



Illinois State Board of Education

Family Engagement Foundational Services Facilitator Guide

Making the Case for Family Engagement Training



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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, addresses 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 workshop.

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 workshop 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 workshop 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 workshop 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 opportunities 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 the workshop. 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 is designed to build the awareness and increase stakeholder involvement in developing meaningful partnerships with families that is linked to learning and healthy development. The training provides a review of key research findings on the impact of family engagement on student achievement and school improvement outcomes as well as a summary of the legislative mandates that require parental involvement.

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 summarize how family engagement is mutually beneficial to all stakeholders.
Family Engagement Resources and Materials
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 **Making the Case for Family Engagement**
- 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)

3 minutes	Welcome and Introductions
10 minutes	FE Foundational Services
5 minutes	Norming Activity
3 minutes	FE Context
5 minutes	Evolution of FE
11 minutes	Framework Overview
15 minutes	Legislation Review & Activity
15 minutes	Research Review Jigsaw
31 minutes	FE Asset Mapping Activity
2 minutes	Next Steps
10 minutes	Resources
10 minutes	Post-survey and Closing Statements

Preparation

- Read the Family Engagement Framework Guide 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 whole group.

Making the Case for Family Engagement Training

Welcome and Introductions (3 minutes)

Present slides 1-4

Family Engagement and Foundational Services (10 minutes)

Present Foundation Services PowerPoint (http://iarss.org/?page_id=1173)

Show slide: 5

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).

FE Context (3 minutes)

Present slides 7-9

Evolution of Family Engagement (5 minutes)

Present slides 7-15

Framework Overview (11 minutes)

Present slides: 16-19

Legislative Review (15 minutes)

Present slides: 20-23

Materials: devices to access research reviews or handouts if no internet

Introduce Legislative Review Activity

Talking Points

- During this activity, each of you will be asked to pair up and review an excerpt that outlines a legislative policy that is linked to parental involvement and aligned to the continuous school improvement planning process. You will use the Legislative Requirements/References section of the ISBE Family Engagement Framework Guide. When you review the policy, highlight the key features, provide an explanation of the policy and if possible how it is implemented in your respective schools and/or districts.
1. Ask individuals to find a partner.
 2. Assign them the excerpts to review from the Legislative Requirements/References section of the ISBE Family Engagement Framework Guide. The excerpts include the following:
 - Comprehensive Planning
 - Leadership
 - Curriculum
 - Instruction
 - Assessment
 - Professional Development
 - Conditions for Learning
 - Family and Community
 3. Pass out sticky notes.
 4. Use slide 16 to show the questions they are to answer.
 5. On the stick notes, ask the pairs write their responses.
 6. Allow the pairs 5 minutes to read and discuss the excerpts.
 7. Once time to review has lapsed, organize the sticky notes on three separate sheets of chart paper that correspond to the questions they were charged to answer.
 8. Ask select pairs to present key findings to the larger group.

Research Review Jigsaw Activity (15 minutes)

Slide 24

Materials: devices to access research reviews or handouts if no internet

Introduce Research Review Jigsaw Activity

Talking Points

- 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).
- Not only does the research show the impact of parental involvement on student outcomes, but what practices are more likely to result in meaningful family engagement.

- During this activity, each of you will be assigned to a group, members of each group will read a specific excerpt from a literature review, synthesizing that information as a group, and then representatives from the small group will share their findings with the large group.
1. Participants will not be working in their team but randomly assigned to either group 1, 2, 3, or 4.
 - Group 1 is assigned to read the following sections under Principle 1's research review: the introduction, commitment, leadership, and accountability.
 - Group 2 is assigned to read the following sections under Principle 1's research review: capacity building and community partnership.
 - Group 3 is assigned to read Principle 2's research review.
 - Group 4 is assigned to read the research reviews for Principle 3 and 4.
 2. Each individual takes approximately 3-4 minutes to individually read their assignment.
 3. Ask participants to move into their new groups to discuss and record key findings.
 4. Ask each group to present key findings to the larger group (groups can determine how information gets shared back to the larger groups).

FE Asset-Mapping Activity (31 minutes)

Present Slides 25-28

Talking Points

- You have begun a personal asset map. You have put down what you consider valuable that is yours. Is everything on your map a material good (a car, house, bank account)? Are these all your assets? Does a beautiful smile count? How about fluency in three languages? What about being a great crafter or artist? Go back and fill in any nonmaterial thing you did not include that you might consider an asset. Assets are more than cars and houses, or even a great pitching arm. How has your life been affected by people? How did you get the stuff? Did you borrow money for a car? From a bank? From family or friends? How are people and their relationship to you assets?
- As your map grows, we begin to see that assets are both things (material objects) and people (relationships with others and others' involvement in your connection to things). People and things surround us, make up the whole of our world. Let's take 5 minutes and trade your map with a neighbor (preferably someone you do not know well).
- With just a glance or two at this person's map, what do you learn about him or her?

Record the responses on the chart paper

Ask a Follow-Up Question

- What kinds of things does this map of people and things NOT tell you about this person?

Record the responses on the chart paper

Talking Points:

- Learning how to ask what families and communities have to offer begins a process of building, creating, and developing. It brings resources, knowledge, skills, capacities, and people together. Through these connections, access to more resources and assets is at our fingertips. Let's take a look at the various kinds of asset maps you could create.

Present Slide: 29-30

- As you build relationships with families, agencies, institutions, or businesses, we increase our connections and access to a multitude of assets. Asset mapping can be a tool at many stages of community building processes, and involve many different participants.
- Once the assets are identified and you learn how to access and use them, a variety of new ideas about directions for strengthening the school/family partnership may follow. As more people come into the process and bring ideas as well as skills and resources, new approaches to old issues will come into the process as well.

Next Steps (2 minutes)

- Now that you have increased your understanding on why family engagement is an essential component of the student achievement and healthy development outcomes, you should also invest in the time to learn more about an evidence-based approach to the work. The Illinois State Board of Education developed a series of training opportunities to help schools and districts build meaningful partnerships with families that are linked to student outcomes and align with the continuous school improvement process.
- This training entitled, "Making the Case for Family Engagement" is the first one in the series. There are three two-hour trainings or they can be collapsed into an all-day training.
- The next 10 minutes I will show you how to access these training opportunities and locate resources and materials that align with the family engagement framework.

Resources (10 minutes)

Present Slide: 31

Note to the facilitator: At this point, share with the group the best way to schedule a training and contact information.

Post-survey and Closing Statements (10 minutes)

Show Slide: 32

Appendix

Facilitators Notes

Facilitator's Notes:

Lesson Evaluation:

Participant's Feedback:

Notes for Next Time:

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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