BUILDING P-3 BRIDGES FOR FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

- Hosted by the Greater East St. Louis Early Learning Partnership and Innovation Zone
- February through May 2017
- Prenatal through 3rd grade
- Cross-sector workgroups
  - School districts
  - Head Start
  - Community-base child care
  - Child and family serving agencies
Family Engagement: The Missing Link
Program Goals

- Increase the individual and collective capacity of program leaders in Greater East St. Louis
- Build knowledge and skills for fostering family engagement in programs serving children prenatal through 3rd grade (P-3) using national and state family engagement frameworks
- Identify and address challenges related to family engagement in the Greater East St. Louis area
- Strengthen community-wide systems change approaches that can foster and support family engagement efforts on an ongoing basis
Big Questions

- Who are you as a leader?
- What are the community’s needs for family engagement?
- How can we create systems-wide change for family engagement?
- What are the root causes of our family engagement problem?
- Why are these root causes happening in our community? How can we work together to design strategies that address them?
- How will we continue to measure impact and track progress going forward?
- What is the structure needed to keep the conversation going in your program and in the community?
Family Engagement Matters For All Ages

- Infants and toddlers
- Preschoolers
- Kindergarteners
- Children in Primary Grades
The Early Childhood Administrator’s Influence

Leadership and Management Practices

Organizational Culture and Climate

Teaching Practices

Family Engagement

Indirect

Direct

Children’s Development and Learning
How do leaders influence family engagement?
Theoretical Frameworks

- Ecological Systems Theory
- Family Systems Theory
- Five Essential Supports Framework
- ISBE Comprehensive Framework for Engaging Families
- Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement (PFCE) Framework
- Whole Leadership Framework
Resources

*Preparing educators to engage families: Case studies using an ecological systems framework*
  Weiss, Kreider, & Chatman-Nelson (2014)

*From Parents to Partners: Building a Family-Centered Early Childhood Program*
Other Resources

- **Community Engagement Tool Kit** (Collective Impact Forum, 2017)
- **Family Involvement in Early Childhood Education** (Harvard Family Research Council, 2006)
- **Family Involvement in Elementary School Children’s Education** (Harvard Family Research Council, 2007)
- **Family-Provider Relationships: A Multidisciplinary Review of High Quality Practices and Associations with Family, Child, and Provider Outcomes** (OPRE, #2011-26a)
- **Reframing Family Involvement in Education: Supporting Families to Support Educational Equity** (Weiss, Bouffard, Bridglall, & Gordon, 2009)
Data Driven

- Assessment Tools
  - *Family Engagement Best Practices Rubric and Assessment* (Albuquerque Public Schools Family Engagement Collaborative)
  - Applying Family Systems Theory (created)
  - Whole Leadership Self-Assessment (created)
### Assessment Results

**Engaging Parents, Developing Leaders Survey**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Categories</th>
<th>Needs Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Building a Culture of Respect, Inclusion and Equity</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coaching Parents on Competence and Confidence</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening To and Forming Partnerships with Parents</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnering with Other Organizations to Serve the Whole Family</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Assessment Results

**Family Engagement Best Practices Survey**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Level 1</th>
<th>Level 2</th>
<th>Level 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communicating</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening relationships and capacity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecting learning at home and at school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognizing the role of the family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared decision-making</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborating with community</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Community Action Plan

- **Domains**
  - Literacy development
  - Learning and academic achievement
  - Perceptions of the school or learning program
  - Social-emotional and behavioral development
  - Well-being

- **Structure of the Community Action Plan**
  - Intended Child Outcomes
  - Intended Family Outcomes
  - Objectives
  - Strategies
## Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>SOCIAL EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL DEVELOPMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategy</strong></td>
<td>Promote the importance of play through books and marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Action steps</strong></td>
<td>Create a mobile resource lending library for families</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Action Steps

- Barriers
- By whom?
- By when?
- Measurement
- Communication
Lessons Learned from the Pilot

- Create family engagement teams in the programs
- Create a system to empower the work of the participants
  - Decision-makers participate in the collaborative
  - Enhance feedback loops to inform the work
- Include family members on the cross-sector workgroups and program teams
Questions?
Schools and Programs Ready for Children

Using Family Engagement as a Strategy for Meeting Student Outcomes and School Improvement

Illinois Birth-to-Third (B3) Grade Continuity Conference
June 2017

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A Strategy Not a Goal

for Educational Excellence and Equity

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Shared Responsibility
Deliberate Process
Empowers Adults
Mindful of Diversity
Responsive

(Henderson & Mapp 2002)
Common Drivers for Engagement

Outcomes

• Gaps in continuum of care and support for families transition from early Ed programs to elementary and high schools

Statute and Policies

• ESSA
• HHS and USDE Joint Policy Statement on Family Engagement

Research

• Five Essentials

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Family Engagement is an integral part of Learning and School Improvement

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Family Engagement is Beyond the School Building

District
• Leveraging resources to maximize opportunity

School
• Strengthening PACs, BACs, LSCs, parent advisory etc.

Home
• Extending learning at home

Community
• Building support for school improvement

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How?
Dual Capacity-Building and Generational Approach Working in Partnership

Schools and Districts
- Develop a Family Engagement System
- Build a Welcoming Environment
- Enhance Communication
- Include Parents in Decision-Making

Families
- Support Child Development
- Advocate for School Improvement
- Strengthen Pathways for Self-Sufficiency
- Build Peer to Peer Connections

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Shared Goals and Outcomes

**POLICY AND PROGRAM GOALS**

To build and enhance the capacity of staff/families in the “4 C” areas:
- **Capabilities** (skills and knowledge)
- **Connections** (networks)
- **Cognition** (beliefs, values)
- **Confidence** (self-efficacy)

**FAMILY AND STAFF CAPACITY OUTCOMES**

- School and Program Staff who can
  - Honor and recognize families’ funds of knowledge
  - Connect family engagement to student learning
  - Create welcoming, inviting cultures

- Families who can negotiate multiple roles
  - Supporters
  - Encouragers
  - Monitors
  - Advocates
  - Decision Makers
  - Collaborators

**Effective Family-School Partnerships**
Supporting Student Achievement & School Improvement
Foundation for Engagement

ISBE Family Engagement Framework

How to engage families cont.
Districts and schools partner with families by developing family engagement systems, building welcoming and supportive environments, enhancing communication and including parents in decision making. The ways families are engaged occur on a regular basis and are seen across the 8 Essential Elements of effective education. When families, communities, and schools partner to build educational and support systems for children, those systems are stronger and more effective.

Principles for Family Engagement

- Develop a Family Engagement System
  - Standard Summary:
    - Includes a shared vision that drives policies and practices
    - Connects to district and school improvement

- Build a Welcoming and Supportive Environment
  - Standard Summary:
    - Acknowledges a shared responsibility for learning and healthy development of students
    - Establishes relational trust

- Enhance Communication
  - Standard Summary:
    - Promotes ongoing meaningful two-way exchange of information
    - Ensures communication is clear and constructive

- Include Parents in Decision Making
  - Standard Summary:
    - Empowers parents to be involved
    - Solicits input from families
    - Includes parents in the district/school continuous improvement processes

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Tackle the System
(Blank, Berg, & Melaville, 2006; Bryk, et.al, 2010, and Marschall, 2006)
Commitment to Family Engagement

Leadership

Capacity Building

Community Partnership

Accountability

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Build Trust

(Hoover-Dempsey, et al. 2005)
Build Relational Trust
Engage in Ongoing Outreach
Be Responsive
Stay In Tune

(Christenson, et al. 1997)
Ongoing Two-Way Communication

Address Barriers

Cultural Competence
Be Inclusive

(Henderson, A. T., & Mapp, K. L. 2002)
Collaborative Approach

Dual Capacity Building

Investment

Equity and Access

Continuous Improvement Process

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FSCE High-Impact Strategies

Lower impact
- Bulletin Boards
- Fundraisers
- Class Parties
- PTAs
- Potlucks
- Student performances
- Generic newsletters
- Parent volunteering
- Back to school night
- Parent training events
- Regular, personalized communication
- Weekly data-sharing folders
- Parent-teacher conferences
- Positive phone calls home
- Interactive homework, tips, and tools for home learning

Higher impact
- Goal-setting talks
- Home visits
- Classroom observations or mini-lessons

Source: The Flamboyan Foundation, 2012

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Components of Meaningful and Effective High-Impact Strategies:

- Provide training and supports for both educators and families.
- Leverage funds and resources from multiple sources.
- Create staff positions dedicated to family engagement.
- Focus on school improvement instead of procedural compliance.
- Make student and school data accessible and meaningful to families.
- Link family engagement efforts to learning.
- Build relational trust and respect.

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ISBE Family Engagement Webpage

Key Features include:
• Family Engagement Framework Guide
• Self Assessment and Action Planning Tool
• ISBE Resources
  • Webinars
  • Conference Material
  • Guidance
  • Templates
• External Resources

The webpage is accessible at:
www.il-fss.org
Foundational Services

Low cost capacity-building trainings on family engagement for schools and district teams.

Accessible through local Regional Office of Education

Training Offerings Include:
- Making the case for FE
- Cultural Competency
- FE Framework
- Collaborative Approach
- Assessment and Action Planning

www.foundationalservices.org

Need help with your evaluation? e-mail abchelp@i-kan.org

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