



Family Partnerships: Foundations and Principles

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Group Expectations

Be Responsible

- Return from breaks on time
- Active Participation
 - Use participant features of raise hand, thumbs up, etc.
 - Type short answer or questions in chat box
 - Respond to poll questions, if provided

Be Respectful

- Limit use of chat box to essential communication
- Please refrain from email and internet browsing
- Place your phone and other devices on mute and out-of-sight

Training Effectiveness

- At the end of the session, you will be asked to provide feedback on today's training
- Results will be used to make improvements to professional learning and for reporting to TA Center stakeholders
- One of the feedback questions you will see is related to promoting and positively portraying diversity among educators and learners (e.g., focus on asset-based language, positive representation of multiple identities)

Team Roles

- **Facilitator:** lead discussions and activities to keep the team moving forward
- **Recorder:** keep written documentation of key discussion points, decisions, and next steps
- **Timekeeper:** keep track of time and bring the team back together



Purpose

To provide research, resources, and strategies to support intentional partnerships with families in their child's education through a tiered approach, leading to improved outcomes for students.

Intended Outcomes

- Define family partnerships/family engagement and what primary principles support family partnerships
- Articulate some strategies supporting family partnerships
- Describe tools, resources, and examples to enhance family partnerships

Agenda

1.0 Welcome and Introductions

2.0 Family Partnership Foundations

3.0 Family Partnership Principles

1.0 Welcome and Introductions

Introductions

In the chat box-

- Name
- Organization
- Role with families



Activity 1: Hopes and Fears

- Share one hope regarding this session and share in chat.
- As a team, can we identify any themes. What stands out? What hopes or fears do you share with others in the group?



2.0 Family Partnership Foundations



Activity 2: Impacts of Family Partnerships

- What do we know about the impacts of fostering family partnerships? On the JamBoard (link is in chat)...
 - Share impacts of strong family partnerships on one side of the chart
 - Share impacts of weak family partnerships on the other side of the chart

Why Do Family Partnerships Matter?

- Effective family partnerships improve classroom dynamics, increase teacher expectations, student teacher relationships, and classroom competence
- Strong family partnerships can be the key to improving school dropout rates and foster improved educational aspirations
- Family engagement is a primary predictor in children's success

(Boberiene, 2013; Barton, 2003; McWayne, Melzi, Limingan, & Schick, 2016)

More on Why Family Partnerships Matter

- Family experiences are significant predictors of cognitive skills and social-emotional skills
- Child outcomes improve considerably when schools and families collaborate on individual children's needs, goals, programs, and progress
- Interventions engaging family members contribute to reductions in children's disruptive behaviors

(Boberiene, 2013; McLeskey et al., 2017; Owens, Murphy, Richerson, Girio, & Himawan, 2008))

Why Family Partnerships Matter: A Research Study

- A study of 71 high-poverty schools found that when teachers were active in their outreach to families, students' reading and math scores improved at a rate 50% faster in reading and 40% faster for math
- What worked?
 - ✦ Meeting every family face-to-face
 - ✦ Sending materials home for families to use with their children
 - ✦ Staying in regular touch with families
 - ✦ Providing regular progress updates to families

(US Department of Education, 2001)

Equitable Family Partnerships

- Focus on meaningful engagement activities and systems between schools and families
- Do not characterize or treat specific family groups as deficient in their levels of engagement or approach to education
- Include specific practices or approaches that reflect the values of a general group of families, as well as systems that foster tailored supports, flexible engagement options, and coordination between families and schools

(Day, 2013; Goodall & Montgomery, 2014)

Parent Involvement to Family Partnerships

Involvement

- Individual responsibility
- Deficit-based/adversarial
- Random acts
- Add-on, one-time activities
- Compliance-focused

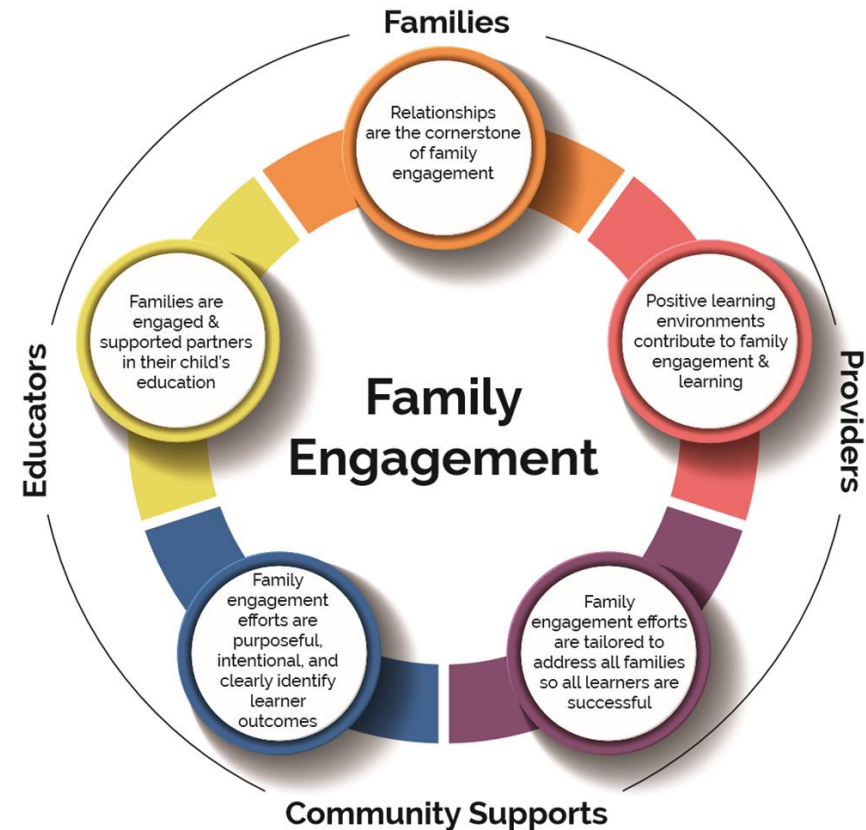
Partnerships

- Shared responsibility
- Strength-based and collaborative
- Systemic
- Integrated and sustained
- Integrated and aligned

(Michigan Department of Education, 2020)

Family Engagement Definition and Principles

- Family engagement is a collaborative relationship between families, educators, providers, and partners to support and improve the learning, development, and health of every learner
- <https://www.michigan.gov/mde/resources/family-engagement>



(Michigan Department of Education, 2020)

Dual Capacity Framework

- ◆ Conditions integral to the success of family-school partnership initiatives and interventions
- ◆ Desired intermediate capacity goals that should be the focus of policies and procedures
- ◆ Description of the capacity-building outcomes for families and school and program staff

(SEDL, 2013)



Challenges to Partnering with Families

- Scheduling conflicts and time restraints
- Families with different, few, or no experiences with formal education
- Educators may have limited time or capacity to engage in thoughtful or detailed interactions with families
- Educators may communicate with families about problems but fail to offer guidance or information to help parents support students
- Educators may neglect to engage families based on perceptions that families do not wish to be engaged, which further exacerbates communication challenges

(Hill & Tyson, 2009; Gonzalez-DeHass & Willems, 2003; Öztürk, 2013; Stephens & Pate, 2015)

Challenges to Equitably Partnering with Families

- Family members who are recent immigrants or refugees may be experiencing stress regarding major life changes
- Family members may distrust public institutions and choose to limit interactions
- Educators may hold expectations for family engagement that do not reflect the schedules or cultures of families
- Educators may lack the preparation or administrative support to effectively engage with diverse families

(State Support Network, 2018)

Effective Home-School Partnerships

- Provide clear, consistent, and regular communication
- Invite ideas from families
- Responsive to family needs
- Focus on the whole family
- Help families identify and connect to resources
- Share observations of children's behaviors with families
- Show respect for families and their cultures
- Take time to understand the family's community
- Show openness to change

(Porter, Bromer, & Forry, 2015)



Activity 3: Busting Barriers

- In the chat box, share: What are some activities your program has implemented to overcome potential barriers to family partnerships?

Strategies to Bust Family Partnership Barriers

- Invite families to join in the development of program goals.
- Use Google Forms to gain participation, especially for families that are working and unable to attend events
- Be intentional with communications, how much, how often, critical information.
- Ensure all messages can be translated and that parents who do not email still have access to information.
- Consider ways and areas that families can shape how we do business. One example- have them vote on program-wide expectations.
- Do not assume you already know the reasons/details/complexities.

3.0 Family Engagement Principles



Activity 4: Brainstorm

- On the JamBoard, share all the principles of family engagement or family partnerships that come to your mind
- As a large group, discuss what principles you shared with other participants. What principles were different?

Family Engagement Definition and Principles



(Michigan Department of Education, 2020)

Relationships are the Cornerstone

Strong Relationships

- Educators are culturally responsive and reach out to families
- Families feel welcome and respected
- Educators and families jointly plan and lead family engagement activities

Weak Relationships

- Educators make assumptions that some families don't value education or are not interested
- Educators do not communicate effectively with families
- Families do not feel welcome at their child's school

(California Department of Education, 2017)

Relationships are the Cornerstone (cont.)

- Welcome families in consistently appropriate and culturally competent ways
- Provide families with relevant information about school systems and resources
- Communicate based on cultural norms and priorities
- Schedule events at times convenient for families
- Host special events that foster connections (e.g., Meet the Teacher Night, Coffee with the Principal, School Tours)

(SEDL, 2013)

Building Relationships

- Welcome families in consistently appropriate and culturally competent ways
- Provide families with relevant information about school systems
- Offer structures to listen to families
- Engage family members and community members in ongoing and recurring efforts
- Conduct home visits

(SEDL & US Department of Education, 2013; Moodie & Ramos, 2014)

Relationships: District Practices

- Provide training and supports for both educators and families
- Clear and direct signage
- Clear protocols for family member interactions
- Offer spaces with key information on school policies and procedures
- Create staff positions dedicated to family engagement
- Focus on school improvement rather than procedural compliance
- Council on Family Engagement

(Hanover Research, 2016; SEDL, 2014)

Culturally Responsive Practices

- Instructional and engagement practices may need to be adapted or modified to consider language, culture, and context
- Adaptations...
 - May be minor or substantial
 - Should be made with input and feedback from families
 - Help foster trust, respect, and communications between members and schools
- Example in practice: Detroit Public Schools
 - The district adapted their parent engagement model to better reflect the values of the Latino community
 - Translated the parent engagement model to Spanish
 - Adaptations go beyond language translation to modify practices and interventions.

Relationships: Supporting Family Culture

- Culture: Includes values, customs, general beliefs about gender roles, and practices. Influences the way a family communicates. Culture influences how families raise their children
- When learning about families' culture, you can:
 - Find out what is important to them, what they value, and how their experiences shape their caregiving practices
 - Support and strengthen families' and parents' relationships with their children by supporting their learning and development at home
 - Make connections between what children learn at home and the competencies you home to nurture at school

Positive Learning Environments

Positive Learning Environments

- All school visitors are warmly greeted daily
- Student work and photos are visible throughout the school
- School has an open-door policy for family visitors

Negative Learning Environments

- The school creates security and visiting policies without input from families
- Families required to schedule appointments to visit school
- Family engagement opportunities are only offered during the school/work day

Positive Environments: Strategies for Success

- Place information about school- and community-based programs throughout the school
- Create literacy-rich school environments
- Work with families to develop and host family workshops reflective of stated family need and schoolwide data
- Partner with community-based organizations

Efforts are Tailored to Address all Families

Strong Learning Connections

- Family engagement activities are aligned with district goals for student outcomes
- Families and educators engage in two-way communication about what students are learning in school
- Family engagement activities help families to support at-home learning

Weak Learning Connections

- Educators do not understand how to engage families to support student learning
- Families do not feel knowledgeable or confident about how to provide support for learning
- Family engagement efforts are not related to student learning outcomes

(California Department of Education, 2017)

Tailored Efforts: Strategies for Success

- Develop goals with, not for, families
- Collect and share student data with families
- Assign interactive homework
- Provide resources and books in different languages for families who are not native English speakers

School Efforts are Purposeful, Intentional, and Aligned

Strong Connections

- Family engagement activities are aligned with district goals for student outcomes
- Families and educators engage in two-way communication about what students are learning
- Family engagement activities help families to provide support at home for learning

(California Department of Education, 2017)

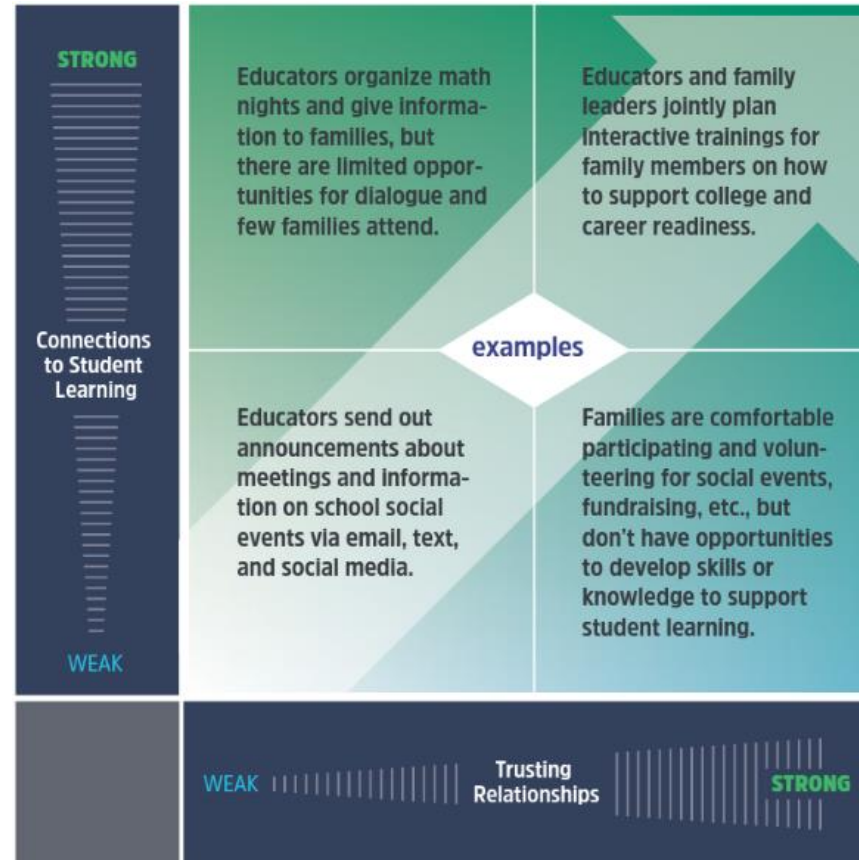
Weak Connections

- Educators do not understand how to engage families to support student learning
- Families do not feel knowledgeable or confident about how to provide support for learning
- Family engagement activities are not related to student learning outcomes

Purposeful, Intentional, and Aligned: Strategies for Success

- Provide material and host workshops
- Create and share literacy, math, etc. kits for students to take home
- Provide families with information about summer and after-school programs that focus on building literacy skills

School Efforts are Purposeful, Intentional, and Aligned



(California Department of Education, 2017)

Families are Engaged and Supported Partners

Strong Support

- Families are included on school committees with an intentional role
- Surveys are shared throughout the year to garner family input- results are shared with families
- Families are linked to community resources

Weak Support

- Plans for students are developed without input from families
- School programming includes only dominant language of students
- Families do not consult the school as a resource in meeting family needs

Engaged and Supported Partners in Education

- Establish regular, meaningful communication
- Promote and support parenting skills
- Encourage active parent participation in student learning
- Welcome parents as volunteers in schools
- Invite parents to be full partners in making school decisions
- Reach out to the community for resources

(Berger & Riojas-Cortez, 2004)

Engaged and Supported: Strategies for Success

- Integrate family input on school and classroom decisions regarding reading and writing curriculum and assessment
- Co-create events and book clubs with families
- Share family literacy engagement opportunities with the school community

Engaging Families in Data- Examples

- Student-led conferences- Students are given charge of the meeting to explain coursework to parents, including learning goals and struggles
- Incorporate “data chats”- Include direct conversations between parents and teachers, with the goal of mitigating gaps in parent understanding of data and its applications
- Online family portraits- Developed in a format understandable and informed by parents. Includes integrating data systems and two-way translated communications

Example: Student-Led Conference



Activity #7: Fill in the Blank!

- The quality of family experiences and home-school partnerships are significant predictors of _____ and _____-_____ skills.
- Effective _____ _____ foster communication, invite ideas from family, are responsive to families, connect families to resources, and are inclusive of family cultures and beliefs.
- Trusting _____ are the key component to strong family partnerships.



Activity #8: Make a Plan

In the chat box:

- Share one thing you will start doing to partner with families in the next week
- Discuss one takeaway you have from this session

Thank you!

No school can work well for children if parents and teachers do not act in partnership on behalf of the children's best interests

— *Dorothy H Cohen* —

AZ QUOTES

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SESSION EVALUATION

- Trainers, add the session evaluation link from the MiMTSS Data System
- When you get to this slide in training, go to the link and provide a preview of the questions and how to complete the feedback