AUTHENTIC AND PROVEN FAMILY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Prepared for Southeast Wisconsin Schools Alliance

January 2018

In the following report, Hanover Research discusses authentic and proven strategies in supporting family engagement. Hanover additionally highlights family engagement evaluation methods and programming of selected peer and best practice districts.

HANOVER RESEARCH

www.hanoverresearch.com

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND KEY FINDINGS

INTRODUCTION

As decades of research consistently links family engagement with increased academic achievement, attendance, graduation rates, and general academic success, policies and initiatives supporting family engagement have increasingly become the core elements of district and school improvement plans.[1] However, teachers and principals often identify family engagement as "one of the most challenging aspects of their work," partially due to the lack of training and knowledge needed to engage all families.[2]

To support Southeast Wisconsin Schools Alliance (SWSA) districts' efforts in family engagement, this report reviews the relevant secondary literature on evidence-based practices in engaging diverse families. The report proceeds in three sections:

- **Section I: Strategies for Engaging Diverse Families** discusses "authentic" family engagement practices that are supported by research studies demonstrating their effectiveness.

- **Section II: Evaluation Methods** reviews common tools, indicators, and metrics that educators can use to assess family engagement.

- **Section III: District Profiles** presents case studies of school districts with particularly successful and innovative engagement strategies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- SWSA districts should create a welcoming school climate built on mutual trust and respect by acknowledging the needs of diverse families, strengthening communications, and building families' knowledge and skills.

- SWSA districts should remove logistical barriers to family engagement that deter parents from becoming involved in their child's schools, such as providing child care and transportation, coordinating events that adapt to parents' schedules, and offering weekend activities.

- SWSA districts should build school leaders' and teachers' engagement capacity by offering professional development and training tailored to meet the needs of diverse families.

---

[1] For example, see: Henderson, A. and K. Mapp. "A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family and Community Connections on Student Learning." Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, 2002. p.7. http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED536946.pdf

[2] Mapp, K. and P. Kuttner. "Partners in Education: A Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships." Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, 2013. p.7. https://www2.ed.gov/documents/family-community/partners-education.pdf

KEY FINDINGS

- **Creating a welcoming school climate built on mutual trust and respect, establishing effective communication lines, and building families' knowledge and skills are proven strategies for improving the engagement of families from diverse backgrounds**. Studies show that when school staff engage in caring and trusting relationships with parents that recognize parents as partners in the educational development of their children, these relationships enhance parents' desire to be involved and influence how they participate in their children's educational development. Because communication is the foundation of family engagement, teachers should aim to make personal contact with all students' families through emails, phone calls, home visits, conferences, and open houses. Parents should also have formal avenues for communicating with administrators and teachers as needed.
  - **Schools and districts can better engage parents at home by redefining family engagement to incorporate activities that can be done at home.** Educators should acknowledge that family engagement goes beyond simply parental presence in the school building and consider various things that parents can do to help their kids succeed.

- **Schools and districts should reduce logistical barriers to engagement, especially when engaging low-income families.** Parents and staff participants in focus group studies have cited the lack of child care, transportation, and flexible scheduling; single-parent or foster homes; background checks; and cost of involvement as barriers to parental involvement. Schools and districts should support these families by providing child care services, coordinating events that adapt to parents' schedules, and offering weekend activities.

- **Educators should receive professional development on the engagement of culturally and/or linguistically diverse families.** School staff should be properly trained in cultural competency and culturally-sensitive responses to engage with diverse families. Districts should increase their professional capacity by leading educators in exercises to reflect on their beliefs and assumptions about family and community engagement, including how family culture may affect partnerships and engagement.

- **School communities with families from diverse cultures and backgrounds need to take specific steps to ensure broad family and community engagement.** When engaging with parents, teachers and staff should emphasize and take advantage of family strengths, which will vary according to parental situations, perspectives, and skills. In addition, districts should provide materials in multiple languages and offer translation services.

- **Regardless of the model, evaluating family engagement should be a systematic and regular process.** This process includes four main phases: preparing for data collection, collecting data, analyzing data, and sharing and using the results of data. Notably, leaders should use the preparation phase as an opportunity to determine what

engagement model is the best fit for their community, ask questions about existing engagement efforts, and contemplate the engagement needs of their communities.

■ **Although the literature does not frequently offer specific, measurable indicators that districts can use to track engagement, educators can develop indicators from reviews of the qualitative descriptions of family engagement models and standards.** For example, some of the existing literature suggests that helpful indicators may include the percentage of school meetings outside school hours that offer subsidized childcare, or the number of key school documents and handbooks available in languages other than English.

SECTION I: STRATEGIES FOR ENGAGING DIVERSE FAMILIES

This section discusses family engagement strategies that are proven to be effective. As many of these practices are broadly applicable in a variety of contexts, schools and districts should develop their implementation strategies according to the specific needs of their families.

OVERVIEW FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

According to the Regional Education Laboratories (REL), **"when a school community includes families from diverse cultures, school staff may need to take specific steps to ensure broad family and community engagement."** [3] The disconnect between schools and culturally diverse families is a long-acknowledged barrier to family engagement efforts. For example, a 2002 Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL) report notes that while families of all backgrounds engage in supporting their child's learning at home, white, middle-class families are most involved at school. [4] SEDL finds that higher performing schools engage families from diverse backgrounds through the following practices, which are also aligned with those recommended by the REL and additional research:[5]

- Focus on building trusting collaborative relationships among teachers, families, and community members;

- Recognize, respect, and address families' needs, as well as class and cultural difference; and

- Embrace a philosophy of partnership where power and responsibility are shared.

In its 2002 report, SEDL examines a broad body of literature on the process and impact of school, family, and community connections.[6] Two SEDL staff, Anne Henderson and Karen Mapp, examined 51 studies that explored different ways schools had engaged with families. These studies fell within three broad categories that focused on: "the impact of family and community involvement on student achievement; effective strategies to connect schools, family, and community; and studies on parent and community organizing efforts to improve schools." [7] The review of these studies indicated a positive and convincing relationship between family involvement and student achievement. Specifically, these studies found that students with involved parents, no matter their income or background, were more likely to:[8]

- Earn higher grades and test scores, and enroll in higher level programs;

---

[3] "Toolkit of Resources for Engaging Parents and Community as Partners in Education - Part 2: Building a Cultural Bridge." Regional Education Laboratory (REL) Pacific, 2015. p.11. http://relpacific.mcrel.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Part-2_Jan2015.pdf

[4] "A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement," Op. cit., p.7.

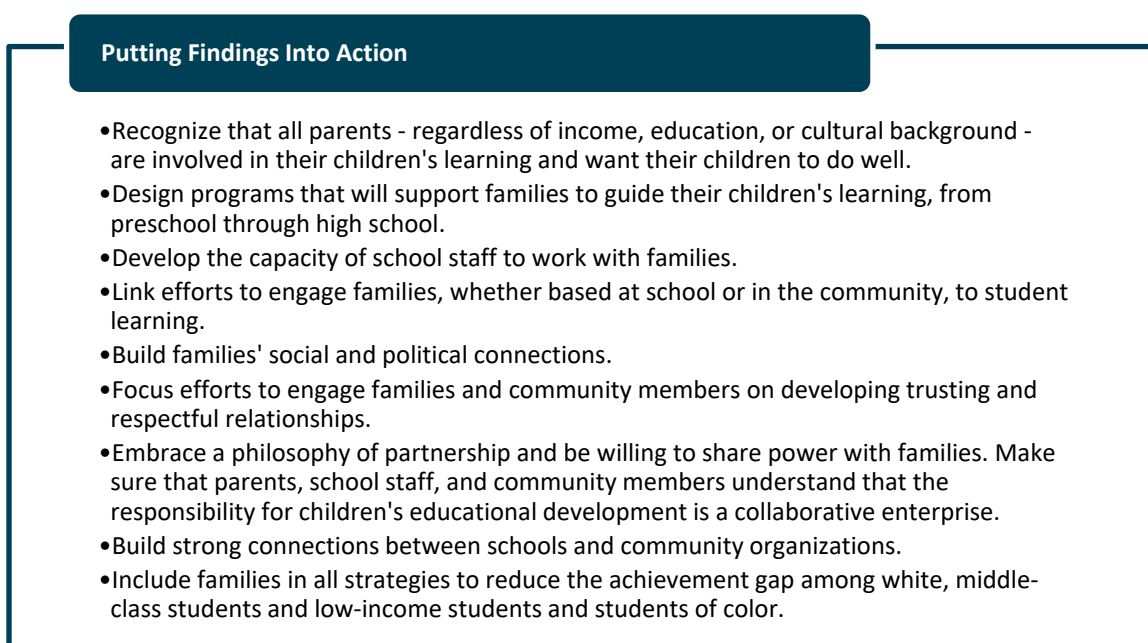[5] Bulleted text quoted verbatim from: Ibid.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Quoted verbatim from: Ibid., p.21.

[8] Ibid., p.7.

- Be promoted, pass their classes; and earn credits;
- Attend school regularly;
- Have better social skills, show improved behavior, and adapt well to school; and
- Graduate and go on to postsecondary education.

Particularly, Henderson and Mapp evaluated 16 studies that identified effective practices to connect families and schools. These studies hold important implications for educational practices at school districts. Based on their findings, Henderson and Mapp developed nine recommendations for engaging families, as demonstrated in Figure 1.1 below. The subsections that follow focus on "authentic" and proven family engagement strategies in four major areas that are supported by quantitative and qualitative research.

Figure 1.1: Nine Recommendations for Educational Practice

Putting Findings Into Action

- Recognize that all parents - regardless of income, education, or cultural background - are involved in their children's learning and want their children to do well.
- Design programs that will support families to guide their children's learning, from preschool through high school.
- Develop the capacity of school staff to work with families.
- Link efforts to engage families, whether based at school or in the community, to student learning.
- Build families' social and political connections.
- Focus efforts to engage families and community members on developing trusting and respectful relationships.
- Embrace a philosophy of partnership and be willing to share power with families. Make sure that parents, school staff, and community members understand that the responsibility for children's educational development is a collaborative enterprise.
- Build strong connections between schools and community organizations.
- Include families in all strategies to reduce the achievement gap among white, middle-class students and low-income students and students of color.

Source: SEDL[9]

BUILDING TRUST IN THE COMMUNITY

A critical first step in engaging diverse families is to build mutual trust and respect. In general, research studies suggest that trust and relationship-building are recurrent themes in discussion around family engagement. For example, Mapp, who is currently a senior lecturer on education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, examined the incentives and factors behind parent involvement in their child's education in 2002, specifically focusing on families from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. She conducted her study at the Patrick O'Hearn Elementary School, an urban school serving a racially and socioeconomically diverse population of students, and interviewed African American, white, and Hispanic

---

[9] Content quoted verbatim from: Ibid., p.8.

American parents and school staff. Her research found that social and school factors primarily influenced how and why parents were involved in their children's education.[10] Specifically, some of the social factors from parents' own experiences included:[11]

- Parents' own educational experiences in school;

- Their own parents' involvement when they were students;

- Their beliefs about family involvement as shaped by cultural norms and values; and

- The burden of family responsibilities and time commitments.

Additionally, Mapp's findings reveal that "**when school staff engage in caring and trusting relationships with parents that recognize parents as partners in the educational development of children, these relationships enhance parents' desire to be involved and influence how they participate in their children's educational development**."[12] For instance, another study that examined the predictors of parental school involvement among economically disadvantaged African American parents found that while there appeared to be several variables that affected parental school involvement, school receptivity was the most powerful predictor of school involvement for parents of elementary, middle, and high school students. That is, the extent to which parents felt that the school listened to them and promoted activities for them significantly influenced their level of engagement.[13]

In addition, a 2008 meta-analysis of 31 studies about family engagement by researchers Chris Ferguson et al. also underscored the importance of educator attitudes towards parents.[14] When schools create structures that cultivate a culture of "complementary or reciprocal learning—public interaction about educator and family perceptions about family involvement, and multiple outreach structures or procedures—families feel more welcome.". To create this sense of welcome, Ferguson et al. recommend that staff develop strategies and processes to communicate the following to parents:[15]

- Differences in language;

- Family perception of the child's academic ability;

- Educational support common to the home culture; and

- Ability to navigate educational systems are not barriers to engagement.

---

[10] "A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement," Op. cit., pp.44-45.

[11] Bulleted text quoted verbatim from: Ibid., p.45.

[12] Ibid., p.44.

[13] Overstreet, S. et al. "Predicting Parental Involvement in Children's Schooling within an Economically Disadvantaged African American Sample." *Psychology in the Schools*, 42:1, 2005. p.109. Retrieved from EBSCO Host.

[14] Ferguson, C. et al. "The School-Family Connection: Looking at the Larger Picture." Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, June 16, 2008. p.9. http://www.sedl.org/connections/resources/sfclitrev.pdf

[15] Bulleted text quoted verbatim from: Quiocho, A.M.L. and A.M. Daoud. "Dispelling Myths about Latino Parent Participation in Schools." *The Educational Forum*, 70:3. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ735839.pdf. Cited in: "The School-Family Connection: Looking at the Larger Picture," Op. cit., p.10.

Moreover, Delores Peña's 2000 study included specific suggestions on how schools could improve their outreach strategies to parents. In this study, she explored the extent of parent involvement in their children's education at an urban elementary school in Texas with 95.5 percent of students being Mexican.[16] She concluded that parent involvement was influenced by various factors, and that school staff were responsible for taking the time and effort to gain the trust of parents and inform them of how they can be involved. Some of the specific strategies recommended by this study include:[17]

- Making parents feel more welcomed;
- Changing the attitudes of school staff so that they recognize the advantages of teachers and parents working together;
- Considering the educational level, language, culture, and home situation of parents;
- Giving teachers time to plan and organize parent activities;
- Taking parents' interests and needs into consideration when planning activities;
- Recognizing that even if parents cannot be present at school, helping their children at home is also a valuable contribution; and
- Providing parents with knowledge about how to be involved in a range of involvement opportunities.

Indeed, building trust and respect is particularly important when engaging disengaged families. To gauge how a low-income school can best design family engagement strategies and explore parent engagement levels among low-income families, Jane Graves Smith conducted a study at a public elementary school in the Pacific Northwest in 2004 on parent engagement practices.[18] **This study found that comprehensive and detailed knowledge of the needs of unemployed or underemployed school families was foundational to the advancement of family engagement in their children's education at school.**[19] When school staff gave greater attention to parents and the environmental factors affecting them, communications and informal opportunities to build relationships grew, and teachers' understanding of families increased. The school created a Family Resource Center for parents, which became the center of activity for families. It provided a space for families to connect informally with educators and other parents. At the Family Resource Center, parents were able to stay informed about school events by talking with each other and with school personnel, and could access information on county resources through a computer network. This study included a few recommendations for family engagement in low-income schools, as shown in Figure 1.2 below.

---

[16] Peña, D.C. "Parent Involvement: Influencing Factors and Implications." *The Journal of Educational Research*, 94:1, 2000. Cited in: "A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement," Op. cit., p.45.
[17] Bulleted text quoted verbatim with minor edits from: Ibid., p.46.
[18] Smith, J.G. "Parental Involvement in Education Among Low Income Families: A Case Study." *The School Community Journal*, 16:1. p.44. https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/ecb2/8a0698366def7f86e4cf6cbebc6b46b40c85.pdf
[19] Ibid., p.48.

Figure 1.2: Recommendations for Enhancing Parental Involvement at Low-Income Schools

Recommendation 1

- Educators interested in developing strategies for enhanced parental involvement in low-income schools would be wise to seek the input of neighbors and interested agency representatives in order to gain an understanding of the lives of those that the school serves.

Recommendation 2

- Educators, with a clear understanding of the lives of their school families, ought to encourage the emergence of a definition of parental involvement which would recognize a broad array of parental behaviors intended to support academic success. In low-income schools, there is a need to acknowledge and encourage even the smallest efforts made by parents to support their children's education.

Recommendation 3

- Educators serving low-income populations must consider offering services to the families of their students, thereby bringing parents into the school building. Full-service schools, well-situated in neighborhoods, can provide services offered to meet the needs of low-income school families. The services offered must be based on an understanding of the needs of the neighborhood and provided with the participation of government and community agencies.

Recommendation 4

- Educators should consider inviting the input and participation of community agencies, businesses, and local churches or other faith-based groups in any efforts to meet the needs of school families. Offering the opportunity to provide input early in any transitional process will encourage feelings of ownership and allow for long term participation and financial support by community members.

Recommendation 5

- Educators must realize that some parents will remain disconnected from the school. Whether because of past school failure, family life circumstances related to financial stress, or other crises, some parents will be unable to respond to invitations for involvement. Parents may also choose to leave the responsibility for educating their children to the teacher out of respect and trust. Educators need to accept that even though parents desire academic success for their children, they may not choose to be involved in education in commonly accepted ways. With this acceptance, teachers may be less likely to judge parents harshly for a perceived lack of involvement.

Source: *The School Community Journal*[20]

IMPROVING SCHOOL-FAMILY COMMUNICATIONS

Districts and schools should engage in cross-cultural communications to build the trusting relationships necessary to support family involvement. Cross-cultural communication considers cultural influences on the ways people communicate and helps ensure that

---

[20] Bulleted text quoted verbatim from: Ibid., pp.54-55.

educators and families from all backgrounds understand each other. The REL notes that cross-cultural communication "is a must to minimize the confusion and frustration that people may experience when they enter an environment where not only their language, but also their attitudes, values, and behaviors differ from that of others."[21] It further recommends that schools ask parents early in the school year about their preferred communication methods, and translate any written information into the native language of the families.[22] Figure 1.3 below lists the specific strategies recommended by the REL to improve two-way and cross-cultural communications.

Figure 1.3: Two-Way and Cross-Cultural Communication Strategies

TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES	CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES
▪ Translate materials to the home language. ▪ Use bilingual staff members to help provide a direct link between parents and school community. ▪ Provide transportation to bring families to school meetings or meet at a community location. Be open to hosting school meetings in a location where families feel comfortable (e.g., community centers, local business). ▪ Build a parent network for families who speak the same language to promote mutual support among parents and help to create a more comfortable environment for attending school events.	▪ Begin the conversation on a personal level rather than starting with a formal progress report. ▪ Allow the personnel to be mixed with the discussion of academics. ▪ Have respect for the whole family, instead of only paying attention to the child who is the focus of the conference. ▪ Use indirect questions or observations rather than questions that ask for information about the child at home (e.g., "Some parents prefer to have an older child help with homework…" rather than, "Do you or someone else help the child with her homework?"). ▪ Discuss the student's achievements in the context of all of the students in the classroom, suggesting how the child contributes to the well-being of all. ▪ Explain the goals and expectations of the school and help parents find ways in which they are comfortable supporting their children's learning. ▪ Create a sense of common purpose and caring through the use of the pronoun "we" rather than "you" and "I."

Source: REL[23]

Districts and schools may decide to customize communication methods by employing new methods and by making parent participation easier to engage hard-to-reach families. While there are plenty of best practice strategies for engaging families, certain strategies and practices may be particularly suited for disengaged and hard-to-reach families. For example, in an immigrant-rich environment, parent engagement strategies should be tailored for non-native English speakers. Education leaders in areas with expanding immigrant populations face a common challenge in engaging parents. When immigrant parents do not respond to

---

[21] "Toolkit of Resources for Engaging Parents and Community as Partners in Education - Part 2: Building a Cultural Bridge," Op. cit., p.5.

[22] "Toolkit of Resources for Engaging Parents and Community as Partners in Education - Part 3: Building Trusting Relationships with Families and Community Through Effective Communication." Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Pacific, 2015. pp. 5–6. http://relpacific.mcrel.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Part-3_Jan2015.pdf

[23] Figure bullets quoted verbatim from: Ibid., pp. 5–14.

traditional family engagement strategies, administrators and teachers often assume that these parents are not interested. In reality, most immigrant parents care, but misunderstand what is expected of parents in American schools or do not know how to become more involved. Moreover, language barriers tend to be a major obstacle to parents who have limited English proficiency. Cultural differences in communication styles, languages, expectations for teachers, parents, and children, and best ways to raise and educate children may make family-school partnerships more difficult, and thus require additional engagement efforts, such as translating materials and using interpreters.[24]

At Annandale High School in Virginia, where students come from 84 countries and speak 50 different languages, educators have been looking for innovative ways to connect with immigrant parents.[25] The effort began with the development of new strategies that target the needs of the diverse immigrant community. In 2004, the school received a $25,000 grant from the Washington Area Partnership for Immigrants to support its Immigrant Parent Leadership Initiative, which significantly enhanced the school's efforts in family engagement. Annandale High School implemented a program to cultivate leadership among immigrant parents, which included[26]

- Holding parent leadership classes – in English and in Spanish – to empower parents to become leaders in their own families, schools, and communities;

- Offering programs for parents from specific ethnic groups, held in Spanish, Korean, and Vietnamese;

- Guiding teachers in action research to increase their understanding of parents from other cultures and their skill at developing partnerships with parents; and

- Opening a parent resource center.

In addition, Annandale High School's approach to parent enagagment was not merely disseminating information, but also developing meaningful relationships with immigrant parents. Through the Parent Leadership Initiative, the school recognized the value of immigrant parents and the support system required to engage them in their children's education. It learned that first, immigrant parents had limited knowledge of how they could help their children in schools, and required more information from the school on student achievement. Second, many immigrant parents lacked the understanding of the nuances in English or academic language used in school.

The success of the school's initiative was also due to its part-time parent liaisons, "who collectively speak Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese, French, Hindi, Urdu, and Punjabi."[27] Through these liaisons, the school learned to target the varying needs of its diverse community. For

[24] "Engaging Parents in Education: Lessons From Five Parental Information And Resource Centers." U.S. Department of Education, 2007. p.14. https://www2.ed.gov/admins/comm/parents/parentinvolve/engagingparents.pdf
[25] Sobel, A. and E.G. Kugler. "Building Partnerships with Immigrant Parents." *Educational Leadership*, 64:6, March 2007. p.2. http://www.healthinschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/EKuglerParents.pdf
[26] Bulleted text adapted from: Ibid.
[27] Ibid., p.4.

example, when Korean families expressed an interest in college admissions, the Korean parent liaison organized a workshop on the college admissions process. When Spanish speaking parents sought advice on accessing school resources, the Spanish parent liaison shared details on materials available to parents in the library.[28]

However, while parent engagement programs work best when the strategies respect the needs of families, the effectiveness of these strategies also depends on teacher outreach practices. According to a study by Westat and Policy Studies Associates on teacher outreach to parents of low-performing students at 71 Title I schools, some types of teacher outreach strategies work more efficiently than others in engaging families. The study revealed that at schools where teachers more frequently reached out to parents, student test scores grew at a higher rate when compared to schools where the level of parent outreach was minimal.[29]

Schools and districts should use every opportunity to promote family involvement. From its literature review, the School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida outlines the following activities that educational experts suggest promoting family engagement:[30]

- Offer tours of the building and encourage all staff members to be present to welcome visitors. Familiarity with the school makes parents more likely to be involved in school activities;

- Develop a list of volunteer opportunities so families can check off the activities they are interested in;

- Use bulletin boards, the school's web site, and phone calls to inform family members of volunteer opportunities;

- Encourage teachers to call the parents of their students during the first few weeks of the school year. Establishing a positive relationship early lays the foundation for good relationships all year long;

- Send home school newsletters that include important school telephone numbers, critical dates, and specifics on how parents can support the school and help their children learn at home;

- Plan a back-to-school night or open house to showcase the school's goals and explain how families can help the school to achieve them;

- Hold Family nights to build a sense of community by giving family members the opportunity to interact with school staff. Family Nights can take many forms, including:
  o Parent training on helping children develop the cognitive and social skills needed in school;

---

[28] Ibid.

[29] "The Longitudinal Evaluation of School Change and Performance (LESCP) in Title I Schools." Westat and Policy Studies Associates, U.S. Department of Education, 2001. https://www2.ed.gov/offices/OUS/PES/esed/lescp_highlights.html. Cited in: "A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement," Op. cit., p.28.

[30] Bulleted text quoted verbatim from: Blazer, C. "Literature Review on Family Involvement: The Home-School Partnership." Miami-Dade County Public Schools, April 2005. pp.6-7. http://drs.dadeschools.net/AdditionalReports/Family%20Involvement.pdf

- o Family Game Night, using different classrooms for different types of games (for example, board games, physical movement games, knowledge-base games, and hands-on activities), to encourage families to play games together on a regular basis;
- o Scavenger hunts to familiarize families with the school building and grounds; and
- o Pajama parties where families of elementary students come to the school in the evening with their favorite bedtime stories to read and eat milk and cookies. At the secondary level, the pajama party can be substituted for Movie Night, with popcorn and a discussion of the movie.

REDUCING LOGISTICAL BARRIERS TO ENGAGEMENT

When school- or family-related barriers dissuade parents from becoming involved in their children's education, students lose an important source of support. One study by Timberly Baker et al. that relied on family and school staff focus groups held in six schools in an unidentified Midwestern state underscores the necessity of removing barriers to parental involvement.[31] For example, parents with more than one child generally find it difficult to care for the entire family prior to a school event, and those who work late hours or multiple jobs often miss opportunities to participate in school activities. Some parents in the focus groups with multiple children suggested that schools provide child care, coordinate with other schools to make sure that they are not holding events on the same day, and provide a meal or food for families during events. Working parents also proposed weekend activities – working with and around parent work schedules was seen by parents as a strategy that benefits everyone.[32]

Baker et al. also discussed other barriers to parent involvement, such as the lack of transportation, single-parent homes, foster parents, background checks, and cost of involvement.[33] In a focus group only including school staff, participants noted that single parents who had to work full-time found it more difficult to participate in school activities. Staff also mentioned that communicating with and engaging foster parents were more difficult when compared to engaging biological parents, and that background checks were a major barrier for parents' participation in volunteer activities, as some parents refused to participate in background checks despite their willingness to volunteer. Furthermore, parents whose children were involved in, for example, a school sport, faced barriers in attending events or games due to the cost of transportation or entry fees.

To address common barriers to family engagement, schools and districts should make special efforts to encourage involvement among diverse populations, including but not limited to "providing child care, transportation, translation, food, flexible scheduling, and developing culturally appropriate and relevant programs."[34] For example, the literature

---

[31] Baker, T.L. et al. "Identifying Barriers: Creating Solutions to Improve Family Engagement." *School Community Journal*, 26:2. p.169. Retrieved from EBSCO Host.

[32] Ibid., p.170.

[33] Ibid., p.176.

[34] O'Donnell, J. and S.L. Kirkner. "The Impact of a Collaborative Family Involvement Program on Latino Families and Children's Educational Performance." *School Community Journal*, 24:1, 2014. p.214. Retrieved from ProQuest.

review on family involvement by the School Board of Miami-Dade County notes that not all families are able to be involved in conventional engagement activities due to limited time or resources.[35] Therefore, schools and districts should vary the locations and times of school activities to provide parents with the flexibility to encourage participation. Moreover, schools and districts should offer transportation and child care services to increase the number of family members attending school events.

> *Studies have found that student achievement is not only based on what parents do at school, but what parents do at home to support their children.*

In addition to providing logistical support, schools and districts should redefine "parent involvement" to incorporate activities that can be done at home. Studies have found that student achievement is not only based on what parents do at school, but also what they do at home to support their children. Techniques used at home may include "communicating their expectations for their children's achievement; discussing learning strategies; fostering career aspirations; linking what children are learning in school, or are interested in learning, to outside activities; and making plans for the future."[36]

Indeed, parents in the focus groups from the aforementioned study hoped that schools would see parent involvement as something beyond the activities in the school building and consider the multitude of things that parents could do to help their children succeed. In the study, parents addressed some of the ways that schools wanted them to be involved as a barrier to parent engagement.[37] Working parents, in particular, voiced that schools should "give more detailed info on how parents can be involved academic-wise" and "suggest ideas that make learning fun at home."[38]

In addition, a 2007 study examining dropout rates in urban high schools proposed that it was "incumbent upon school personnel to reach out to parents of students considered most at risk for leaving school," meaning that teachers must be disposed to interact with all types of parents including "single parents, parents with special needs, and parents that don't speak English."[39] To support the engagement of parents who have limited time and/or resources in their children's education, educators may:[40]

- Communicate expectations families so that they can help foster high aspirations in their children at home;

---

[35] Blazer, Op. cit.

[36] Viadero, D. "Scholars: Parent-School Ties Should Shift in Teen Years." Education Week, 2009. https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2009/11/18/12parent_ep.h29.html

[37] "Literature Review on Family Involvement: The Home-School Partnership," Op. cit., p.174.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Patterson, J.A., D. Hale, and M. Stressman. "Cultural Capital and School Leaving: A Case Study in an Urban High School." *The High School Journal*, 2007. Cited in: Barile, N. "Parent and Family Engagement in Low Income High Schools." Scholastic, August 30, 2010. https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/blog-posts/nancy-barile/parent-and-family-engagement-at-the-high-school-level/

[40] Bulleted text adapted from: "Parent and Family Engagement in Low Income High Schools," Op. cit.

- Organize workshops for parents to help them better understand the importance of "academic ethos" to their child's academic achievement;

- Teach parents to understand the language of success in high school and show parents how to monitor their child's progress;

- Help parents understand how to plan beyond high school by teaching them about Advanced Placement classes, standardized tests, financial aid, or summer enrichment programs; and

- Encourage parents to take a supervisory role in overseeing homework, and if possible, encourage parents to supplement instruction through the purchase of books or additional study materials.

BUILDING CAPACITY TO SUPPORT FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Experts find that effective family engagement efforts also depend on staff and family capacity. Several studies from the Henderson and Mapp meta-analysis highlight the importance of the relationship between school staff and families as key to developing effective connections. Teachers and principals often report that family engagement is one of the most difficult aspects of their work, and that they lack the training and knowledge needed to connect with families, especially those from diverse cultural backgrounds.[41] Likewise, SEDL notes that school and district family engagement initiatives often focus on providing workshops and seminars to families on how to support their children's education, rather than providing professional development for school and district-level teachers, staff, and administrators, leading to a disconnect between the capacity and expectations of families and school/district staff.

Several studies identified by Henderson and Mapp indicate that shifting the nature of contact between school staff and families can change the way families perceive the school, influence their relationships with teachers, and affect the degree to which they are involved in their children's education. School staff require support in building their skills in better understanding their students and families. For example, a study that examined high-performing Hispanic schools found that "school staff used a combination of strategies to build collaborative relationships with parents that included learning about and building on Hispanic cultural values, stressing personal contact with parents through telephone calls and home visits, fostering communication, and creating a warm and welcoming environment."[42] The study indicated that when teachers and parents came together to support the academic achievement of their students, the collaborative relationship created an environment and structures that were inviting to parents.

---

[41] "Partners in Education: A Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships," Op. cit., p.7.

[42] Schribner, J.D., M.D. Young, and A. Pedroza. "Building Collaborative Relationships with Parents." In *Lessons from High-Performing Hispanic Schools: Creating Learning Communities*, New York: Teachers College Press, 1999. Cited in: "A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement," Op. cit., p.169.

To build school leadership, teacher, and parent capacity, school administrators, teachers, and parents require tailored professional development and training. Based on the meta-analyses of school studies, Henderson and Mapp suggested that schools and districts design and implement preservice and inservice educational opportunities for all school staff that:[43]

- Help all staff recognize the advantages of school, family, and community connections;

- Explore how trusting and respectful relationships with families and community members are achieved;

- Enhance school staff's ability to work with diverse families;

- Enable staff to make connections with community resources; and

- Explore the benefits of sharing power with families and community members.

Particularly, school staff should receive professional development in cultural competency to engage with diverse families. Cultural competency emphasizes the staff's ability to serve students and families from diverse cultures in an effective and sensitive manner, keeping in mind that cultural differences may arise from a variety of family and individual characteristics.[44] While incorporating parents as partners in the educational process is critical, parents of minority groups are often left marginalized.[45] Race and cultural bias has an impact on minority families from all socioeconomic levels, and affects parent involvement in schools.

A 2014 study that invited African American, biracial, and Latina parents to participate in a focus group to discuss family-school relationships identified several themes related to engagement barriers, such as a "lack of cultural enrichment for families of color, isolation in the community, and experiences of colorblind racism and cultural ignorance" and "lack of cultural competency in the schools, stereotyping, and racial disproportionality in suspensions and school discipline".[46] When asked about what they wanted the district superintendent to know, parents mentioned that they wanted to see more diversity among their children's administrative and teaching staff. They argued that increased diversity among school personnel would provide parents with a greater sense of comfort in their parent-teacher interactions, and provide their children with role models.

The district commissioned the focus group study responded by developing a strategic plan to institute developments in school improvement. It paid close attention to cultural competency and responsiveness when developing the plan, and administrators sought to include specific mechanisms that would integrate culturally responsive curriculum. To address parents' specific concerns, the superintendent met with parents of color, including both middle-class parents and those living in poverty. The district also offered several educational presentations

---

[43] Bulleted text quoted verbatim from: Ibid., p.65.

[44] "Diversity Toolkit: Cultural Competence for Educators." National Education Association. http://www.nea.org//tools/30402.htm

[45] Yull, D. et al. "Can We Talk? Using Community-Based Participatory Action Research to Build Family and School Partnership with Families of Color." *School Community Journal*, 24:2. p.10. Retrieved from EBSCO Host.

[46] Ibid., p.15, 9.

and resources to school staff to increase their understanding of culturally responsive practices and to challenge stereotypes. Some recommendations emerged from this study include:[47]

- Professional development for school personnel that include the history of race in America and highlights the social and cultural dynamics of privilege and oppression;

- Teaching school staff about the subtle workings of culture and systems that can inform work with different marginalized groups, including students of various ethnicities, LGBTQ youth and parents, financially poor families, and students with disabilities;

- Informing school staff about the impact of toxic stress and trauma associated with poverty; and

- Disseminating information on racial identity development to prevent microaggressions of racism.

This study highlights the need for educators to receive professional development on the engagement of culturally and/or linguistically diverse families. In a series of reports on family engagement, the REL cites "cultural barriers (e.g., language differences, religious priorities, misconceptions about schools, generational differences in acculturation)," as well as "teachers' beliefs and attitudes" as two common barriers to family and community engagement. [48] Parents from culturally diverse backgrounds may lack the necessary knowledge of their schools, including grading practices, curriculum standards, and the importance placed on parent-teacher conferences. This lack of knowledge may make efforts to improve engagement more difficult. Therefore, the REL recommends that districts increase their staff capacity by leading educators in exercises that reflect on their beliefs and assumptions about family and community engagement, including how families' cultures may affect partnerships and engagement. [49] Overall, districts should consider the following in building culturally responsive school staff:[50]

- Understanding how a person's cultural lens influences interactions can encourage family and community engagement; and

- Viewing interactions from the families' perspective helps educators work more effectively with them.

---

[47] Bulleted text adapted from: Ibid., pp.27-28.

[48] Garcia, M. et al. "Toolkit of Resources for Engaging Families and the Community as Partners in Education - Part 1: Building an Understanding of Family and Community Engagement." Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Pacific, 2016. p.3. https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/pdf/REL_2016148.pdf

[49] "Toolkit of Resources for Engaging Parents and Community as Partners in Education - Part I: Building an Understanding of Family and Community Engagement." Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Pacific, 2015. pp. 3–5. http://relpacific.mcrel.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/ToolkitPart1.pdf

[50] Bulleted text quoted verbatim from: Ibid., pp. 5–6.

SECTION II: EVALUATING FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

This section reviews common processes, tools, and metrics that educators can use to assess family engagement and involvement strategies and practices.

THE EVALUATION PROCESS

Measuring family engagement is ideally a cyclical, systemic process, rather than an isolated, singular activity. Specifically, districts should approach important self-evaluation initiatives systematically to ensure that the collected data meaningfully contribute to answering the evaluation questions and have a significant chance of being used to make real impacts.[51]

In a guide to using data to support family progress, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Service's Office of Head Start organizes this evaluation process into four interrelated activities:[52]

- **Prepare**: What do you want to know (about individual children, about families, about program efforts)? How does change happen? What questions will you ask?

- **Collect**: How will you collect the information? Who will you collect it from? When and where? How often? How will you store and retrieve it?

- **Analyze and Aggregate**: How will you analyze the information? Will you aggregate (summarize) the information?

- **Share and Use**: How will you share the information? How will you know what it means? How will you use it to support continuous improvement and change?

---

[51] "Parent and Family Involvement: A Guide to Effective Parent, Family, and Community Involvement in North Carolina Schools." Public Schools of North Carolina. p. 7.
http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/parents/toolkit/guide.pdf

[52] Content taken with minor edits from "Measuring What Matters: Using Data to Support Family Progress." U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start. p. 16.
https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/measuring-what-matters-exercises-01.pdf

Figure 2.1: The Four Data Activities
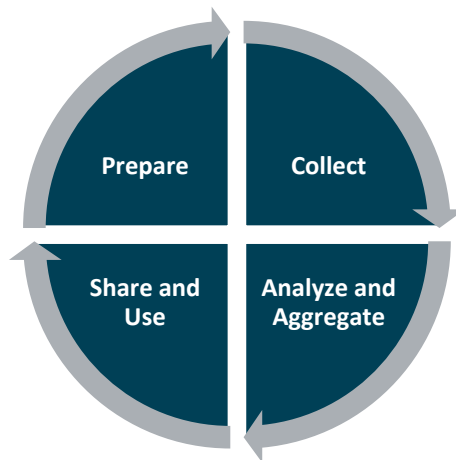
Source: Office of Head Start[53]

PREPARE

In the "prepare" stage, district leaders should develop the definitional framework that best fits their understanding of parent engagement, compile information on their ongoing family engagement efforts, and gather information on family demographics. Collecting information on family engagement efforts (e.g., descriptions of current initiatives, strategies, or programs aimed at increasing family engagement) and family demographics (e.g., what languages parents speak at home, what types of schedules parents keep, how many children parents have below the age of five) helps leaders understand what information would most appropriately track district successes or challenges within the context of a given population. For example, districts with multiple initiatives aimed at increasing the number of single parents in elementary school attending school events may want to track different information when compared to districts with initiatives aimed at increasing the number of language-minority parents who feel comfortable contacting teachers and administrators.[54]

To compile data on family demographics, leaders may ask questions such as:[55]

- Is this a school with a high percentage of single-parent homes?

- Is this a school with many English language learners?

- Is this a school with a high mobility rate?

- Are there many families where at least one parent is predominately in the home?

- Is there a high percentage of homes where violence, abuse, addiction, physical or mental illness is present?
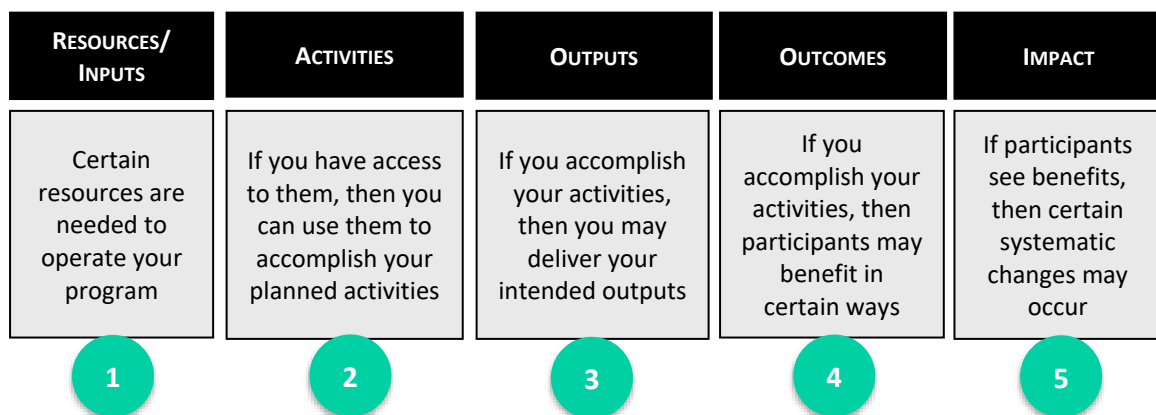
---

[53] Ibid.

[54] [1] "Parent and Family Involvement: A Guide to Effective Parent, Family, and Community Involvement in North Carolina Schools," Op. cit., p. 7. [2] Davis, D. "Supporting Parent, Family, and Community Involvement in Your School." Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, June 2000. p. 4.
http://www.pacer.org/mpc/pdf/titleipip/SupportingInvolvement_article.pdf

[55] Bulleted points taken verbatim from: Ibid.

▪ What educational goals do families have for their children?

Leaders can use visual tools such as logic models to compile detailed information regarding ongoing family engagement efforts. Logic models depict "how your organization does its work" by describing how programmatic assumptions, principles, activities, processes, and outcomes are linked together.[56] When programs are well-defined and publicly outlined, building a logic model is fairly simple. When programs are poorly defined and lack concrete documentation, however, building a logic model may take substantial effort as educators work to solidify unspoken presumptions and hypotheses.[57] A sample logic model is provided below in Figure 2.2 below.

Figure 2.2: Logic Model Components

RESOURCES/ INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES	IMPACT
Certain resources are needed to operate your program	If you have access to them, then you can use them to accomplish your planned activities	If you accomplish your activities, then you may deliver your intended outputs	If you accomplish your activities, then participants may benefit in certain ways	If participants see benefits, then certain systematic changes may occur
1	2	3	4	5

Source: W.K. Kellogg Foundation[58]

Critically, the logic model allows leaders to categorize the components of their engagement initiatives that they wish to measure. Some districts, for example, may be most interested in measuring the "planned work", such as the number and extent of resources and inputs that support activities. Others may be most interested in measuring the "intended results," or the number and extent of activities and outcomes that occurred as a result of the resources and inputs.[59]

COLLECT

Districts can choose between two main methods to collect the information needed to answer questions about family engagement, including gathering existing data or new data through self-evaluation questionnaires and/or stakeholder surveys. However, to collect the

---

[56] "Logic Model Development Guide." W.K. Kellogg Foundation, January 2004. p. 3.
https://www.bttop.org/sites/default/files/public/W.K.%20Kellogg%20LogicModel.pdf
[57] Giancola, S. "Evaluation Matters: Getting the Information You Need From Your Evaluation." U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education. 2014. p. 18.
https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oese/sst/evaluationmatters.pdf
[58] "Logic Model Development Guide," Op. cit., p. 4.
[59] "Evaluation Matters," Op. cit., pp. 16–21.

most comprehensive set of information possible, experts suggest that districts invest in both methods.[60] According to the California Department of Education (CDE), for example, districts that are "innovative implementers" of the principle "document progress of each school's implementation of its parent invovlement program," collect feedback from families, staff, students, and community members through annual surveys, and track "measures of effectiveness linked to student achievement and specific parent invovlvement activities."[61]

GATHERING EXISTING DATA

Districts can compile and analyze a variety of existing data to evaluate family engagement. These data may come from hard-copy sources such as sign-in sheets at parent education workshops or digital sources such as the number of unique visitors to a parent portal on the district website. Regardless of the data source, experts recommend that districts keep such data in a single data tracking system, explaining that "data-tracking systems are essential for gathering information about the frequency of opportunities for engagement, and participation in those opportunities." Ideally, the tracking system should assign each family and/or family member a unique identifier to allow for easy comparisons across database fields and over time. Even a simple data tracking system can identify relatively detailed information, such as the number of positions on school committees open to parents and the demographics of parents who tend to apply for school committee positions. A more complex data tracking systems could identify more factors, such as the types of committee positions parents tend to fill and the length of time parents spend in those committee positions.[62]

GATHERING NEW DATA

Existing data may not appropriately evaluate all aspects of family engagement. As the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) notes, "**Some aspects of family engagement are inherently difficult to track in a system, such as creating a welcoming environment or using effective communication strategies**." To obtain this type of information, districts may need to gather new data using alternative methods, such as self-assessment questionnaires or stakeholder surveys.[63] Both questionnaires and surveys allow districts to collect substantial amounts of information from one or multiple populations simultaneously. Below, Figure 2.3, briefly summarizes the basic information about these methodologies, as conceptualized by the U.S. Department of Education's guide to program assessment, "Evaluation Matters."

---

[60] London, R. "Family Engagement Practices in California Schools." Public Policy Institute of California, June 2016. p. 21. http://www.ppic.org/content/pubs/report/R_616RLR.pdf

[61] "Family Engagement Frameworks: A Tool for California School Districts." California Department of Education, 2014. p. 19. http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/pf/pf/documents/famengageframeenglish.pdf

[62] "Family Engagement Practices in California Schools," Op. cit., p. 23.

[63] Ibid., p. 22.

Figure 2.3: Surveys and Questionnaires

BASIC INFORMATION	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
▪ Typically quantitative but can be qualitative ▪ Can be administered in person, over the phone, online, or through the mail	▪ In-person surveys can be a quick way to collect data ▪ If conducted with a captive (in-person) audience, response rates can be high ▪ Electronic or internet-based surveys can save time and costs with data entry and can improve data quality by reducing data entry errors	▪ Due to postage costs and multiple mailings, mail surveys can be expensive ▪ Response rates of mail surveys can be low ▪ If upon data anlysis it is found that questions were not worded well, some data may be unusable

Source: U.S. Department of Education[64]

Districts can choose to use existing questionnaires or surveys, or to create new instruments. Creating new questionnaires and surveys may be more time-intensive, but often allows the designers to better tailor questions to target populations and programs. As the U.S. Department of Eudcation warns, "It is tempting to use an already developed survey without thinking critically about whether it will truly answer your evaluation questions;" however, "existing surveys may need to be adapted to fit your specific needs."[65]

For those interested in adopting or adapting the content in existing questionnaires and surveys, the Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP)'s guide – Data Collection Instruments for Evaluating Family Involvement – may serve as a useful resource. After identifying dozens of data collection instruments used in research studies to measure involvement as perceived by families and school staff, the HFRP categorized each instrument based on its availability, structure, original test population, and other basic characteristics.[66]

Much like the U.S. Department of Education, the HFRP cautions educators to consider three key issues before selecting an existing instrument for evaluator purposes:[67]

- Alignment of program objectives with evaluation instrument: Given its different measures, will the evaluation instrument you selected yield useful information about how well your program is meeting its own particular objectives?

- Applicability to respondents: If your respondents differ from the population in which the instrument was tested for validity and/or reliability, how will this influence your interpretation of evaluation results? Is the format and language of the instrument conducive to the way you are currently engaging with parents, teachers, and others to whom you might administer the instrument?

---

[64] Content taken verbatim from: "Evaluation Matters," Op. cit., p. 48.

[65] Ibid., pp. 44–45.

[66] Westmoreland, H. et al. "Data Collection Instruments for Evaluating Family Involvement." Harvard Family Research Project, 2009. p. 12. http://www.msapcenter.com/applicationdoc/1d912a51-1b37-46aa-ab39-923a99803e70DataCollectionInstrumentsForEvaluatingFamilyInvolvement.pdf

[67] Bulleted text taken verbatim from: Ibid., p. 4.

■ Human and financial costs: Will you need to invest resources in building capacity—in expertise or in time—to collect, analyze, or use data that will be harvested from the instrument?

To illustrate the HFRP's categorization of data collection instruments, Figure 2.4 below depicts information from two instruments listed in the guide. For more detailed information on the instruments or to review all instruments in the guide, please refer to the original source.

Figure 2.4: Family Involvement Instruments with School Staff as Respondents

INSTRUMENT	DESCRIPTION	ADMINISTERED TO	ORIGINAL TEST POPULATION	MEASURE STRUCTURE	AVAILABILITY
Parent Efficacy Scales	The Parent Efficacy scales assess parent efficacy through measures for parent perseverance, general ability to influence children's school outcomes, and specific effectiveness in influencing children's school learning.	Parents	Teachers in a large middle class public school district - Predominantly White respondents in elementary schools	Items scored on a 5-point Likert scale (1=strongly agree, 5=strongly disagree).	Available online
Parent–Teacher Involvement Questionnaire: Teacher	The PTIQ-T has three subscales that measure: • Parents' comfort in their relationship with the teacher and with the school • Parent involvement and volunteering in school • Parent–teacher contact	Teachers	Both high-risk and normative samples	21 items on a 5 point Likert scale	Available online

Source: HFRP[68]

ANALYZE

Evaluators use analytical methods to transform collected data into meaningful research findings. The "best" analytical methods for any given data set depend on factors such as data type (e.g., qualitative, quantitative) and volume. Although it is often assumed that data analysis is synonymous with statistical analysis, this assumption is not always accurate. While statistical analysis is often employed when working with quantitative data, other analytical methods are used to examine qualitative data, such as transcripts from in-depth interviews.[69]

All analyses should account for potential biasing factors, as doing so helps evaluators increase accountability and establish analytical validity. Common evaluation biases include history ("any event that takes place during the treatment phase unrelated to the treatment that may account for the particular outcome"), attrition ("clients who drop out of treatment… may influence the outcome results"), selection ("if clients are selected for the intervention, then

---

[68] Ibid., pp. 15–16.
[69] "Evaluation Matters,' Op. cit., pp. 57–58.

the results may be skewed because of this selection") and maturation ("general changes in clients that are not specific to the treatment").[70]

SHARE

The final step of program evaluation is to share the findings with the appropriate stakeholder groups and determine what next steps, if any, the district should take in response to the findings. When sharing findings with multiple stakeholder groups, leaders may need to "tailor content and presentation style to best reach the intended audiences."[71] Decisions regarding what and how to share information should be based on leaders' understanding of audience needs and confidentiality policies. Stakeholders should receive the information that will be useful for them, but not information that would be inappropriate or illegal for them to know. Notably, some experts even recommend that leaders establish a communications plan for the evaluation findings *before* collecting data.[72]

Data sharing should be accompanied by an open acknowledgement of evaluation limitations. The results of evaluation that are not structured as randomized, controlled experiments are not causal. In other words, evaluators cannot truthfully claim that any positive results are directly attributable to a program or strategy. However, those same results may be correlative.[73] To ensure that stakeholders realize the limitations of evaluations, the U.S. Department of Education recommends that final publications include a section on limitations, "including limitations based on evaluation design, analysis of data, and interpretation of findings."[74]

SPECIFIC INDICATORS

An examination of the specific indicators that districts can use to assess family engagement must begin with a discussion of what an "indicator" is. Although the specific definitions of indicators (much like the definitions for metrics) vary in academic and popular literature,[75] "indicator" is used in this report to refer to *measurable behaviors or findings.*[76] The content of these specific, measurable behaviors or findings can be contextualized against *benchmark* data collected from other programs, or *baseline* data collected at the start of the original program. When compiled and tracked together, indicators can compose indices – a tool intended to measure programs against comparative programs – or standards – a tool intended to measure programs against meaningful, agreed-upon descriptions of success.[77]

---

[70] Barrett, T. and J. Sorenson. "Human Services Program Evaluation." Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, March 2015. p. 86. http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED557770.pdf

[71] "Family Engagement Practices in California Schools," Op. cit., p. 25.

[72] "Measuring What Matters: Using Data to Support Family Progress," Op. cit., p. 14.
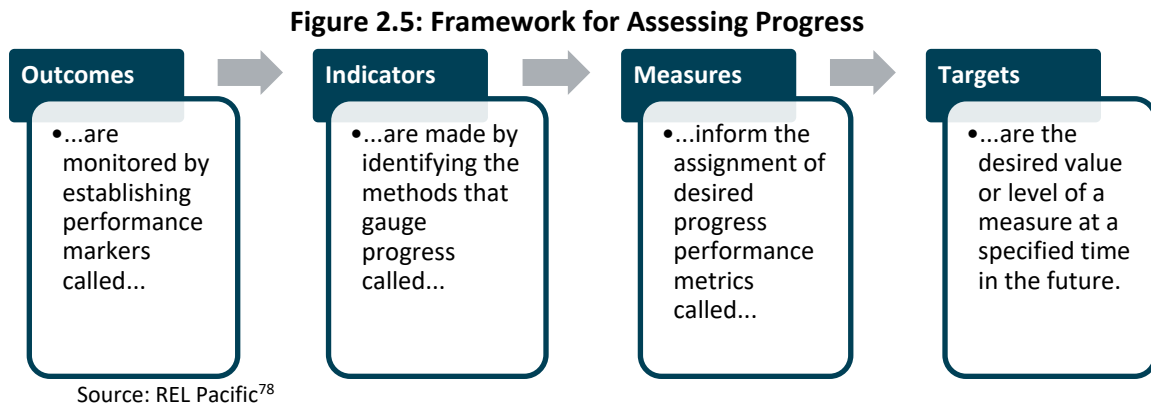
[73] "Evaluation Matters," Op. cit., p. 63.

[74] Ibid., p.66.

[75] See, for example, "Use Measures, Indicators, or Metrics." Better Evaluation. http://betterevaluation.org/en/plan/describe/measures_indicators

[76] Malone, N., L. Mark, and K. Narayan. "Understanding program monitoring: The relationships among outcomes, indicators, measures, and targets." REL Pacific, 2014. http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/pdf/REL_2014011.pdf

[77] "Use Measures, Indicators, or Metrics," Op. cit.

Below, Figure 2.5, illustrates how these specific indicators can inform the assessment of program progress, as envisioned by Regional Education Laboratory (REL) Pacific.

Figure 2.5: Framework for Assessing Progress

Outcomes	Indicators	Measures	Targets
•...are monitored by establishing performance markers called...	•...are made by identifying the methods that gauge progress called...	•...inform the assignment of desired progress performance metrics called...	•...are the desired value or level of a measure at a specified time in the future.

Source: REL Pacific[78]

Another key concept underlying discussions of indicators is "SMART:" the idea that specific (S), measurable (M), and agreed-upon (A) indicators should be used to measure realistic (R) and time-bound (T) targets. For example, a district interested in assessing parent engagement may use specific, measurable, and agreed-upon indicators, such as "Number and type of opportunities parents have to participate in the education of all students" or "Percentage of surveyed parents who express satisfaction with their opportunities to participate in school decision-making processes and programs"[79]

INDICATORS BY CATEGORY

The literature on family engagement published by researchers, educational organizations, and state departments of education typically does not review specific, measurable indicators that may be used to track family engagement. However, the literature describes *general behaviors* characterizing family engagement using qualitative language in lists of standards and best practices. These behaviors generally fall into four broad categories, namely:[80]

- Welcoming Environment
- Shared Decision Making
- Community Collaboration
- Supportive Parenting

Hanover outlines a few sample indicators that districts may wish to use to evaluate family engagement in each broad category based on qualitative descriptions of desired behaviors. To showcase which specific components of family engagement the sample indicators can

---

[78] "Understanding program monitoring," Op. cit., p. 2.
[79] "LCAP Metrics Review – Professional Learning and Parent Engagement." Hanover Research. 2017
[80] See [1] "National Standards for Family-School Partnerships." National PTA. http://www.pta.org/nationalstandards [2] Epstein, J. "Epstein's Framework of Six Types of Involvement." https://www.sps186.org/downloads/table/13040/6TypesJ.Epstien.pdf [3] "Family Engagement Framework," Op. cit.

measure, we used the logic model format discussed earlier in this section, which depicts inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes of evaluation. Please note that the applicability of the specific indicators discussed below may vary based on a) the existing family engagement efforts in place at SWSA districts, b) the data availability, and c) districts' ability to collect additional data. For more ideas regarding potential indicators of family engagement, please refer to the cited literature describing *general behaviors* characterizing family engagement.

WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

The idea that a welcoming school and district environment contributes to family engagement is visible in the Parent Teacher Association (PTA)'s first national standard, "Welcoming All Families: Families are active participants in the life of the school, and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to school staff, and to what students are learning and doing in class."[81] Figure 2.6 below illustrates an example of how leaders may choose to evaluate a welcoming school and district environment in the context of family engagement using a logic model.

Figure 2.6: Potential "Welcoming Environment" Logic Model with Indicators

SAMPLE CATEGORY	SAMPLE RESOURCES/INPUTS	SAMPLE ACTIVITIES	SAMPLE OUTPUTS	SAMPLE OUTCOMES	SAMPLE IMPACT
School Staff	▪ Translators (number available, languages spoken)	Offer translators at school meetings	▪ 100 percent of school meetings staffed by a translator ▪ Translators available for all languages spoken by district parents	▪ Majority of surveyed families report satisfaction with translator services	
School Resources	▪ Signs (number in school buildings, languages of)	Provide clear signage in school buildings	▪ 100 percent of schools include signs on all buildings	▪ Majority of school parents report that school site is easy to navigate	▪ Continued strong family engagement
Economic Supports	▪ Childcare (availability at meetings; cost) ▪ Schedules (location of meetings, timing of meetings)	Arrange for economic supports for low-income families	▪ 100 percent of PTA meetings include free childcare	▪ Majority of surveyed families report that nothing prevents them from attending school meetings	

---

[81] "National Standards for Family-School Partnerships." National PTA. Op. cit.

SAMPLE CATEGORY	SAMPLE RESOURCES/INPUTS	SAMPLE ACTIVITIES	SAMPLE OUTPUTS	SAMPLE OUTCOMES	SAMPLE IMPACT
Volunteer Staff	▪ Volunteer mentors for new parents (number, demographics)	Create a volunteer network to welcome new families	▪ All new parents are offered a tour of the school by a volunteer mentor	▪ Majority of surveyed families report satisfaction with the volunteer mentor program	

Source: PTA[82]

SHARED DECISION MAKING

The idea that shared decision making contributes to family engagement is visible in the PTA's fourth standard, "Families are empowered to be advocates for their own and other children;" fifth standard, "Families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families,"[83] and Joyce Epstein's fifth type of involvement, "Include parents in school decisions, developing parent leaders and representatives."[84] Figure 2.7 below illustrates an example of how leaders may choose to evaluate shared decision making in the context of family engagement using a logic model.

Figure 2.7: Potential "Shared Decision Making" Logic Model with Indicators

SAMPLE CATEGORY	SAMPLE RESOURCES/INPUTS	SAMPLE ACTIVITIES	SAMPLE OUTPUTS	SAMPLE OUTCOMES	SAMPLE IMPACT
Information about Laws	▪ Workshops on student rights (number, times and locations offered, languages) ▪ Parent Bill of Rights (availability, languages)	Communicate legal rights of students to families	▪ 50 percent increase in attendance at workshops on student rights	▪ Majority of surveyed families feel comfortable advocating for their student	▪ Continued strong family engagement
District and School Policies	▪ School handbook (availability, languages)	Create clear policies; communicate policies to families	▪ 100 percent of families receive a copy of the handbook annually in their native language	▪ Majority of surveyed families report that school policies are clear	

---

[82] Specific indicators adapted from content in "PTA National Standards for Family-School Partnerships Assessment Guide." National Parent Teacher Association, 2008. pp. 5–8. http://s3.amazonaws.com/rdcms-pta/files/production/public/National_Standards_Assessment_Guide.pdf

[83] "National Standards for Family-School Partnerships," Op. cit.

[84] Epstein, J., Op. cit., p. 5.

SAMPLE CATEGORY	SAMPLE RESOURCES/INPUTS	SAMPLE ACTIVITIES	SAMPLE OUTPUTS	SAMPLE OUTCOMES	SAMPLE IMPACT
Conflict Resolution Process	▪ Workshops on conflict resolution (number, times and locations offered, languages) ▪ Written procedure for resolving conflicts (availability, languages)	Offer clear channels for conflict resolution	▪ 50 percent increase in attendance at workshops on conflict resolution	▪ Majority of surveyed families report that leaders are in-tune with school issues and concerns	
Parent Represent-atives	▪ Parent groups (number of, demographics, attendance) ▪ Parent representatives (number of, demographics, attendance)	Support active parent organizations	▪ 25 percent increase in the number of parents of English Learners in parent groups	▪ Majority of surveyed families report that the district is transparent about decision-making	

Source: PTA, Joyce Epstein, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction[85]

COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

The idea that community collaboration contributes to family engagement is visible in the PTA's sixth standard, "Families and school staff collaborate with community members to connect students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation;" Joyce Epstein's third type of involvement, "Recruit and organize parent help and support;" and sixth type of involvement, "Identify and integrate resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning and development." Figure 2.8 below illustrates an example of how leaders may choose to evaluate community collaboration in the context of family engagement using a logic model.

---

[85] Specific indicators adapted from content in [1] Ibid., p. 5. [2] "PTA National Standards for Family-School Partnerships Assessment Guide," pp. 18-27. [3] "Measuring Your Family-School-Community Partnerships." Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. p. 3. https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/fscp/pdf/tk-measure-prtshps.pdf

Figure 2.8: Potential "Community Collaboration" Logic Model with Indicators

SAMPLE CATEGORY	SAMPLE RESOURCES/INPUTS	SAMPLE ACTIVITIES	SAMPLE OUTPUTS	SAMPLE OUTCOMES	SAMPLE IMPACT
Volunteers	▪ Official communications on volunteering (mediums, content) ▪ Annual survey to identify talents, times, and locations of volunteers ▪ Volunteer training (times, locations)	Encourage volunteering; Identify potential volunteers; follow-up and train volunteers	▪ 25 percent increase in number of parents trained ▪ Increase in the proportion of volunteers from special groups (e.g., English learner parents) relative to family demographics	▪ Increase in percentage of surveyed families reporting that they were invited to volunteer at their child's school	
Partnerships	▪ Partnerships (number, type) ▪ Materials on partnerships (number, type, content, accessibility, languages)	Increase awareness and use of community resources	▪ Increase in percentage of families using partnerships ▪ Demographics of parents using partnerships	▪ Increase in percentage of surveyed families reporting satisfaction with specific partnerships	▪ Continued strong family engagement
Facilities	▪ School facility use (who can access facilities, when, for what reasons)	Increase use of school facilities after-hours for community events	▪ 25 percent increase in number of facilities available for after-hours use ▪ 25 percent increase in number of facilities reserved	▪ Increase in percentage of surveyed families reporting satisfaction with school facility use after school hours	

Source: PTA, Joyce Epstein, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction[86]

SUPPORTIVE PARENTING

The idea that supportive parenting contributes to family engagement is visible in the PTA's third standard, "Families and school staff continuously collaborate to support students' learning and healthy development both at home and at school;" Joyce Epstein's first type of involvement, "Help all families establish home environments to support children as students;" and fourth type of involvement, "Provide information and ideas to families about how to help students at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions, and planning." Figure 2.9 below illustrates an example of how leaders may choose to evaluate supportive parenting in the context of family engagement using a logic model.

---

[86] Specific indicators adapted from content in [1] Epstein, Op. cit., pp. 3, 6. [2] "PTA National Standards for Family-School Partnerships Assessment Guide," pp. 28-30. [3] "Measuring Your Family-School-Community Partnerships," Op. cit., p. 3.

Figure 2.9: Potential "Supportive Parenting" Logic Model with Indicators

CATEGORY	RESOURCES/INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES	IMPACT
Workshops	▪ Annual survey to identify parent interest in workshop subjects ▪ Workshops on parenting and homework help (number, topics, times and locations offered, languages)	Support effective parenting	▪ 10 percent increase in number of families attending workshops ▪ Demographics of families attending workshops	▪ Percentage of surveyed families reporting satisfaction with workshops offered by school and/or district	
Communication	▪ District webpage (number, type of parenting resources for families) ▪ Parent-teacher interaction (number, timing, purpose) ▪ Progress reports (number, timing)	Clearly communicate student progress to families	▪ 20 percent increase in traffic to district webpages for parents ▪ 15 percent increase in number of parent-teacher interactions for positive reasons	▪ Percentage of surveyed families reporting that the district website is easy to navigate ▪ Percentage of surveyed families reporting positive relationships with teachers	▪ Continued strong family engagement
Representation	▪ Parent positions on committees (number of) ▪ Administrator meetings with parent representatives (number of)	Support collaboration between families and administration to improve student learning	▪ Demographics of parents on committees	▪ Percentage of surveyed families reporting that their child's school wants children to succeed	

Source: PTA, Joyce Epstein, CDE, Michigan Department of Education, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction[87]

---

[87] Specific indicators adapted from content in [1] Epstein, Op. cit., pp. 1, 4. [2] "PTA National Standards for Family-School Partnerships Assessment Guide," pp. 13-17. [3] "Measuring Your Family-School-Community Partnerships." Michigan Department of Education. p. 3. http://www.michigan.gov/documents/Parent_Involvement_Part_1_12-16-04_111426_7.pdf [4] "Parent Engagement Information and Tools," Op. cit., p. 34.

SECTION III: DISTRICT PROFILES

This section describes family engagement policies and practices at two districts highlighted in the secondary literature. Each of these districts were selected on the basis of their adherence to established best practices in family and community engagement.

CREIGHTON SCHOOL DISTRICT (AZ)

Creighton School District (Creighton) in Phoenix, Arizona includes 10 elementary schools serving over 7,000 students. Of these students, 38 percent are English Language Learners (ELL) and 36 percent live below the poverty line.[88] The district's family and community engagement programs were identified by the HFRP as an example of innovation and success in the field, employing several best practices to impact student achievement.[89] Parent engagement is encouraged through Academic Parent-Teacher Teams (APTT), parent liaisons, and community classes.

At the district level, the director of community education is responsible for overseeing and implementing family engagement programs. Associated responsibilities include training administrators and parent liaisons in program implementation techniques. Each school in the district has a Title I coordinator who oversees the implementation of Academic Parent-Teacher Teams. Finally, teachers and parent liaisons are responsible for carrying out APTT meetings and communicating student progress to parents.[90]

ACADEMIC PARENT-TEACHER TEAMS

Creighton schools keep parents updated on their children's academic progress and provide them with tools to support learning through Academic Parent-Teacher Teams. These teams consist of a teacher, an entire class of parents, and a parent liaison. The parent liaison is an individual hired by the district to promote family engagement. Liaisons sit in on team meetings, coach teachers, and assist in parent outreach efforts. Each team meets three times a year for 75 minutes each. During these meetings, teachers address all the parents at once. Each parent receives performance data for the whole class and for his/her child.[91] Teachers review the data with a group of parents and then set 60-day academic goals for students based on their academic scores. "For example, if the standard is for 1st graders to learn 120 high-frequency words by the end of second quarter, children working ahead of the curve

---

[88] "Creighton Elementary District, AZ." National Center for Education Statistics. https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/districtsearch/district_detail.asp?ID2=0402430&details=1

[89] Weiss, H., M Lopez, and D. Stark. "Breaking New Ground: Data Systems Transform Family Engagement in Education." Harvard Family Research Project, January 2011. p. 8. http://www.americaspromise.org/sites/default/files/d8/Breaking%20New%20Ground-%20PTA.pdf

[90] Paredes, M. "Academic Parent-Teacher Teams: Reorganizing Parent Teacher Conferences Around Data." Harvard Family Research Project, October 2010. http://www.sfusd.edu/en/assets/sfusd-staff/Reorganizing%20Parent%20Teacher%20Conf%20around%20data.pdf

[91] "Academic Parent Teacher Teams (APTT)." Creighton School District. http://www.creightonschools.org/parents_and_students/community_classes/family_engagement/academic_parent_teacher_teams___a_p_t_t_/

might have a goal of mastering all 120 by the end of November, whereas a child behind the curve might have a goal of 75."[92] Next, teachers demonstrate skills for parents to help their children achieve these goals and ask parents to practice these techniques with each other.

Parents and teachers also meet once a year for individual consultations. These meetings usually take place at the beginning of the year and provide teachers and parents the chance to review student performance and create individualized action plans to support learning. These meetings empower parents, as they note that "APTT team meetings offer them a clear window into their child's learning in the classroom, a clear and explicit articulation of what teachers expect them to do to support learning at home, and a timeline for completing the goals."[93]

Through the APTTs, teachers get to spend more time engaging with parents than they would using traditional parent-teacher conferences, helping them solidify bonds. In the traditional model, parents and teachers typically meet twice a year for about 15 minutes. The time and frequency of interactions are limited because educators need to conduct meetings with each individual family. Through group sessions, APTTs allow teachers to engage with parents more frequently and for longer periods of time without taking additional time away from a teacher's schedule. This facilitates communications, makes families more comfortable speaking with their child's teacher, and provides more timely student progress updates to families.[94]

PARENT LIAISONS AND COMMUNITY CLASSES

In addition to their role in APTTs, Creighton's parent liaisons facilitate family involvement through a variety of avenues. Parent liaisons foster the school-family bond, respond to family demand for educational and skill-building programming, and facilitate communication with parents. They do so by:[95]

- Organizing regular educational workshops for parents,
- Raising parent awareness of academic standards and standardized testing,
- Arranging family intervention assistance, and
- Facilitating volunteering opportunities to parents and community members.

Each school's Parent Liaison and the Community Education Department staff organize workshops for parents that provide new learning opportunities. Each school also hosts monthly Parent Connection Workshops to provide parents with the skills necessary to extend learning into their home and to improve their children's academic outcomes. These Parent

---

[92] "Academic Parent-Teacher Teams: Reorganizing Parent Teacher Conferences Around Data," Op. cit., pp.1-2.

[93] "Breaking New Ground: Data Systems Transform Family Engagement in Education," Op. cit., p. 9.

[94] Ibid.

[95] Bulleted text adapted from: "School Parent Liaisons." Creighton School District.
http://www.creightonschools.org/cms/one.aspx?portalId=351160&pageId=1677274

Connection Workshops provide a place for parents to build relationships with teachers and other parents and to exchange ideas and goals to improve student learning.[96]

Creighton's community classes provide parents with learning-linked skill building opportunities and address barriers to parental involvement. The Parent-Child Kinder Readiness class is a free program conducted over several weeks. In the program, PreK Parent Liaisons train parents in how to be their child's first teacher and mentor. The class emphasizes parental involvement and builds parents' capacity to support learning at the early stages of education. It provides parents with learning-linked techniques to support their child's academic achievement at home.[97] Adult English classes are also offered to help support parental involvement by removing language barriers to engagement. Through this program, the district aims to acknowledge and address the needs of all its parents.[98]

Creighton also offers Grade 7 and 8 girls and their mothers the opportunity to participate in the Hispanic Mother-Daughter Program (HMDP), in partnership with Arizona State University (ASU). [99] The goal of HMDP is to raise educational awareness and to promote career aspirations for Hispanic women. Students are generally selected to participate in Grade 7, and the mother and daughter pair starts a 10-year commitment with the program that begins in Grade 8 and ends with their college degree. The mother and daughter pair is expected to attend monthly educational workshops at ASU. The HMDP's goal is to increase the number of first-generation Hispanic women completing a bachelor's degree by directly involving their mothers in the process.

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS (FL)

Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) serves over 349,000 students in 435 PreK – 12 schools. Of its students, 17.2 percent are English Language Learners and 22 percent live below the poverty line.[100] In 2012, M-DCPS won the Broad Prize, an honor awarded annually to four urban school districts that "demonstrate the strongest student achievement and improvement in student achievement while reducing achievement gaps among low-income and minority students."[101] Family and community engagement was cited as one of the factors contributing to the district's win.[102]

---

[96] Vineyard, L. "Community Education Department Overview." Creighton School District, 2013. p.2.
https://www.applitrack.com/creightonschools/onlineapp/1BrowseFile.aspx?id=13543

[97] Ibid.

[98] Ibid., p.1.

[99] Ibid., p.2.

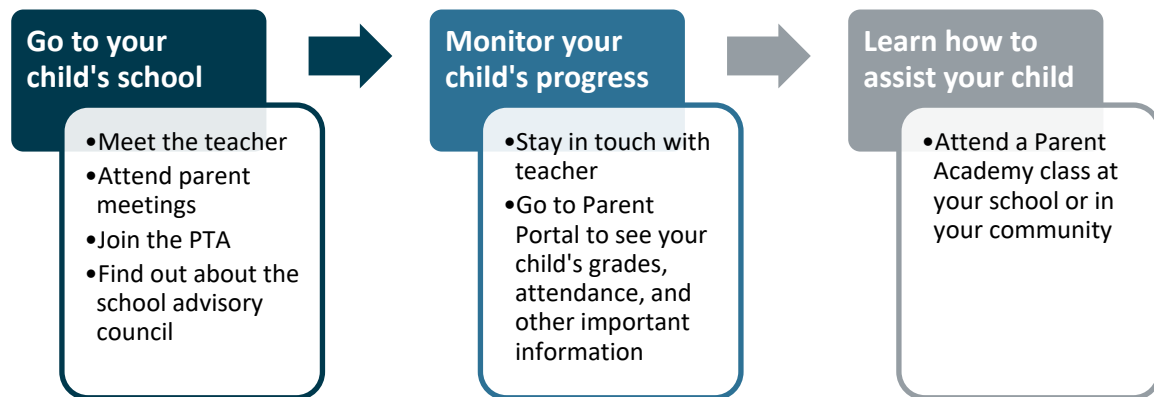[100] "Dade, FL." National Center for Education Statistics.
https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/districtsearch/district_detail.asp?ID2=1200390&details=1

[101] "2012 Broad Prize Awarded to Miami-Dade County Public Schools; Florida District Wins $550,000 in College Scholarships for Students, Three Finalist Districts Each Win $150,000." The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation, 2012. http://broadfoundation.org/2012-broad-prize-awarded-to-miami-dade-county-public-schools-florida-district-wins-550000-in-college-scholarships-for-students-three-finalist-districts-each-win-150000/

[102] "The 2012 Broad Prize." The Broad Prize. p. 4. http://www.broadprize.org/asset/1801-tbp%202012%20fact%20sheet%20mdcps.pdf

In its 2009-2014 Strategic Plan, the district recommitted itself to student achievement and identified "Student, Parent, and Community Engagement" as one of the four pillars upon which this goal depends.[103] Figure 3.1 below depicts M-DCPS's "Parent Pathway," which outlines the various modes of communication and support M-DCPS provides parents in an effort to boost involvement. The pathway includes the Parent Portal and the Parent Academy, two innovative approaches described in more detail below. The district also has a robust community engagement office.

Figure 3.1: Parent Pathway

Go to your child's school
- Meet the teacher
- Attend parent meetings
- Join the PTA
- Find out about the school advisory council

Monitor your child's progress
- Stay in touch with teacher
- Go to Parent Portal to see your child's grades, attendance, and other important information

Learn how to assist your child
- Attend a Parent Academy class at your school or in your community

Source: Miami-Dade County Public Schools[104]

PARENT ACADEMY

M-DCPS supports parents in their supplementary teaching role through The Parent Academy (TPA). This academy was originally stablished by the former Superintendent, Rudy Crew, in an effort to provide parents from all economic groups with the skills necessary to effectively advocate for and support their children's learning. TPA acts as "a multifaceted and community-wide initiative helping parents learn about their roles, rights, responsibilities, and opportunities to support learning."[105] It was initiated in 2005 with four primary goals:[106]

- To educate parents on how to become "active partners" by providing them with resources that will enhance their ability to assist in their child's achievement and success;

- To strengthen the family unit through various, courses, workshops, and conferences;

---

[103] "District Strategic Framework 2009 – 2014." Miami-Dade County Public Schools. p. 13. http://districtartifacts.dadeschools.net/Standard%204/4.04/District%20Strategic%20Framework.pdf

[104] "Parent Pathway." Miami-Dade County Public School Office of Parental Involvement. http://prekese.dadeschools.net/-docs/ForTeachers/TeacherHandbook/appendixY/Y%20ParentPathway.pdf

[105] Weiss, H.B. et al. "Reframing Family Involvement in Education: Supporting Families to Support Educational Equity." Equity Matters: Research Review No. 5. A Research Initiative of the Campaign for Educational Equity Teachers College, Columbia University, December 2009. p.30. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED523994.pdf

[106] Bulleted text taken verbatim from: Mapp, K. and E. Brookover. "The Parent Academy: Family Engagement in Miami-Dade County Public Schools." Public Education Leadership Project at Harvard University, September 3, 2010. p.6. http://pelp.fas.harvard.edu/files/hbs-test/files/pel062p2.pdf

- To unite families, schools and communities toward the common goal of educational achievement for our children; and
- To inform parents of their rights, responsibilities and the educational opportunities available to them.

TPA provides free classes focused on building parents' understanding of the education system and effective parenting practices for student achievement.[107] Classes range from one-time events to multi-session courses and are taught in English, Spanish, and Creole. In the first year, classes were held at over 125 different sites across the county. TPA worked with one grassroots community organization to hold classes in barbershops, an established and popular meeting place in the Haitian refugee communities. The Lunch and Learn series held brown bag events for working parents to attend in their place of business during their lunch breaks. Family Learning Events invited families to participate in an activity and an educational program. These events were held at local attractions community locations that many families may not have the financial ability to visit, such as an animal park or the Children's Science Museum. As of 2010, the most recent year for which program data was available, over 100,000 parents had participated in TPA classes.[108]

In order to assess its impact, TPA has evaluated the program in each of its first three years. The first evaluation found that the program was more successful than the planning committee had anticipated. Nearly 20,000 people attended TPA events in the first year, roughly twice the projected number. In addition, TPA hosted over 600 events, nearly five times the expected number.[109] Parents cited a sense of community and support as a valuable outcome of TPA. Parents and school staff also noted that TPA brought them together to share their experiences and ideas. In 2015, TPA partnered with the Miami-Dade Public Library System to host monthly workshops for parents and their children. Workshops included topics on: parents' rights and responsibilities, how parents can build literacy skills in their children, and how parents can protect their child from bullying.[110]

For the 2017-2018 school year, the distritc's School-Level Parent and Family Engagement Plan's mission statement is "to enhance parent and family engagement, access, and advocacy in order to build parents' and families' capacity for stronger parent, family, school and community engagement, in support of measurable improvement in student achievement."[111] The current plan incorporates parents' and families' opinions in the planning, improvement, and funding of Title I programs. In addition to the Title I Annual Meeting for all parents, the district offers a flexible meeting schedule by organizing morning, afternoon, and evening

---

[107] "Mission/Vision/Goal." The Parent Academy. http://www.parentacademymiami.com/about/mission-vision-goal/

[108] "The Parent Academy: Family Engagement in Miami-Dade County Public Schools," Op. cit., p.1.

[109] Ibid., p.10.

[110] Mordica, M. "The Parent Academy Teams Up With Miami-Dade's Public Libraries to Hold Workshops Series for Parents." Miami-Dade County Public Schools Office of Communications, January 23, 2015. http://news.dadeschools.net/releases/rls15/179_TPAworkshops.html

[111] "Miami-Dade County Public Schools: 2017-2018 School-Level Parent and Family Engagement Plan (PFEP)." Miami-Dade County Public Schools. p.1. http://ntlelementary.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/SCHOOL-LEVEL-PARENT-AND-FAMILY-ENGAGEMENT-PLAN-2017-2018.pdf

visits, as well as home visits and workshops held at various times to accommodate parents' schedules.[112]

PARENT PORTAL

M-DCPS has also created a parent portal that allows parents to engage in their children's education (e.g., grades, attendance) without necessarily having to be present in the school. Parents are allowed to add multiple children to one account to view all relevant information. The district's parent webpage also includes rich resources that are organized based on the following main categories:[113]

- **Parent Toolbox** that includes information such as free & reduced price meal application, physicians/therapists resources, PTA/PTSA, report cards information, school volunteers, special education, and the parent academy;

- **Parent Highlights** that cover FCAT information, system accreditation, code of conduct, Florida KidCare, food and nutrition, immunization requirements, schools of choice, transportation, becoming a mentor, and student transcript request; and

- **Parent Resources** that include information related to school programs and policies, school safety, and state/federal policies.

---

[112] Ibid., p.3.
[113] Bulleted information adapted from: "Parents." Miami-Dade County Public Schools.
http://www.dadeschools.net/parents.asp

PROJECT EVALUATION FORM

Hanover Research is committed to providing a work product that meets or exceeds client expectations. In keeping with that goal, we would like to hear your opinions regarding our reports. Feedback is critically important and serves as the strongest mechanism by which we tailor our research to your organization. When you have had a chance to evaluate this report, please take a moment to fill out the following questionnaire.

http://www.hanoverresearch.com/evaluation/index.php

CAVEAT

The publisher and authors have used their best efforts in preparing this brief. The publisher and authors make no representations or warranties with respect to the accuracy or completeness of the contents of this brief and specifically disclaim any implied warranties of fitness for a particular purpose. There are no warranties that extend beyond the descriptions contained in this paragraph. No warranty may be created or extended by representatives of Hanover Research or its marketing materials. The accuracy and completeness of the information provided herein and the opinions stated herein are not guaranteed or warranted to produce any particular results, and the advice and strategies contained herein may not be suitable for every client. Neither the publisher nor the authors shall be liable for any loss of profit or any other commercial damages, including but not limited to special, incidental, consequential, or other damages. Moreover, Hanover Research is not engaged in rendering legal, accounting, or other professional services. Clients requiring such services are advised to consult an appropriate professional.

4401 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 400
Arlington, VA 22203
P 202.559.0500 **F** 866.808.6585
www.hanoverresearch.com