

Nevada's Family Engagement Guide

Birth Through Grade 12

2025



*Developed and informed by Nevada
families, educators, and community members*



Guide



Framework



Toolkit



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Family Engagement in Nevada

Nevada recognizes that family and community engagement are critical to our students' success. In 2011, legislation was passed that set forth a vision for family engagement. As a result, the Nevada Department of Education Office of Parental Involvement and Family Engagement and the Advisory Council for Family Engagement were created. The Nevada Department of Education Office of Parental Involvement and Family Engagement supports schools and districts in implementing effective family engagement practices, collaborates with the Advisory Council to develop and evaluate policies, coordinates a biennial statewide family engagement summit, and shares best practices and grant information. The Council facilitates parental involvement and family engagement by reviewing state and district policies, collaborating with the Office of Parental Involvement and Family Engagement, and assessing effective practices from other states for statewide implementation. It also evaluates family communication in accountability reports and identifies strategies to engage parents, including those with limited time or English proficiency, while examining how family involvement impacts student performance, attendance, and discipline.

This vision is evident in several statewide initiatives, including Nevada's Statewide Plan for the Improvement of Pupils (STIP), developed by the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) in 2020. The STIP outlines core values that guide all NDE's efforts, with a strong focus on community. This value emphasizes the importance of collaboration among educators, districts, families, stakeholders, and partner agencies to create a high-performing and responsive education system for all Nevadans. Licensed educators play a key role in this collaborative effort, as family engagement is a central element of the Nevada Educator Performance Framework (NEPF), the state's performance evaluation system. Family Engagement is highlighted as Standard 4 in both the teacher and school administrator rubrics, underscoring its critical role in building strong connections between schools and families.

Defining Family Engagement

Having a common definition for family engagement in Nevada gives everyone a shared understanding of what we mean when we refer to or talk about family engagement. It allows everyone to be on the same page when discussing family engagement and puts us in a better position to make decisions going forward.

During the summer of 2019, the Birth-12 Framework Advisory Committee and NDE engaged hundreds of **stakeholders**¹ to help develop Nevada's definition for family engagement. Over 400 hundred families, educators, and community members shared their thoughts on what family engagement means to them and what words or phrases Nevada's definition should include. The Committee and NDE then took all the feedback and crafted a common statewide definition: family engagement is a shared responsibility between schools, families, and communities where all receive equitable access to tools and supports needed to successfully work together toward the development of children and youth for college, career, and lifelong learning.

In 2024, the Birth Through Grade 12 Family Engagement Framework Advisory Committee, tasked with updating the Nevada's Family Engagement Framework, crafted a revised definition:

Family engagement is a joint partnership involving families, communities and schools ensuring equitable access to necessary resources for successful collaboration in children's development for education and lifelong learning.

¹Stakeholders: anyone who has an interest in the success of a school or school system, including government officials, school board members, administrators, educators, district and school staff, associations, parents and families, and community members

Family engagement is a collaborative effort that brings together families, communities, and schools to create a united support system for children's development and educational success. This partnership goes beyond simply involving parents; it encompasses a comprehensive approach that recognizes the diverse roles that each stakeholder plays in shaping a child's learning experiences. By ensuring equitable access to resources, opportunities, and support, family engagement seeks to bridge gaps that may exist due to socio-economic, cultural, or linguistic differences, empowering all families to actively participate in their children's education.

This partnership still emphasizes the importance of shared responsibility, where families, educators, and community members must work together to create a learning environment that extends beyond the classroom but describing it as a "joint partnership" suggests a more integrated and collaborative approach. The new definition emphasizes unity, teamwork, and working together toward a shared goal and conveys the idea that all parties are equally engaged and invested in supporting a child's success. By fostering open communication, trust, and mutual respect, this approach promotes strategies that address the unique needs of each child, ensuring that every student has the tools and opportunities to succeed in school and in life. Ultimately, family engagement is a cornerstone of lifelong learning, as it lays the foundation for skills and habits that students will carry with them throughout their educational journeys and into their future careers.

Why Family Engagement Matters

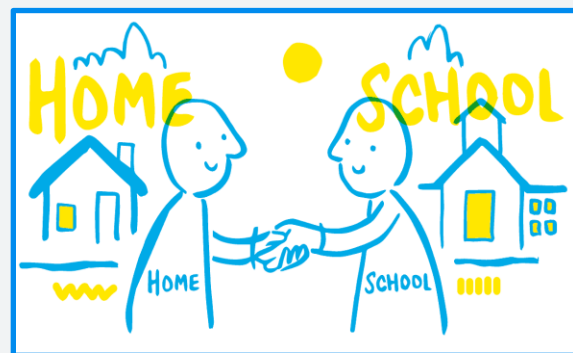
Family engagement is crucial because it fosters a supportive learning environment, enhances student achievement, and strengthens the overall school community. Research has shown that family engagement positively impacts academic achievement, social-emotional development, attendance, behavior, and school-community collaboration, making it a critical factor in education.

1. **Improved Academic Performance:** Research consistently shows that students with engaged families tend to perform better academically. They are more likely to earn higher grades, attend school regularly, and graduate on time. Research by Henderson & Mapp (2002) in [A New Wave of Evidence](#) found that students with engaged families, regardless of their socio-economic status, are more likely to earn higher grades and test scores, enroll in higher-level programs, pass their classes, earn credits, and graduate. Family engagement contributes to higher levels of academic achievement and greater likelihood of pursuing post-secondary education.
2. **Enhanced Social-Emotional Development:** Family engagement contributes to students' social and emotional well-being, helping them develop resilience, better communication skills, and a positive self-image. Research by [Joyce L. Epstein \(1995\)](#) on school-family-community partnerships indicates that students with strong family engagement experience better emotional health, demonstrating more positive attitudes toward school and better behavior in class. Family support is key in developing resilience and emotional intelligence.
3. **Increased Attendance and Motivation:** When families are engaged, students are more motivated to attend school and participate actively. According to a 2014 study from the [National Center for Education Statistics](#), students with engaged families have higher attendance rates. The [Attendance Works](#) organization has shown that chronic absenteeism decreases when families are aware of and invested in their children's attendance and school success.
4. **Better Behavior:** Engaged families contribute to fewer behavioral problems in schools. Students feel supported both at home and in school, leading to improved attitudes and relationships with peers and teachers. The [Harvard Family Research Project](#) highlights that family engagement is associated with fewer behavioral issues. A meta-analysis by [S. Wilder \(2014\)](#) found that students with active family support display fewer disruptive behaviors, contributing to a more positive school climate and better peer interactions.

5. **Strong School-Community Relationships:** When families are engaged, schools benefit from a stronger sense of community. Family engagement promotes trust, collaboration, and shared responsibility for student success. [National PTA \(2009\)](#) emphasizes the role of family engagement in building strong school-community relationships. Schools with engaged families report greater collaboration, trust, and mutual respect between educators and families, leading to a more welcoming environment for students.
6. **Cultural Responsiveness:** Engaging families provides schools with better insights into the cultural backgrounds, needs, and strengths of students. This allows schools to tailor educational practices to be more inclusive and relevant to diverse communities. Research by [Ishimaru & Galloway \(2014\)](#) in the *Journal of Educational Change* points out that schools that foster culturally responsive family engagement help close achievement gaps. When educators engage families from diverse backgrounds, students feel more included, which enhances their educational experiences.
7. **Empowerment of Families:** Family engagement empowers parents and caregivers to be advocates for their children's education. It encourages them to take an active role in decision-making, leading to a more democratic and inclusive school environment. [Susan Auerbach \(2009\)](#), in her work on family engagement in urban schools, found that empowering parents through engagement programs not only supports student success but also enables families to participate in decision-making processes. This leads to more equitable and inclusive school environments.

The Link Between Family Engagement and School Performance

Family engagement is one of the key characteristics of high-performing schools because it directly contributes to improved student outcomes. Schools that excel academically often view families as crucial partners in the educational process, and they intentionally develop strategies that align family engagement with their academic goals. This integration of family engagement into the school's core practices is more than just a supportive activity—it becomes a deliberate, strategic approach to fostering student success. These schools:



- **Set Clear Objectives:** They identify academic goals such as improving reading proficiency, boosting math scores, or increasing graduation rates and then design family engagement initiatives that support these specific targets. For example, schools may offer workshops that train parents in helping their children with homework, or they may send home learning resources that align with classroom instruction.
- **Two-Way Communication:** Schools maintain open lines of communication with families, ensuring that parents understand academic expectations and are kept informed about their children's progress. Effective communication builds trust and empowers families to take an active role in supporting their children's education.
- **Data-Driven Engagement:** By using data to inform decisions, schools can tailor their family engagement practices to meet the needs of their students. For example, schools may analyze attendance data to develop targeted outreach for families of students with chronic absenteeism, or they may use assessment results to inform parents about how they can help their children improve in specific academic areas.

Family Engagement in School Improvement Plans

High-performing schools also embed family engagement in their **school improvement plans**, ensuring that it is a long-term, sustainable practice. This requires a structured approach:

- **Collaborative Goal Setting:** Family members are included in the process of setting school improvement goals. This fosters a sense of shared responsibility and makes families feel like valued contributors to the school's vision and mission.
- **Training and Resources:** Schools invest in providing professional development for teachers and staff on effective family engagement strategies. They may also offer parents resources and training to help them understand how they can support academic goals at home.
- **Continuous Evaluation:** Schools regularly assess the effectiveness of their family engagement strategies, making adjustments as necessary to ensure they are having a positive impact on student achievement. By treating family engagement as a dynamic and evolving process, schools ensure that these efforts remain relevant and impactful.

The importance of family engagement in school improvement plans is further supported by research. [Shannon & Bylsma \(2007\)](#) emphasized that schools with strong family engagement frameworks were able to consistently link these efforts to academic gains. They found that successful schools did not treat family engagement as a “one-size-fits-all” strategy but adapted their approaches to the needs of their particular student populations. By making it a deliberate part of their academic strategy and school improvement efforts, they ensure that students have the comprehensive support needed to achieve their full potential.

Family engagement is crucial for student success, as it positively impacts academic performance, social-emotional development, and overall school improvement. Research shows that when families are engaged in their children’s education, students achieve higher grades, attend school more regularly, and are more likely to graduate. Family engagement is a partnership that enhances learning, promotes equity, and contributes to student success both in and out of the classroom.



[Click here](#) for more on the impact of family engagement.

Parental Involvement Versus Family Engagement

The distinction between parental involvement and family engagement is crucial. Parental involvement tends to focus on activities initiated by the school, often with limited two-way interaction. On the other hand, family engagement emphasizes a collaborative approach where educators, families, and the community work together as equal partners. Family engagement can foster deeper relationships, shared responsibility, and a holistic approach to a child's learning and development. To expand on the distinction between parental involvement and family engagement, let’s explore some key differences:

Parental Involvement typically includes activities initiated by the school or teacher, where parents participate but have limited decision-making power. Examples may include:

- Attending parent-teacher conferences
- Helping with school-organized fundraisers or bake sales
- Monitoring homework and making sure it is completed
- Joining school events like plays or sports activities

Family Engagement focuses on collaboration, where families, educators, and communities work together to support children’s education. This approach empowers families to play an active role. Examples could include:

- Co-creating learning goals for children with teachers
- Hosting community meetings to identify collective educational strategies
- Participating in curriculum design or decision-making processes at school
- Sharing cultural experiences that enrich school activities and teaching

ASPECT	PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT	FAMILY ENGAGEMENT
		
Definition	Parents' participation in school-related activities	Collaborative partnership between families and schools
Focus	School-centric activities and tasks	Holistic approach focusing on child’s overall well-being
Interactions	Often one-way (school to parent)	Two-way (dialogue and collaboration)
Examples	Attending parent-teacher conferences, helping with homework	Participating in decision-making, contributing to school policies
Goal	Support school’s goals and procedures	Build mutual trust and respect, support child’s development
Level of Engagement	May occur periodically or be focused on specific tasks	Ongoing, integrated into daily routines
Impact on Child	May improve academic performance	Can enhance emotional, social, and academic outcomes

Research also indicates that family engagement has a more substantial impact on student achievement and academic success whereas parental involvement has been shown to have limited effects. Parental Involvement is often transactional and doesn’t engage parents in a meaningful way. Parents may not feel as connected to the educational process, which can limit their ability to influence positive outcomes for their children. Family Engagement, on the other hand,

- Promotes a shared vision for student learning.
- Encourages deeper, ongoing communication between educators and families.
- Fosters cultural relevance in the learning environment, making education more meaningful for students from diverse backgrounds.
- Boosts students’ confidence and motivation as they see their families and educators working together.

Strategies to Shift from Parental Involvement to Family Engagement

Shifting from parental involvement to family engagement requires intentional strategies to foster partnerships:

- **A Strengths-Based Approach:** Acknowledge the strengths of families first, respect and learn from differences, show openness to adapting practice based on family preferences, and approach families as equal and reciprocal partners in support of their child. Adopting and using a strengths-based approach allows us to positively build trusting relationships with families and shows families that we want to work together (Office of Head Start, 2018).
- **Invite Parents into the Decision-Making Process:** Involve families in curriculum discussions or school governance. Create committees where parents can offer input on school policies or curriculum.
- **Offer Culturally Responsive Engagement:** Understand the cultural backgrounds of the families in your school and create opportunities for them to share their experiences and knowledge. This could be through family workshops, cultural nights, or integrating family stories into learning.
- **Create Two-Way Communication Channels:** Move beyond parent-teacher conferences to regular, ongoing communication. Use newsletters, emails, text messages, or digital platforms that encourage dialogue, rather than just sending information.
- **Build Trust Through Home Visits or Community-Based Learning:** Teachers can make visits to families or community centers, creating stronger relationships outside the school setting. This shows families that educators are genuinely interested in learning about their lives and context.
- **Train Educators in Family Engagement:** Schools should provide professional development to staff about family engagement practices. This ensures teachers have the skills to engage in meaningful collaboration with families.

As an example, a school traditionally hosted parent-teacher conferences once a semester and relied on report cards and school events to interact with families to promote parent involvement. To make the shift to family engagement, the school-initiated family workshops where parents, students, and teachers collaborated on setting academic goals and discussed how learning could continue at home. They also established monthly "community circles," where families could discuss challenges and opportunities within the school. This shift helped the school improve student attendance, engagement, and performance. By emphasizing the importance of family engagement over traditional parental involvement, the school can foster more meaningful relationships with families, ultimately benefiting students' academic and personal growth.

Nevada's Family Engagement Framework: Birth Through Grade 12

The Nevada Department of Education's (NDE) *Family Engagement Framework: Birth through Grade 12* (*Framework*) was created to guide families, schools, districts, educators, and community members in their family engagement efforts (NRS 385.635). It was developed and informed by Nevada **families**¹, **educators**², and **community members**³. The Framework Advisory Committee (Committee), consisting of family engagement experts and advocates from across the state, supported NDE in developing the *Framework*. Nevada families, educators, and community members also provided NDE and the Committee feedback on the *Framework* through written feedback and surveys.

The *Framework* was based on best practices from national and state organizations, research, and Committee members' expertise. The *Framework* was not developed as a script for family engagement efforts, but rather as a guide for schools, districts, educators, and communities to strengthen and fortify the family engagement strategies they may have already had in place to fit and best serve their communities. The *Framework* was designed as a living document, intended for continual updates to reflect the latest family engagement strategies, practices, and research. The *Framework* was first updated in 2021 to provide essential resources for districts, schools, educators, and community members to engage and support students and families effectively and equitably amid the unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Framework is being updated again to continue serving as a vital resource for enhancing family engagement and supporting children's learning and development in today's educational landscape. Changes in educational policies and standards in Nevada further underscore the importance of aligning both the *Framework* and the *Toolkit* with current regulations and expectations. As education systems and student needs evolve, it's vital to refresh the included *Toolkit* to incorporate the latest research, best practices, and emerging trends in family engagement. Rapid advancements in technology also necessitate updates to include new tools and platforms for better family engagement. Additionally, shifts in community dynamics and family structures highlight the need for a *Toolkit* that remains relevant and responsive to diverse family needs. Finally, incorporating feedback from previous iterations facilitates continuous improvement and refinement of both the *Framework* and the *Toolkit*.

The Goal of the Framework

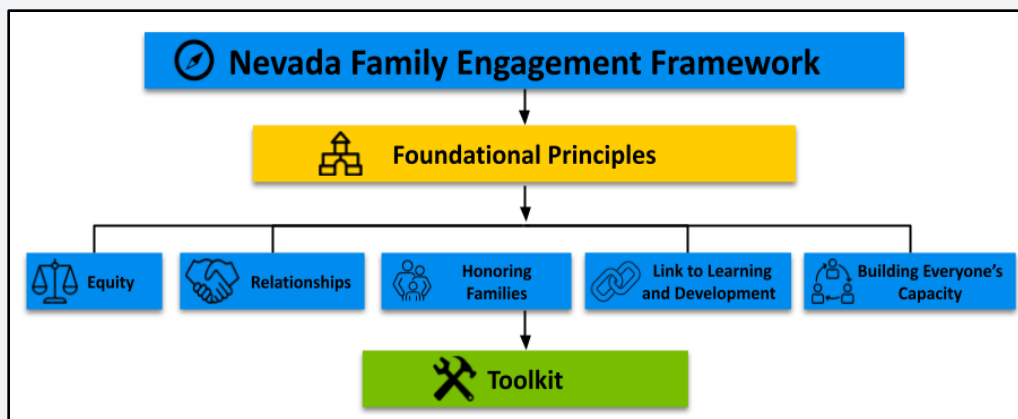
The goal of the *Framework* is to create a shared understanding and approach to family engagement in Nevada from birth through grade 12. This will result in family engagement playing a greater role in a child's learning and development throughout the state in our efforts to improve children's outcomes. The *Framework* is built around five Foundational Principles—essential values and beliefs that guide the family engagement practices and strategies detailed in the accompanying *Toolkit*:

1. [Equity](#)
2. [Relationships](#)
3. [Honoring Families](#)
4. [Link to Learning and Development](#)
5. [Building Everyone's Capacity](#)

¹ Families: any caregiver who takes primary or shared responsibility for raising a child, regardless of biological relationship

² Educator: refers to in-school and out-of-school staff providing instruction and support to students

³ Community member: a member of the community and/or community organization



These Foundational Principles are based on stakeholder input, grounded in research, and aligned with other family engagement frameworks like the [Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships](#). The aim is for schools, districts, educators, communities, and families involved in a child's learning to apply these principles in their family engagement planning and initiatives. The included *Toolkit* provides valuable resources to help strengthen their family engagement practices.

The Five Foundational Principles



Foundational Principle #1: Equity

Equity⁴ refers to providing each individual or group with the resources, opportunities, and support they need to succeed based on their unique circumstances. Unlike equality, which treats everyone the same, equity recognizes that different students and families have different needs, and it adjusts approaches and resources accordingly to ensure everyone has a fair chance to achieve success. Equity is a foundational principle for family engagement because it ensures that all families, regardless of their unique circumstances, have the opportunity to actively participate in their child's education. Equitable educational opportunities involve addressing the diverse social and educational needs of both students and their families.

This is where an effective Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) becomes crucial. MTSS provides a structured framework to ensure all students and families receive the support they need for success. It helps schools implement strategies that address the barriers some families face, such as work schedules or language differences. For example, if a school only schedules events during traditional working hours or fails to provide communication in multiple languages, certain families may be unintentionally excluded. MTSS guides schools to address these issues, ensuring that family engagement efforts are equitable and inclusive. By integrating equity into MTSS, schools can create systems that enable all families to participate meaningfully in their child's learning process.

This approach strengthens the partnership between schools and families, leading to better student outcomes and more supportive learning environments. Equity in family engagement, therefore, is not just about fairness; it is about making sure every family has the tools, support, and opportunities they need to contribute to their child's success.

⁴Equity: The learning needs of every student are supported in an environment where all students are valued, respected, and see themselves in their curriculum and instructional materials while experiencing academic success without regard to differences in age, gender, socio-economic status, religion, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, ability, native language, national origin, or citizenship status (NDE definition from the [2020 Statewide Plan for the Improvement of Pupils](#))



The figure above shows NDE’s seven core elements of MTSS (can also be found in Nevada’s [Framework for Equitable Integrated System of Student Supports](#)).



Foundational Principle #2: Relationships

Relationships are a foundational principle for family engagement because they form the basis of trust, respect, and understanding between families and educators, which is crucial for creating meaningful partnerships. Building these relationships requires intentional effort and allows families and educators to learn about each other, share experiences, and collaborate in supporting students. When relationships are genuine and based on mutual respect, they help families feel more confident in working with schools, especially those who might otherwise feel hesitant due to their own educational background or negative school experiences. By making consistent efforts to connect with families, schools can break down these barriers, ensuring families feel included and valued in the educational process. Furthermore, building authentic relationships helps to bridge divides related to differences in age, gender, socio-economic status, race, ethnicity, and other factors. These relationships provide an opportunity for educators to recognize and address **implicit biases**⁵, which can negatively affect interactions with families and contribute to **opportunity gaps**⁶ for marginalized groups. By fostering strong relationships, educators can counteract these biases, build trust, and create inclusive environments where all families are welcomed as equal partners in their child's education. In essence, relationships are the gateway to understanding, trust, and collaboration between schools and families, which are all necessary for meaningful family engagement that supports student success.

⁵ Implicit bias: attitudes or stereotypes toward others that unconsciously affect our understanding, actions, and decisions toward others

⁶ Opportunity gaps: ways in which race/ ethnicity, socioeconomic status, English proficiency, community wealth, familial status, or other factors contribute to or perpetuate lower educational aspirations, achievement, and attainment for certain students



Foundational Principle #3: Honoring Families

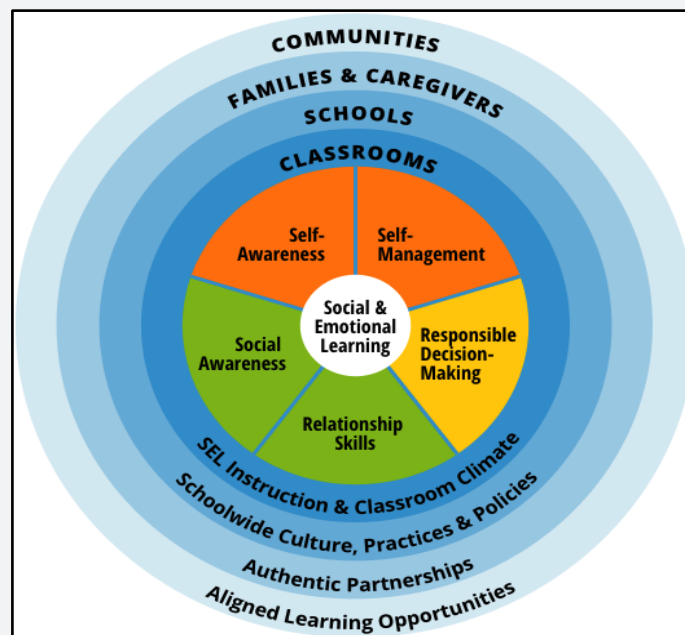
Honoring families acknowledges the vital role families play in their child's learning and development. Families are a child's first teachers and are experts on their child's strengths. By recognizing and valuing the knowledge, skills, and forms of engagement that families bring, educators can create stronger, more effective partnerships that support student success. Honoring families means understanding that their contributions are essential, regardless of their age, socio-economic status, race, ethnicity, or any other identity factor. When schools actively honor and validate the "funds of knowledge" families possess, they reinforce the idea that every family has the ability to positively influence their child's education. This recognition not only empowers families but also encourages them to become more involved in their child's learning process, knowing that educators respect and value their insights and experiences. Incorporating families' knowledge into the educational process helps build trust and collaboration. By making it clear that their contributions are a valuable asset, schools strengthen the family-school partnership, which is critical for fostering an environment where children can thrive academically and developmentally.



Foundational Principle #4: Link to Learning and Development

Linking family engagement to learning and development ensures that the efforts made by families and schools are directly aligned with the child's academic, social, and emotional growth. Family engagement practices should be connected to the child's learning and development goals, as well as the school's or district's social, emotional, and academic development (SEAD) objectives. When family engagement is purposefully linked to these goals, it creates a unified approach that supports the **whole child**⁷—academically, emotionally, physically, and socially.

[CASEL Wheel](#)



⁷ Whole child: Consideration of the whole child transitions focus from narrowly defined academic achievement to one that promotes long-term development of each child through a healthy lifestyle, physical and emotional safety, connections with school and the broader community, support from adults, as well as academic preparation for success in college and career.

By aligning family engagement strategies with learning goals, families and educators are better able to collaborate as partners in the child's development. Research shows that when families are engaged in this way, they can reinforce SEAD skills at home, which in turn enhances the child's overall development and academic success. Family engagement events become more meaningful when they are focused on helping families understand what their child needs to know and be able to do, as this fosters a sense of shared responsibility between families, educators, and the broader community in supporting the child's growth. Additionally, linking family engagement to learning and development encourages families and educators to participate more actively, as they can see the tangible benefits of working together to support the child's holistic development. This connection makes family engagement strategies more impactful, ensuring that they are not just about participation but about making real contributions to the child's cognitive, emotional, and social progress. In essence, linking family engagement to learning and development is foundational because it ensures that engagement efforts are intentional, purposeful, and aligned with the child's success, creating a collaborative partnership that supports the whole child.



Foundational Principle #5: Building Everyone's Capacity

Building everyone's capacity is a foundational principle for family engagement because it recognizes that both families and educators need ongoing development to effectively collaborate and support student success. Strengthening family engagement requires enhancing the knowledge and skills of everyone involved - families and educators alike. This mutual growth leads to more effective partnerships, where both groups are equipped to work together in meaningful ways. Importantly, this principle acknowledges that families already have strengths and knowledge to contribute. Instead of viewing families as passive recipients of support or in need of help, the focus is on building upon their existing capabilities. By providing opportunities for families to grow through workshops, training, and family engagement activities, schools can empower them to better support their children's learning. Likewise, educators must also develop their capacity to engage families effectively. Through professional development, educators can learn strategies for building stronger connections with families, improving communication, and fostering inclusive environments. Just as students are expected to continually learn and improve, adults in the education system must also evolve in their ability to engage families. In short, building stakeholders' capacity creates a continuous learning environment where families and educators grow together, resulting in stronger, more effective family-school partnerships that benefit student development.



The *Framework* also contains a *Toolkit*, which has recommended family engagement practices and strategies that align with the [Parent-Teacher Association's \(PTA\) National Standards for Family-School Partnerships](#), which were adopted by the Nevada State Board of Education in 2015 as a part of its [Nevada Policy of Parental Involvement and Family Engagement](#), and the [Nevada Educator Performance Framework's](#) family engagement standard. The *Toolkit* will be consistently updated to reflect the most up-to-date family engagement best practices and strategies.

Everyone Plays a Role

Family engagement involves the collective effort of various stakeholders, including state agencies, districts, schools, early childhood programs, community members, and families. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Education (2016), family engagement requires a systematic, collaborative approach where everyone works together to improve child outcomes.

A helpful analogy compares family engagement to building a house. Just as a successful house construction requires different experts—architects, builders, electricians, and plumbers—working together with a clear plan, a child's education relies on the collaboration of various stakeholders. The family serves as the foundation, providing stability and support, while schools act as the framework, guiding academic and social development. Community members contribute additional resources and opportunities, like specialists adding finishing touches. Without each party doing their part, the structure would be incomplete. By working together and regularly checking in on progress, families, schools, and communities can ensure the child's educational experience is strong and resilient, providing the foundation for future success.



By maintaining consistent collaboration, as highlighted by the [FrameWorks Institute \(2019\)](#), students are more likely to reach their academic and personal goals. This shared responsibility ensures that the entire community contributes to fostering an environment in which children thrive both academically and personally.

The following pages are the Toolkit, a collection of resources aligned with the Parent Teacher Association's National Standards for Family-School Partnerships. These standards, adopted by the Nevada State Board of Education as part of the Nevada Policy on Parental Involvement and Family Engagement, emphasize that family engagement is a shared responsibility. To enhance usability, the resources have been thoughtfully organized by specific stakeholder groups, reinforcing that everyone—families and caregivers, educators and school staff, and community and partner organizations—plays a vital role in fostering meaningful family engagement.

Toolkit

The original Toolkit, published in 2019, offered recommended practices and strategies for family engagement that aligned with the Framework's Foundational Principles, the [Parent Teacher Association's National Standards for Family-School Partnerships](#) (adopted by the Nevada State Board of Education in 2015 as part of the [Nevada Policy of Parental Involvement and Family Engagement](#)), and the [Nevada Educator Performance Framework](#)'s family engagement standards. The Standards serve as essential guideposts for promoting robust family engagement, ensuring accountability, and providing the necessary support to strengthen partnerships between families and educational institutions. Each Standard also includes specific goals that set clear expectations and benchmarks for effective collaboration, fostering an environment where family involvement is integral to student success. The six Standards are:

Standard 1 - Welcome All Families: The school treats families as valued partners in their child's education and facilitates a sense of belonging in the school community.

Standard 2 - Communicate Effectively: The school supports staff to engage in proactive, timely, and two-way communication so that all families can easily understand and contribute to their child's educational experience.

Standard 3 - Support Student Success: The school builds the capacity of families and educators to continuously collaborate to support students' academic, social, and emotional learning.

Standard 4 - Speak Up for Every Child: The school affirms family and student expertise and advocacy so that all students are treated fairly and have access to relationships and opportunities that will support their success.

Standard 5 - Share Power: The school partners with families in decisions that affect children and families and together—and as a team, inform, influence and create policies, practices, and programs.

Standard 6 - Collaborate with the Community: The school collaborates with community organizations and members to connect students, families, and staff to expand learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

After gathering input and feedback from various stakeholder groups, the Toolkit was revised in 2025 to update and expand upon the strategies and resources offered in the original version. Additionally, it was reorganized to align the recommended practices with three specific target audiences—families and caregivers, educators and school staff, and community and partner organizations—to ensure relevance and improve usability.

The revised Toolkit continues to center on the Standards, using the goals to identify core priorities for strengthening family and school partnerships. Strategies and resources are tailored specifically to the intended audiences for each Standard, ensuring that the recommended practices are relevant and effective in fostering meaningful collaboration. It's important to recognize that no single practice or strategy will effectively engage all families. Instead, the key to creating a successful family engagement environment lies in implementing a combination of practices and strategies that align with and are integrated into an overall family engagement plan.



The Role of Families and Caregivers in Family Engagement



The Role of Families and Caregivers in Family Engagement

Welcome to the Families and Caregivers section of the Family Engagement Toolkit! Your role as a parent, guardian, or family member is pivotal in shaping your child's educational experience. This section is built around six foundational standards designed to guide schools and families in fostering meaningful partnerships that promote student success.

Here's how you can leverage these standards to engage effectively, advocate confidently, and collaborate purposefully:

- 1. Welcome All Families:**
Schools aim to create an environment where all families feel valued, respected, and included. As partners in education, you can actively participate in fostering a sense of belonging by sharing your culture, experiences, and perspectives.
- 2. Communicate Effectively:**
Clear, timely, and two-way communication is essential. This standard emphasizes building open channels where you can understand your child's progress, share concerns, and celebrate achievements.
- 3. Support Student Success:**
Collaboration between families and educators is key to your child's academic, social, and emotional growth. Discover strategies for working with teachers to set goals and support your child's learning journey.
- 4. Speak Up For Every Child:**
Your voice matters. This standard encourages you to advocate for your child and others, ensuring fair treatment, equity, and access to opportunities that empower every student to thrive.
- 5. Share Power:**
Effective partnerships require shared decision-making. Engage with schools to influence policies, programs, and practices, ensuring they reflect the diverse needs and aspirations of all families.
- 6. Collaborate with the Community:**
Schools and communities work together to provide resources, services, and opportunities. Learn how you can connect with community organizations to expand support for your child and family.

Through these six standards, this section equips you with tools and insights to actively contribute to your child's education while building stronger partnerships with schools and communities. Together, we can create an educational environment where every child has the support to succeed.

Key Roles of Family Members and Caregivers in Family Engagement

Standard 1: Welcome All Families

The school treats families as valued partners in their child's education and facilitates a sense of belonging in the school community.

- Actively participate in school events and activities to build relationships with educators and staff.
- Share cultural traditions, values, and experiences to help create a more inclusive school environment.
- Communicate openly and respectfully with teachers and school staff to support their child's education.
- Advocate for a welcoming school environment that reflects the diversity of all families.
- Attend parent-teacher conferences and other meetings to stay informed about their child's progress.
- Volunteer for school events, committees, or classroom activities to strengthen school-community bonds.
- Provide feedback and input on school policies and practices that affect their child's education.
- Support other families in the community by participating in school-led family outreach initiatives.
- Encourage their child's involvement in school activities that promote inclusion and diversity.
- Help remove barriers to engagement by communicating needs, such as translation or childcare, to the school.

Standard 2: Communicate Effectively

The school supports staff to engage in proactive, timely, and two-way communication so that all families can easily understand and contribute to their child's educational experience.

- Establish open and two-way communication with teachers and school staff about their child's needs and progress.
- Attend parent-teacher conferences and meetings to stay informed about their child's academic and social development.
- Use available tools (e.g., school apps, newsletters, emails) to stay updated on school events, assignments, and announcements.
- Share relevant information with the school about any challenges their child may be facing, both academically and personally.
- Ask questions and seek clarification when they don't understand school policies, procedures, or their child's performance.
- Respond promptly to school communications to foster timely and ongoing dialogue.
- Advocate for clear and accessible communication, including translation and interpretation services when needed.
- Participate in feedback surveys or forums to provide input on how the school communicates with families.
- Collaborate with teachers and staff to develop solutions for any concerns related to their child's education.
- Encourage their child to share their school experiences and work with the school to address any concerns.

Standard 3: Support Student Success

The school builds the capacity of families and educators to continuously collaborate to support students' academic, social, and emotional learning.

- Set high academic and behavioral expectations for their child and communicate these expectations to the school.
- Provide emotional and practical support to help their child navigate academic challenges and maintain a positive attitude toward learning.
- Encourage regular school attendance and involvement in class activities to support continuous learning.
- Monitor academic progress by reviewing grades, assignments, and communication from teachers to stay informed.
- Create a positive home environment for learning, including setting aside time for homework and providing necessary resources (e.g., books, internet access).
- Collaborate with teachers and staff to develop action plans for supporting their child's academic and social-emotional growth.
- Engage in school activities that promote student success, such as volunteering or attending parent-teacher conferences.
- Support the development of study and organizational skills, helping their child learn how to manage time and prioritize tasks.
- Encourage involvement in extracurricular activities, such as sports, clubs, or arts, to support the child's personal development and interests.
- Advocate for their child's needs in areas where additional support or accommodations may be necessary to ensure success.

Standard 4: Advocate for Every Child

The school affirms family and student expertise and advocacy so that all students are treated fairly and have access to relationships and opportunities that will support their success.

- Support their child's rights and needs, ensuring their child has access to the necessary resources and opportunities for success.
- Speak up for their child's well-being, advocating for fair treatment and addressing any concerns regarding academic or behavioral issues.
- Engage in school decision-making processes, such as attending meetings, providing feedback, and participating in parent committees or school boards.
- Promote equality and inclusion, advocating for equitable access to educational opportunities for all students, regardless of background or ability.
- Monitor the school's adherence to policies and practices that impact their child's education, ensuring compliance with regulations that protect students.
- Collaborate with teachers and staff to ensure their child's educational needs are met and that any necessary accommodations or interventions are in place.
- Educate themselves on educational policies and practices to better advocate for their child's needs within the school system.
- Raise awareness about issues affecting their child or other students, such as bullying, discrimination, or lack of resources.
- Support initiatives that promote student success, such as advocating for additional support services, extracurricular programs, or special education services.
- Ensure their child's voice is heard, encouraging their child to express their needs and concerns and supporting them in speaking up for themselves when appropriate.

Standard 5: Share Power

The school partners with families in decisions that affect children and families and together - and as a team, inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.

- Participate in school decision-making by attending meetings, serving on committees, or joining parent advisory boards to influence policies and practices.
- Provide input on school policies and practices, sharing their perspectives and experiences to ensure decisions reflect the needs of all families.
- Collaborate with school staff to co-create strategies for supporting their child's learning and development, ensuring their voice is valued in the process.
- Advocate for shared decision-making in school activities and events, encouraging the inclusion of diverse family voices in all aspects of school life.
- Empower other families by sharing information, resources, and strategies to help them become active participants in their child's education.
- Engage in discussions about school goals and educational priorities, ensuring that family perspectives are integrated into planning and implementation.
- Respect the expertise of educators and school staff while offering their own insights and feedback, contributing to a balanced exchange of ideas.
- Support efforts to create an inclusive school culture, advocating for policies and practices that promote equity and representation for all families.
- Encourage other families to get involved and use their voice in advocating for school improvement and student success.
- Work with schools to develop initiatives that promote family involvement and ensure that all families have opportunities to participate in meaningful ways.

Standard 6: Collaborate with Community

The school collaborates with community organizations and members to connect students, families, and staff to expand learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

- Connect with local organizations to access resources that support their child's learning, development, and well-being.
- Build partnerships with community members and leaders to create a network of support for their child and other students.
- Encourage community involvement in school activities, such as volunteering, organizing events, or offering expertise.
- Support community service projects that align with the school's values and help students develop a sense of civic responsibility.
- Promote collaboration between the school and community organizations, ensuring that families have access to services like healthcare, counseling, and academic support.
- Advocate for community involvement in addressing issues that affect student success, such as safety, housing, or access to technology.
- Encourage their child's participation in community events and extracurricular activities, helping them build relationships outside of school.
- Share knowledge of community resources with other families, helping to create a supportive network for all students.
- Participate in community meetings and forums to voice concerns, share experiences, and collaborate on solutions for improving educational outcomes.
- Support initiatives that strengthen the connection between the school and the local community, such as developing mentorship programs or partnering with local businesses for internships or job-shadowing opportunities.

Family Engagement Resources for Family Members and Caregivers

Standard 1: Welcome All Families

The school treats families as valued partners in their child's education and facilitates a sense of belonging in the school community.

Goal 1: Build a Community of Belonging

Goal 2: Create an Inclusive Environment

- When families engage with the school, do they feel respected, understood and connected to the school community?
- Do the school's efforts encourage engagement with and among the diversity of families in the community?

High-Impact Family Engagement Strategies and Resources for Families	Recommended Grade Level
<u>WCSD Parent University</u> Workshops are offered to help families build upon skills, knowledge, and support systems to advocate for student success. Families have access to valuable educational, networking, and parent leadership information and opportunities that will increase both family and student success. Resource Type: Website	☐ Birth – 2 ☒ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☒ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☒ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☒ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☒ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)
<u>University of Family Learning</u> The University of Family Learning (UFL) offers parents and adult family members opportunities to access valuable educational, leadership, and networking information to support both student and family success. Parents are invited to join us for workshops that support student academic achievement, navigating the school system, family wellness, and parent leadership and advocacy. Resource Type: Website	☒ Birth – 2 ☒ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☒ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☒ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☒ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☒ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)
<u>Full, Equal and Equitable Partnerships with Families</u> The purpose of Connecticut's common definition and framework of family engagement is to encourage shared understanding and collaboration, making it easy for all parties – educators, providers, partners, and families – to understand what is expected of them and what effective practice looks like. The hope is that this will lead to a robust culture of partnership between families and professionals throughout all education and human service programs Resource Type: Website	☒ Birth – 2 ☒ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☒ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☒ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☒ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☒ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)

Standard 2: Communicate Effectively

The school supports staff to engage in proactive, timely, and two-way communication so that all families can easily understand and contribute to their child's educational experience.

Goal 1: Exchange Information Between School and Families

Goal 2: Facilitate Parent-Teacher Communication

- Are families able to receive and share information in culturally and linguistically sustaining ways?
- Does the school promote communication between families and teachers?

High-Impact Family Engagement Strategies and Resources for Families	Recommended Grade Level
<u>Essential Tech for Better Family-School Communication</u> National PTA's Center for Family Engagement (CFE) helped create a toolkit to help school communities understand the communication systems and options that build relationships and support every child's learning and development. Resource Type: Guide/Toolkit	☐ Birth – 2 ☐ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☒ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☒ 7 - 10 (1st - 5th) ☒ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☒ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)
<u>Increasing Parent Engagement Through Absent Narratives</u> "Increasing Parent Engagement Through Absent Narratives", highlights parent narratives around family engagement with schools. The film allows us all access to vital narratives, such that a multiplicity of community stories can also emerge. Informed by the work of Joyce Epstein, "Increasing Parent Engagement Through Absent Narratives", also inspires us to seek out fresh ideas, and generate opportunities for learning and engagement. Resource Type: Video	☒ Birth – 2 ☒ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☒ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☒ 7 - 10 (1st - 5th) ☒ 11 - 13 (6th - 8th) ☒ 14 - 18 (9th - 12th)
<u>Helping Parents Communicate Better With Schools</u> Good communication between parents and teachers has many benefits. When parents and teachers share information, children learn more and parents and teachers feel more supported. Good communication can help create positive feelings between teachers and parents. Resource Type: Article	☐ Birth – 2 ☒ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☒ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☒ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☒ 11 - 13 (6th - 8th) ☒ 14 - 18 (9th - 12th)

Standard 3: Support Student Success

The school builds the capacity of families and educators to continuously collaborate to support students' academic, social and emotional learning.

Goal 1: Team-Up For Student Success

Goal 2: Support Learning by Engaging Families

- Are families, students and educators on the same page about how students are progressing?
- Are families valued partners in their children's learning at home and at school?

High-Impact Family Engagement Strategies and Resources for Families	Recommended Grade Level
<u>Nevada PEP</u> To increase the opportunities for home, community and school success for children with disabilities, including those who are at risk or who have serious emotional disturbances, their families and their service providers, through education, encouragement and empowerment activities. Resource Type: Website	☒ Birth – 2 ☒ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☒ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☒ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☒ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☒ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)
<u>Seek Common Ground Family Guides: English</u> <u>Seek Common Ground Family Guides: Spanish</u> These Family Guides, created by Seek Common Ground and the experts at Student Achievement Partners, take the mystery out, and provide parents and caregivers with the information and tools they need to support their children academically in literacy and math, which are the building-block subjects for everything else. With these Guides, families can engage more deeply in their children's education, advocate for them, and build partnerships with their teachers— thus developing the strong bond between students, families, and teachers that ensures kids thrive. Resource Type: Guide	☐ Birth – 2 ☐ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☒ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☒ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☒ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☒ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)
<u>Learning Heroes</u> This website offers resources for families, educators, and community partners for assisting students in the classroom via action research. Resource Type: Website	☒ Birth – 2 ☒ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☒ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☒ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☒ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☒ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)
<u>How to Help Your Child Prepare for Tests</u> It's important to start thinking about study habits at a young age. Don't wait for a bad test grade to take action. Here are some tips to support your child taking tests at any age. Resource Type: Article	☐ Birth – 2 ☒ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☒ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☒ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☒ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☒ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)

High-Impact Family Engagement Strategies and Resources for Families	Recommended Grade Level
<u>Help Your Child's Anxiety in the Classroom</u> Is your child often clingy at drop-off? Do they make frequent trips to the nurse during the school year? They may have classroom anxiety. See what it looks like, and why it's often mistaken for something else. Resource Type: Article	☐ Birth – 2 ☒ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☒ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☒ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☒ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☒ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)
<u>Parents' Guides to Student Success</u> The Parents' Guides provide clear, consistent expectations for what students should be learning at each grade to be prepared for college and career. Resource Type: Guide/Toolkit	☐ Birth – 2 ☐ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☒ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☒ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☒ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☒ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)
<u>Family Guide to the Annual State Test</u> Learn how you can help your child be best prepared to meet annual state testing expectations. Guides are available for each state in English and Spanish and include formal assessment information. Resource Type: Guide/Toolkit	☐ Birth – 2 ☐ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☒ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☒ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☒ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☒ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)
<u>Helping Your Teen Succeed in High School</u> High school can be one of the most exciting times in a young person's life, but also, one of the most stressful. Here are some proven ways to help your teen succeed in high school. Resource Type: Guide/Toolkit	☐ Birth – 2 ☐ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☐ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☐ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☐ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☒ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)
<u>Starting Kindergarten Off Right</u> So, your child is going to kindergarten! You must be very proud. But it's also natural to feel some anxiety. After all, it's the beginning of their formal education, and an important milestone both socially and academically. There are a number of things you can do to prepare your child, while keeping you both focused on the exciting aspects of this new adventure. Resource Type: Guide/Toolkit	☐ Birth – 2 ☒ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☐ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☐ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☐ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☐ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)

High-Impact Family Engagement Strategies and Resources for Families	Recommended Grade Level
<u>Preparing Your Child for School</u> Starting school can be daunting for both parent and child—but there are steps you can take to make the transition as smooth as possible. Long before your child walks through a classroom door, you can begin instilling the skills and knowledge they need to succeed. Resource Type: Guide/Toolkit	☒ Birth – 2 ☒ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☐ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☐ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☐ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☐ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)
<u>PreK - K Transition Book: Benjamin Bradley Benton</u> This entertaining story about a curious young fellow will delight young children while the enclosed parent guide will support transition into kindergarten by helping parents learn how to use Common Core based strategies every time they read aloud to their preschooler. Resource Type: Book	☒ Birth – 2 ☒ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☐ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☐ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☐ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☐ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)
<u>Family Engagement Kits</u> Your child is exposed to a ton of information while in the classroom – but that's not the only place where learning occurs. They also need to have those skills and lessons reinforced when at home. Having the right family engagement kits can help with that endeavor. By providing parent involvement materials, young children can solidify the foundation from classroom learning and then build on it, which further accelerates their educational development. Reading, writing, and math are some of the most common lessons that are used outside of the classroom. By implementing family engagement kits at home that focus on these subjects, you can help your child practice and improve important skills. This benefits your child and increases their knowledge in the classroom and beyond. Resource Type: Guide/Toolkit	☒ Birth – 2 ☒ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☒ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☒ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☒ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☐ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)
<u>Transitions to Kindergarten</u> This resource offers suggestions to help teachers and families support students moving from pre-k to kindergarten. Resource Type: Article	☐ Birth – 2 ☒ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☐ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☐ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☐ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☐ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)

High-Impact Family Engagement Strategies and Resources for Families	Recommended Grade Level
<u><i>A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement</i></u> This resource provides comprehensive research on the impact of family involvement in student success. “All of you who are advocates of school, family, and community partnerships will be heartened by reaffirmation of the partnership idea that is provided in these pages. Those of you interested in research will also find new stimulation and ideas for filling the many gaps that remain to be filled in our knowledge.” Resource Type: Report	☒ Birth – 2 ☒ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☒ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☒ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☒ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☒ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)
<u><i>Parent Roadmaps to the Common Core Standards- English Language Arts</i></u> The Council of the Great City Schools' parent roadmaps in English language arts/literacy provide guidance to parents about what their children will be learning and how they can support that learning in grades K-8. These parent roadmaps for each grade level also provide three-year snapshots showing how selected standards progress from year to year so that students will be college and career ready upon their graduation from high school. Resource Type: Guide	☐ Birth – 2 ☐ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☒ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☒ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☒ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☒ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)
<u><i>Child Mind Institute</i></u> This website offers resources and guides for families. It focuses on mental health, behavior, and learning challenges. Resource Type: Website	☒ Birth – 2 ☒ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☒ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☒ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☒ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☒ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)
<u><i>Ohio Statewide Family Engagement Center</i></u> This website offers a variety of supports including articles and professional learning for educators, families, and community members. Resource Type: Website	☒ Birth – 2 ☒ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☒ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☒ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☒ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☒ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)
<u><i>Attendance Works</i></u> This website offers resources for reducing chronic absenteeism amongst schools and communities. Resource Type: Website	☐ Birth – 2 ☐ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☐ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☒ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☒ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☒ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)

Standard 4: Speak Up for Every Child

The school affirms family and student expertise and advocacy so that all students are treated fairly and have access to relationships and opportunities that will support their success.

Goal 1: Navigate the School System

Goal 2: Address Inequitable Outcomes and Access

- Are families knowledgeable and able to raise questions or concerns about their child's educational experience?
- Does the school remove barriers for families to be advocates for and with students'—particularly those who are most marginalized?

High-Impact Family Engagement Strategies and Resources for Families	Recommended Grade Level
<u>8 Ways to Advocate for Your Child's Success</u> Nobody knows a child's character better than their parent, which is why parents should know how to support their child at school. Find out when and how to advocate on their behalf. Resource Type: Article	☐ Birth – 2 ☒ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☒ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☒ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☒ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☒ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)
<u>Advocacy Toolkit</u> This toolkit is designed to help child advocates speak up for the health and wellbeing of all children. Use this resource for everything from writing your legislators to scheduling Capitol Hill visits—even to reach out to the media. Resource Type: Guide/Toolkit	☒ Birth – 2 ☒ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☒ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☒ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☒ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☒ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)
<u>Making Sure Your Child Gets the Education They Deserve</u> Your child has a right to attend and succeed in a great public school. Regardless of income, ethnicity, family circumstances, disability or school readiness, all children are entitled to an education that will help them reach their full academic, professional and personal potential. As a parent or guardian, you are the best advocate for ensuring this happens. Resource Type: Guide/Toolkit	☒ Birth – 2 ☒ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☒ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☒ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☒ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☒ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)
<u>National PTA: Building and Joining Coalitions</u> A coalition is a group of like-minded organizations or individuals who unite to create policy change. Coalitions are a great way to build or enhance your advocacy network and connect with similar organizations to advance a policy goal. Resource Type: Website	☒ Birth – 2 ☒ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☒ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☒ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☒ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☒ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)

High-Impact Family Engagement Strategies and Resources for Families	Recommended Grade Level
<u>Colorin Colorado: For Families</u> As a parent, there are many ways that you can help your child succeed every single day! These bilingual parent resources offer tips on helping your child learn to read, succeed in school, and learn a new language. They also provide information about the U.S. school system and share ideas on how to build a relationship with your child's teacher and school. In addition, you can find fun reading tips and games, bilingual booklists, ideas for using the public library, and videos of children's authors, illustrators, and musicians. Resources are organized by topic. Resource Type: Website	☒ Birth – 2 ☒ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☒ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☒ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☒ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☒ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)
<u>An Advocate's Guide to Transforming Special Education – Home</u> The goal of this guide is to help parents and advocates understand what educational opportunity truly looks like for students with disabilities. It highlights what research and the highest-performing schools have found are the best practices to help students with disabilities achieve at high levels. Concrete examples, interviews, and school profiles show what this looks like in action. Resource Type: Guide	☒ Birth – 2 ☒ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☒ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☒ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☒ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☒ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)
<u>Advocating for All Students' Rights</u> Diversity enriches the education experience for all students. Protecting this experience is harder in some schools than others. The good news is that as a parent, you can take action in your child's school. Resource Type: Article	☒ Birth – 2 ☒ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☒ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☒ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☒ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☒ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)
<u>Get Parenting Tips</u> This website has parenting tips for families including stress management, budget planning, and tips for single fatherhood. Resource Type: Website	☒ Birth – 2 ☒ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☒ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☒ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☒ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☒ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)
<u>Child Trends</u> This website lists various articles to support families. Content areas include fatherhood, coparenting, and family formation. Resource Type: Website	☒ Birth – 2 ☒ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☒ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☒ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☒ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☒ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)

Standard 5: Share Power

The school partners with families in decisions that affect children and families and together—and as a team, inform, influence and create policies, practices, and programs.

Goal 1: Strengthen the Family's Voice in Shared Decision Making

Goal 2: Build Families' Connections

- Are families partners in making decisions that affect their children at school and in the community?
- Do families have a strong, broad-based organization that offers regular opportunities to develop relationships and raise concerns with school leaders, public officials, and business and community leaders?

High-Impact Family Engagement Strategies and Resources for Families	Recommended Grade Level
<u>School Organizational Team (SOT)</u> A School Organizational Team (SOT) is an example of how to implement shared decision-making at the school level. An SOT assists and advises a school principal on the operation plan of the school and helps monitor and implement the school in carrying out that plan. Resource Type: Website	☐ Birth – 2 ☐ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☒ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☒ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☒ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☒ 4 - 18 (9th – 12th)
<u>How To Start a PTO</u> Step-by-step tips for getting a new parent group up and running at your school. Resource Type: Article	☒ Birth – 2 ☒ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☒ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☒ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☒ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☒ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)
<u>Start a PTA</u> Each local PTA is a member-led and member-run independent association providing programs, activities and services to support its members and community. All PTAs are established to achieve PTA's mission. Resource Type: Article	☒ Birth – 2 ☒ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☒ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☒ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☒ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☒ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)
<u>SWIFT in 60: Trusting Family Partnerships</u> This film was created by SWIFT, a national K-8 center that provides academic and behavioral support to promote the learning and academic achievement of all students, including students with disabilities and those with the most extensive needs. This film focuses on Trusting Family Partnerships that include participants in important school decision-making teams and leadership roles. Resource Type: Video	☐ Birth – 2 ☐ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☒ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☒ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☒ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☐ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)

Standard 6: Collaborate with the Community

The school collaborates with community organizations and members to connect students, families and staff to expand learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

Goal 1: Build a Strong Foundation for Community Partnerships

Goal 2: Connect the School with Community Partners

- Does the school have a plan for when and how to engage community partners?
- Do family and school leaders work closely with community organizations, businesses, and institutions of higher education?

High-Impact Family Engagement Strategies and Resources for Families	Recommended Grade Level
<u>Communities in Schools Nevada (CIS)</u> CIS places full-time site coordinators within school campuses who work directly with students and their families. Site coordinators work directly with the school's administration, with parents, and with students to provide resources that help students graduate on time, prepare for college, career and life. Resource Type: Website	☐ Birth – 2 ☒ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☒ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☒ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☒ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☒ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)
<u>Communities In Schools</u> Communities In Schools is a national organization that ensures every student, regardless of who they are, their ability, zip code or socioeconomic background, has what they need to realize their potential in school and beyond. They work directly inside 3,460 schools and community sites across the country, hand-in-hand with parents, families and caregivers, helping them access important resources and support their children's success. Resource Type: Website	☒ Birth – 2 ☒ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☒ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☒ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☒ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☒ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)
<u>National Resources on Family Engagement</u> This webpage houses links to federal guidance, tools, and resources from national centers and associations on family engagement. Resource Type: Website	☒ Birth – 2 ☒ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☒ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☒ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☒ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☒ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)
<u>Child Care Aware of America: Nevada Resources</u> Would you like to know more about childcare licensing in your state or resources for children with special needs? Do you need to contact someone about child support, health care for your family, or help paying for food or heat? If so, you've come to the right place. Resource Type: Website	☒ Birth – 2 ☒ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☒ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☒ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☒ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☒ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)

High-Impact Family Engagement Strategies and Resources for Families	Recommended Grade Level
<u>Nevada: Financial Assistance Resources for Families</u> Are you looking for help paying for child care or help with buying groceries or diapers? Do you need help with your electric bill? Find out about financial assistance programs offered in your state or territory. Resource Type: Website	☒ Birth – 2 ☒ 3 - 4 (Pre-K) ☒ 5 - 6 (Kinder) ☒ 7 - 10 (1st-5th) ☒ 11 - 13 (6th – 8th) ☒ 14 - 18 (9th – 12th)

The Role of Educators and School Staff in Family Engagement



The Role of Educators and School Staff in Family Engagement

Welcome to the Educators and School Staff section of the Family Engagement Toolkit! As an educator, administrator, or school staff member, you play a critical role in fostering strong partnerships with families that enhance student achievement and well-being. This section is centered around six foundational standards that empower you to create an inclusive, collaborative, and supportive school environment for all families.

Here's how these standards can guide your efforts to engage families effectively and build meaningful relationships:

- 1. Welcome All Families:**
Cultivate a welcoming school culture where every family feels valued, respected, and included. Discover strategies to build trust and create a sense of belonging for families from diverse backgrounds.
- 2. Communicate Effectively:**
Proactive, timely, and two-way communication is vital. This standard helps you establish clear and accessible channels to share information, gather input, and foster mutual understanding with families.
- 3. Support Student Success:**
Strengthen collaboration with families to support students' academic, social, and emotional growth. Learn how to equip families with the tools and resources they need to engage in their child's learning journey.
- 4. Speak Up for Every Child:**
Advocate for equity by affirming family and student voices. This standard emphasizes the importance of listening to families' concerns and ensuring that all students have access to fair treatment, resources, and opportunities.
- 5. Share Power:**
Partner with families in meaningful ways to inform decisions about policies, programs, and practices. Foster a team-based approach that values family input and reflects shared ownership of outcomes.
- 6. Collaborate with the Community:**
Build connections with community organizations and resources to enhance learning opportunities and provide support for students and families. This standard encourages you to work alongside community partners to address diverse needs.

This section provides practical tools, strategies, and insights to strengthen your role as a family engagement champion. By applying these six standards, you can create a school environment where families and educators work hand-in-hand to ensure every child's success. Together, we can build a vibrant and inclusive school community.

Key Roles of Educators and School Staff in Family Engagement

Standard 1: Welcome All Families

The school treats families as valued partners in their child's education and facilitates a sense of belonging in the school community.

- Create a welcoming and inclusive school culture where all families feel valued and respected.
- Build positive relationships with families by fostering trust and open communication.
- Provide opportunities for families to share their cultural traditions, experiences, and perspectives.
- Design and implement school events that celebrate diversity and promote inclusivity.
- Ensure that communication with families is accessible by offering translation and interpretation services.
- Identify and remove barriers that may prevent families from engaging with the school community.
- Collaborate with community organizations to enhance outreach and support efforts.
- Actively seek input from families to inform school policies and practices.
- Offer professional development for staff on cultural competency and family engagement strategies.
- Greet families warmly and personally during school events, meetings, and daily interactions to strengthen connections.

Standard 2: Communicate Effectively

The school supports staff to engage in proactive, timely, and two-way communication so that all families can easily understand and contribute to their child's educational experience.

- Establish open, two-way communication with families about students' academic, social, and emotional development.
- Share timely updates on student progress, assignments, and upcoming events through various channels (e.g., emails, school apps, newsletters).
- Provide clear and accessible information about school policies, procedures, and expectations.
- Respond promptly and thoughtfully to families' inquiries and concerns, fostering a supportive dialogue.
- Use multiple communication methods to reach all families, ensuring accessibility for those with different needs (e.g., translation, phone calls, in-person meetings).
- Encourage regular communication with families, offering opportunities for them to ask questions or express concerns.
- Involve families in the decision-making process regarding their child's learning and well-being.
- Collaborate with families to address challenges or areas of concern and develop action plans for student success.
- Use feedback from families to improve communication strategies and meet their needs.
- Support family engagement by organizing workshops or providing resources on how families can be involved in their child's learning.

Standard 3: Support Student Success

The school builds the capacity of families and educators to continuously collaborate to support students' academic, social, and emotional learning.

- Communicate regularly with families about student progress, needs, and goals through meetings, conferences, and updates.
- Provide targeted support for students who need additional academic, social, or emotional assistance.
- Collaborate with families to create individualized learning plans that address students' strengths and areas for growth.
- Encourage and model positive behaviors by reinforcing classroom expectations and student achievements.
- Offer resources and strategies to help families support learning at home, such as tips for study habits or time management.
- Create a safe and supportive learning environment where students feel valued, respected, and motivated to succeed.
- Monitor and address social-emotional well-being, providing referrals to counselors or support services when needed.
- Involve families in setting academic goals and tracking progress, fostering a shared responsibility for student success.
- Organize professional development opportunities for staff to improve family engagement and collaboration strategies.
- Celebrate student achievements and milestones, involving families in recognizing successes both in and out of the classroom.

Standard 4: Advocate for Every Child

The school affirms family and student expertise and advocacy so that all students are treated fairly and have access to relationships and opportunities that will support their success.

- Ensure all students are treated fairly, advocating for equitable access to resources, opportunities, and support services.
- Identify and address systemic barriers that may affect student success, advocating for changes to policies or practices that are not serving all students effectively.
- Foster an inclusive classroom environment, where every child feels valued, respected, and supported regardless of background or ability.
- Engage with families to address concerns or challenges their child may face, advocating for solutions that promote the child's success.
- Provide families with the tools and resources needed to advocate for their child's needs, including information on educational rights and services.
- Collaborate with community organizations to provide additional support and resources to students and their families.
- Speak up for students' mental health and well-being, advocating for the necessary services and interventions to support their emotional and social development.
- Support the development of individualized plans for students, including IEPs (Individualized Education Programs) or 504 plans, to ensure their educational needs are met.
- Listen to and respect students' voices, advocating for their interests and ensuring their opinions are taken into consideration in school decisions.
- Promote a culture of advocacy within the school by encouraging staff, students, and families to speak up and work together to support all students' needs.

Standard 5: Share Power

The school partners with families in decisions that affect children and families and together - and as a team, inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.

- Invite families to participate in decision-making by involving them in school planning, policy creation, and setting academic or behavioral goals for students.
- Value and respect the contributions of families, ensuring their perspectives are taken seriously in discussions about their child's education.
- Create opportunities for families to be co-leaders in school activities, committees, and parent organizations to share in the governance of the school.
- Collaborate with families to address challenges, ensuring that solutions are developed together and reflect both the school's and families' priorities.
- Empower families to take leadership roles by providing training and support to help them effectively contribute to decision-making processes.
- Facilitate open communication where families feel comfortable sharing their ideas, concerns, and feedback on school practices and policies.
- Ensure that decision-making processes are inclusive and reflect the diverse needs and perspectives of all families, ensuring equity in school practices.
- Actively listen to and integrate family feedback into school policies, instructional practices, and community engagement strategies.
- Encourage family involvement in school improvement efforts, ensuring families have a stake in shaping the educational experience for all students.
- Share power by working collaboratively with families in problem-solving, addressing challenges, and setting goals for student success.

Standard 6: Collaborate with Community

The school collaborates with community organizations and members to connect students, families, and staff to expand learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

- Build partnerships with local organizations to provide students and families with access to community resources, such as healthcare, tutoring, or extracurricular opportunities.
- Encourage family involvement in community-based initiatives, such as volunteering, local service projects, or neighborhood improvement efforts.
- Collaborate with community leaders and organizations to identify and address issues affecting student success, such as food insecurity or housing instability.
- Provide information about community resources to families, ensuring they have access to the support services they need to help their children succeed.
- Coordinate community events at the school, fostering connections between students, families, and local organizations to create a sense of belonging.
- Support family engagement in local decision-making processes, encouraging families to participate in community forums, town halls, or other civic activities.
- Integrate community-based learning opportunities into the curriculum, such as internships, job shadowing, or community service projects, to expand students' learning experiences.
- Develop partnerships with local businesses and agencies to provide students with real-world learning opportunities and to strengthen ties between schools and the community.
- Advocate for policies that support community collaboration, ensuring schools and families work together to address systemic barriers to student success.
- Foster a welcoming school culture that invites community members to contribute their knowledge, skills, and resources to enhance student learning and development.

Family Engagement Resources for Educators and School Staff

Standard 1: Welcome All Families

The school treats families as valued partners in their child's education and facilitates a sense of belonging in the school community.

Goal 1: Build a Community of Belonging

Goal 2: Create an Inclusive Environment

- When families engage with the school, do they feel respected, understood and connected to the school community?
- Do the school's efforts encourage engagement with and among the diversity of families in the community?

High-Impact Family Engagement Strategies and Resources for Educators and School Staff	Recommended Educator Group
<u>Family-School Relationships Survey</u> Schools can use the Family-School Relationships Survey to gather feedback while effectively engaging parents and guardians. Developing parents' capacity to contribute to their children's learning is an important factor in promoting positive student outcomes. Resource Type: Survey	☒ Administrators ☐ Counselors ☐ Librarians ☐ Social Workers ☐ Support Staff ☐ Teachers
<u>Parent Tips for Effective Family Engagement</u> Family engagement is at the heart of successful Head Start programs as they work to build partnerships with parents, families, and caregivers and to support them as advocates and leaders. These efforts are more successful when programs create opportunities for parents and family members to share their voices and contribute to the program in ways that matter to the families themselves. One way to do this is to invite parents and staff to work as partners from the beginning of a project using a "co-design" model. Resource Type: Article	☒ Administrators ☒ Counselors ☒ Librarians ☒ Social Workers ☒ Support Staff ☒ Teachers
<u>6 Strategies for Effective School Family Engagement Events</u> This resource shares strategies to improve family attendance at school events. Resource Type: Article	☒ Administrators ☒ Counselors ☒ Librarians ☒ Social Workers ☒ Support Staff ☒ Teachers

High-Impact Family Engagement Strategies and Resources for Educators and School Staff	Recommended Educator Group
<u><i>The Welcoming Classroom: Building Strong Home-to-School Connections for Early Learning</i></u> The children in today's early childhood classroom are more culturally, linguistically, and ability diverse than ever. As a teacher, your challenge is to partner with each family through recognizing their individual strengths, concerns, priorities, and resources. Dr. Johnna Darragh Ernst offers practical ideas for creating a welcoming atmosphere for families that will encourage them to participate in their children's learning community. From improving children's school readiness to encouraging positive engagement with peers, promoting student academic achievement, increasing graduation rates, and helping reduce the negative impact of poverty, the benefits of engaging families early will impact the young children in your care long after they leave your classroom! Resource Type: Book	☐ Administrators ☐ Counselors ☐ Librarians ☐ Social Workers ☐ Support Staff ☒ Teachers
<u><i>Full, Equal and Equitable Partnerships with Families</i></u> The purpose of Connecticut's common definition and framework of family engagement is to encourage shared understanding and collaboration, making it easy for all parties – educators, providers, partners, and families – to understand what is expected of them and what effective practice looks like. The hope is that this will lead to a robust culture of partnership between families and professionals throughout all education and human service programs. Resource Type: Website	☒ Administrators ☒ Counselors ☒ Librarians ☒ Social Workers ☒ Support Staff ☒ Teachers

Standard 2: Communicate Effectively

The school supports staff to engage in proactive, timely, and two-way communication so that all families can easily understand and contribute to their child's educational experience.

Goal 1: Exchange Information Between School and Families

Goal 2: Facilitate Parent-Teacher Communication

- Are families able to receive and share information in culturally and linguistically sustaining ways?
- Does the school promote communication between families and teachers?

High-Impact Family Engagement Strategies and Resources for Educators and School Staff	Recommended Educator Group
<u>Preparing for Challenging Conversations with Families</u> Discover ways to prepare for conversations that include challenging topics. These conversations can be used to engage families, strengthen relationships, and build trust. It may be difficult to begin discussing a challenging topic with a family. Resource Type: Article	☒ Administrators ☒ Counselors ☒ Librarians ☒ Social Workers ☒ Support Staff ☒ Teachers
<u>Engaging Parents Through Better Communication Systems</u> School and staff collaborate with families to develop school-wide structures and means for engaging in ongoing dialogue using two-way communication methods and technologies. Resource Type: Article	☒ Administrators ☐ Counselors ☐ Librarians ☐ Social Workers ☐ Support Staff ☒ Teachers
<u>How Two-Way Communication Can Boost Family Engagement</u> Read on to learn how to communicate more effectively with your school's families. Included are classroom strategies you can share with your teachers as well as administrator-focused tips. Resource Type: Article	☒ Administrators ☐ Counselors ☐ Librarians ☐ Social Workers ☐ Support Staff ☒ Teachers
<u>5 Strategies to Unlock the Power of Family Engagement</u> A family engagement strategy equals positive outcomes for students—and better support for school faculty and staff. Here are five ways to get families more interested and involved. Resource Type: Article	☒ Administrators ☒ Counselors ☒ Librarians ☒ Social Workers ☒ Support Staff ☒ Teachers

High-Impact Family Engagement Strategies and Resources for Educators and School Staff	Recommended Educator Group
<u>Increasing Parent Engagement Through Absent Narratives</u> "Increasing Parent Engagement Through Absent Narratives", highlights parent narratives around family engagement with schools. The film allows us all access to vital narratives, such that a multiplicity of community stories can also emerge. Informed by the work of Joyce Epstein, "Increasing Parent Engagement Through Absent Narratives", also inspires us to seek out fresh ideas, and generate opportunities for learning and engagement. Resource Type: Video	☒ Administrators ☒ Counselors ☒ Librarians ☒ Social Workers ☒ Support Staff ☒ Teachers
<u>School-Home Communication Strategies</u> Leading the effort to build strong, trusting relationships with parents is a crucial task for school leaders. Having good lines of communication with parents already in place can make a huge difference when a school is working on discipline issues. Here are some strategies school leaders can use to build positive relationships with parents at the beginning of the school year. Resource Type: Article	☒ Administrators ☐ Counselors ☐ Librarians ☐ Social Workers ☐ Support Staff ☐ Teachers

Standard 3: Support Student Success

The school builds the capacity of families and educators to continuously collaborate to support students' academic, social and emotional learning.

Goal 1: Team-Up For Student Success

Goal 2: Support Learning by Engaging Families

- Are families, students and educators on the same page about how students are progressing?
- Are families valued partners in their children's learning at home and at school?

High-Impact Family Engagement Strategies and Resources for Educators and School Staff	Recommended Educator Group
<u>Family Engagement Learning Series Briefs</u> These briefs summarize a six-part webinar series of conversations designed to Raise the Bar for family engagement practices between school and home. The 2023 series produced by the U.S. Department of Education in partnership with Carnegie Corporation of New York and Overdeck Family Foundation, provided an overview of evidence, highlighted bright spots in the field, and shared resources and evidence-based strategies to support student success with education leaders and practitioners. Resource Type: Articles	☒ Administrators ☒ Counselors ☒ Librarians ☒ Social Workers ☒ Support Staff ☒ Teachers
<u>Strategies and Resources to Support Effective Family Engagement</u> These webinars are a six-part webinar series of conversations designed to Raise the Bar for family engagement practices between school and home. The 2023 series produced by the U.S. Department of Education in partnership with Carnegie Corporation of New York and Overdeck Family Foundation, provided an overview of evidence, highlighted bright spots in the field, and shared resources and evidence-based strategies to support student success with education leaders and practitioners. Resource Type: Webinar Series	☒ Administrators ☒ Counselors ☒ Librarians ☒ Social Workers ☒ Support Staff ☒ Teachers
<u>Transitions to Kindergarten</u> This resource offers suggestions to help teachers and families support students moving from pre-k to kindergarten. Resource Type: Article	☐ Administrators ☐ Counselors ☐ Librarians ☐ Social Workers ☐ Support Staff ☒ Teachers

High-Impact Family Engagement Strategies and Resources for Educators and School Staff	Recommended Educator Group
<u><i>A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement</i></u> This resource provides comprehensive research on the impact of family involvement in student success. “All of you who are advocates of school, family, and community partnerships will be heartened by reaffirmation of the partnership idea that is provided in these pages. Those of you interested in research will also find new stimulation and ideas for filling the many gaps that remain to be filled in our knowledge.” Resource Type: Report	☒ Administrators ☒ Counselors ☒ Librarians ☒ Social Workers ☒ Support Staff ☒ Teachers
<u><i>Resources for School Leaders</i></u> This resource offers options for school administrators on effective family engagement for all students. Resource Type: Website	☒ Administrators ☐ Counselors ☐ Librarians ☐ Social Workers ☐ Support Staff ☐ Teachers
<u><i>Professional Resources for Teachers</i></u> This resource offers options for teachers to engage in effective family engagement to enhance student success. Resource Type: Website	☐ Administrators ☐ Counselors ☐ Librarians ☐ Social Workers ☐ Support Staff ☒ Teachers
<u><i>Learning Heroes</i></u> This website offers resources for families, educators, and community partners for assisting students in the classroom via action research. Resource Type: Website	☒ Administrators ☐ Counselors ☐ Librarians ☐ Social Workers ☐ Support Staff ☒ Teachers
<u><i>Ohio Statewide Family Engagement Center</i></u> This website offers a variety of supports including articles and professional learning for educators, families, and community members. Resource Type: Website	☒ Administrators ☒ Counselors ☒ Librarians ☒ Social Workers ☒ Support Staff ☒ Teachers
<u><i>Attendance Works</i></u> This website offers resources for reducing chronic absenteeism amongst schools and communities. Resource Type: Website	☒ Administrators ☒ Counselors ☒ Librarians ☒ Social Workers ☒ Support Staff ☒ Teachers

Standard 4: Speak Up for Every Child

The school affirms family and student expertise and advocacy so that all students are treated fairly and have access to relationships and opportunities that will support their success.

Goal 1: Navigate the School System

Goal 2: Address Inequitable Outcomes and Access

- Are families knowledgeable and able to raise questions or concerns about their child’s educational experience?
- Does the school remove barriers for families to be advocates for and with students’—particularly those who are most marginalized?

High-Impact Family Engagement Strategies and Resources for Educators and School Staff	Recommended Educator Group
<u>Family Engagement in School</u> Our Educator Toolkit for Family Engagement is designed for anyone who engages in educating children or promoting family engagement. Whether you work in a school building, a district office, a community organization, or serve on a committee that supports the education of children, there are resources in this toolkit to support and inspire you. Resource Type: Toolkit	☒ Administrators ☒ Counselors ☒ Librarians ☒ Social Workers ☒ Support Staff ☒ Teachers
<u>National Resources on Family Engagement</u> This webpage houses links to federal guidance, tools, and resources from national centers and associations on family engagement. Resource Type: Website	☒ Administrators ☐ Counselors ☐ Librarians ☐ Social Workers ☐ Support Staff ☐ Teachers
<u>Getting Comfortable with Complicated Conversations: How Teachers Advocate for Their Students</u> New research aims to better understand how teachers advocate for their students and how simulated conversations with colleagues can help hone that skill. Resource Type: Article	☐ Administrators ☐ Counselors ☐ Librarians ☐ Social Workers ☐ Support Staff ☒ Teachers
<u>Educator Advocacy Rights</u> This guide helps public school teachers and support staff understand their rights when speaking up for public education and students. Resource Type: Article	☐ Administrators ☐ Counselors ☐ Librarians ☐ Social Workers ☐ Support Staff ☒ Teachers

High-Impact Family Engagement Strategies and Resources for Educators and School Staff	Recommended Educator Group
<u><i>National Association for Family, School, and Community Engagement</i></u> This website outlines family engagement initiatives nationwide. It provides information about policy, state services, and professional development. Resource Type: Website	☒ Administrators ☒ Counselors ☒ Librarians ☒ Social Workers ☒ Support Staff ☒ Teachers

Standard 5: Share Power

The school partners with families in decisions that affect children and families and together—and as a team, inform, influence and create policies, practices, and programs.

Goal 1: Strengthen the Family's Voice in Shared Decision Making

Goal 2: Build Families' Connections

- Are families partners in making decisions that affect their children at school and in the community?
- Do families have a strong, broad-based organization that offers regular opportunities to develop relationships and raise concerns with school leaders, public officials, and business and community leaders?

High-Impact Family Engagement Strategies and Resources for Educators and School Staff	Recommended Educator Group
<u>School Organizational Team (SOT)</u> A School Organizational Team (SOT) is an example of how to implement shared decision-making at the school level. An SOT assists and advises a school principal on the operation plan of the school and helps monitor and implement the school in carrying out that plan. Resource Type: Website	☒ Administrators ☐ Counselors ☐ Librarians ☐ Social Workers ☒ Support Staff ☒ Teachers
<u>Building Partnerships with Families Course</u> Family services professionals and other staff who work with families can explore this four-module learning series to enhance their knowledge and practice about engaging families using strengths-based attitudes, relationship-based practices, and reflective practice. The course is accessible on the Individualized Professional Development (iPD) Portfolio, and continuing education units are awarded for completion. Resource Type: Course	☒ Administrators ☒ Counselors ☒ Librarians ☒ Social Workers ☒ Support Staff ☒ Teachers
<u>A Multi-Tiered Approach to Family Engagement</u> This article describes how schools can apply a multi-tiered, flexible approach to family engagement. Resource Type: Article	☒ Administrators ☒ Counselors ☒ Librarians ☒ Social Workers ☒ Support Staff ☒ Teachers

High-Impact Family Engagement Strategies and Resources for Educators and School Staff	Recommended Educator Group
<u><i>SWIFT in 60: Trusting Family Partnerships</i></u> This film was created by SWIFT, a national K-8 center that provides academic and behavioral support to promote the learning and academic achievement of all students, including students with disabilities and those with the most extensive needs. This film focuses on Trusting Family Partnerships that include participants in important school decision-making teams and leadership roles. Resource Type: Video	☒ Administrators ☐ Counselors ☐ Librarians ☐ Social Workers ☐ Support Staff ☐ Teachers
<u><i>HarvardX: Introduction to Family Engagement in Education</i></u> This course outlines the connection between family engagement and students' success. It also covers research related to the importance of engaging families. Resource Type: Course	☒ Administrators ☒ Counselors ☒ Librarians ☒ Social Workers ☒ Support Staff ☒ Teachers

Standard 6: Collaborate with the Community

The school collaborates with community organizations and members to connect students, families and staff to expand learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

Goal 1: Build a Strong Foundation for Community Partnerships

Goal 2: Connect the School with Community Partners

- Does the school have a plan for when and how to engage community partners?
- Do family and school leaders work closely with community organizations, businesses, and institutions of higher education?

High-Impact Family Engagement Strategies and Resources for Educators and School Staff	Recommended Educator Group
<u>Communities in Schools Nevada (CIS)</u> CIS places full-time site coordinators within school campuses who work directly with students and their families. Site coordinators work directly with the school's administration, with parents, and with students to provide resources that help students graduate on time, prepare for college, career and life. Resource Type: Website	☒ Administrators ☒ Counselors ☐ Librarians ☒ Social Workers ☐ Support Staff ☐ Teachers
<u>Family Engagement: A Guide to Tools, Strategies and Resources</u> TASC created this toolkit to help school planning teams refine their family engagement strategies and clarify what they are trying to do, why, and how. Resource Type: Guide	☒ Administrators ☐ Counselors ☐ Librarians ☐ Social Workers ☐ Support Staff ☒ Teachers
<u>SWIFT in 60: Trusting Community Partnerships</u> This film was created by SWIFT, a national K-8 center that provides academic and behavioral support to promote the learning and academic achievement of all students, including students with disabilities and those with the most extensive needs. This film focuses on how trusting community partnerships support students, families and schools to improve all aspects of students' and their families' lives. Resource Type: Video	☒ Administrators ☐ Counselors ☐ Librarians ☐ Social Workers ☐ Support Staff ☐ Teachers
<u>How Schools Can Engage Community Partners</u> Local businesses, nonprofits, and government agencies can play a valuable role in your school culture and student success. Here's how to attract and engage community partners. Resource Type: Video	☒ Administrators ☒ Counselors ☒ Librarians ☒ Social Workers ☒ Support Staff ☒ Teachers

The Role of Community and Partner Organizations in Family Engagement



The Role of Community and Partner Organizations in Family Engagement

Welcome to the Community and Partner Organizations section of the Family Engagement Toolkit! Whether you represent a local nonprofit, business, civic group, or state agency like the Nevada Department of Education, your role in supporting schools and families is essential to fostering student success. This section is built around six foundational standards that guide how schools and communities can collaborate effectively to create a robust support network for students and their families.

Here's how these standards can help you align your efforts with schools and families to make a lasting impact:

- 1. Welcome All Families:**
Help create an inclusive environment where all families feel seen, heard, and valued. Through partnerships, you can contribute resources, programs, and initiatives that celebrate diversity and foster a sense of belonging.
- 2. Communicate Effectively:**
Strong communication bridges gaps between schools, families, and the community. This standard emphasizes clear, timely, and transparent communication that ensures all stakeholders can contribute to students' educational experiences.
- 3. Support Student Success:**
Work alongside schools and families to provide resources, programs, and services that enhance students' academic, social, and emotional learning. Your partnership strengthens the shared mission of helping every child thrive.
- 4. Speak Up for Every Child:**
Advocate for equity by addressing barriers and amplifying the voices of underrepresented families and students. Collaborate with schools to ensure all students have access to opportunities and relationships that empower them to succeed.
- 5. Share Power:**
Collaborate with schools and families to inform and shape policies, practices, and programs. This standard encourages shared decision-making and co-creation of initiatives that reflect the community's collective vision for education.
- 6. Collaborate with the Community:**
Leverage your expertise and resources to build meaningful partnerships with schools, families, and other organizations. By working together, we can connect students and families to expanded learning opportunities, essential services, and civic engagement.

State agencies like the Nevada Department of Education play a crucial role in setting the framework for these partnerships, aligning resources, and ensuring equitable access to support across communities. Together, we can create a system of collaboration that uplifts students and families while fostering vibrant school-community relationships.

This section offers tools, strategies, and guidance to strengthen your impact and create meaningful connections with schools and families. By applying these six standards, you can contribute to an educational ecosystem where every child is supported to reach their full potential.

Key Roles of Community and Partner Organizations in Family Engagement

Standard 1: Welcome All Families

The school treats families as valued partners in their child's education and facilitates a sense of belonging in the school community.

- Host community-wide welcome events in collaboration with schools, such as open houses, family nights, or resource fairs, to foster a sense of belonging for all families.
- Provide language and translation services by offering resources or volunteers to help schools communicate with families in their preferred languages, ensuring inclusivity.
- Offer cultural competency training by conducting workshops for school staff and community members to better understand and respect the diverse backgrounds of families.
- Create resource hubs by supplying schools with materials like brochures, guides, or digital tools that families can use to navigate school systems and community services.
- Promote positive messaging by sharing school achievements and family success stories through newsletters, social media, or local media outlets to celebrate collaboration and build trust.
- Facilitate connections by acting as a bridge between families and school staff, coordinating informal meet-and-greet sessions or focus groups for open dialogue.
- Sponsor parent engagement activities by providing funding or in-kind donations for school-based initiatives like parent coffee mornings, workshops, or family appreciation days.
- Encourage volunteer support by partnering with state agencies and community organizations to recruit volunteers for school events, tutoring, or welcoming families during drop-off and pick-up times.
- Develop mentorship programs by pairing new or hesitant families with experienced parents, community volunteers, or representatives from state agencies to guide them in becoming active participants in their child's education.
- Provide space and resources by offering venues for school-family events or donating supplies like welcome kits, refreshments, or childcare during meetings to make families feel welcomed.

Standard 2: Communicate Effectively

The school supports staff to engage in proactive, timely, and two-way communication so that all families can easily understand and contribute to their child's educational experience.

- Collaborate with schools to establish multilingual communication channels, ensuring all families receive information in their preferred languages through newsletters, text alerts, or translated materials.
- Partner with schools to offer workshops for staff on effective two-way communication strategies, focusing on cultural sensitivity and responsiveness to diverse family needs.
- Provide technology grants or resources to schools, enabling the use of digital tools like apps, websites, or messaging platforms that support timely and interactive communication with families.
- Host training sessions for families on how to use school communication platforms, such as parent portals or email systems, to stay informed and engaged.
- Facilitate town hall meetings, focus groups, or virtual Q&A sessions where families can share feedback and discuss concerns directly with school staff and administrators.
- Supply schools with materials like visual aids, infographics, or simplified guides to make educational processes, policies, and resources more accessible to families.
- Collaborate with state agencies and local organizations to disseminate critical school updates and educational resources through established community networks, ensuring broad outreach.
- Support the creation of family liaisons or communication coordinators who can bridge the gap between schools and families by delivering messages and gathering feedback.
- Promote awareness campaigns through local media, social media platforms, and public service announcements to highlight the importance of open and proactive school-family communication.
- Provide interpreters or communication aids during school events, parent-teacher conferences, or Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings to ensure families can effectively participate in their child's education.

Standard 3: Support Student Success

The school builds the capacity of families and educators to continuously collaborate to support students' academic, social, and emotional learning.

- Offer workshops or training sessions for families and educators focused on strategies to support students' academic success, social development, and emotional well-being.
- Provide funding or resources for after-school tutoring programs, mentoring initiatives, or academic enrichment activities that help students excel academically.
- Partner with schools to organize family learning nights, where families and students engage in hands-on activities that reinforce classroom concepts.
- Collaborate with state agencies and local organizations to create and distribute resources, such as study guides, online tools, or parent tip sheets, to support student learning at home.
- Facilitate access to mental health services by connecting schools with local counseling centers or offering on-site support programs for students and families.
- Establish partnerships with local businesses and state agencies to provide internships, career exploration opportunities, or work-based learning experiences that enhance student engagement and success.
- Sponsor community events like STEM fairs, reading challenges, or college and career nights that bring families, educators, and students together to focus on academic and career readiness.
- Work with schools to develop family-led committees or advisory boards that contribute to decisions impacting students' academic and social-emotional outcomes.
- Provide professional development opportunities for educators on family engagement best practices, with a focus on fostering collaborative relationships with families.
- Collaborate with schools to create student and family recognition programs that celebrate achievements in academics, attendance, and character development.

Standard 4: Advocate for Every Child

The school affirms family and student expertise and advocacy so that all students are treated fairly and have access to relationships and opportunities that will support their success.

- Offer advocacy training sessions for families to help them understand their rights, navigate school systems, and effectively advocate for their children's needs.
- Collaborate with schools to provide families with information on laws, policies, and resources related to equity, special education, and student rights.
- Partner with state agencies and legal aid organizations to offer free or low-cost consultations for families requiring assistance with educational advocacy.
- Create platforms such as advisory councils or focus groups where families can share their expertise and contribute to school policies and practices that promote fairness and equity.
- Develop mentorship programs that connect families with experienced advocates or community leaders who can guide them through challenging situations.
- Facilitate access to community resources and services, such as housing support, food assistance, or mental health care, to address barriers impacting students' educational success.
- Work with schools to host equity-focused town halls or forums where families, educators, and community members can discuss challenges and solutions for ensuring all students are treated fairly.
- Partner with schools to develop inclusive policies and practices that address disparities in discipline, access to advanced coursework, or participation in extracurricular activities.
- Provide scholarships, grants, or funding to support programs that promote access to high-quality education, extracurricular activities, and enrichment opportunities for all students.
- Celebrate and amplify student and family voices by sharing their stories through social media, newsletters, or public events, reinforcing the importance of advocacy and equitable access.

Standard 5: Share Power

The school partners with families in decisions that affect children and families and together - and as a team, inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.

- Lead the formation of joint decision-making committees, consisting of school representatives, families, and community partners, to collaborate on key policy and program decisions affecting students and families.
- Facilitate training for both school staff and families on shared leadership practices, empowering both groups to equally contribute to the development of school policies and initiatives.
- Organize focus groups or listening sessions where families can voice concerns, share their perspectives, and influence school decisions related to curriculum, discipline policies, and extracurricular activities.
- Partner with local school districts and state agencies to establish formal channels, such as family councils or advisory boards, where families can have direct input into school governance and decision-making processes.
- Develop collaborative platforms, such as school-wide surveys or town hall meetings, that encourage families to contribute to shaping school programs, services, and educational priorities.
- Work with schools to co-create school improvement plans that reflect the collective input of families, students, and community members, ensuring their voices are integral to the process.
- Provide families with tools and resources to help them understand school policy-making and educational processes, enabling them to effectively advocate for their children's needs and participate in decisions.
- Facilitate regular meetings between families and school staff to review policies and practices, ensuring that decisions are made collaboratively and that families are empowered to influence outcomes.
- Promote transparent communication around decision-making processes, ensuring that families are regularly informed about the status and impact of initiatives that were influenced by their feedback.
- Co-develop programs with families and community organizations that respond to specific needs, such as family support services, mental health resources, or academic enrichment programs, creating initiatives that directly reflect the priorities of the community.

Standard 6: Collaborate with Community

The school collaborates with community organizations and members to connect students, families, and staff to expand learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

- Lead the creation of community-wide partnerships, bringing together local school districts, state agencies, and community organizations to address educational and support needs for students and families.
- Facilitate collaborative initiatives that align local businesses, non-profits, and schools to provide real-world learning experiences, such as internships, career readiness programs, or job shadowing opportunities for students.
- Work with state agencies and local school districts to create a seamless system of services for families, including access to health care, housing, food assistance, and counseling, ensuring students have the support they need to succeed.
- Organize community events such as resource fairs, back-to-school nights, or family fun days that bring together schools, local organizations, and families to promote engagement and build relationships.
- Coordinate with local governments to facilitate student and family participation in civic engagement activities, such as voter registration, public hearings, or community service projects, strengthening ties between families and their local community.
- Lead the development of after-school and summer programs by partnering with local organizations, expanding learning opportunities that offer academic support, enrichment activities, and mentorship for students.
- Partner with local libraries, museums, and cultural organizations to offer educational experiences and workshops that foster students' academic, social, and emotional growth.
- Support schools in creating family resource centers or hubs where families can easily access information, receive guidance on educational support, and connect with community organizations offering additional services.
- Facilitate collaborations between state agencies, local school districts, and advocacy groups to ensure equity in access to educational resources, particularly for marginalized or underserved families.
- Establish advisory committees consisting of school district representatives, community leaders, and families to co-create policies, programs, and initiatives that benefit students and the broader community.

Family Engagement Resources for Community and Partner Organizations

Standard 1: Welcome All Families

The school treats families as valued partners in their child's education and facilitates a sense of belonging in the school community.

Goal 1: Build a Community of Belonging

Goal 2: Create an Inclusive Environment

- When families engage with the school, do they feel respected, understood and connected to the school community?
- Do the school's efforts encourage engagement with and among the diversity of families in the community?

High-Impact Family Engagement Strategies and Resources for Community and Partner Organizations	Recommended Organization
<u>WCSD Parent University</u> Workshops are offered to help families build upon skills, knowledge, and support systems to advocate for student success. Families have access to valuable educational, networking, and parent leadership information and opportunities that will increase both family and student success. Resource Type: Website	☐ Business and Industry ☐ Community Service Provider ☒ District ☐ Nonprofit ☐ NSHE ☐ State
<u>University of Family Learning</u> The University of Family Learning (UFL) offers parents and adult family members opportunities to access valuable educational, leadership, and networking information to support both student and family success. Parents are invited to join us for workshops that support student academic achievement, navigating the school system, family wellness, and parent leadership and advocacy. Resource Type: Website	☐ Business and Industry ☐ Community Service Provider ☒ District ☐ Nonprofit ☐ NSHE ☐ State
<u>Family-School Relationships Survey</u> Schools can use the Family-School Relationships Survey to gather feedback while effectively engaging parents and guardians. Developing parents' capacity to contribute to their children's learning is an important factor in promoting positive student outcomes. Resource Type: Survey	☐ Business and Industry ☐ Community Service Provider ☒ District ☐ Nonprofit ☐ NSHE ☐ State

High-Impact Family Engagement Strategies and Resources for Community and Partner Organizations	Recommended Organization
<u>Full, Equal and Equitable Partnerships with Families</u> The purpose of Connecticut’s common definition and framework of family engagement is to encourage shared understanding and collaboration, making it easy for all parties – educators, providers, partners, and families – to understand what is expected of them and what effective practice looks like. The hope is that this will lead to a robust culture of partnership between families and professionals throughout all education and human service programs Resource Type: Website	☒ Business and Industry ☒ Community Service Provider ☒ District ☒ Nonprofit ☒ NSHE ☒ State

Standard 2: Communicate Effectively

The school supports staff to engage in proactive, timely, and two-way communication so that all families can easily understand and contribute to their child's educational experience.

Goal 1: Exchange Information Between School and Families

Goal 2: Facilitate Parent-Teacher Communication

- Are families able to receive and share information in culturally and linguistically sustaining ways?
- Does the school promote communication between families and teachers?

High-Impact Family Engagement Strategies and Resources for Community and Partner Organizations	Recommended Organization
<u>Family Engagement: State Policy Recommendations</u> The report includes state policy recommendations to support family engagement and ultimately improve school climate, statewide assessments, and early childhood development. Resource Type: Report	☐ Business and Industry ☐ Community Service Provider ☐ District ☐ Nonprofit ☐ NSHE ☒ State
<u>Increasing Parent Engagement Through Absent Narratives</u> "Increasing Parent Engagement Through Absent Narratives", highlights parent narratives around family engagement with schools. The film allows us all access to vital narratives, such that a multiplicity of community stories can also emerge. Informed by the work of Joyce Epstein, "Increasing Parent Engagement Through Absent Narratives," also inspires us to seek out fresh ideas, and generate opportunities for learning and engagement. Resource Type: Video	☐ Business and Industry ☒ Community Service Provider ☒ District ☒ Nonprofit ☐ NSHE ☐ State
<u>Students and Communities Can Be Better Served via Partnerships Between Community Organizations and Schools</u> This series from the Innovation to Evidence Project team at Child Trends aims to help practitioners, policymakers, and researchers transform K-12 school systems to better meet the needs of students, families, and communities. This practice guide focuses on community-school partnerships and their potential to transform school systems. Resource Type: Report	☐ Business and Industry ☒ Community Service Provider ☐ District ☐ Nonprofit ☐ NSHE ☐ State

Standard 3: Support Student Success

The school builds the capacity of families and educators to continuously collaborate to support students' academic, social, and emotional learning.

Goal 1: Team-Up For Student Success

Goal 2: Support Learning by Engaging Families

- Are families, students and educators on the same page about how students are progressing?
- Are families valued partners in their children's learning at home and at school?

High-Impact Family Engagement Strategies and Resources for Community and Partner Organizations	Recommended Organization
<u>Communities in Schools Nevada (CIS)</u> CIS places full-time site coordinators within school campuses who work directly with students and their families. Site coordinators work directly with the school's administration, with parents, and with students to provide resources that help students graduate on time, prepare for college, career and life. Resource Type: Website	☐ Business and Industry ☐ Community Service Provider ☒ District ☒ Nonprofit ☐ NSHE ☐ State
<u>Family Engagement: State Policy Recommendations</u> The report includes state policy recommendations to support family engagement and ultimately improve school climate, statewide assessments, and early childhood development. Resource Type: Report	☐ Business and Industry ☐ Community Service Provider ☐ District ☐ Nonprofit ☐ NSHE ☒ State
<u>Family Engagement Learning Series Briefs</u> These briefs summarize a six-part webinar series of conversations designed to Raise the Bar for family engagement practices between school and home. The 2023 series produced by the U.S. Department of Education in partnership with Carnegie Corporation of New York and Overdeck Family Foundation, provided an overview of evidence, highlighted bright spots in the field, and shared resources and evidence-based strategies to support student success with education leaders and practitioners. Resource Type: Webinar Series	☐ Business and Industry ☐ Community Service Provider ☒ District ☒ Nonprofit ☐ NSHE ☒ State

High-Impact Family Engagement Strategies and Resources for Community and Partner Organizations	Recommended Organization
<u><i>A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement</i></u> This resource provides comprehensive research on the impact of family involvement in student success. “All of you who are advocates of school, family, and community partnerships will be heartened by reaffirmation of the partnership idea that is provided in these pages. Those of you interested in research will also find new stimulation and ideas for filling the many gaps that remain to be filled in our knowledge.” Resource Type: Report	☒ Business and Industry ☒ Community Service Provider ☒ District ☒ Nonprofit ☒ NSHE ☒ State
<u><i>Resources for School Leaders</i></u> This resource offers options for school administrators on effective family engagement for all students. Resource Type: Website	☐ Business and Industry ☐ Community Service Provider ☒ District ☐ Nonprofit ☐ NSHE ☐ State
<u><i>Learning Heroes</i></u> This website offers resources for families, educators, and community partners for assisting students in the classroom via action research. Resource Type: Website	☐ Business and Industry ☒ Community Service Provider ☐ District ☐ Nonprofit ☐ NSHE ☐ State
<u><i>Ohio Statewide Family Engagement Center</i></u> This website offers a variety of supports including articles and professional learning for educators, families, and community members. Resource Type: Website	☐ Business and Industry ☒ Community Service Provider ☐ District ☐ Nonprofit ☐ NSHE ☐ State
<u><i>Attendance Works</i></u> This website offers resources for reducing chronic absenteeism amongst schools and communities. Resource Type: Website	☒ Business and Industry ☒ Community Service Provider ☒ District ☒ Nonprofit ☐ NSHE ☒ State

Standard 4: Speak Up for Every Child

The school affirms family and student expertise and advocacy so that all students are treated fairly and have access to relationships and opportunities that will support their success.

Goal 1: Navigate the School System

Goal 2: Address Inequitable Outcomes and Access

- Are families knowledgeable and able to raise questions or concerns about their child’s educational experience?
- Does the school remove barriers for families to be advocates for and with students’—particularly those who are most marginalized?

High-Impact Family Engagement Strategies and Resources for Community and Partner Organizations	Recommended Organization
<u>Building Trust, Elevating Voices, and Sharing Power in Family Partnership</u> Develop a team of educators and family members from underrepresented communities who collaborate to support the success and well-being of all students, as well as improve family members' connection with the school. Resource Type: Article	☐ Business and Industry ☐ Community Service Provider ☒ District ☐ Nonprofit ☐ NSHE ☐ State
<u>National PTA: Building and Joining Coalitions</u> A coalition is a group of like-minded organizations or individuals who unite to create policy change. Coalitions are a great way to build or enhance your advocacy network and connect with similar organizations to advance a policy goal. Resource Type: Website	☐ Business and Industry ☐ Community Service Provider ☐ District ☒ Nonprofit ☐ NSHE ☐ State
<u>Family Engagement: State Policy Recommendations</u> The report includes state policy recommendations to support family engagement and ultimately improve school climate, statewide assessments, and early childhood development. Resource Type: Report	☐ Business and Industry ☐ Community Service Provider ☐ District ☐ Nonprofit ☐ NSHE ☒ State

High-Impact Family Engagement Strategies and Resources for Community and Partner Organizations	Recommended Organization
<u>Family Engagement in School</u> Our Educator Toolkit for Family Engagement is designed for anyone who engages in educating children or promoting family engagement. Whether you work in a school building, a district office, a community organization, or serve on a committee that supports the education of children, there are resources in this toolkit to support and inspire you. Resource Type: Toolkit	☐ Business and Industry ☒ Community Service Provider ☒ District ☒ Nonprofit ☐ NSHE ☒ State
<u>National Resources on Family Engagement</u> This webpage houses links to federal guidance, tools, and resources from national centers and associations on family engagement. Resource Type: Website	☐ Business and Industry ☐ Community Service Provider ☒ District ☐ Nonprofit ☐ NSHE ☒ State
<u>An Advocate's Guide to Transforming Special Education – Home</u> The goal of this guide is to help parents and advocates understand what educational opportunity truly looks like for students with disabilities. It highlights what research and the highest-performing schools have found are the best practices to help students with disabilities achieve at high levels. Concrete examples, interviews, and school profiles show what this looks like in action. Resource Type: Guide	☐ Business and Industry ☒ Community Service Provider ☐ District ☒ Nonprofit ☐ NSHE ☒ State
<u>National Association for Family, School, and Community Engagement</u> This website outlines family engagement initiatives nationwide. It provides information about policy, state services, and professional development. Resource Type: Website	☒ Business and Industry ☒ Community Service Provider ☒ District ☒ Nonprofit ☒ NSHE ☒ State

Standard 5: Share Power

The school partners with families in decisions that affect children and families and together—and as a team, inform, influence and create policies, practices, and programs.

Goal 1: Strengthen the Family's Voice in Shared Decision Making

Goal 2: Build Families' Connections

- Are families partners in making decisions that affect their children at school and in the community?
- Do families have a strong, broad-based organization that offers regular opportunities to develop relationships and raise concerns with school leaders, public officials, and business and community leaders?

High-Impact Family Engagement Strategies and Resources for Community and Partner Organizations	Recommended Organization
<u>How Family, School, and Community Engagement Can Improve Student Achievement and Influence School Reform</u> Develop, build, or create a Parental/Family Action Committee (or Advisory Board) that is implemented at both the district and school levels to provide an opportunity for shared decision-making and inclusion of family voice within the decision-making process. Resource Type: Report	☐ Business and Industry ☒ Community Service Provider ☒ District ☐ Nonprofit ☐ NSHE ☐ State
<u>Building Partnerships with Families Course</u> Family services professionals and other staff who work with families can explore this four-module learning series to enhance their knowledge and practice about engaging families using strengths-based attitudes, relationship-based practices, and reflective practice. The course is accessible on the Individualized Professional Development (iPD) Portfolio, and continuing education units are awarded for completion. Resource Type: Course	☐ Business and Industry ☒ Community Service Provider ☒ District ☒ Nonprofit ☐ NSHE ☒ State
<u>Family Engagement: State Policy Recommendations</u> The report includes state policy recommendations to support family engagement and ultimately improve school climate, statewide assessments, and early childhood development. Resource Type: Report	☐ Business and Industry ☐ Community Service Provider ☐ District ☐ Nonprofit ☐ NSHE ☒ State

Standard 6: Collaborate with the Community

The school collaborates with community organizations and members to connect students, families, and staff to expand learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

Goal 1: Build a Strong Foundation for Community Partnerships

Goal 2: Connect the School with Community Partners

- Does the school have a plan for when and how to engage community partners?
- Do family and school leaders work closely with community organizations, businesses, and institutions of higher education?

High-Impact Family Engagement Strategies and Resources for Community and Partner Organizations	Recommended Organization
<u>Family Engagement: A Guide to Tools, Strategies and Resources</u> TASC created this toolkit to help school planning teams refine their family engagement strategies and clarify what they are trying to do, why, and how. Resource Type: Guide	☐ Business and Industry ☒ Community Service Provider ☒ District ☐ Nonprofit ☐ NSHE ☐ State
<u>Communities In Schools</u> Communities In Schools is a national organization that ensures every student, regardless of who they are, their ability, zip code or socioeconomic background, has what they need to realize their potential in school and beyond. They work directly inside 3,460 schools and community sites across the country, hand-in-hand with parents, families and caregivers, helping them access important resources and support their children's success. Resource Type: Website	☐ Business and Industry ☒ Community Service Provider ☐ District ☐ Nonprofit ☐ NSHE ☐ State
<u>SWIFT in 60: Trusting Community Partnerships</u> This film was created by SWIFT, a national K-8 center that provides academic and behavioral support to promote the learning and academic achievement of all students, including students with disabilities and those with the most extensive needs. This film focuses on how trusting community partnerships support students, families and schools to improve all aspects of students' and their families' lives. Resource Type: Video	☒ Business and Industry ☒ Community Service Provider ☒ District ☒ Nonprofit ☐ NSHE ☐ State

Letter from Nevada State Superintendent of Public Instruction

Dear Nevada Families, Educators, Students, and Community Members:

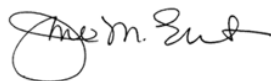
In June 2018, the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) joined the State Consortium on Family Engagement, collaborating with the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), the National Association for Family, School, and Community Engagement (NAFSCE), and 12 other states. This partnership aims to implement systemic and strategic approaches to family engagement, recognizing its critical role in improving student outcomes.

As part of this initiative, each state committed to forming a diverse stakeholder coalition to develop a statewide definition and framework for family engagement tailored to its unique needs. Nevada's Family Engagement Framework establishes a unified understanding and approach to family engagement from birth through grade 12. By prioritizing family engagement, the Framework seeks to enhance children's learning and development, ultimately improving outcomes for all students statewide. Grounded in five foundational principles, it aligns with Nevada's State Plan for the Improvement of Pupils (STIP).

The Framework, informed by best practices, research, and expertise, serves as a guide—not a script—for strengthening family engagement strategies across schools, districts, and communities. As a living document, it is continually updated to reflect the latest strategies and research. Initially revised in 2021 to address challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Framework is being updated again to further enhance family engagement and support children's learning in today's evolving educational landscape.

Special thanks to the Framework Advisory Committee, Nevada families, educators, and community members whose time, effort, and expertise made this document possible. Your contributions are invaluable. Together, we can foster a learning environment where every child thrives. The Family Engagement Framework represents more than a document—it is a shared vision for building stronger connections and support systems for students and their families.

Sincerely,



Jhone M. Ebert
Superintendent of Public Instruction

Appendices

Glossary

Authentic relationship: Relationship where educators fully understand a family’s needs and where parents can share their knowledge, strengths, and what is important for them and their child

Community member: Member of the community and/or community organization

Educator: In-school and out-of-school staff providing instruction and support to students

Equity: The learning needs of every student are supported in an environment where all students are valued, respected, and see themselves in their curriculum and instructional materials while experiencing academic success without regard to differences in age, gender, socio-economic status, religion, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, ability, native language, national origin, or citizenship status (NDE definition from the [2020 Statewide Plan for the Improvement of Pupils](#))

Family: Any caregiver who takes primary or shared responsibility for raising a child, regardless of biological relationship

Family engagement: Shared responsibility between schools, families, and communities where all receive equitable access to tools and supports needed to successfully work together toward the development of children and youth for college, career, and lifelong learning

Implicit bias: Attitudes or stereotypes toward others that unconsciously affect our understanding, actions, and decisions toward others (McKnight, et al., 2017)

Opportunity gaps: Ways in which race/ ethnicity, socioeconomic status, English proficiency, community wealth, familial status, or other factors contribute to or perpetuate lower educational aspirations, achievement, and attainment for certain students

Shared responsibility: Educators, families, students, and the community co-owning the responsibility for teaching, learning, and accountability for student success

Stakeholder: Anyone who has an interest in the success of a school or school system, including government officials, school board members, administrators, educators, district and school staff, associations, parents and families, and community members

Strengths-based approach: Acknowledging the strengths of families first, respecting and learning from differences, showing openness to adapting practice based on family preferences, sharing decision-making, and approaching families as equal and reciprocal partners in support of their child

Toolkit: Collection of tools, guidance, and resources

Two-way communication: Communication that is interactive, equal, and feedback-oriented

Whole child: Consideration of the whole child transitions focus from narrowly defined academic achievement to one that promotes long-term development of each child through a healthy lifestyle, physical and emotional safety, connections with school and the broader community, support from adults, as well as academic preparation for success in college and career.

Nevada's Family Engagement Framework Advisory Committee Members

2024 Nevada's Family Engagement Framework Advisory Committee

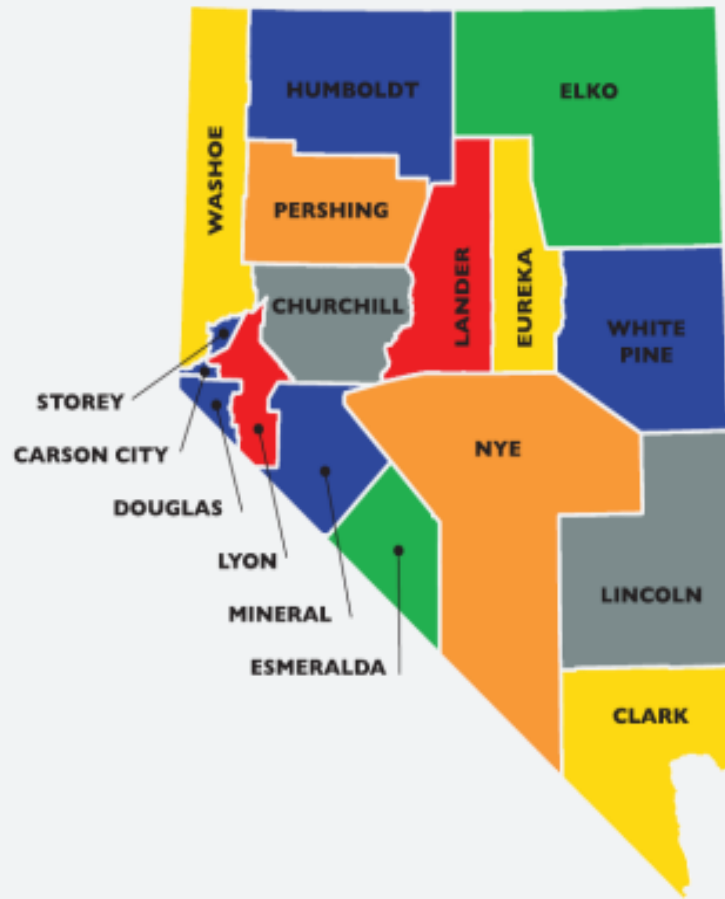
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2021 Framework Advisory Committee

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Sherry Waugh	Director, Child and Family Research Center, University of Nevada, Reno
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