Reframing family and community engagement

Matthew Nixon & Peggie O’Hare

October 19, 2012 Title I Technical Assistance & Networking Session
Session overview

- Review Title I District and School Parent/Guardian Involvement Rights, Policies and Compacts
- Look at how parent involvement has changed over the years
- Overview and Activity: Family, School, and Community Partnership Fundamentals Document
- Share Additional Resources
Title I district and school parent/guardian involvement rights, policies and compacts

Title I District and School Parent/Guardian Involvement Rights, Policies and Compacts

Parent’s Right-to-Know: At the beginning of each school year, a district that receives Title I funds shall notify the parents of each student attending Title I schools that the parents may request, and the district will provide in a timely manner, information regarding the professional qualifications of their child’s classroom teachers. In addition, schools shall provide parents with information on the level of achievement of the parent’s child in each of the State’s academic assessments and timely notice that the parent’s child has been assigned, or has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by, a teacher who is not highly qualified. [Section 1111(b)(9), ESEA]

District Wide Parent/Guardian Involvement Policy: Each school district that receives Title I funds shall develop jointly with, agree on with, and distribute to, parents of participating children written parent involvement policies. [Section 1118(a)(2), ESEA]

School Parent/Guardian Involvement Policies: Each school that receives Title I funds shall develop a written policy that includes convening an annual meeting informing parents of their school’s participation in Title I and to explain the requirements and the right of parents to be involved, offering a flexible number of meetings and may provide, with Title I funds: transportation, child care, or home visits, as such services relate to parental involvement, involving parents, in an organized, ongoing, and timely way, in the planning, implementation, and review of Title I programs, including input during the development and revision of the school/district parental involvement policy and any schoolwide program plan. [Section 1118(c), ESEA]

School-Parent Compact: As a component of the parental involvement policy, each school served under Title I shall develop jointly with parents a school-parent-student compact for all children served under Title I. The compact will outline how parents, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement, and the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve the State’s high standards. [Section 1118(d), ESEA]

For a listing of the activities required for effective involvement of parents, see: http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/pg2.html#sec1118
For additional information regarding Parent’s Right to Know, see: http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/pg2.html#sec1118
For additional information regarding the parent involvement policy and the school-parent compact, see: http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/pg2.html#sec1116
For comprehensive information regarding the above, see: http://www.doe.mass.edu/title1/parents.html

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Overall findings from 40 years of research

When families are involved at home and at school,

children do better in school...

AND

...schools do better educating children.
Why families get involved

Family members are more likely to become involved when they:

★ Understand that they *should* be involved
★ Feel *capable* of making a contribution
★ Feel *invited* by the school and their children
**Parent Involvement**

- Random Acts
- Events-driven
- Add-on
- No infrastructure
- Compliance

**Family Engagement**

- Systemic
- Student outcome-oriented
- Integrated
- Sustainable over time
- Ownership and continuous improvement
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partnership School</th>
<th>Open-Door School</th>
<th>Come-If-We-Call School</th>
<th>Fortress School</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All families &amp; communities have something great to offer—we do whatever it takes to work closely together to make sure every single student succeeds.</td>
<td>Parents can be involved at our school in many ways—we’re working hard to get an even bigger turnout for our activities. When we ask the community to help, people often respond.</td>
<td>Parents are welcome when we ask them, but there’s only so much they can offer. The most important thing they can do is help their kids at home. We know where to get community help if we need it.</td>
<td>Parents belong at home, not at school. If students don’t do well, it’s because their families don’t give them enough support. We’re already doing all we can. Our school is an oasis in a troubled community. We want to keep it that way.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Building Relationships</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Family center is always open, full of interesting materials to borrow</td>
<td>Teachers contact families once a year</td>
<td>Better-educated parents are more involved</td>
<td>Parents do not “bother” school staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home visits are made to every new family</td>
<td>Parent coordinator is available if families have questions or need help</td>
<td>“Many immigrant parents don’t have time to come or contribute”</td>
<td>“Minority families don’t value education”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Activities honor families’ contributions</td>
<td>Office staff are friendly</td>
<td>Staff are very selective about who comes into the school</td>
<td>Parents need security clearance to come in</td>
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<td>Activities honor families’ contributions</td>
<td>Staff contact community agencies &amp; organizations when help is needed</td>
<td>It is important to keep community influence out of the school</td>
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<td><strong>Linking to Learning</strong></td>
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<td>All family activities connect to what students are learning</td>
<td>Teachers explain test scores if asked</td>
<td>Parents are told what students will be learning at the fall open house</td>
<td>Curriculum &amp; standards are considered too complex for parents to understand</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parents &amp; teachers look at student work &amp; test results together</td>
<td>Folders of student work go home occasionally</td>
<td>Parents can call the office to get teacher-recorded messages about homework</td>
<td>“If parents want more information, they can ask for it”</td>
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<td>Community groups offer tutoring &amp; homework programs at the school</td>
<td>School builds curriculum nights 3 or 4 times a year</td>
<td>Workshops are offered on parenting</td>
<td>“We’re teachers, not social workers”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students’ work goes home every week, with a scoring guide</td>
<td>Staff let families know about out-of-school classes in the community</td>
<td><strong>Addressing Differences</strong></td>
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<td>Translators are readily available</td>
<td>Office staff will find a translator if parents ask in advance</td>
<td>“We can’t deal with 20 different languages”</td>
<td>“Those parents need to learn English”</td>
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<td>Teachers use books &amp; materials about families’ cultures</td>
<td>Multicultural nights are held once a year</td>
<td>“Parents can bring a translator with them”</td>
<td>“We teach about our country—that’s what those parents need to know”</td>
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<td>PTA/PTO includes all families</td>
<td>“Minority” parents have their own group</td>
<td>“This school just isn’t the same as it used to be”</td>
<td>“This neighborhood is going downhill!”</td>
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<td>Local groups help staff reach families</td>
<td><strong>Supporting Advocacy</strong></td>
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<td>There is a clear, open process for resolving problems</td>
<td>Principal will meet with parents to discuss a problem</td>
<td>School calls families when children have problems</td>
<td>Parents don’t come to conferences</td>
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<td>Teachers contact families each month to discuss student progress</td>
<td>Regular progress reports go to parents, but test data can be hard to understand</td>
<td>Parents visit school on report card pick-up day &amp; can see a teacher if they call first</td>
<td>Problems are dealt with by the professional staff</td>
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<td>Student-led parent-teacher conferences are held 3 times a year for 30 minutes</td>
<td>Parent-teacher conferences are held twice a year</td>
<td><strong>Sharing Power</strong></td>
<td>Teachers don’t feel safe with parents</td>
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<td>Parents &amp; teachers research issues such as prejudice &amp; tracking</td>
<td>Parents can raise issues at PTA/PTO meetings or see the principal</td>
<td>Principal sets agenda for parent meetings</td>
<td>Principal picks a small group of “cooperative parents” to help out</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parent group is focused on improving student achievement</td>
<td>Parent group sets its own agenda &amp; raises money for the school</td>
<td>PTA/PTO gets the school’s message out</td>
<td>Families are afraid to complain, “They might take it out on my kid”</td>
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<td>Families are involved in all major decisions</td>
<td>Resource center for low-income families is housed in a portable classroom next to the school</td>
<td>“Parents are not experts in education”</td>
<td>“Community groups should mind their own business; they don’t know about education”</td>
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<td>Parents can use the school’s phone, copier, fax, &amp; computers</td>
<td>PTA/PTO offices can use the school office</td>
<td>Community groups can address the school board if they have concerns</td>
<td>—from “Beyond the Bells—The Essential Guide to Family-School Partnerships” (2007) by Henderson, Mapp, Johnson &amp; Daines</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Massachusetts Family, School and Community Partnership Fundamentals

- Welcoming All Stakeholders
- Communicating Effectively
- Supporting the Success of Children and Youth
- Advocating for Each Child and Youth
- Sharing Power and Responsibility
- Partnering with the Community
Why are Fundamentals needed?

- Provide a framework for positive effective family and community engagement
- Offer guidance for families, schools and community to examine current strategies
- Explore new possibilities and expansion of practice
- Correlate with other family and community engagement initiatives
Key features of the Fundamentals

- Focus on student learning outcomes
- Provide a welcoming space for families
- Outreach to all families
- Share information with families in multiple ways and in multiple languages
- Survey families and students
- Offer multiple opportunities for engagement
Important aspects of the Fundamentals

- Families share responsibility to support their children’s education.
  - Parenting
  - Home-School Relationships
  - Responsibility for Learning Outcomes
- Schools connect families to community resources.
- Principals lead in creating a welcoming environment for all families and community members.
Fundamentals and Title I parent involvement requirements

- Involving parents/guardians cornerstone of Title I of current ESEA
- Information to parents in languages they understand
- Build parental capacity for involvement
- Home – School compacts
- Parental input to Title I Parent Involvement Policy
# Fundamental 1: Welcoming All Stakeholders

Schools create and ensure a welcoming culture and environment for all families, children and youth, school staff, and community members. Stakeholders are valued and connected to each other in support of high academic expectations, achievement, and healthy development.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Level 1: Initiating Basic level of development and implementation</th>
<th>Level 2: Progressing Functioning level of development and implementation</th>
<th>Level 3: Mastering Highly functioning level of development and implementation embedded throughout school practice</th>
<th>Current Status</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>A. Creating a respectful atmosphere for stakeholders</td>
<td>The school maintains clear signage that is welcoming to parents and visitors in the main languages used by families in the district.</td>
<td>The school is a welcoming place with a designated space such as a family center where families can connect with each other and staff to address issues, share information, and plan family engagement activities.</td>
<td>The school and district share responsibility with stakeholders from all neighborhoods and backgrounds to identify and break down barriers to family engagement related to race, ethnicity, family structure, religion, physical and mental abilities, educational background, and socioeconomic status of families.</td>
<td>□ Level 3: Mastering Level 2: Progressing Level 1: Initiating Not here yet</td>
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<td>B. Developing personal relationships</td>
<td>The school offers opportunities for families to connect with school staff and visit classrooms.</td>
<td>Parents and community members volunteer to work in the school office to welcome visitors and provide information and support to families and students.</td>
<td>Family volunteers from diverse neighborhoods and backgrounds are trained to serve as mentors to help other families become more engaged in the school. Families are greeted in their home language by friendly front office staff.</td>
<td>□ Level 3: Mastering Level 2: Progressing Level 1: Initiating Not here yet</td>
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<td>C. Providing opportunities for volunteering</td>
<td>The school invites families to volunteer in field trips, fundraising activities, and varied learning opportunities.</td>
<td>The school has a family engagement action team that organizes a formal volunteer program. Parent group members, other parents, and community members are welcome to volunteer their services in the school or individual classrooms.</td>
<td>The school volunteer program reaches out to families and community members across all neighborhoods and backgrounds, acknowledging unique experiences and skills, and offering varied volunteer opportunities at home, at school, and in the community.</td>
<td>□ Level 3: Mastering Level 2: Progressing Level 1: Initiating Not here yet</td>
</tr>
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<td>D. Ensuring accessible programming by removing economic obstacles to participation</td>
<td>The school identifies external resources and after-school/enrichment programs that are free or low cost, and refers families to them.</td>
<td>Family and student activities and events are free. All stakeholders collaborate to cover the costs through the school budget, parent group fundraising, and contributions from community businesses and organizations.</td>
<td>The school and district share responsibility with stakeholders to plan and implement high quality family programs to be held at the school and in community locations such as libraries, community centers, faith-based centers, homes in different neighborhoods, and/or work sites.</td>
<td>□ Level 3: Mastering Level 2: Progressing Level 1: Initiating Not here yet</td>
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Making the Fundamentals work for you

★ Gather stakeholders to form action team
★ Review Fundamentals to identify priorities
★ Reach consensus on Level of Implementation for each Indicator
★ Determine activities to move to next Levels
★ Look back at what was accomplished
★ Move onto next Fundamental
Welcome to the Massachusetts Parent Information and Resource Center (PIRC)

Established in 1995 as Parents’ PLACE, our goal as the Massachusetts PIRC is to inform and enable parents to play a key role as partners with schools in ensuring children’s success in school.

The Massachusetts PIRC is a place where parents across the state can find information to help them make the best choices for their children’s education. We also support schools and districts across the state in their efforts to form strong partnerships with families.

The U.S. Department of Education, Office of Innovation and Improvement, Parental Information and Resource Center Program, IDEA #04313A, funds at least one PIRC in each state under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The PIRC program is official recognition of the vital contributions parents make to children’s academic success. The Massachusetts PIRC is currently funded under Award Number U085A07.

Early Childhood
Helping Young Children Learn Two Languages
English | Spanish | Portuguese | Albanian | Chinese | French | Hebrew

Early Math Learning
Math at Home
English | Spanish | Portuguese

Getting a Strong Foundation for Learning
Rabbits at Work!
English | Spanish | Portuguese

Parents as Teachers (PATs) Program

Family and Community Engagement for the 21st Century
Learn about the Family, School, and Community Partnership Framework developed by the Parent and Community Engagement Advisory Council of the Massachusetts Board of Education.

In Family and Community Engagement in Every School by Gary C. Sam, learn what 21st-century family engagement looks like, and what the framework is doing to make it a reality.

Resources for English Language Learners
Immigrant Student Rights
English | Spanish | Portuguese

Rights of English Language Learners
English | Spanish | Portuguese | Albanian | Cape Verdean Creole | Haitian Creole | Spanish (Puerto Rican) | Vietnamese | Chinese

English Language Learners and State Assessments
English | Spanish | Portuguese | Albanian | Cape Verdean Creole | Haitian Creole | Vietnamese

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
**Family Engagement**

- District and School Family Engagement & Required Policies (ESEA Guidance)
- Federal Non-Regulatory Guidance on Parental Involvement
- Massachusetts PIRC – Parent’s Learning About Children’s Education (Family, School & Community Partnership Fundamentals)
- U.S. Department of Education Parent and Family Engagement (Resources aimed at parent and family engagement)
- Academic Development Institute (Handbook on Family & Community Engagement by Sam Redding, Marilyn Murphy, & Pamela Shaeley, Eds., (2011))
- Family-School Partnership Lab (The Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler Model of Parental Involvement (2009))
- Harvard Family Research Project (Beyond Random Acts: Family, School, and Community Engagement as an Integral Part of Education Reform by Heather Weinz, M. Elena Lopez, and Heidi Rosenberg (December 2011))

**Books**

- A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement by Anne T. Henderson and Karen L. Mapp (SEDL, 2002)

**Presentations**

- Family Engagement (PowerPoint from October 6, 2011 Title I Technical Assistance Session)
- Family and Community Involvement (PowerPoint from October 9, 2010 Title I Technical Assistance Session)
Questions?

School Improvement Grant Programs
Email: titlei@doe.mass.edu
Phone: 781-338-6230
Website: http://www.doe.mass.edu/titlei/

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A project of the Federation for Children with Special Needs
Informing, Educating, Empowering Parents