What is the SECRET to Family Engagement?

IDEAS Conference 2014

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Today’s Learning Targets

• I can list two factors that prevent families from being engaged in their child’s education.

• I can explain the difference between a parent being involved and engaged.

• I can list 3-4 tips that will help to build better family engagement.
When you think of Family Engagement, what picture(s) come to mind?
Where is June Cleaver when you need her?
The Invisible Parent
It's not your fault son.
Can you tell me the difference between Family Involvement and Family Engagement?
What does the RESEARCH say about Family Engagement?
30 years of national achievement research shows a direct correlation between families engaged/in involved in their child’s education to higher achievement.

2010 Presidents and Fellows of Harvard College
Published by Harvard Family Research Project
Family Disengagement is One of the Multiple Risk Factors Of Dropout

A Lack of Communication Between Families and the School and --- the Family Feeling "Unwelcomed" are the Triggers That Predict Future Dropout

According to a 1997 Study by The National Dropout Prevention Clearinghouse, Network, Clemson University and Communities in School
One of the most comprehensive research synthesis on Family Engagement was completed in 2002 by Ann Henderson and Karen Mapp. The researchers focused on the relationship between student achievement and family-community involvement.
Findings from Mapp and Henderson:

**WHEN FAMILIES ARE ENGAGED:**

Students achieve more, regardless of socioeconomic status, ethnic/racial background, or the parents' education level.

These students also exhibit more consistently higher grades, test scores, better attendance, completed homework; and positive attitudes and behavior.
If it works, how do we make it happen?

Different types of parent/family engagement produce different types of gains.

To ensure long lasting gains, Ann Henderson
And Karen Mapp say family engagement must be
SUSTAINABLE, INCLUSIVE & COMPREHENSIVE
So “Why” is it so difficult to engage families?
Build Adult Capabilities

A THEORY OF CHANGE

Improve Child Outcomes

narrated by
Jack P. Shonkoff, MD
Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University

•  http://hfrp.org/hfrp-news/news-announcements/announcing-a-new-format-for-fine
Factors that can impact successful family engagement...

Respect people from where they stand – not where you want them.
Secretary of Education Arnie Duncan announced last month a family and community engagement model, 


Develop a Sustainable and Embedded Family Engagement Plan

• - Linked to Learning: Connecting families to the teaching and learning goals for the students.

• - Rational: Building respectful and trusting relationships between home and school.
• Developmental: Building the adult learning capacity of the families

• Collective/Collaborative: Learning is focused on building networks and learning communities.

• Interactive: Families are given opportunities to test out and apply new skills.
Models

Supporters
Encouragers
Monitors
Advocates
Decision-makers
Collaborators

ROLES
The roles Families play when they are engaged are**:

• **Supporters** of their children’s learning

• **Encouragers** of an achievement identity, a positive self image, and a “can do” spirit

• **Monitors** of their children’s time, behavior boundaries and resources

• **Models** of lifelong learning and enthusiasm for education

**Karen Mapps - 2013**
• **Advocates** for improved learning opportunities for their children and at their school

• **Decision-makers/Choosers** of educational options for their child, the school, and community

• **Collaborators** with school staff and members of community
Where do you go from here?
TIPS FOR TEACHERS TO DEVELOP SUSTAINABLE FAMILY ENGAGEMENT -- DRAFT

Research confirms that there is a direct correlation between families engaged in their child’s education and higher student achievement. When families are engaged students achieve more, regardless of socioeconomic status, ethnic/racial background, or the parents’ level of education.

Below are tips that can be used as a guide to build family friendly relationships:

**Develop a trusting and respectful relationship with families**
- Take the opportunity to learn about the student’s story by asking questions:
  - Can you tell me about who makes up your family?
  - Do parent/parents work?
  - Are there siblings?
  - Etc...
- Find a common ground with them (ie: shopping at Walmart, loving Starbucks, watching American idol, etc.).
- Acknowledge that parent challenges are unique and usually greater than average when you have a child with special needs.
- Seek to understand each family’s cultural diversity by asking questions about customs around school, holidays, etc. in a non-judgmental way.
- Share the Power – acknowledge parent role as equally important as teacher/school staff by:
  - Seeking solutions collaboratively with the emphasis on how “we” can work together.
- Show you care by:
  - Ask for their advice, as the experts
  - Ask what the parent sees as their child’s specific talent, interest or
Building Sustainable Family Engagement into your classroom

- Power of Positive Communication Plan
- Building Respectful and trusting Relationships
- A “Welcoming” Environment
- Building on the Random Acts of Family Involvement
- Linked to Learning
- Your timeline
Do you drop family and community engagement when no one is looking?
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OUR CONTACT INFORMATION

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