12 or less) (30 minutes)**

Show slide: 34

1. Create four groups. You can ask participants to number off from 1-4. The participants that have been assigned to 1 are in the first group, those assigned a 2 are in the second group and so forth.
2. Assign a principle to each group.
3. Give each group no more than 15 minutes to review and discuss the following questions:
  - What do the standards for each principle mean to your group?
  - If a school or district decides to incorporate the standards into their improvement plan, what opportunities might be present? What would be the challenges?
  - Where and how could a school/district implement the standard?
4. Support groups as needed.
5. Ask each group to share highlights from their discussion.
6. Record responses.

#### Parent Café Talking Points

- One of the ways to engage parents in the decision making process is a parent café.

- The parent café is an opportunity for parents, teachers, school leaders, community members and other stakeholders to engage in a conversational process with others around topics and varying perspectives that impact student learning and healthy development.
- It brings people together for discussion, sharing, and support with the goal of creating a space that stimulates learning and further action.
- Parent Café offers an easy to follow format for guiding parents in strength-based conversations centered on sharing ideas and successes related to supporting their child's learning.
- I am going to show you how a mini café works by engaging you in the process.

Present slide: 35

Pass out the recipe and handouts for a parent café

Show slide: 36

Talking Points

- Let's take a couple minutes to review the recipe. This recipe is a condensed version of how to facilitate a parent café. You can find a link to the complete guide at [www.isbe.net/family-engagement](http://www.isbe.net/family-engagement).

### **High Impact Strategies (10 minutes)**

Present slides (37-41)

### **Resources (10 minutes)**

Present Slide: 42

Demonstrate where to find the various resources and tools in the webpage. Please be sure to show the following links:

- Overview
- ISBE Framework Tools
- ISBE Resources
- External Resources
- Resources for Parents

### **Post-survey and Closing Statements (10 minutes)**

Show Slide: 43

## Appendix



## Facilitators Notes

### Facilitator's Notes:

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### Lesson Evaluation:

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### Participant's Feedback:

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### Notes for Next Time:

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## Parent Café Recipe

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### Recipe for a Parent Café

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The parent café is an opportunity to engage in a conversational process with other parents and school staff about being a parent, school, and their children.

#### Ingredients

##### Ingredients:

9-30	Guests	3	Parent “Hosts”
1	Facilitator	3-4	Questions
3	Tablecloths	3-4	Copies of Café Agreements
12-30	Cups, Tea	A Bunch	Edible Teats
3-6	Large pieces of paper	12-30	Name Tags
12	Markers	1	Timer
12-30	Commitment Cards	12-30	Envelopes
12-30	Outcome surveys	A Dash	Creativity!

##### Directions:

##### Weeks before...

1. Share your idea with existing parent groups and school staff for their input and buy in. Encourage everyone’s contribution.
2. Get together a parent café planning committee that includes parents.
3. Create special invitations, deliver the invitations in person, talk to parents about important issues or themes.
4. Have a planning committee meeting. Set the context.
  - a. Talk about needs and decide on an area of focus, theme or topic to be addressed in your parent café.
  - b. Determine 3 big questions related to your theme that everyone will respond to in the care. Explore questions that matter.
  - c. Determine 1 one on one question for a “warm-up” activity.
  - d. Assign next steps, roles and responsibilities (see the following directions)
5. Invite parents to your parent café. You are encouraged to be welcoming, fun, and friendly.
6. Find and on-board 3 hosts. Ideally, the hosts are parents. Review with them their roles, what they should do and review the café agreements.
7. Arrange a potluck or plan for café style refreshments.
8. Make follow-up calls to parents to confirm their participation in the café.
9. Get markers, name tags, big paper, table cloths, and decorations.
10. Make tents with the questions written on them for each conversation table.

##### Right before the day of the café...

1. Set up a greetings area, conversation tables (with table cloths, paper, markers, question tents) and refreshments

## Parent Café Recipe Continued

### During the café...

1. Greet guests as they come in. You are encouraged to be welcoming and offer refreshments.
2. Have participants complete name tags.
3. Introduce the café theme and café process for the day.
4. Randomly pair guests for a warm-up activity.
5. In the pairs, conduct one-on-one conversations.
6. Introduce hosts and ask participants to join a table with a host.
7. Host café conversations at each table and rotate. Encourage everyone's contribution. Connect diverse perspectives. Listen together and notice patterns.
8. Rotate the group until every person has had the chance to respond to each question.
9. Ask each host to review the responses to the group. Ask for group feedback. Note patterns.
10. Pass out commitment cards and ask participants to complete them and put their mailing address on the envelopes. The cards will be mailed back to them in 2 weeks.
11. Share/reflect on conversations. Share collective discoveries.
12. Ask participants to complete the outcome survey. Provide closing remarks and thank participants.

### After...

1. Thank participants. Send thank you notes, emails or call.
2. Review the survey data.
3. Debrief with the planning committee. Share with them the highlights of the café and survey data. Plan next steps. Ask if there are additional resources needed.
4. Follow up on next steps.
5. Enjoy!



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## **Parent Café Questions**

### **Developing a Family Engagement System**

- What does this standard mean to you and your partner?
- If a school or district decides to incorporate the standard into their improvement plan, what opportunities might be present? What would be the challenges?
- Where and how could a school/district implement the standard?

### **Building a Welcoming Environment**

- What does this standard mean to you and your partner?
- If a school or district decides to incorporate the standard into their improvement plan, what opportunities might be present? What would be the challenges?
- Where and how could a school/district implement the standard?

### **Enhancing Communication**

- What does this standard mean to you and your partner?
- If a school or district decides to incorporate the standard into their improvement plan, what opportunities might be present? What would be the challenges?
- Where and how could a school/district implement the standard?

### **Including Parents in Decision Making**

- What does this standard mean to you and your partner?
- If a school or district decides to incorporate the standard into their improvement plan, what opportunities might be present? What would be the challenges?
- Where and how could a school/district implement the standard?

## **Parent Café Agreements**

**Use “I” Statements**

**Turn Your Cell Phone on Silent**

**Talk from your Own Experiences**

**No Put-Downs of Yourself or Others**

**What is Said in the Room Stays in the Room**

**Be an Active Listener**

***Meaningful Family Engagement** is based on the premise that parents, educators, and community members **share responsibility** for youth development. It is fostered through a deliberate process and embraced throughout the school community. It empowers adults to **jointly support** student growth, addresses barriers to learning, and is mindful of diverse school-communities and responsive to student and family needs.*

***Meaningful Family Engagement** is based on the premise that parents, educators, and community members **share responsibility** for youth development. It is fostered through a deliberate process and embraced throughout the school community. It empowers adults to **jointly support** student growth, addresses barriers to learning, and is mindful of diverse school-communities and responsive to student and family needs.*