

School Leaders' Perspectives: Including Parents in the Decision-Making Process

ISBE's Draft Family Engagement
Framework Guide, Principle Four



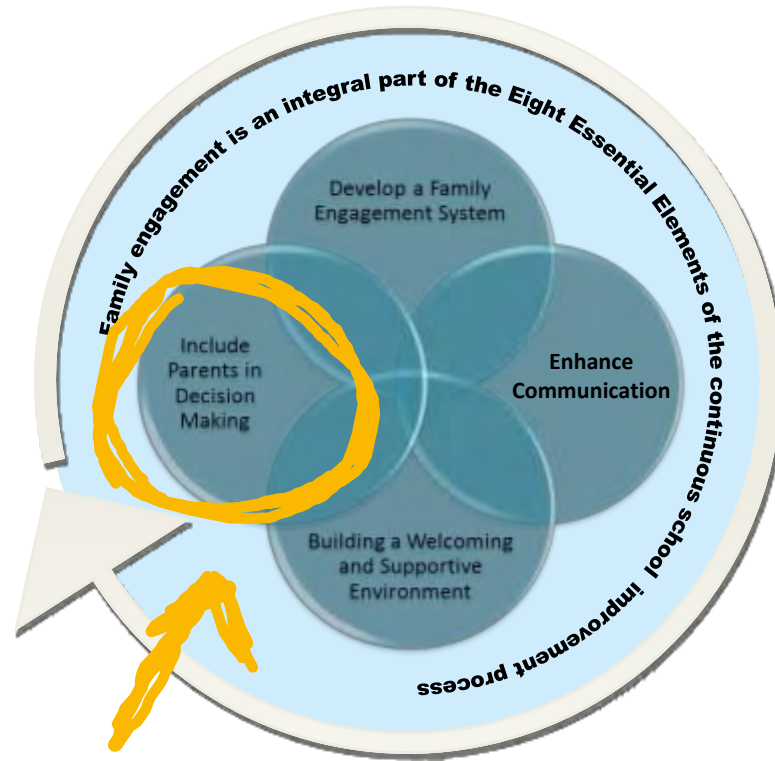
Why are We Here Today?

To gain a deeper knowledge of how to:

1. Empower parents to be involved
2. Solicit input from families in the district/school continuous improvement process
3. Jointly develop and review programming for families to support learning and healthy development
4. Engage parents to participate in problem solving discussions related to their child



ISBE Family Engagement Framework Guide Overview



- Districts and schools partner with families
- Families are engaged on a regular basis and are seen across the 8 Essential Elements
- When critical stakeholders partner, educational systems are stronger and more effective



Evidence-Based Practice: The Research Review

Research Review: Include Parents in

More research is now emerging that indicates that parents are included in the decision making process. Henderson and Mapp found that when parents advocate for their children, their children are more confident at school, take on more and achieve more (2002). A study on Conjoint Behavioral Consultation in which a structured, detailed, and collaborative approach (between schools and families) to decision making and intervention implementation was investigated, findings revealed the process to be effective in addressing various developmental concerns for at-risk children in Head-Start settings (Sheridan, Clarke, Marti, Burt, Rohik, 2005). In addition, Walber, et al. found that when parents, teachers, administrators, and program developers collaborate in the development of parent involvement programs, student achievement significantly increased (1981).

The empirical research on parental involvement in school decision making is somewhat limited. There are, however, some studies that indicate that taking parental input into account when making school-wide decisions may result in increased parental involvement (Bryk, Sebring, Allensworth, Luppescu, & Easton, 2010). This may be due to the higher levels of relational trust that occur when including parents in the decision making process. District and school personnel can solicit parental input through parent forums, dialogue, and surveys.

Educators are in a position to promote parental input in the decision making process for individual students. Likewise,

Henderson and Mapp found that when parents advocate for their children, their children are more confident at school, take on more and achieve more (2002).

Educational Development Laboratory, *Research Review: Include Parents in Decision Making*. Retrieved June 10, 2013 from <http://www.sedl.org/conjoint-behavioral-consultation/resources/evidence.pdf>.

Lopez, M.E. (2002, Spring). Learning from Families, The evaluation exchange: A Periodical on Emerging Strategies in Evaluation, Volume VIII, Number 1. Retrieved on July 12, 2013 from <http://www.hfro.org/evaluation/the-evaluation-exchange/issue-archive/family-support/learning-from-families>.

Sheridan, S., Clarke, B., Marti, D., Burt, J., & Rohik, A. (2005). *Conjoint Behavioral Consultation: A Model to Facilitate Meaningful Partnerships for Families and Schools*, University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Walberg, H., Bole, R., & Waxman, H. (1980). School-based family socialization and reading achievement in the inner city. In *Psychology in the schools*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation.



Notes



Q&A: Where does it get hard to involve families in decision-making opportunities?



Family Engagement Standards of Effective Practice

Principle 4: Include Parents in Decision Making



District and school personnel include parents in the decision-making process.

Standards:

- 4A. District and school personnel empower parents to be involved in the decision making process.
 - 4A.1. District and school personnel establish relational trust with families.
 - 4A.2. District and school personnel build the capacity of parents so that they may effectively engage in the decision making process.
 - 4A.3. District and school personnel partner with community organizations to further empower parents to be involved in the decision making process.
- 4B. District and school personnel solicit input from families and take it into account when making decisions.
 - 4B.1. District and school personnel invite parent opinions on school climate.
- 4C. District and school personnel include parents in the continuous improvement process.
- 4D. District and school personnel and families jointly develop and review programming for families to support student learning and healthy development.
- 4E. District and school personnel encourage parents to participate in any problem solving discussions related to their child.

Notes



Closer Look at the Standard: 4A

Standard	Descriptors
<p>4A. District and school personnel empower parents to be involved in the decision making process.</p>	<p>4A.1. District and school personnel establish relational trust with families.</p> <p>4A.2. District and school personnel build the capacity of parents so that they may effectively engage in the decision making process.</p> <p>4A.3. District and school personnel partner with community organizations to further empower parents to be involved in the decision making process.</p>



Taking a Closer Look at the Standard: 4B

Standard	Descriptors
4B. District and school personnel solicit input from families and take it into account when making decisions	4B.1. District and school personnel invite parent opinions on school climate.



Taking a Closer Look at the Standards: 4C, 4D, 4E

4C. District and school personnel include parents in the continuous improvement process.

4D. District and school personnel and families jointly develop and review programming for families to support student learning and healthy development.

4E. District and school personnel encourage parents to participate in any problem solving discussions related to their child.



Alignment with the Continuous School Improvement Process



We engage families as partners in all aspects
of building effective schools



Making the Framework Actionable: FE Matrix

Conditions for Learning

8 Essential Elements	Guiding Questions for Integrating Family Engagement Efforts	Family Engagement Standards of Effective Practice	Legislative Requirements/References
<p><u>Conditions for Learning</u> Conditions for Learning are the factors that ensure an optimal learning environment that promotes healthy development; addresses barriers to teaching and learning; and supports student motivation and re-engages the disengaged student.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well do district/school personnel know the children and families in the community? Are they aware and do they acknowledge the assets as well as the risk factors in the community? • Are families listened to? Are their opinions taken into account? • How do district/school personnel positively respond to families from different cultures? • Are parents given multiple opportunities to provide input and engage in activities that support their students' learning and healthy development? • Are procedures in place that allow for family participation in classroom activities? • How often do district/school personnel personally reach out to families and extend an invitation? • Do district/school personnel communicate concerns to parents in a timely manner? Are parents included in the problem-solving process? • Does your school administer the IL 5 Essentials Parent Survey? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do district/school personnel support parents' understanding of rules, laws, and policies for family engagement? (Standard 4E.) • Districts and schools invite parent opinions on school climate. (Standard 4B.1.) • District and school personnel build the capacity of parents to understand and interpret rules, laws, and policies for family engagement. (Standard 1G.4.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information to families [20 USC 6318(e)(1)] and materials and training to help parents work with their children [20 USC 6318(e)(2); 20 USC 6381d(2),(4),(7)]; Conduct other activities to encourage and support parents, including parent resource centers [20 USC 6381(e)(4)]. • Provide parents with timely information about schools and students in a language and format that they can understand [20 USC 6318(f)]. • Provide parent involvement policy to parents in an understandable and uniform format [20 USC 6318(a)(2) and (f)]. • Conduct parent input meetings and/or surveys with the required response rate (for Special Education Self-Review) [20 USC 1416(a)(3)(A)]. • Involve family and community members representative of the student population [20 USC 1400 § 650]. • Provide opportunities for the participation of parents who are economically disadvantaged, have limited English proficiency,



Models of Practice

HONORING FAMILIES

Do More

- “Hello! Welcome to our school. How may I help you?”
- Welcome sign with the name of the center
- Parent meetings that break into small discussion groups, each picking a leader.
- One-to-one and small group meetings.
- Thanking parents for contributions large or small.
- Meeting and greeting parents before and after center, and going to community events.

- Rotating meetings before school, evening, and weekends.
- Involving families in selecting new reading programs
- Surveying families to get their ideas and opinions about activities and programs.

Do Less

- “Who are you? What do you want?”
- NO TRESPASSING SIGNS
- Parent meetings dominated by a few “officers”.
- Large meetings in the center’s gym.

- Complaining that parents don’t do more.
- Hiding in office and assigning parent involvement to the assistant principal or teacher’s aide.
- Meeting only during center hours.

- Announcing a new reading program.
- Planning events, then publicizing them to parents.



Challenges and Opportunities

Representative Voice:

- Schools need to be aware of the input they received from all families.
- Another factor influencing junior high and high school programs is the ideas and opinions of students. Schools are encouraged to seek out student representatives along with parents in the decision making process.

Documentation and Evaluation:

- Documenting activities may include obtaining signatures from decision makers or retaining meeting agendas and minutes.
- The evaluation should also seek input from all those involved.
- Evaluation is crucial as this is often the determining factor of whether or not the activity should be continued, be revised, or be dismissed all together.



Voices from the Field: A Panel Discussion

Chicago Public School District 299

Phillip Hampton

Chief, Community & Family Engagement Officer

Community High School District 218

Dr. Anne Coffman

Director of Federal & State Projects

Rockford Public School District 205

Marsha Sisney

Parent & Community Empowerment Supervisor

Cahokia School District



Questions for the Panelists

What were the contextual factors that lead to your district in making investments (time, space, staff, and/or funding) to include parents in the decision-making process?

What system, policy and/or practice did your district develop/strengthen?

How: How did your district plan, implement and evaluate the strategy? What worked well? What were the lessons learned?

Is this happening at the district and/or school level? Where is it connecting to the continuous school improvement process?



Additional Resources

Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE)

- Learning Supports: <http://www.isbe.net/learningsupports/html/partnerships.htm>
- Common Core: http://www.isbe.net/common_core/htmls/resources.htm
- Special Education: <http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/parents.htm>
- Innovation and Improvement: http://www.isbe.net/grants/pdf/parent_involvement_guide.pdf/
- Illinois School Report Card: <http://www.illinoisreportcard.com/>

National Network of Partnership Schools.

Engaging Families in Decision-Making

www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000/sixtypes.htm

Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP)

<http://www.hfrp.org/out-of-school-time/publications-resources?topic=30>

HFRP promotes strategies to support family engagement in children's learning and development. The website provides research, evaluation and assessment tools



Questions??



Next Steps: What Will You Do?



Thank you for participating!

We can help you to build strong
school communities
within the schools you serve.

All webinar sessions are recorded and posted
to the ***Tool Box*** page at ***IllinoisParents.org***.



Illinois State
Board of Education

