Rethinking the Connection: Enhancing Communication with Family, Community Stakeholders and Schools

Webinar Series from ISBE’s Draft Family Engagement Framework Guide
Why are We Here Today?

• To gain a deeper understanding of how enhance communication efforts with families
• To learn how this work is happening in the field
Our Presenters

Academic Development Institute
Bernadette Anderson
Director of Institutional Advancement

Illinois State Board of Education
Sarah Ogeto
Principal Consultant
How to Participate in Today’s Webinar

Questions:
The presenter will respond to your questions during the presentation at identified times.

Participation instructions:
Type your question/comments into the Question Box
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
According to a study by Christenson, et al., most effective interventions to promote academic and social development of children are those where parents and school personnel work together to implement interventions utilizing a two-way exchange of information and those involving communication between school and home (1997).
Key Characteristics of Effective Communication Strategies

District and school personnel engage in ongoing and meaningful two-way-exchanges of information with families to support student learning and healthy development.

Knowing that all parents can positively impact student outcomes.

Parental input and diverse perspectives are valued.

Programs use communication practices that are sensitive to cultural backgrounds of the families they serve.

Programs use communication practices that are sensitive to the diverse language.

Families are engaged in ways that are linked to learning and healthy development.

Supporting student learning and healthy development is a shared responsibility.

Knowing that all parents can positively impact student outcomes.

Parental input and diverse perspectives are valued.

Programs use communication practices that are sensitive to cultural backgrounds of the families they serve.

Programs use communication practices that are sensitive to the diverse language.

Families are engaged in ways that are linked to learning and healthy development.

Supporting student learning and healthy development is a shared responsibility.
Questions for Reflections
**Family Engagement Standards of Effective Practice**

**Principle 3: Enhance Communication**

District and school personnel engage in ongoing and meaningful two-way-exchanges of information with families to support student learning and healthy development.

**Standards:**

3A. District and school personnel ensure that communication is clear, constructive, and ongoing.

3A.1. District and school personnel make certain that communication is accessible to all and in the languages of families.

3A.2. District and school personnel use a variety of ways to communicate with families.

3B. District and school personnel provide information pertaining to parental rights.

3C. District and school personnel ensure that communication is linked to student learning and healthy development.

3C.1. District and school personnel share information about how standards and curriculum are used by teachers.

3C.2. District and school personnel help families understand student expectations and classroom activities.

3C.3. Teachers inform parents of the strategies they are using to promote students' academic, physical, social, emotional, and behavioral development.

3C.4. District and school personnel communicate with parents about any academic, physical, social, emotional, or behavioral concerns in a timely manner.

3C.9. District and school personnel share with parents any strategies implemented to address barriers to learning.

3D. District and school personnel communicate district/school/classroom policies and practices.

**Notes**

---

Illinois State Board of Education
## Principle 3: District and school personnel engage in ongoing and meaningful two-way-exchanges of information with families to support student learning and healthy development.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Descriptors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3A. District and school personnel ensure that communication is clear, constructive, and ongoing.</td>
<td>3A.1. District and school personnel make certain that communication is accessible to all and in the languages of families. 3A.2. District and school personnel use a variety of ways to communicate with families.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Taking a Closer Look at the Standard:

3B. District and school personnel provide information pertaining to parental rights.
Taking a Closer Look at the Standard: 3C

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Descriptors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 3C. District and school personnel ensure that communication is linked to student learning and healthy development. | 3C.1. District and school personnel share information about how standards and curriculum are used by teachers.  
3C.2. District and school personnel help families understand student expectations and classroom activities.  
3C.3. Teachers inform parents of the strategies they are using to promote students’ academic, physical, social, emotional, and behavioral development.  
3C.4. District and school personnel communicate with families about how they can enhance student learning and healthy development.  
3C.5. District and school personnel inform parents of the types of summative and formative assessments that will be used each year.  
3C.6. District and school personnel share school-wide data with families and communities.  
3C.7. District and school personnel communicate regularly with parents about their students’ and school’s progress.  
3C.8. District and school personnel communicate with parents about any academic, physical, social, emotional, or behavioral concerns in a timely manner.  
3C.9. District and school personnel share with parents any strategies implemented to address barriers to learning. |
Taking a Closer Look at the Standard: 3D

Standard

3D. District and school personnel communicate district/school/classroom policies and practices.

RPS 205 District Parent Advisory Council (DPAC)
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8 Essential Elements</th>
<th>Guiding Questions for Integrating Family Engagement Efforts</th>
<th>Family Engagement Standards of Effective Practice</th>
<th>Legislative Requirements/References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Curriculum</strong></td>
<td>• How are families supported in becoming knowledgeable about the curriculum, standards, and expectations for their children?</td>
<td>• District and school personnel ensure that communication is linked to student learning and healthy development. <em>(Standard 3C.1)</em></td>
<td>• Inform parents of English learners how they can be involved in the education of their children [20 USC 7012(e)] <em>(1)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A school or district curriculum is an educational plan that defines what the expectations are for the content, knowledge, and skills to be learned as well as the resources to be employed for documenting student progress and achievement.</td>
<td>• Do families have an opportunity to provide input on the curriculum?</td>
<td>• District and school personnel share information about how standards and curriculum are used by teachers. <em>(Standard 3C.1)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What venues and systems are being utilized to keep families regularly informed of classroom activities and assignments?</td>
<td>• Districts and schools regard families as valuable sources of knowledge and information to enhance curriculum and instruction. <em>(Standard 1H.3)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To review the full legislative requirements/references, go to page 32.
Effective Communication Strategies

District and school personnel can support this by sharing information and having a dialogue with parents about:

• the Common Core
• the curriculum used to address the standards
• expectations and classroom activities
• the strategies teachers are using to promote students’ academic, physical, social, emotional, and behavioral development
• how parents can enhance student learning and healthy development
• the types of summative and formative assessments that will be used each year
• school-wide data and the implications
• their students’ and school’s progress
• any academic, physical, social, emotional, or behavioral concerns in a timely manner
• any strategies that have been implemented to address barrier(s) to learning
Epstein, M., et al. suggests that teachers proactively communicate with families before any problems are identified. Recommendations include:

- sending positive emails or notes home that highlight the student’s strengths;
- providing a parent signature log with the child’s homework assignments;
- building strong partnerships between parents and school counselors;
- communicating regularly in multiple ways; and
- inviting parents to participate in school and out of school events.
Illinois School Report Card
Online school report card goes beyond test scores to present a complete view of schools. Information here helps families to be an informed partner in your child's education.

PBIS/Learning Supports
PBIS is a Response to Intervention (RtI) model. Can be implemented at school, home, community

Parent Cafes
Be Strong Families developed the first parent café process to support programs and communities in engaging parents, building protective factors, and promoting deep individual self-reflection and peer-to-peer learning. Parent Cafés are based on the principles of adult learning and family support and are a gateway to providing parent leadership opportunities.
Cahokia School of Choice
Brenda Mitchell, 5th grade Teacher
Mr. Gustavo Cotto-Rodriguez, Principal

Fast Facts About CAHOKIA SCHOOL OF CHOICE

- 49% ISAT Scores
- 26% PSAE Scores
- 386 Total Enrollment
- 90% within 4 Years
- 38% Ready for College
- 48% Low Income Students
- 2% English Learners
- 17% Students with Disabilities
- $7,434 Instructional Spending
- $14,580 Operational Spending
A Web of Resources

Provided by Illinois State Board of Education in partnership with Academic Development Institute and Early Childhood and Parenting Collaborative at UIUC
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 Early Learning Project
http://illinoisearlylearning.org/
The Illinois Early Learning Project website is a source of evidence-based, reliable information on early care and education for parents, caregivers, and teachers of young children in Illinois.

Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP)
HFRP promotes strategies to support family engagement in children’s learning and development. The website provides research, evaluation and assessment tools.
Questions for Reflections
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.