A Conduit for Change: Improving Family Engagement in Your School

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Title I, Part A is a federally funded program under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965. It is designed to support state and local school reform efforts tied to challenging state academic standards in order to reinforce and amplify efforts to improve teaching and learning for students furthest from meeting state standards.
Title I, Part A provides for **substantive parental involvement** at **every level of the program**, such as in the development and implementation of the **State and local plan**, and in carrying out the **LEA and school improvement provisions**. **Section 1118** contains the primary Title I, Part A requirements for SEAs, LEAs, and schools related to involving parents in their children’s education. It is this section that identifies critical points in the process of improving teaching and learning where **parents and the community can intervene and assist in school improvement**.

(Continued)
Although section 1118 is extensive in scope and has many requirements for LEAs and schools, the intent is not to be burdensome. These provisions reflect good practice in engaging families in helping to educate their children, because students do better when parents are actively involved in the education process, both at home and at school.
Session Expectations

Set new sights for parent engagement
Share ideas for family-school partnerships
Overcome obstacles to parent engagement
Why is parent engagement important at your school?
What does parent engagement look like at your school?
Parental Involvement vs. Parent Engagement

- **Parental Involvement:** Parent participation in the systems and activities of the school. There are opportunities for parent participation in a variety of program activities that support student learning and success, including policy and program decision making.

- **Parent/Family Engagement:** Goal-directed relationships between staff and families that are mutual, culturally responsive, and that support what is best for students and families both individually and collectively. Staff and families share responsibility as true partners for student learning.

Adapted from *Family Engagement as Parent Involvement 2.0*, HHS/ACF/OHS/NCPFCE. 2012.
Parental Involvement vs. Parent Engagement

Parental Involvement:
- Ideas and energy come from the schools and government mandates.
- Schools are leading with their institutional self-interests and desires – *leading with their mouths*.

Parent Engagement:
- Ideas and energy emerge from parent/community needs and priorities elicited from parents by staff.
- Schools are leading with the parents’ self-interests in an effort to develop genuine partnerships – *leading with their ears*.

Adapted Learning First Alliance, Larry Ferlazzo, 2009.
Parental Involvement vs. Parent Engagement

**Parental Involvement**

- Pushing parents to do something about what school staff sees as important for their child
- Completing tasks selected by the school staff – or simply sharing services and information

**Parent Engagement**

- Parents are challenged to do something about what they feel is important to them and to their child
- Parents are leaders who are integral to identifying a vision and goals while then performing the tasks needed to achieve them

Adapted Learning First Alliance, Larry Ferlazzo, 2009.
Parental Involvement vs. Parent Engagement

Parental Involvement

Schools see it as the responsibility of one staff member (Parent Involvement Coordinator)

Revolves around outputs – number of parents who show up for a school event

Parent Engagement

Schools see it as the responsibility of all staff members embedded into the school culture/priorities

Revolves around parent and student progress in achievement – evidence of positive, goal directed relationships

Family Engagement as Parent Involvement 2.0, HHS/ACF/OHS/NCPFCE. 2012.
Parental Involvement vs. Parent Engagement

**Parental Involvement**
- Revolves around a small percentage of families involved in school leadership opportunities
- Collect data from children and families on information about parent participation

**Parent Engagement**
- Revolves around reaching all families in various goal directed ways
- Utilize data from children and families to improve services to increase student academic achievement

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*Family Engagement as Parent Involvement 2.0,*
HHS/ACF/OHS/NCPFCE. 2012.
Traditional Involvement

- Fundraiser
- School chaperone
- Volunteer
- Speaker on Career Day
- Homework Helper

Modern Engagement

- Committee Member
- Classroom Helper
- Community Liaison
- Parent Engagement Expert
- Student Advocate
Formula for Success

Parental Involvement & Parent Engagement

Improved Academic Achievement & Student Success
Where Should I Begin?

The focus is not what schools should do to involve parents – it is what parents, schools, and communities can do together to support student success.
PTA National Standards for Family-School Partnerships

- Welcoming All Families
- Communicating Effectively
- Supporting Student Success
- Speaking Up for Every Child
- Sharing Power
- Collaborating with Community
Families are active participants in the life of the school and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to school staff, and to what students are learning and doing in class.
The school, faculty, and staff welcome families and see them as assets in supporting student learning.

There is a core belief at the school that all families want the best for their children, and family engagement will help students reach their academic potential.

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Welcoming All Families Ideas

- Create warm environments in key locations
- Offer tours of the school for all families
- Invite families in classrooms
- Host fun family events
- Open the building to the community
- Take a walk-through with parents
- Decorate hallways and doors
Georgia's Virtual Family-Friendly Partnership Schools

Click on one of the schools to explore what makes it family-friendly.
Hello! Welcome to Graduation Middle - High School. My name is Ms. Smith and I am the principal here. We strive to make sure our school environment is welcoming to families as well as the community, and I hope that after you take this tour, your school will be family-friendly too. So, let's get started! Click on any part of the school or its surrounding areas to zoom in for a detailed view and tour.
Hello! I’m Ms. Chang and I am a teacher here at Graduation Middle - High School. Our school expects all faculty and staff to acknowledge the presence of visitors when they are in the building. As you walk our halls you will notice that they are clean, well lit and informative.
Hello! Welcome to Graduation Middle-High School's parent resource center. I am Ms. Perez the parent involvement coordinator. I am responsible for providing resources and information that help families become active participants in their child's education at home and at school. Take time to explore the various opportunities and the wealth of information that I have available in my area.
Part I  Individually answer the survey questions about your school climate

Part II  As a group, discuss questions (1-4) to brainstorm ideas and strategies
Families and school staff engage in regular two-way meaningful communication about student learning.
The school keeps all families informed about important events and issues and makes communication easy between staff and parents.

Parent engagement means that school personnel listen to the families who are not engaged.
Communicating Effectively Ideas

- Provide frequent and advance notices
- Utilize all existing methods and platforms
- Use community partners and groups
- Send good news and updates
- Provide translations and interpreters
- Create social media accounts or blogs
- Conduct home visits/community meetings
Georgia Department of Education

Helping Your Child Succeed: Parent Strategies for Improved Communication with Teachers and Schools

Parent Engagement Program

Workshop Template
Academic Programs and Educational Opportunities
Assessment Information for Parents
Counseling
Family Friendly Schools
Family School Partnerships
Parent Resources
Parent Involvement Calendar
Title I Schools
Volunteering
Family Engagement and You

Part I  Individually answer the survey questions about communication in your school

Part II  As a group, discuss questions (1-4) to brainstorm ideas and strategies
Families and school staff continuously collaborate to support students’ learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.

Supporting Student Success

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Families can be involved in many different levels and simple activities to improve the quality of the school and emphasize the importance of academic and school success.

Parent engagement involves personal contact, educational support at home and schools serving as parent resource sites.
Supporting Student Success Ideas

- Create tip sheets for parents
- Involve parents in test preparation
- Offer grade level meetings
- Provide technology assistance
- Display student academic work
- Show parents how they can help
- Target areas of low achievement
Family Engagement and You

Part I  Individually answer the survey questions about supporting student success in your school.

Part II  As a group, discuss questions (1-4) to brainstorm ideas and strategies.
Name something parents say is a barrier to being involved at their child’s school.

1
2
3
4
5
6
Overcome Barrier

Be flexible in scheduling meetings and events
Hold meetings at community centers, church halls, parks, libraries
Consider potluck dinners and brown bag lunches to meet the needs of working parents
Name something parents say is a barrier to being involved at their child’s school:

1. [Option]
2. [Option]
3. [Option]
4. [Option]
5. [Option]
6. [Option]
Overcome Barrier

Use school buses to provide transportation
Form carpools
Hold events in community locations
Provide home visits or follow-up phone calls
Name something parents say is a barrier to being involved at their child’s school
Barrier to Parent Involvement

Overcome Barrier

- Identify interpreters and translators
- Allow parents of the same language to break off into smaller groups
- Translate printed materials sent home and for meetings in all languages spoken in the school
Name something parents say is a barrier to being involved at their child’s school

1
2
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6
Barrier to Parent Involvement

Overcome Barrier

Allow parents to bring their children to events
Create fun activities for the children
Ask teachers, high school students, or community members to provide child care
Name something parents say is a barrier to being involved at their child’s school.

1

2

3

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6
Overcoming Barrier

Create a parent handbook
Develop an answer sheet/brochure to frequently asked questions
Provide names and phone numbers of helpful people for parents to contact
Name something parents say is a barrier to being involved at their child’s school

1  

2  

3  

4  

5  

6
**Barrier to Parent Involvement**

**UNCERTAIN HOW TO CONTRIBUTE**

Overcome Barrier

- Seek out parents
- Create a list of qualities and contributions
- Conduct a survey
- Form realistic expectations with the faculty
Name something parents say is a barrier to being involved at their child’s school:

- TIME
- CHILD CARE
- TRANSPORTATION
- SCHOOL SYSTEM
- LANGUAGE
- INFORMATION
References


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Questions