# Overview: Ideas for Collaboration on Student Learning and Well-Being

icon of pen in ink jar to represent author **CONTRIBUTOR**

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Icon of a document with lines of text and a folded corner**WHAT is this resource?**

This document provides some examples of ways in which a Teacher Candidate might engage with families to support the learning and social-emotional well-being of their students.  The document is divided into sections that offer suggestions in different content areas (math, science, social studies, literacy), at different grade levels (PreK-K, Elementary, Middle School, High School) as well as in areas that acknowledge families’ cultural and linguistic strengths.

Icon of a calendar with multiple blocks to represent time **WHEN could this resource be used?**

This resource could be used at multiple time points. It can be used in coursework before a Teacher Candidate begins a practicum to introduce the importance of family collaboration and it can be used during the practicum to provide examples of collaboration on student learning and well-being.

Icon with a group of five people standing together  **WHO could use this resource?**

The faculty member responsible for preparing Teacher Candidates for the practicum, as well as the **Program Supervisor** and **Teacher Candidate** could all use this resource.

**icon with a checkmark in a circle HOW could this resource best be used?**

In coursework before a Teacher Candidate begins the practicum and/or in a CAP seminar, this resource emphasizes the importance of collaboration with families.  During the practicum, as the Teacher Candidate begins to develop the important relationship with families, this resource gives several examples of how to leverage cultural and linguistic assets of families through communication, school events and shared home-school practices. Whether in a CAP seminar or in meetings with a program supervisor, this resource provides ideas as a springboard for a Teacher Candidate’s own demonstration of the Essential Element of collaboration on student learning and well-being.

***Note:*** *This resource was submitted for inclusion in the Candidate Assessment of Performance (CAP) Resource Hub. It is intended to serve as a reference and source of guidance for others engaged in the CAP process. While it reflects one approach, users should adapt its content to fit the specific context and needs of their own evaluations.*

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## Ideas for Collaboration on Student Learning and Well-Being

**Leveraging Families’ Cultural and Linguistic Knowledge and Expertise as Assets**

* Conducting a **family survey** at the start of the year to learn about students' home languages, traditions, and learning preferences.
* Incorporating **multicultural texts** and resources that reflect students' backgrounds in lessons.
* Inviting **family members to share** their expertise (e.g., guest speakers, storytelling, cultural celebrations).
* Using **key phrases in students’ home languages** to build rapport and connection.

**Engaging with Families About Classroom Learning and Expectations**

* Sending **weekly or biweekly newsletters** (email, print, or video) outlining students' learning.
* Hosting **family nights or virtual meetings** to discuss curriculum, assessments, and ways families can support learning at home.
* Utilizing **classroom apps** (like ClassDojo, Seesaw, or Remind) to provide real-time updates and share student progress.
* Offering **parent-teacher conferences** at flexible times and in accessible formats (phone, virtual, in-person).

**Collaboratively Identifying Strategies and Resources for Student Growth**

* Encouraging families to share **strategies that work at home** for motivation, organization, and learning.
* Providing **bilingual resource guides** for homework help and academic enrichment.
* Creating **individualized learning plans** with family input for students needing extra support.
* Partnering with school counselors and community organizations to connect families with resources (e.g., tutoring, mental health support, food assistance).

### Examples at Various Licensure Levels:

#### Early Childhood (PreK-K)

**Leveraging Families’ Cultural and Linguistic Knowledge**

* Ask families to send photos or objects representing their culture for a "Family Wall" or **classroom culture box**.
* Integrate **songs, rhymes, and greetings** in different home languages.
* Create **"All About Me" books** with students, incorporating family stories and traditions.

**Engaging Families In Learning**

* Send home **"Ask Me About" cards** with simple conversation starters (e.g., "Ask me about the story we read today!").
* Use a **daily communication folder** with student work and teacher notes.
* Host **play-based family workshops** (e.g., “Math Through Play” night).

**Collaborating on Strategies and Resources**

* Provide **hands-on learning kits** with manipulatives for home practice.
* Offer simple **video demonstrations** of home literacy and numeracy strategies families can use.
* Conduct **home visits or virtual check-ins** to understand family learning routines.

#### Elementary (Grades 1-5)

**Leveraging Families’ Cultural and Linguistic Knowledge**

* Assign a **"Family Interview" project** where students learn about family traditions.
* Include **diverse books** and invite families to read in their home language.
* Celebrate **multicultural holidays and events** with family participation.

**Engaging Families in Learning**

* Use **weekly learning logs** where students write/draw what they learned, and families can add comments.
* Host **curriculum nights** where teachers model reading or math strategies.
* Use digital platforms (Seesaw, ClassDojo) to send **photo/video updates** of student learning.

**Collaborating on Strategies and Resources**

* Share **reading strategies** like "Stop and Retell" with take-home bookmarks.
* Create **individualized support plans** with family input for struggling students.
* Offer a **Family Resource Library** with books, games, and websites for home learning.

#### Middle School (Grades 6-8)

**Leveraging Families’ Cultural and Linguistic Knowledge**

* Incorporate **family heritage projects** in social studies or ELA.
* Encourage students to **interview elders** about historical or cultural events.
* Offer opportunities for **family storytelling** in literature units.

**Engaging Families In Learning**

* Hold **quarterly student-led conferences** where students share their progress.
* Create a **weekly digital newsletter** with highlights and at-home discussion topics.
* Offer a **"Family STEAM Night"** where students and parents solve challenges together.

**Collaborating on Strategies and Resources**

* Work with families to create **study schedules** for major projects and tests.
* Share **organization tips** (e.g., color-coded notebooks, planner use).
* Connect families with **tutoring or community mentoring programs**.

#### High School (Grades 9-12)

**Leveraging Families’ Cultural and Linguistic Knowledge**

* Encourage students to **research and present** their family’s cultural contributions.
* Invite families to **share career experiences** related to course topics.
* Integrate **multilingual perspectives** in discussions and assignments.

**Engaging Families in Learning**

* Host **grade-level parent info nights** on graduation, college, and career pathways.
* Use student-led **portfolio presentations** to reflect on progress.
* Share real-world applications of learning through **family involvement projects**.

**Collaborating on Strategies and Resources**

* Provide **bilingual guides on college/career planning**.
* Offer **financial aid and scholarship workshops** with family participation.
* Connect students and families with **internship or job shadowing opportunities**.

### Examples of Various Content Areas

#### Math

**Early Childhood (PreK-K)**

* **Cultural Knowledge:** Invite families to share counting songs or games from their culture.
* **Engagement:** Send home "Math in Everyday Life" activities (e.g., counting objects while cooking).
* **Collaboration:** Provide simple games using dice or playing cards to practice numeracy.
* Share counting songs and games from different cultures.
* Provide "Math in Everyday Life" activities (e.g., counting food items).
* Send home simple math games using dice or playing cards.

**Elementary (Grades 1-5)**

* **Cultural Knowledge:** Explore number systems from different cultures (e.g., Roman numerals, Mayan counting).
* **Engagement:** Host a "Family Math Night" with interactive problem-solving stations.
* **Collaboration**: Share a monthly math challenge for families to solve together.
* Introduce number systems from different cultures (e.g., Roman numerals).
* Host a "Family Math Night" with problem-solving activities.
* Share a monthly math challenge for families to solve together.

**Middle School (Grades 6-8)**

* **Cultural Knowledge:** Assign a project on real-world math applications in different cultures (e.g., architecture, currency).
* **Engagement:** Send home "How We Used Math Today" journals for family discussions.
* **Collaboration:** Provide study guides and test-prep strategies with family involvement.
* Assign projects on real-world math applications (e.g., architecture, currency).
* Use "How We Used Math Today" journals for family discussions.
* Provide study guides and test-prep strategies with family input.

**High School (Grades 9-12)**

* **Cultural Knowledge:** Analyze global economic data and discuss financial literacy with families.
* **Engagement:** Encourage students to teach a math concept to a family member.
* **Collaboration:** Offer parent workshops on SAT/ACT math strategies.
* Discuss global financial literacy and analyze economic data.
* Encourage students to teach a math concept to a family member
* Offer parent workshops on SAT/ACT math strategies

#### Science

**Early Childhood (PreK-K)**

* **Cultural Knowledge:** Explore weather, plants, or animals from different home countries.
* **Engagement:** Send home "Science in My Kitchen" experiments (e.g., mixing colors, growing seeds).
* **Collaboration:** Encourage families to visit parks or science museums and share their experiences.
* Explore plants, animals, and weather from different cultures.
* Send home simple science experiments (e.g., growing seeds).
* Encourage families to visit science museums and share experiences.

**Elementary (Grades 1-5)**

* **Cultural Knowledge:** Discuss scientists from diverse backgrounds and their contributions.
* **Engagement:** Host a "Family STEAM Night" with hands-on experiments.
* **Collaboration:** Provide a take-home science journal for students to log observations with family input.
* Highlight contributions of scientists from diverse backgrounds.
* Host a "Family STEM Night" with hands-on experiments.
* Provide a take-home science journal for student-family collaboration.

**Middle School (Grades 6-8)**

* **Cultural Knowledge:** Explore how different cultures approach sustainability and conservation.
* **Engagement:** Assign an at-home family science project (e.g., building a simple machine).
* **Collaboration:** Offer bilingual guides on STEM careers and high school course pathways.
* Discuss sustainability practices in different cultures.
* Assign at-home family science projects (e.g., building a simple machine).
* Share bilingual guides on STEM careers.

**High School (Grades 9-12)**

* **Cultural Knowledge:** Research environmental issues in students’ home countries and compare **policies.**
* **Engagement:** Provide families with at-home science challenges (e.g., designing an energy-efficient home).
* **Collaboration:** Connect students with family members in STEM careers for mentorship.
  + Research environmental issues in students’ home countries.
  + Provide at-home science challenges (e.g., energy-efficient designs).
  + Connect students with family members in STEM fields.

#### English Language Arts (ELA)

**Early Childhood (PreK-K)**

* **Cultural Knowledge:** Invite families to share stories or songs in their home language.
* **Engagement:** Create a Family Book Bag Program where students bring home books to read with caregivers.
* **Collaboration:** Provide parents with storytelling prompts to encourage language development at home.
* Invite families to share stories or songs in their home language.
* Create a "Family Book Bag" program for shared reading at home.
* Provide storytelling prompts for caregivers to use.

**Elementary (Grades 1-5)**

* **Cultural Knowledge:** Include folktales and literature from diverse backgrounds in read-aloud.
* **Engagement:** Send home weekly reading logs where families track read-aloud time.
* **Collaboration:** Offer bilingual guides on "How to Support Reading at Home."
* Include folktales from different cultures in the curriculum.
* Use weekly reading logs for families to track read-aloud time.
* Offer bilingual guides on "How to Support Reading at Home."

**Middle School (Grades 6-8)**

* **Cultural Knowledge:** Assign a family storytelling project where students interview a relative.
* **Engagement:** Use a digital classroom blog where students and families can comment on book discussions.
* **Collaboration:** Share vocabulary-building strategies with families
  + Assign a family storytelling project (interviewing relatives).
  + Use a digital classroom blog for book discussions with families.
  + Share vocabulary-building strategies for home practice.

**High School (Grades 9-12)**

* **Cultural Knowledge:** Have students analyze literature based on their cultural background.
* **Engagement:** Encourage students to write a letter to a family member about what they are reading.
* **Collaboration:** Host college essay workshops for families to support students' writing.
  + Have students analyze literature from their cultural backgrounds.
  + Encourage students to write letters to family members about their reading.
  + Host college essay workshops for families.

#### Social Studies

**Early Childhood (PreK-K)**

* **Cultural Knowledge:** Explore family traditions through art and storytelling.
* **Engagement:** Send home maps or globes for students to mark places where family members are from.
* **Collaboration:** Encourage families to share artifacts or photos for cultural show-and-tell.
* Explore family traditions through art and storytelling.
* Send home maps or globes for students to mark their family's origins.
* Invite families to share cultural artifacts.

**Elementary (Grades 1-5)**

* **Cultural Knowledge:** Research holiday traditions around the world and invite family participation.
* **Engagement:** Assign a "My Family’s History" timeline project.
* **Collaboration:** Provide bilingual materials on government and history topics.
  + Research holiday traditions around the world with family input.
  + Assign a "My Family’s History" timeline project.
  + Provide bilingual materials on government and history topics.

**Middle School (Grades 6-8)**

* **Cultural Knowledge:** Discuss current events and how they impact students’ home cultures.
* **Engagement:** Create a classroom podcast where families can be guest speakers on historical

events.

* **Collaboration:** Share resources for students to interview family members about historical events.
  + Discuss current events and their connections to students’ cultures.
  + Create a classroom podcast featuring family guest speakers.
  + Share resources for students to interview family members about history.

**High School (Grades 9-12)**

* **Cultural Knowledge:** Compare family immigration stories with historical migration patterns.
* **Engagement:** Encourage students to debate social issues with family perspectives included.
* **Collaboration:** Connect students with family members in civic roles (e.g., local government, activism).
* Compare family immigration stories with historical migration trends.
* Encourage students to debate social issues with family perspectives.
* Connect students with family members in civic roles (e.g., government)