# DESE logo

# Watson Elementary School

**Video Facilitation Guide**

***Guiding Question:***What can we learn from Watson about effectively engaging families and the community to support student achievement?

Family engagement is a key strategy identified in Turnaround Practice 4 (School Climate and Culture), and many schools find that community partners play an essential role in supporting student success. Massachusetts identifies six [Fundamentals](http://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/fscp-fundamentals.docx) of family and community engagement. As you watch the [Watson Elementary School](https://youtu.be/QFnXKu2rhaE) video, identify examples of how Watson educators, parents, and community partners talk about their role in using these practices at Watson.

1. **Welcoming All Stakeholders.** “If parents are involved in education, and the community bought in and helped us, we would be much more successful.” *(Cathy, 0:52)*
2. **Communicating Effectively.** “... we’re contacting the parent for the positive stuff too, and we let [students] call home and tell their parent that...they’re doing a great job” *(Erin, 4:34)*
3. **Supporting the Success of Children and Youth.** “Having the families in the classroom really signifies for the students how important their education is... they see that connection between their parents and their teachers.” *(Nicole, 5:53)*
4. **Advocating for Each Child and Youth.** “...when we think about that work that we do with young people, it’s a team effort, focused on meeting the kids where they are, closing gaps, and opening doors of opportunity.” *(Superintendent Malone, 6:55)*
5. **Sharing Power and Responsibility.** “...we created a family engagement committee, of staff members, and some parents, and we said OK, what, what’s missing? ... we tried to problem solve that with staff and the parents.” *(Cathy, 2:37)*
6. **Partnering with the Community.** “...what fits perfectly between us both is our missions. I mean our goal, as [is] the school’s, is to make sure our children are on track to graduate from school with a plan for the future.” *(Peter, 1:00)*

***Additional Climate and Culture Strategies***: Turnaround Practice 4 identifies other important strategies that are not addressed in this video - for example, expanding student learning opportunities, and building a culture of professional collaboration among teachers. What other climate and culture-building strategies are employed in your classroom, school or district?

***Related Resources***

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| [Turnaround Practice 4: School Climate and Culture](http://www.doe.mass.edu/turnaround/howitworks/turnaround-practices-508.pdf) - Learn more about what family engagement looks like at other schools building a safe and respectful climate for students, educators, and families (pages 26-27)[Massachusetts Family, School, and Community Partnership Fundamentals](http://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/fscp-fundamentals.docx) - Dive deeper in the six Fundamentals, and use the levels of implementation tool to reflect on family and community engagement in your classroom, school or district.  |

**Detailed Reflection Questions.** The following sections of the video illustrate key points that the Watson team identified as critical to their success.  As you watch the video, consider pausing after viewing the indicated times, and reflecting on the following questions.

**Partners Showing Teachers the School Community *(Fundamental 6: Partnering with the Community)***

(1:09-1:43) Why might it be important for teachers to physically see and experience the neighborhoods

where their students live? How did Watson work with a partner to show teachers their school community?

**Identifying Barriers to Success *(Fundamental 1: Welcoming all Stakeholders)***

(2:17-2:53) What was family engagement like at Watson in the early stages of their sustainable improvement efforts? What did the school do in response? Who was involved, and what questions did they ask themselves?

**Leveraging Technology for Two-Way Family Communication *(Fundamental 2: Communicating Effectively)***

(3:06-3:48) How did Watson try to communicate with parents in the past? Why might have that original strategy been ineffective? What are the advantages of the new approach that the school has adopted?

**Teachers Helping Parents Support Academics *(Fundamental 5: Sharing Power and Responsibility)***

(5:02-5:36) How do teachers at Watson make themselves available to parents?  What strategy have teachers used to help parents support their children’s learning?

**Additional Reflections for Your Context**

* What strategies, insights, or specific actions from the video most resonate with you?
* What questions do you have about the video?
* What strategies or actions did you see in the video that you are already doing in your classroom, school, or district?
* What strategies or actions did you see that you could consider implementing in your classroom, school, or district?
* What are the next steps for your classroom, school or district planning?