Illinois State Board of Education

Family Engagement Foundational Services Facilitator Guide
Assessing and Action Planning 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.

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.

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 and addresses barriers to learning, is mindful of diverse school-communities and responsive to student and family needs.*

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 the Assessing and Action Planning 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 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. 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.

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 this 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.

Assessing and Action Planning Overview

The Assessing and Action Planning Training is designed for participants to attend as teams. The intended audience is as follows: Area Coordinators, ROE-based service providers, and district/ school teams. This training is designed to build the capacity of teams in assessing and planning for meaningful family engagement.

Expected Outcomes

Family Engagement
I can identify meaningful and effective practices of family engagement in districts/schools.
Family Engagement Framework – Knowledge level targets
I can explain the purpose and components of ISBE's Family Engagement Framework.
Family Engagement Reasoning/Skills
I can use the Family Engagement Self- Assessment and Action Planning tools.
Family Engagement Resources and Materials
I can identify and share resources and materials that align with the Family Engagement Framework.

Facilitator's Checklist

- ☑ Preparation
  - Read the following:
    - Family Engagement Framework Guide
    - Self-Assessment and Action Planning tool
    - Family Engagement Facilitator Guide for the Assessing and Action Planning 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
  - 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)
  - Moving from Theory to Practice Graphic Organizer
  - Data Types and Sources (or view electronically)
  - Self-Assessment and Action Planning Tools and Appendices (or view electronically)
  - Alignment Tool (or view electronically)

Agenda

5 minutes	Welcome and Introductions
10 minutes	FE Foundational Services
5 minutes	Norming Activity
5 minutes	Evolution of FE
15 minutes	Framework Introduction
6 minutes	Principles and Standards Overview
6 minutes	High Impact Strategies
1 minute	Introduction to Implementation Strategies
25 minutes	Moving from Theory to Practice
25 minutes	Self-Assessment and Action Planning Tool
7 minutes	Resources
10 minutes	Post-survey and Closing Statements

Preparation

- Read the Family Engagement Framework Guide and the Self-Assessment and Action Planning Tools.
- 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. Identify the expected outcomes for the Assessing and Action Planning Training. Ask them to only complete the "pre" column for Assessing and Action Planning expected outcomes. Inform participants that they will be asked to complete the "post column" at the end of the training. Participants should select N/A for expected outcomes that are not applicable (those not identified as expected outcomes for this specific training). 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 whole group.

Presentation and Facilitation of Learning

Welcome and Introductions (5 minutes)
Present slides (1-4)

Family Engagement and Foundational Services (10 minutes)
Present Foundation Services slides

Norming Activity (5 minutes)
Materials*:* paper, chart paper and markers

Show Slide: 6

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 we will not have time today to spend on establishing team norms, it is a critical behavior of successful teams. Not only should norms be developed for basic group behaviors but also around how the team will make decisions, communicate within the group and with external stakeholders.

Evolution of Family Engagement (5 minutes)
Present slides 7-12

Framework Overview (15 minutes)
Present slides: 13-19

Overview of Principles/Standards (6 minutes)
Present slides: 20-23

High Impact Strategies (6 minutes)
Present slides 24-26

Introduction to Implementation Strategies (1 minute)
Present slides: 27-28

Moving from Theory to Practice (25 minutes)
Materials: Graphic Organizer and CSI Data Types and Sample Sources

Show slide 29

1. Ask teams to take about 25 minutes to think about and discuss the following:
   - the students and families in their school community
   - the family engagement efforts they are currently implementing under each principle
   - the data they are collecting and using to inform and evaluate their efforts

   Share the graphic organizer and refer teams to the CSI Data Types and Sample Sources document.

   Talking Points:
   - As teams have their discussion, they should be recording their information in the graphic organizer. The information recorded in this graphic organizer will help teams plan for and inform a more comprehensive family engagement self-assessment.
   - When discussing what data you are collecting on your efforts, the CSI document may be a good point of reference. It highlights the various types of student learning data, perception data, process and program data, as well as the demographic data that districts/schools collect.

   Note: Walk around room during this process to see if teams need any additional support. Offer words of encouragement. If a team doesn't have very many data sources, ask them what data is still needed and how they can collect it.

Self-Assessment and Action Planning Tool (25 minutes)
Present slides: 30-40

Next Steps Team Discussion
Show Slide: 41

1. Ask teams to spend about 15 minutes (or less depending on time constraints) discussing how they would like to approach the self-assessment and action planning tool process. Do they want to allocate 1-2 full days to complete them or do the standards need to be chunked out and addressed during 1-2 hour meetings over the next couple of months? Who is going to further identify and gather data sources? Will a data specialist be utilized to help present the data to the group so that it is easily understood? Ask teams to consider how the information recorded in their graphic organizer can help inform a more comprehensive self-assessment and action planning process.
2. Have teams record their responses for their own planning purposes.

Resources (7 minutes)
Present slide: 42

Talking Points

- There are a number of tools and resources available. They can be located at www.isbe.net/family-engagement.

The facilitator should then click on the following weblink: www.isbe.net/family-engagement

Talking Points

- This webpage is a tool for school districts and schools to use in developing and expanding school-family partnerships to support improved student learning and healthy development outcomes. This resource brings 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.

- At the core of the webpage is the Illinois State Board of Education's Family Engagement Framework. The framework includes principles that establish a foundation for developing meaningful engagement with families and community leaders including guides that address capacity building, leadership development, resource allocation, progress monitoring, access, and equity.

- Please share the resources in the webpage 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.

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

Pass out Alignment Tool

Talking Points

- All districts/schools and areas have local resources to help support the work. ISBE has created a Family Engagement Framework alignment tool that can be used when trying to map local professional development opportunities.
- This tool may be a good data source when assessing capacity building.

Post-survey and Closing Statements (10 minutes)
Show slide 43

Talking Points

- This concludes the family engagement one day training session. This training was designed to provide you with foundational information and resources; and enhance your capacity in building meaningful school/family partnerships. You can find additional resources and tools at www.isbe.net/family-engagement.

Hand out post survey. Allow 5 minutes for participants to complete.

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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Scenarios

(Please note that the scenarios are to be used during trainings for Area Coordinators and Service Providers)

K-4 school; 420 students

Team Members: 3rd grade teacher, representative parent, school counselor, kindergarten teacher, and district literacy coach

The team has been working on family engagement efforts for a number of years. Many team members like what they are currently doing in regards to family engagement. Your team does not, however, collect a lot of data related to those efforts and family engagement outcomes. The school has data from the 5 Essentials Survey. The school counselor has shared information about the capacity building activities the school has implement for parents, such as a Parent University and a parent mentoring program for parents of students with disabilities.

Everyone on the team is also aware of these activities:

- Back to School Event for Families (approximately half of the families attend)
- Parent Teacher Conferences (record parent participation through sign in sheets)
- Monthly Newsletter
- PTA (raises money for various activities and coordinates the teacher appreciation luncheon)
- Family Reading Nights (observe low turnouts… 20-25 parents; families who would benefit the most don't attend)
- Website
- Outreach to parents to chaperone field trips or class parties
- Have parents sign reading logs, school handbooks, and classroom expectations (don't track this information school-wide)
- Comply with all Title I, Title III, and IDEA parent involvement regulations (meeting minutes, Compact, parent involvement policy, written notifications, etc.)

K-8 school; 1000 students

Team Members: 2nd grade teacher, 5th grade teacher, music teacher, district social worker, principal, parent of student with a disability, and PTA president

The team has been working on family engagement for a while and the team has been tracking related data for three years. They have so much data that it is a challenge to know how best to utilize it and organize it for assessment purposes. The school is constantly sharing information with parents. Efforts have included:

- Website
- Newsletters (all teachers send weekly newsletters home with students)
- Flyers (flyers are posted throughout the school building and many are also sent home with students on a weekly basis)
- Letters Mailed Home (as needed… sometimes to all parents and sometimes to targeted parents; depending on program, letters are kept on file and/or tracked)
- Emails (teachers log various email communications into tracking system)
- Phone Calls (teachers log calls into tracking system)
- Newspaper Articles (4 different articles)
- Message Board (changes almost daily)
- Parent Teacher Conferences (sign in sheets are collected)

The team also has hosted events for families.

- Reading Nights (sign in sheets)
- Family Movie Nights (observation- well attended by mostly K-4th grade families)
- Student Gallery or Poster Walks (not tracked school-wide… these are individual classroom activities)
- Back to School Event (observation- well attended by mostly K-4th grade families)
- Muffins with Mom
- Donuts with Dad
- Coffee with the Principal first Friday of the month (principal reports an average of 35 participants)

The school has offered several workshops to parents on different topics (you have sign in sheets and satisfaction survey).

The school also has 5 Essentials Survey data (only 15% of parents responded).

The school complies with all Title I, Title III and IDEA parent involvement regulations (meeting minutes, Compact, parent involvement policy, written notifications, etc.).

Parents are invited and encouraged to attend problem-solving and IEP team meetings (sign in sheets, minutes, IEPs, written notifications).

High School; 1150 students

Team Members: principal, dean, parent of freshman, parent of sophomore, parent of junior, English teacher, guidance counselor, career and technical education team leader, and resource officer

The school has complied with Title I, Title III and IDEA parent involvement regulations. The school in the past has typically only reached out to parents for disciplinary issues. The school communicates basic information to parents through their website. The downturn in the economy has hit the community hard. Students are not performing where they should be and more students have been dropping out. A new principal is interested in partnering with parents and has convened this team to direct the work.

The principal has begun some initial work by trying to understand his new community better. He has done the following:

- Reviewed census data and school data (demographics, languages spoken in the home, socio-economic levels, education levels)
- Reviewed news stories about the community
- Reviewed 5 Essentials data (only 9% of parents responded)
- Spoke with ministers in the area
- Hosted a series of forums with parents throughout the community to introduce himself, share his concern about the students and his interest in partnering with parents to improve student learning and healthy development. He asked parents about what their hopes for their children were, what they thought would help their children the most, what they would like to partner with the school on to help their children succeed, and what they might need from the school to support their children's learning and healthy development. Findings from the forum were recorded.

The team also collects and maintains documentation related to Title I, Title III and IDEA compliance (meeting minutes, Compact, parent involvement policy, written notifications, etc.).

K-12 District; 2400 students

Team Members: special education coordinator, curriculum director, assistant superintendent, district parent liaison, principal of MS, guidance counselor of HS, district literacy coach, parent representative from HS, parent representative from MS, parent representative from ES, parent liaison from the mayor's office, representative from the Chamber of Commerce, 3rd grade teacher, and representative from the school board

Test scores and enrollment in the district have been declining over the last several years. Relationships between the parents and school district are strained over some recent budgetary decisions that resulted in teacher layoffs. The mayor's office and Chamber of Commerce are concerned about people moving out of their city as a result of the schools' poor performance and their relationships with parents. A representative from the school board has initiated multiple conversations with the mayor's office, Chamber of Commerce and the assistant superintendent. All were in favor of forming a district team to improve district/school performance by engaging families.

The district has been collecting mandated data and shares school report card data through their website. They also maintain documentation that shows compliance with all Title I, Title III and IDEA parent involvement regulations.

Some of their schools and classrooms have implemented various activities to engage parents such as (newsletters, back to school events, family reading nights, etc.). The district does not collect data on these school-wide or classroom family engagement activities.

The district does have an automated communication system that allows them to notify parents of district-wide events and school closings.

The district also maintains minutes of their school board meetings. These meetings allow for public participation. Many parents over the last several years have used this forum to voice their concerns and perspectives about district decisions, etc.

Lastly, the district has 5 Essentials data (42% of parents responded to the survey).

Alignment Tool

Division: _____ Primary Contact: _____ Phone #: _____

ISBE's Family Engagement Cross-Divisional Team needs your help. We know that multiple training modules, webinars, and resources that support home-school partnerships have been previously developed accross the agency. We are interested in building from what we already have if at all possible and would appreciate it if a representative from each division could map out their family engagement capacity building resources and indicate how they align to the principles and standards within the framework. We would also appreciate it if you could forward a copy of all capacity building resources to:

	Type				FE Framework Alignment																		
Description of capacity building activities to support district/school personnel	All day training	Webinar	Workshop	Resource	FE Vision/Mission	Integration of FE efforts	Leadership Supports for FE,	FE data	Capacity building for	Partnerships with Families	Partnering w/community organizations	Shared Responsibility	Relational Trust	Outreach	Responsiveness	Strength-based Approach	Two-way communication	Information on Parent Rights	Communication linked to learning & healthy	Communication on policies and practices	Empowering parents in decision-	Obtaining and using parental input	Planning with families
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Moving From Theory to Practice Graphic Organizer

How are students in our district/school doing?	What do we know about the families in our community?	What strategies/activities do we currently implement to address P1: FE System?
Perceptions:	**Perceptions:**	
What data sources do we use that can confirm or alter these perceptions?	**What data sources do we use that can confirm or alter these perceptions?**	**What data sources do we use related to this principle or individual activities?**

What strategies/activities do we currently implement to address P2: Welcoming Environment?	What strategies/activities do we currently implement to address P3: Communication?	What strategies/activities do we currently implement to address P4: Parents in Decision Making?
What data sources do we use related to this principle or individual activities?	**What data sources do we use related to this principle or individual activities?**	**What data sources do we use related to this principle or individual activities?**

Highlight any activities that you believe might have high impact. Are there activities that you are currently implementing that you think might have little or no impact? If so, put a "?" by those activities. Be sure to further investigate these preliminary thoughts when data sources are accessible.

Data Types and Sample Sources

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.*

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