



Illinois State Board of Education

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www.isbe.net

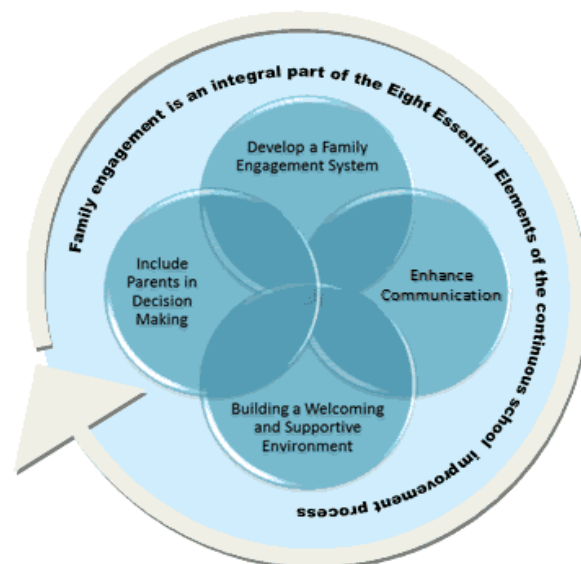
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FACT SHEET FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

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Learning begins long before a child steps foot into a classroom. It's a journey that begins at birth and continues in the home, school, and community. Families play a crucial role in this journey by helping nurture a child's healthy development and education. Decades of research show that children with involved parents have better school attendance; increased motivation; better self-esteem and social skills; lower suspension rates; decreased drug and alcohol use; fewer instances of violent behavior; and overall higher grades, test scores, and graduation rates. The earlier a parent becomes involved in their child's education, the more powerful the impact. And when families, schools, and communities partner to promoting learning and healthy development for all children, schools thrive and student outcomes improve.



The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) believes meaningful family engagement is a cornerstone of effective schools. Meaningful family engagement is based on the belief that parents, educators, and community members all share responsibility for a child's education and well-being. Families have a stake in all aspects of our education system and are key partners in every area of school improvement.

In the response to the need for more support with family engagement, the agency has brought together research, best practices, and trainings to give districts, schools, and families tools to help build and expand school-family partnerships. At the center of ISBE's efforts is a set of principles and strategies, called the [ISBE Family Engagement Framework](#). The framework recommends the following four research-based principles to encourage more systemic, sustained, and integrated engagement. The principles are:

1. Develop systems that support family engagement.
2. Build welcoming and supportive environments.
3. Enhance communication with parents.
4. Include parents in decision making.

Family engagement trainings based on the framework are available to school and district teams at local [Regional Offices of Education](#). These trainings are designed to help improve and expand the development of effective partnerships. ISBE encourages families to be actively engaged. This includes sharing the framework with their schools and districts as well as accessing additional resources at the [ISBE webpage](#) to support learning and healthy development at home, in the school, and in their community.

Below are examples of what school improvement means to families and how parents can join school leaders and community members to strengthen education and support systems for students:

Element for Effective Education	Questions for Families to Consider	How Families Can Help
Comprehensive Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What services are available for children and families? ➤ How are school resources being allocated? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Actively serve on school and/or district school improvement teams. ➤ Connect with other families and encourage their involvement at school, in the home, and in their community.
Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What are the learning expectations for my child? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Know your school's curriculum, standards, and expectations for your child.
Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What lessons and materials are going to be used? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Volunteer in the school and attend events. ➤ Ask the teacher about what your child is learning and how you can support his/her growth.
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What does my child know and how is my child doing? ➤ What areas should we focus on for improvement? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Give the school feedback on demonstrations made outside of school about what children know and are able to do. This is sometimes sought through parent questionnaires. ➤ Regularly request to see your child's assessment data or, if available, log in to the school's parent portal.
Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How are teachers and leaders prepared to serve my child? ➤ How can I support their professional development with what I know? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Participate in trainings and professional development opportunities for parents/parent leaders.
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What leadership roles can I play to support education? ➤ Do I know who the school leaders are and what decisions they're making? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Build relationships with school administrators, teachers, and other support personnel.
Family & Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What opportunities exist for me to get involved in different ways and at different levels in the school? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Connect to the community by establishing relationships, participating in activities, and reaching out to others for support and/or giving support to others. ➤ Reach out to services and resources in the community that can help you and other families as needed.
Conditions for Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How does the school environment support my child and how can it be improved to support all aspects of my child's education, including language and culture? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Share information about your family and child's strengths and needs with the school. ➤ Adapt to challenges by working together on problems as a family. ➤ Establish and maintain clear expectations that are fair; define what your child can or cannot do; encourage communication about tough topics; and help meet the needs of the family.

The following resources are available to help families start conversations with their child's teachers and school leaders and stay up to date on current education initiatives:

<p>Illinois Learning Standards and Assessments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Assessment page <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Illinois Assessment Key Dates Calendar ➤ Kindergarten Individual Development Survey ➤ New Illinois Learning Standards – Math/ELA ➤ New Illinois Learning Standards – Science ➤ PARCC Primer ➤ ISBE Illinois Classroom in Action 	<p>Illinois Schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Charter Schools ➤ Homeschooling ➤ Illinois Virtual School ➤ School Choice ➤ School Community Network ➤ School Profiles ➤ School Report Cards ➤ State Report Card Data ➤ Student Registration and Enrollment Guidance
<p>College and Career:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ College and Career Readiness ➤ Colleges and Universities ➤ Collegezone (Illinois Student Assistance Commission) ➤ Financial Aid 	<p>Family Engagement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ ISBE Family Engagement Framework – Title 1, Part A Non-Regulatory Guidance - http://www.isbe.net/students3.htm ➤ Illinois PTA ➤ National PTA Standards for Family Engagement ➤ U.S. Department of Education Parent Resources
<p>Health and Safety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Drug Prevention Resource ➤ Healthcare for All Kids ➤ School Bus Safety ➤ School Health page <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Guidance: Immunization Requirements for 2015-16 School Year ➤ School Safety and Emergency Response 	<p>Homework Help:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ ISBE Homework Help Page ➤ ISBE Illinois Classroom in Action ➤ Illinois Early Learning Parent Tip Sheets
<p>General Links:</p> <p>ISBE Parent Portal</p> <p>Special Education</p> <p>Bullying</p>	<p>English Language Learning</p> <p>Early Learning</p> <p>Learning Supports</p>