

Parent and Family Engagement: Reframing our Thinking

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What is Family Engagement?



<https://www.menti.com/albnw4vw8box>



Relationships between schools and families should be:

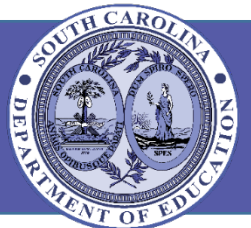
based on mutual respect and trust



should affirm and celebrate families' cultures and languages



should provide ample opportunities for two-way communication between staff and families



Family engagement is an **interactive process** through which program staff and families, family members, and their children build positive and goal-oriented relationships. It is a **shared responsibility** of families and professionals that **requires mutual respect** for the roles and strengths each has to offer. **Family engagement means doing with—not doing to or for—families.**



Effective family
engagement cuts across
and **reinforces learning**
in the multiple settings
where children learn

at home

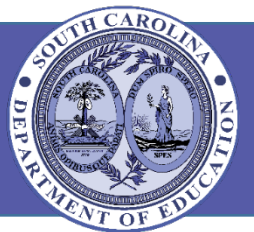
in prekindergarten programs

in school

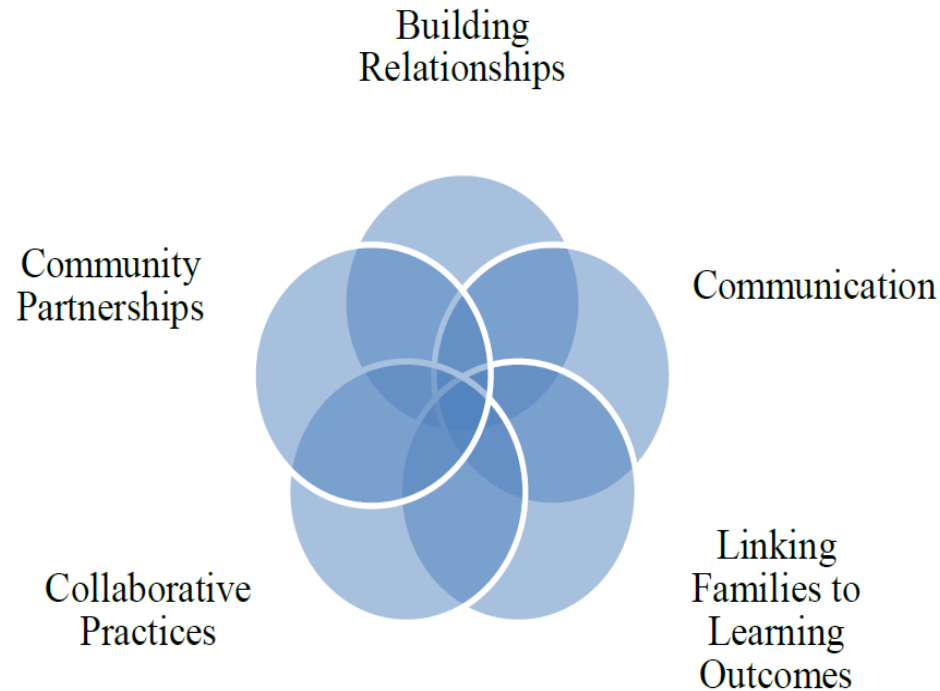
in after school programs

in faith-based institutions

in the community



Family Engagement K-12 Framework: Strategies for Success



Core Principles of Family Engagement

Collaboration: Parents have a lead role in making decisions regarding how to best address their family needs; service providers act as good partners and provide supports to them.



Core Principles of Family Engagement, cont.

Communication: Conversations with families are not one-time or sporadic, rather conversations are ongoing to build trust and demonstrate that service providers are working to meet the needs of the child and family; communication between families and service providers are two-way, flowing from both family and service provider.



More Core Principles of Family Engagement

- Sustained Engagement: Family engagement activities are frequent, consistent, and regular parts of programming.
- System-Level Involvement: Families are included in evaluating current policies and programs and provide input into the development of new ones.



Title I, Part A Requirements on Family Engagement

Opportunities are provided to parents to become actively involved in the planning, implementation, and review of the programs in which their child is involved

Communication is provided in the families' native language

Removal of barriers for greater participation with activities related to achievement goals and help build confidence

Include parents in education and training programs

Include parent participation in the education of their children



Family Engagement Strategies

- Collaborate with Community Based Organizations and Faith-Based Communities
- Conduct Home Visits
- Implement Effective Two-Way Communication Strategies
- Develop a Safe and Welcoming Environment for Parents and Students
- Consider Combining Events across Grade Levels and Schools



Small Group Activity



What are some barriers that you believe keep parents/guardians/caregivers from being able to engage?

Removing Barriers to Family Engagement



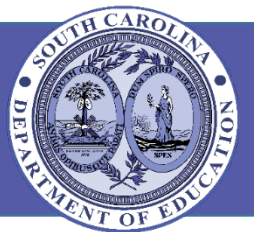
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- ✓ *Consider their time/schedules*
- ✓ *Provide all communication in the family's home language*
- ✓ *Provide appropriate interpreters as needed*
- ✓ *Offer frequent opportunities to build trust and relationships*
- ✓ *Recognize behavior as a trauma response, rather than judging*



Removing Barriers to Family Engagement, cont.

- ✓ *Provide transportation to all family activities and school events with Title I or MV funds, offer tickets to school events like plays, sports events, etc.*
- ✓ *Provide childcare at school events and meetings*
- ✓ *Conduct home visits and build confidence by pointing out things they do well*
- ✓ *Provide materials that can be used and kept at home*



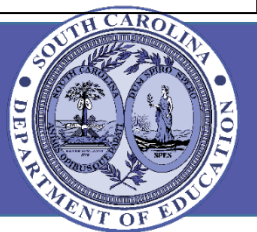
Myths

vs.

Truths

- Certain people just won't engage. It's not in their culture.
- If parents are not willing to come to the school, they cannot be engaged in their kids' education.
- Most parents who do not participate in school events did not do well in school themselves.
- Parents only get involved when their kid is in trouble or if they flunked a test. If the kid is doing ok, there's no reason for families to interfere.
- It's up to the teacher to get parents involved. If the teacher needs us, they will ask.

- Linking engagement to individuals who care prevents people from understanding that engagement can happen intentionally - through structured programs, like home visits, and smart policies.
- This perception of parents in poverty prevents the public from connecting engagement with student success.
- When people see engagement as purely a response to some crisis, they can't see the purpose of engaging early and often, to help their children prepare for success.
- When people see "school" as nothing more than a teacher and their students, they fail to see the role the broader system plays in the success of children.



Reframing our Thinking

When people see “school” as nothing more than a teacher and their students, they fail to see the role the broader system plays in the success of children.

Parents may not want to come into the school, but that does not mean they do not want to help out in a way that feels safe to them.

Instead of judging them, let's use a trauma responsive approach and give them voice and choice in how they would like to be involved.

Initiate regular gatherings throughout the year in your local community centers so teachers can meet families where they are and work in partnership to help their students succeed.



Question and Answer



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