

Best Practices in Family and Community Engagement

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In the following report, Hanover Research describes best practices in family and community engagement. The report examines strategies for overcoming barriers to family and community engagement, summarizes methods of measuring the degree of engagement, and describes engagement policies implemented by three school districts in Washington, North Carolina, and Florida.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND KEY FINDINGS

INTRODUCTION

Families and educators each play central roles in child development, and yet both groups often struggle to engage one another in meaningful ways to improve student outcomes. To clarify the nature of this struggle, this report examines the obstacles that schools face in promoting family and community engagement and suggests concrete, evidence-based strategies for overcoming each of these obstacles.

- **Section I: Promoting Family and Community Engagement** examines the factors that commonly affect levels of engagement, including the school climate, the logistics of parent involvement, the quality of communication between parents and schools, and parent perceptions of the roles they should play in their child's education. Section I also addresses methods for measuring the success of family and community engagement policies and practices.
- **Section II: Parent Involvement Strategies in Practice** profiles family and community engagement policies and measures implemented by three school districts in Washington, North Carolina, and Florida.

KEY FINDINGS

- **Some families face many obstacles to becoming more involved.** Parents may have inflexible work schedules that limit opportunities to visit the school campus, a lack of access to the technology required to receive communication from the school, or difficulty communicating in English. To address these barriers, school leadership should assess the factors that affect parent involvement and consider strategies to improve communication and opportunities for involvement.
- **Districts and schools are responsible for ensuring families and community members understand how to become more involved and recognize the value of their involvement.** Districts and schools that successfully engage families and community members build welcoming environments and provide families with opportunities to learn more about how to support their children and their schools.
- **Districts measure family and community involvement through surveys, policy and practice reviews, and performance indicators.** Surveys are widely considered essential components of any district engagement policy for determining parent attitudes and barriers to engagement. Policy and practice reviews allow districts to assess policy components and district- and school-level practices with reference to best practice benchmarks and strategic goals. Performance indicators provide schools with concrete measures of progress, but should be used in conjunction with other measures.

SECTION I: PROMOTING FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Research demonstrates that family and community engagement improves school readiness, academic achievement, and graduation rates.¹ Based on a review of available evidence, Hanover has determined four key factors that encourage engagement and improve student outcomes:

- The school climate
- The logistics of parent involvement
- The quality of communication between parents and schools
- Parent perceptions of the roles they play in their child’s education

This section examines the barriers to engagement associated with each of these factors and summarizes recommendations for overcoming each of these barriers.

SCHOOL CLIMATE

Experts almost universally consider a welcoming school climate requisite for family and community engagement.² This subsection discusses school climate only in brief, however, not because the school climate component is less significant than any other component of family and community engagement examined in this report, but rather because it encompasses every practice that promotes involvement. Efforts to help families navigate logistical barriers to involvement, improve communication, and improve how parents understand their roles ultimately build a welcoming and engaging environment.

¹ [1] Weiss, H., Lopez, M., and Rosenberg, H. “Beyond Random Acts Family, School, and Community Engagement as an Integral Part of Education Reform.” Harvard Family Research Project, December 2010. p. 2.
http://www.nationalpirc.org/engagement_forum/beyond_random_acts.pdf

[2] Henderson, A., Mapp, K. “A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement.” National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools, 2002.
<http://www.sedl.org/connections/resources/evidence.pdf>

[3] Hara, S., Burke, D. “Parent Involvement: The Key to Improved Student Achievement.” *School Community Journal*, 8(2), 1998. <http://www.adi.org/journal/ss01/chapters/Chapter16-Hara&Burke.pdf>

[4] Bottoms, G., Young, M., Han, L. “Ready for Tomorrow: Six Proven Ideas to Graduate and Prepare More Students for College and 21st-Century Careers.” SREB, November 2009, p. 36.
http://publications.sreb.org/2009/09V20_Ready_for_Tomorrow.pdf

² [1] “The Family Engagement for High School Success Toolkit: Planning and Implementing an Initiative to Support the Pathway to Graduation for At-Risk Students.” Harvard Family Research Project, 2011, p. 22.
<http://www.hfrp.org/family-involvement/publications-resources/the-family-engagement-for-high-school-success-toolkit-planning-and-implementing-an-initiative-to-support-the-pathway-to-graduation-for-at-risk-students>

[2] Nawrotzki, K. “Parent-School Relations in England and the USA: Partnership, Problematicized.” *The Politicization of Parenthood*, Eds. Richter, M., Andresen, S., Springer: 2012, p. 72.

[3] Doll, B. “Positive School Climate.” National Association of Secondary School Principals.
http://www.nassp.org/Content.aspx?topic=Positive_School_Climate

[4] “Sample Best Practices for Parent Involvement in Schools,” Ohio Department of Education.
<http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Other-Resources/Family-and-Community-Engagement/Getting-Parents-Involved/Sample-Best-Practices-for-Parent-Involvement-in-Sc>

In general, schools that successfully promote parent involvement also promote a broad sense of community and build relationships of mutual trust between families and school staff.³ Furthermore, researchers commonly consider a welcoming environment a precursor to family and community partnerships. According to a report from the National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools:

When programs and initiatives focus on building respectful and trusting relationships among school staff, families, and community members, they are effective in creating and sustaining family and community connections with schools.⁴

School leaders who value parent involvement may take steps to develop parent participation skills, provide opportunities for parents to take active and important roles in the school, and ensure that administrators listen to parent concerns. These strategies promote “authentic participation” and involve parents in the school in meaningful ways.⁵

As school leaders develop trusting relationships and a supportive parent community, they may invite parents to help identify new strategies for engaging less involved parents.⁶ Schools may further improve parent involvement by hosting one-on-one and small group meetings to discuss important issues and highlight student success, rather than hosting large, formal events that focus on shortcomings and test scores.⁷

Finally, school leaders may consider how students perceive the school climate. Evidence has shown a significant relationship between the student’s sense of belonging and the extent to which parents become involved in the school.⁸ Ultimately, efforts to improve the school climate may deeply impact family engagement and student outcomes.

Recommendations:

- ✓ Build a welcoming environment for students and families
- ✓ Build trust with the parent community
- ✓ Hold meetings in comfortable, positive settings
- ✓ Invite involved parents to examine ways to engage other parents

³ Lopez, M., Kreider, H. “Beyond Input: Achieving Authentic Participation in School Reform.” *The Evaluation Exchange*, Harvard Graduate School of Education, 9(2), 2003, p. 2.

<http://www.hfrp.org/var/hfrp/storage/original/application/af7fd33cc8b440aba3b1b2cfe995493b.pdf>

⁴ Henderson, Op. cit., p. 43.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Bridgeland, J, Dilulio, J., Streeter, R., Mason, J. “One Dream, Two Realities: Perspectives of Parents on America’s High Schools.” Civic Enterprises, 2008, p. 25. <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED503358.pdf>

⁷ “Best Practices for Engaging Families.” The Indiana Partnerships Center. <http://fscp.org/information-for-educators/best-practices-for-engaging-families/>

⁸ Kuperminc, G., Darnell, A., Alvarez-Jimenez, A. “Parent Involvement in the Academic Adjustment of Latino Middle and High School Youth: Teacher Expectations and Belonging as Mediators,” *Journal of Adolescence*, 31(4), 2008.

LOGISTICS

Logistical obstacles, such as inflexible parent work schedules and lack of transportation, are among the most common barriers to parental involvement.⁹ In 2008, Civic Enterprises, with funding from the Gates Foundation, conducted focus groups that included more than 1,000 parents nationwide to determine the factors that impede parent involvement. Of parents who responded that they were not involved enough in their children’s education, **two-thirds indicated that work or other time commitments were significant obstacles to their involvement.**¹⁰

Although schools may not have the resources to directly address some of the logistical barriers to parental involvement, they can implement strategies that make certain obstacles easier to navigate. Multiple advocates for greater parent involvement encourage schools to provide easier access to teachers and counselors, which may involve offering pay or other benefits to staff members who make themselves available to parents outside of normal school hours.¹¹ Advocates also recommend that schools offer transportation for parents as necessary to attend certain school events.¹² If providing parents with transportation is not an option, leaders may consider more convenient alternative locations to hold events and meetings.¹³

To ensure school leaders better understand the logistical barriers that parents may face, experts encourage schools to conduct a survey that provides information regarding parent schedules and the resources parents need to become more involved.¹⁴

⁹ [1] Nawrotzki, Op. cit., p. 72.

[2] Bridgeland, Op. cit., pp. 26-27.

[3] “The Family Engagement for High School Success Toolkit: Planning and Implementing an Initiative to Support the Pathway to Graduation for At-Risk Students,” p. 20.

[4] “Parent and Community Involvement in a College/Career-Ready Culture,” Texas Comprehensive Center, p. 1. <http://txcc.sedl.org/resources/briefs/number2/>

¹⁰ Bridgeland, Op. cit., p. 19.

¹¹ [1] “Collaborating for Success: Parent Engagement Toolkit.” Michigan Department of Education, 2011, pp. 80-81. http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/4a._Final_Toolkit_without_bookmarks_370151_7.pdf

[2] Bridgeland, Op. cit., p. 25.

¹² Bridgeland, Op. cit., p. 27.

¹³ “High School Counselor’s Guide: NOSCA’s Eight Components of College and Career Readiness Counseling.” College Board, 2011, p. 5. http://advocacy.collegeboard.org/sites/default/files/11b-4151_HS_Counselor_Guide_web.pdf

¹⁴ Bridgeland, Op. cit., p. 26.

Barriers that prevent parents from engaging in school activities in person are not the only logistical obstacles that schools face in promoting engagement. In many cases, technological and language barriers prevent parents from receiving the information they need to become more involved in their child's education. Although these barriers could be described as logistical, they are discussed in the following subsection that addresses the relationship between communication and parental involvement.

Recommendations:

- ✓ Improve access to teachers and counselors at different times during the week
- ✓ Examine ways to offer transportation to school events
- ✓ Consider more convenient locations for school events and meetings
- ✓ Conduct a parent involvement survey to determine logistical barriers

COMMUNICATION

Family and community involvement cannot grow in the absence of a framework that promotes effective communication between the school and relevant stakeholders. A general lack of communication from the school, technological barriers, and failures to invite families and community members to have an active voice in the school are each characteristic of schools that lack effective communication.

The 2008 Civic Enterprises parent involvement study reported that 12 percent of parents attributed their low levels of involvement to a general lack of information or communication.¹⁵ Some advocates suggest that school leaders can use traditional means of communication to improve family engagement. As one scholar notes, "Family engagement can be enhanced by direct, routine communications such as face-to-face conferences, telephone contacts, open houses, teacher notes, and classroom visits."¹⁶ The Urban Strategies Council recommends similar steps, such as that schools establish family liaisons, communicate small accomplishments, increase opportunities for engagement, remove jargon from communications, use interpreters to communicate with family members with limited knowledge of English, and use technology to communicate and track participation.¹⁷

As discussed in this report, however, many logistical barriers can strain even traditional forms of communication, particularly as schools serve increasingly diverse populations and move toward electronic forms of communication. In many cases, **communication between**

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 20.

¹⁶ Bangser, M. "Preparing High School Students for Successful Transitions to Postsecondary Education and Employment." NHSC, 2008, p. 16.
http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/PreparingHSSstudentsforTransition_073108.pdf

¹⁷ [1] "A Resource Guide for Understanding Community Schools: Family and Community Engagement." Urban Strategies Council, October 2012. p. 8.
http://www.urbanstrategies.org/documents/fscs/FSCS%20Family%20%20Community%20Engagement_Oct%202012.pdf

[2] "Strong Families, Strong Schools: Building Community Partnerships for Learning. A Research Base for Family Involvement in Learning from the U.S. Department of Education," U.S. Department of Education, 1994.
http://www.communityschools.org/assets/1/AssetManager/Strongfam_StrongSch_bUILDING.pdf

schools and families suffers due to language barriers and limited parent access to the technology that schools often use to communicate about student needs.¹⁸

To manage these specific communication barriers, advocates for increased parent involvement recommend that schools communicate in multiple languages, make efforts to communicate in ways that do not require computer access, and develop guides and resources that help parents understand how to navigate the technology that the school uses to communicate.¹⁹ The National PTA recommends that school leaders and teachers accept responsibility for initiating interaction by inviting parents to face-to-face meetings, providing parents with materials to let them know how to help their children at home, and calling parents to update them about their child's success.²⁰

Leaders further recommend that communication between schools and parents be both informative and collaborative. These advocates emphasize that communication between the school and parents should be two-way, and should allow parents opportunities to ask questions, initiate interaction, and provide input regarding their child's education and school policies.²¹

Recommendations:

- ✓ Communicate in multiple ways that minimize technical obstacles and language barriers
- ✓ Accept responsibility for initiating positive interaction with parents
- ✓ Make opportunities for parents to ask questions and share their opinions

PARENT ROLES

Although a large body of research supports parental involvement in general, the specific roles that parents should play are not always as well-defined. Often, parents require guidance from their child's school to better understand how best to become involved. As one organization that advocates for better parent involvement states, **"sometimes parents aren't sure what their role should be,"** and it falls to schools to help parents navigate that question.²²

Research has shown that engagement programs that train families about how best to support their children have a demonstrable effect on student achievement.²³ Multiple engagement guides reiterate the role schools play in helping parents determine how to

¹⁸ [1] Nawrotzki, Op. cit., p. 72.

[2] "The Family Engagement for High School Success Toolkit: Planning and Implementing..." Op. cit., p. 19.

¹⁹ [1] "High School Counselor's Guide: NOSCA's Eight Components of College and Career Readiness Counseling," Op. cit., p. 5.

[2] "The Family Engagement for High School Success Toolkit: Planning and Implementing an Initiative to Support the Pathway to Graduation for At-Risk Students," Op. cit. pp. 39, 76.

²⁰ "PTA National Standards for Family-School Partnerships: An Implementation Guide," PTA, 2009, p. 20.
http://www.pta.org/files/National_Standards_Implementation_Guide_2009.pdf

²¹ [1] "Collaborating for Success: Parent Engagement Toolkit," Op. cit. pp. 80-81.

[2] "The Family Engagement for High School Success Toolkit: Planning and Implementing an Initiative to Support the Pathway to Graduation for At-Risk Students," Op. cit. pp. 22-32.

²² "About Us." The Indiana Partnerships Center. <http://fscp.org/about/>

²³ Henderson, Op. cit., p. 25-30.

become more involved and providing them with any necessary training to improve the impact of their involvement.²⁴

For many school districts, helping parents of high school students define their roles and become more engaged proves more difficult than engaging parents of elementary-aged students.²⁵ Parental involvement takes a different form once a child enters high school, partially because of the child's growing independence.²⁶ Findings published in 2011 note that, in addition to having a limited understanding of the role they play in promoting their child's academic engagement, parents of adolescents often hesitate to become too involved in their adolescent child's education "because of overt and implied messages that they must remain on the sidelines to foster a teenager's growing independence."²⁷

The Harvard Family Research Project makes general recommendations that school leaders take steps to define the parent role and ensure they understand it, develop parent participation skills, and provide opportunities for parents to take active and important roles in the school.²⁸ A college and career readiness guide published by the College Board in 2011 makes specific recommendations for parental involvement in adolescent college and career development, suggesting schools ensure parents understand their role in their child's college and career planning and provide opportunities for parents to share their experiences with their children as well as with the student body as a whole.²⁹

Finally, experts suggest that schools avoid a one-size-fits-all approach to parent involvement. Advocates suggest, rather, that school leaders "need to move from this idea that parents are the same, with the same needs, and that children should be treated the same," and focus instead on the different ways that parents with different beliefs and circumstances can become more involved.³⁰ Thus, as schools consider how to define the parent role in relation to academic and career planning, they would be wise to consider what productive involvement might look like for parents with different strengths and resources.

Recommendations:

- ✓ Inform families of the role they play in their child's career development and train them to fulfill that role
- ✓ Engage families in age-appropriate ways
- ✓ Determine the different ways that all families can become involved

²⁴ [1] "Collaborating for Success: Parent Engagement Toolkit." Op. cit., pp. 80-81.

[2] "Sample Best Practices for Parent Involvement in Schools," Ohio Department of Education. <http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Other-Resources/Family-and-Community-Engagement/Getting-Parents-Involved/Sample-Best-Practices-for-Parent-Involvement-in-Sc>

[3] "Handbook on Family and Community Engagement," Academic Development Institute, 2011. pp. 171-174. <http://www.schoolcommunitynetwork.org/downloads/FACEHandbook.pdf>

²⁵ Bouffard, S., Stephen, N. "Promoting Family Involvement." *Principal's Research Review* (National Association of Secondary School Principals), 2(6), November 2007. <http://www.hfrp.org/family-involvement/publications-resources/promoting-family-involvement>

²⁶ "Parent and Community Involvement in a College/Career-Ready Culture," Op. cit., p. 2.

²⁷ "The Family Engagement for High School Success Toolkit: Planning and Implementing ..." Op. cit., p. 21.

²⁸ Lopez, Op. cit., p. 2.

²⁹ "High School Counselor's Guide" Op. cit., pp. 5, 7.

³⁰ Larocque, M., Kleiman, I., Darling, S. "Parental Involvement: The Missing Link in School Achievement," *Preventing School Failure*, 55(3), 2011, p. 117.

MEASURING SUCCESS

Parent surveys are, by far, the most common method that schools use to measure the degree of parent engagement. Educators hail the parent survey as a useful tool for promoting engagement by providing parents an outlet for feedback and helping school leaders understand and address any barriers to parental involvement.³¹ In addition to surveys, districts and schools often conduct additional assessments of engagement by performing structured reviews of engagement policies and practices and by tracking specific performance indicators.

POLICY AND PRACTICE REVIEWS

Policy and practice reviews consist of structured assessments of how districts and schools attempt to engage parents, as measured against set benchmarks and established best practices. Although policy and practice reviews may typically reflect best practices, they should ultimately vary in content according to the specific needs and goals of the school or district.³²

The Academic Development Institute (ADI), which works with national and state-level departments and organizations to develop strategies to improve student outcomes, has established a “parental involvement analysis” as a school-level tool for measuring parent engagement.³³ ADI offers school leaders worksheets for tracking progress in parent engagement and guidelines for group discussions that allow all stakeholders to express their level of satisfaction with the state of parent involvement and develop strategies for improvement. The analysis includes assessments of district- and school-level parent involvement policies as well as policies relating to homework, report cards, and classroom visits.³⁴ The following statements represent sample criteria included in the policy analysis:

- Conducts an annual meeting with parents to discuss program plan, implementation, and suggestions
- Decides with parents how funds allotted for parent involvement activities shall be used
- Conducts an annual meeting with parents to discuss program plans, implementation, and suggestions at a convenient time for parents
- Provides parents information in a timely manner about programs that includes a description and explanation of the school’s curriculum, the forms of academic assessments used to measure children’s progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet.³⁵

³¹ Molnar, M. “Harvard, SurveyMonkey Offer Tool to Weigh Parent Engagement,” *Education Week*, January 15, 2013. <http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2013/01/16/17parents.h32.html>

³² “Increasing Parent Involvement in Education,” New Carolina, 2006, p. 33. <http://www.newcarolina.org/UserFiles/publications/parent-involvement-8.pdf>

³³ [1] “About ADI.” Academic Development Institute. <http://www.adi.org/about/>
[2] “What Is the Parent Involvement Analysis?” Academic Development Institute. <http://www.adi.org/PIA/>

³⁴ “What is Parent Involvement Analysis.” Academic Development Institute, p. 13. <http://www.adi.org/PIA/>

³⁵ Bulleted points taken verbatim from: *Ibid.*, p. 14.

Similarly, a family and community involvement guide published by Public Schools of North Carolina describes eight categories in which schools may rate their parental involvement as lacking, emerging, developing, or leading. For each category of involvement, the department publishes concrete indicators that certain standards are being met (Figure 1.1).

Figure 1.1: Components of Parent Involvement

TYPE OF INVOLVEMENT	DESCRIPTION	CONCRETE COMPONENTS
Communication	Facilitate regular, two-way, and meaningful communication between home and school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communication through multiple mediums ▪ Processes to improve participation in conferences & surveys ▪ Training for teachers and parents
Parenting	Promote and support responsible parenting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assessments of family needs ▪ Partnerships with community organizations ▪ Written plans for effective parent training sessions
Student Learning	Involve parents in children’s learning activities so that they may play an integral role in assisting student learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communication regarding standards and student rights ▪ Concrete demonstration of expectations ▪ Opportunities for parents to learn more about learning standards
Volunteering	Ensure that parents/guardians are welcome in the school and seek their support and assistance in a variety of ways.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Measures of whether parents consider the school welcoming to volunteers ▪ Using school staff to train parent in school-wide program ▪ Recognition of volunteer efforts
Advocacy and Decision-Making	Include parents/guardians as partners in the decisions that affect children and families.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Systematic inclusion of all stakeholders in planning and decision-making processes ▪ Partnerships with advocate groups ▪ Training for parents to improve advocacy skills
Training	Assess parents’ and school personnel informational needs and provide training based upon those needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Measures of parent satisfaction with training ▪ Existence of a written parent involvement plan with a training component ▪ PD to help staff effectively include parents
Community Collaboration	Collaborate with community agencies and other organizations to provide resources to strengthen school programs, families, and student learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Involvement of stakeholders in climate survey development and analysis ▪ Use of networks to build parent understanding of learning standards and student achievement ▪ Use of community resources and development of opportunities for community-based learning ▪ Involvement of community leaders
Student Health	Promote health awareness among parents/guardians by addressing need for health programs & health services linked to student learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Systematic review process of plans to address student health concerns ▪ Professional development for all stakeholders ▪ Partnerships with parents and community members to address student health needs.

Source: Public Schools of North Carolina.³⁶

³⁶ Taken verbatim from: “Parent and Family Involvement: A Guide to Effective Parent, Family, and Community Involvement in North Carolina Schools,” Public Schools of North Carolina, p. 37-44.
<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/parents/toolkit/guide.pdf>

In 2006, New Carolina, the South Carolina-based Council on Competitiveness, published a similarly structured checklist of actions for schools to use as benchmarks for evaluating parent involvement strategies.³⁷ The New Carolina checklist can be found in the Appendix of this report.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance indicators of parent engagement provide concrete measures of parent involvement and allow districts and schools to work toward measurable goals. Fogarty EDvance, an Australian-based company that encourages schools to establish specific performance indicators to measure progress, provides the following example of how one school developed better forms of assessing parent engagement by making goals concrete and measurable:

‘More parent involvement’ became ‘two parents helping each week in each class from K to Grade 3 by 2015’ and ‘greater community engagement’ became ‘two community representatives sitting on the School Council by 2014.’³⁸

Figure 1.2 contains a table from a successful 2012 charter school proposal that described key performance indicators for parent engagement, as measured against goals and preexisting baselines. The proposal includes plans to administer satisfaction surveys and track parent communication with teachers through weekly progress reports. Figure 1.3 describes the benchmarks that indicate success made toward parent engagement goals. Although the parent engagement measures outlined in the proposal do not necessarily represent ideal measures of parent engagement, these measures do demonstrate how the performance indicator framework allows school leaders to set measurable goals.

Figure 1.2: Parent Engagement Goals and Measures

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTOR
Performance Goal	Parents will express high satisfaction in their child's learning experience at the Academy.
Performance Indicator	Parent satisfaction rates will be measured by surveys and progress reports showing parent-teacher contact.
Assessment Tools and Measures	Parent surveys using Likert-scaled statements to measure the degree to which parents agree or disagree with being satisfied in the school culture and performance. Weekly progress reports show teacher-parent contact discussing the [student's] performance.
Rationale for Goals and Measures	When parents are involved, students have higher test scores, increased motivation, better attendance and decreased negative behavior. In fact, family participation in education is twice as predictive of students' academic success as family socioeconomic status. A combination of survey rates and progress reports will provide an assessment of both parental satisfaction and engagement.

³⁷ “Increasing Parent Involvement in Education,” Op. cit., pp. 33-36.

³⁸ “Creating Great Key Performance Indicators for Your School,” Fogarty EDvance. <http://fogartyedvance.org.au/files/Fogarty-EDvance-Creating-Great-Key-Performance-Indicators-M-Enders-120713.pdf>

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTOR
Assessment Reliability and Scoring Consistency	We have a scientifically validated process we use to engage our parents. Parent surveys have been implemented at Summer Advantage and produced consistent results. Progress reports will be provided on a weekly basis to ensure reliability and consistency.
Baseline Data	Parents of newly enrolled [students] will take a survey assessing their general levels of satisfaction with public education or previous schools their [students] attended.

Source: Indianapolis Office of Education Innovation.³⁹

Figure 1.3: Performance Indicator Benchmarks

RATING	DESCRIPTOR
Does not meet standard	Less than 70% of parents are satisfied with their child's learning experience at the Academy and sign weekly progress reports from their child's teachers.
Approaches standard	Between 70 - 79% of parents are satisfied with their child's learning experience at the Academy and sign weekly progress reports from their child's teachers.
Meets standard	Between 80 - 90% of parents are satisfied with their child's learning experience at the Academy and sign weekly progress reports from their child's teachers.
Exceeds standard	Over 90% of parents are satisfied with their child's learning experience at the Academy and sign weekly progress reports from their child's teachers.

Source: Indianapolis Office of Education Innovation.⁴⁰

The Director of Community Engagement of Achievement School District, which serves students in Memphis and Nashville, Tennessee, cautions against privileging certain performance indicators over the parent survey, noting that “Too often, schools measure parental involvement with parent attendance at meetings or the level of volunteerism on campus by families.”⁴¹ His concern is rooted in an understanding that not all parents can attend every school meeting and become involved in the same ways as other families. This argument aligns with suggestions from other educators who have advocated for schools to avoid homogenous conceptions of what it means for a parent or family to be involved.⁴² Federal Way Public Schools in Federal Way, Washington, which this report profiles in Section II, serves as an example of a district that has successfully blended surveys, policy and practice reviews, and performance indicator tracking into district- and school-level measures of family and community engagement.

³⁹ Taken verbatim from: “George and Veronica Phalen Leadership Academy (PLA),” Indianapolis Office of Education Innovation, 2012, pp. 9-10.
<http://www.indy.gov/OEI/Schools/Applicants/2012/Documents/PLA%20Full%20Application%20PLA%20FINAL%20without%20background%20authorization%20forms.pdf>

⁴⁰ Taken verbatim from: *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁴¹ King, T. “The Myth of Parental Involvement,” Achievement School District.
<http://www.achievementschooldistrict.org/the-myth-of-parental-involvement/>

⁴² Larocque, *Op. cit.*, p. 117.

SECTION II: DISTRICT PROFILES

This section describes family and community engagement policies implemented by Federal Way Public Schools in Federal Way, Washington; Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools in North Carolina; and Hillsborough County Public Schools in Tampa, Florida. Each of these districts was selected for this report on the basis of national recognition and adherence to best practices in family and community engagement.

FEDERAL WAY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Federal Way Public Schools in Federal Way, Washington operates 47 public schools that serve more than 22,000 students. Nearly 39 percent of Federal Way students were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch in 2011-2012.⁴³ In recent years, the Harvard Family Research Project has featured Federal Way for the district's leadership in family and community engagement.⁴⁴

Hanover corresponded with a representative from Federal Way to gain a better understanding of how the district has successfully engaged parents and tracked family participation. This profile includes information gathered from our correspondence as well as published accounts of Federal Way practices.

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Federal Way operates a Family and Community Partnership Office, led by a Family Partnership Advocate (FPA), which "promotes a consistent and integrated approach to family engagement."⁴⁵ In recent years, the Family and Community Partnership Office has implemented a series of initiatives that align with research in best practices in family and community engagement.

A core initiative of the Family and Community Partnership Office is the Parent Leadership Institute, described as "a series of workshops developed by the FPA and district-level parent committee, [in which] parents exchange ideas and strategies to effectively advocate for their children's school success."⁴⁶ Hanover's contact at Federal Way praised the Parent

⁴³ Enrollment estimates based on 2011-2012 data reported to: National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Elementary and Secondary Information System (ELSI). <http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/elsi/>

⁴⁴ [1] Westmoreland, H., Rosenberg, H., Lopez, M., Weiss, H. "Seeing is Believing: Promising Practices for How Districts Promote Family Engagement," Harvard Family Research Project, 2009, p. 4. <http://www.hfrp.org/family-involvement/publications-resources/seeing-is-believing-promising-practices-for-how-school-districts-promote-family-engagement>

[2] Moore, T. "Drawing on Parents' Strengths: The Role of Districts and Schools in Empowering Families to be Effective Partners in Learning," Harvard Family Research Project, 2011. <http://www.hfrp.org/family-involvement/publications-resources/drawing-on-parents-strengths-the-role-of-districts-and-schools-in-empowering-families-to-be-effective-partners-in-learning>

⁴⁵ Westmoreland, Op. cit., p. 4.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 5.

Leadership Institute as an opportunity for parents to become involved according to their strengths and resources:

We've established a 'Parent Leadership Institute' approach that provides flexibility and a very fluid approach to engaging families that may want to have a variety of entry points to get involved and/or who may not always like or be able to attend meetings or traditional involvement venues. This approach helps us connect families and community members to a variety of platforms, presentations and pathways that fit their interest and schedule while also maximizing the opportunities for them to link in with education supports that are already happening in their schools, the district or the broader community for all kids.⁴⁷

The Family and Community Partnership Office has also kept convenience as a main priority. Partnership 101 workshops, which are led by parents and staff, may be held on school grounds or in homes and other locations in the community.⁴⁸ The Office's use of family liaisons ensures that all families "have a specific 'go-to' person that can help them connect with all of these opportunities and keep families informed, prepared and involved from preschool to graduation at times beyond the school day and school building."⁴⁹

The Harvard Family Research Project has also praised the district's inclusion of parents and teachers in the planning process, which includes setting specific annual performance goals. All staff members receive professional development "to ensure that parents feel welcomed and needed as partners in enhancing their children's learning."⁵⁰

MEASUREMENT

Each school within the Federal Way district is responsible for developing a family and community partnership plan that serves the following functions:

1. Identify specific measurable goals;
2. Create permanent structures to support family and community engagement;
3. Demonstrate a long-term commitment to family and community engagement;
4. Have explicit connections to learning plan goals; and
5. Contain a variety of engagement practices to reach out to diverse families.⁵¹

A logic model published by the Family and Community Partnerships Office specifically outlines how parent involvement strategies align with district-level goals. The logic model specifically measures the number of opportunities "for collaborative discussions, activities, workshops/forums/quarterly meetings, activities connected to student focused family

⁴⁷ Email correspondence with Federal Way representative, August 5, 2013.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Westmoreland, Op. cit., p. 5.

⁵¹ Taken verbatim from : "Family and Community Partnerships Measurement Rubric and Policy," provided by Federal Way Public Schools Family and Community Partnership Office.

engagement partnerships” and the time parents and staff devote to training.⁵² The full logic model, as provided by Federal Way, can be found in the Appendix.

To assist schools in the measurement of their family and community partnership plan, the Family and Community Partnerships Office provides school leaders with an assessment rubric that addresses how the plan informs, prepares, and involves parents and how the success of the plan will be measured. Figure 2.1 describes the assessment components along with examples of measures each school may choose to include. Schools gather qualitative and quantitative measures of engagement through “focus groups, district and school parent survey, direct observation, interviews, [and] student assessment data.”⁵³

Figure 2.1: Assessment Components and Example Measures

ASSESSMENT COMPONENT	EXAMPLES
How do you inform parents as partners in their student’s learning?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Personal phone calls, automated calls, school newsletter, email, home visits, evening meetings, conferences, Conversation Café, What Every Parent Wants to Know Q&A, website, classroom newsletter, homework hotline call-in message
How do you prepare parents to support their student’s success in school?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide parents with tips and tools for helping students practice lessons at home, workshops, Partnership 101, What Every Parent Wants to Know Q&A, Math/Reading Family Events
How do you involve parents in your intervention, prevention, and/or school improvement plans?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parent Leadership team or School/site leadership team that includes parents ▪ Early support and collaborative contact with families before absences or discipline issues become excessive
How do you measure your success? (Qualitative and Quantitative)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify % increase in number of parents that indicate they feel that the school keeps them informed ▪ % Increase in number of parents asking (calling, visiting, emailing) to learn ways they can help their student at home or school ▪ % Increase in number of parents that say the school helps them feel more prepared to support their student’s success ▪ % Increase in variety and number of opportunities offered for parents to collaborate with staff or other parents ▪ % Increase in parent volunteer hours or attendance from parents that <i>were not previously</i> visiting the school ▪ % Increase in student growth improvement on assessments linked to family engagement based intervention strategies

Source: Federal Way Public Schools.⁵⁴

⁵² “Logic Model,” provided by Federal Way Public Schools Family and Community Partnership Office.

⁵³ “Family and Community Partnerships: 2180,” provided by Federal Way Public Schools Family and Community Partnership Office.

⁵⁴ Taken verbatim from: Ibid.

CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG SCHOOLS

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools in North Carolina operates 174 public schools that serve more than 135,000 students. More than 50 percent of Charlotte-Mecklenburg students were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch in 2011-2012.⁵⁵ Charlotte-Mecklenburg is a recent recipient of the Broad Prize for urban education, and the district's family and community engagement practices have served as a model for other urban districts seeking to improve parent involvement.⁵⁶

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Family and community education is the centerpiece of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools parent involvement strategy. The district's parent education initiative, Parent University, is described as "a community collaborative led by Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools to help parents become full partners in their children's education."⁵⁷ Parent University represents a partnership with community-based organizations "to offer free courses, family events and activities that will equip families with new or additional skills, knowledge, resources and confidence."⁵⁸ Content of Parent University courses, workshops, and events typically fall into one of four areas that improve parent understanding of child development and the role they can play in their child's education. The four content areas include:

- **Parenting Awareness:** Information and experiences that empower parents to raise self-confident, disciplined, motivated and educated children from birth through young adulthood.
- **Helping Your Child Learn in the 21st Century:** Empowering parents to actively support the educational opportunities and academic challenges that children face in the 21st Century.
- **Health and Wellness:** Information and activities that support healthy lifestyles for families, both physically and emotionally.
- **Personal Growth and Development:** Opportunities for parents to increase their own personal and professional growth, enabling them to effectively advocate for themselves and their children.⁵⁹

Parent education opportunities are widely accessible in many locations, "held in schools, public libraries, YMCAs, houses of worship, businesses and other community locations."⁶⁰

⁵⁵ Enrollment estimates based on 2011-2012 data reported to: NCES ELSi, Op. cit.

⁵⁶ [1] Koebler, J. "Charlotte-Mecklenburg School District Wins Prestigious Broad Prize," *U.S. News and World Report*, September 20, 2011. <http://www.usnews.com/education/high-schools/articles/2011/09/20/charlotte-mecklenburg-school-district-wins-prestigious-broad-prize>

[2] Phillips, A. "Walcott Pledges Measures to Increase Parents' Involvement," *WNYC*, October 26, 2011. <http://www.wnyc.org/blogs/schoolbook/2011/oct/26/walcott-pledges-measures-to-increase-parents-involvement/>

⁵⁷ "What is Parent University?" Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.

<http://www.cms.k12.nc.us/parents/ParentUniv/Pages/WhatIsParentUniversity.aspx>

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Taken verbatim from: "FAQ," Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.

<http://www.cms.k12.nc.us/parents/ParentUniv/Pages/FAQ.aspx>

Parent University offers families and community members many outlets for involvement, and relies upon volunteers to assist with classes, workshops, special events, and information sessions.⁶¹ Parents and community members may sign up to volunteer online.⁶²

Parents who cannot attend certain meetings may access resources and handouts presented at Parent University events on the district website.⁶³

MEASUREMENT

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools conducts and publishes parent, student, and teacher surveys that measure levels of engagement.⁶⁴ After the founding of Parent University, Charlotte-Mecklenburg partnered with the University of North Carolina at Charlotte Institute for Social Capital to perform a comprehensive assessment of family and community engagement. The Institute for Social Capital has assessed parent engagement by analyzing parent use of the electronic parent registration system, records from course rosters, and evaluation forms filled out by Parent University participants.⁶⁵

Individual schools within the Charlotte-Mecklenburg district share responsibility for establishing and measuring indicators of parent involvement. The West Mecklenburg High School Parental Involvement Plan, for example, sets goals and strategies for evaluating progress made toward those goals. West Mecklenburg High School evaluates parent involvement practices by assessing the tools used to invite parents to participate (such as newsletters, flyers, and the school website) and by recording parent participation using sign-in sheets for parent information sessions, meetings, and special events. West Mecklenburg also invites parents to provide verbal feedback or complete evaluations of certain events.⁶⁶

⁶⁰ "What is Parent University?" Op. cit.

⁶¹ "Volunteers," Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.

<http://www.cms.k12.nc.us/parents/ParentUniv/Pages/Volunteers.aspx>

⁶² "Parent University Email/Volunteer Signup Form." Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.

http://www.cms.k12.nc.us/parents/ParentUniv/_layouts/charmeckfiles/parentuniversitiesignup.aspx

⁶³ "Parent University." Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.

<http://www.cms.k12.nc.us/parents/ParentUniv/Pages/default.aspx>

⁶⁴ "Parent, Student, and Teacher Surveys," Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.

<http://www.cms.k12.nc.us/cmsdepartments/accountability/cfre/Pages/Surveys.aspx?year=2012-2013>

⁶⁵ "The University of North Carolina at Charlotte Institute for Social Capital, Inc. Serves to Link Faculty and Community to Enhance Research Capacity," University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

http://www.northcarolina.edu/public_service/econ_dev/ISC_Engagement_Stories-3.doc

⁶⁶ "West Mecklenburg High School Parental Involvement Plan," West Mecklenburg High School.

<http://freshmanacademy.cmswiki.wikispaces.net/file/view/Title+I+West+Mecklenburg+School+Parental+Involvement+Plan+10+1+2012.docx>

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Hillsborough County Public Schools in Tampa, Florida operates 302 public schools that serve more than 190,000 students. More than 55 percent of Hillsborough County students were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch in 2011-2012.⁶⁷ In recent years, the state of Florida, the College Board, and the Gates Foundation have recognized Hillsborough County Public Schools for progress in student achievement.⁶⁸

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Family education is a core component of the Hillsborough County engagement strategy. Hillsborough has published a flyer for parents of children of all ages describing strategies for parents to engage students academically outside of school and encouraging parents to ask teachers about how they can support their child's academic growth.⁶⁹ Hillsborough County has also published parent guides in English and Spanish that describe services and opportunities for students in the district and educate parents about how best to advocate for their children.⁷⁰

The district family involvement plan is designed to improve communication, encourage forms of involvement that improve parenting and student learning, engage parents as volunteers, advise parents on decision-making and advocacy, and foster collaboration with the community.⁷¹ Parent and community members may register to volunteer electronically.⁷²

MEASUREMENT

Hillsborough County Public Schools has set four goals pertaining to parent and community involvement and established accompanying objectives and strategies. These objectives and strategies establish benchmarks that indicate progress made toward achieving engagement goals. Figure 2.2 describes the district-level goals, objectives and strategies for engagement.

⁶⁷ Enrollment estimates based on 2011-2012 data reported to: NCES, EISi, Op. cit.

⁶⁸ [1] "Governor Scott Presents \$8.8 Million in School Recognition Funds to Hillsborough County Schools," Florida Department of Education, March 8, 2013. http://www.fldoe.org/news/2013/2013_03_08.asp

[2] Weber, K. "Hillsborough County Public Schools Earns Award," WTSP, March 15, 2011. <http://brandon.wtsp.com/news/schools/hillsborough-county-public-schools-earns-award/48963>

[3] "Hillsborough County Schools Awarded Grant to Support Effective Teaching and Raise Student Achievement," Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 2009. <http://www.gatesfoundation.org/Media-Center/Press-Releases/2009/11/Hillsborough-County-Schools-Awarded-Grant-to-Support-Effective-Teaching-and-Raise-Student-Achievement>

⁶⁹ Whaley, M., Silverstein, A. "A Parent's Quick Guide to Student Success," Hillsborough County Public Schools, 2013, p. 2. http://www.sdhc.k12.fl.us/involvement/Documents/PDFs/ParentQuickGuide_Eng.pdf

⁷⁰ "Parent Guide." Hillsborough County Public Schools. http://www.sdhc.k12.fl.us/involvement/Documents/Parent_Guide/index.asp

⁷¹ "Hillsborough County Public Schools Title I Parental Involvement Plan," Hillsborough County Public Schools, 2012-2013, p. 2. http://www.sdhc.k12.fl.us/involvement/Documents/PDFs/TitleOnePolicyBrochure_Eng.pdf

⁷² "Parent and Community Involvement," Hillsborough County Public Schools. <http://www.sdhc.k12.fl.us/involvement/Index.asp>

Figure 2.2: Engagement Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES
<p>The District will provide an open and inviting environment for parents and families to be involved in their children's learning at school, at home, and in the community.</p>	<p>100% of parents will feel welcome at their children's school.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collaborate with the Department of Assessment and Accountability to ensure that the Parent Satisfaction segment of the School District Climate Survey, sent to families each February, considers the needs addressed by the Parent/Family Involvement Consortium. 2. Review the District Climate Survey results annually recording improvements, targeting areas of need, including diversity and inclusivity to determine future activities of the Consortium. 3. Coordinate with parents and District staff to support the implementation of the Whole School Effectiveness Model. 4. Coordinate services for parents including the Parent Resource Bus, Citizens Call Center, Parent Education Center, Student Intervention Specialists, Social Workers, Choice Parent Resource Centers, Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Parent Liaisons, and other outreach services. 5. Develop an annual "Family Friendly Recognition" award to be given to schools that regularly involve parents and show high parent satisfaction.
	<p>100% of Hillsborough County schools will provide a variety of opportunities for parents, families, and communities to be involved in school programs.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Update the District web page to include timely information for parents and easier access to parent involvement program information, parenting tips, and other resource information to help them stay involved in their children's education. 2. Encourage the schools to use the SERVE Speaker's Bureau. 3. Support the Parent & Family Awards - an evening to celebrate successes. 4. Provide support to all School Advisory Council activities with DOE, PTA/PTSA, Office of School Improvement, Yale Bush Center, 21st Century Schools, and the National Network at John Hopkins University. 5. Encourage parent and community participation through the web site by offering training opportunities, brochures, and any other means developed through the consortium. 6. Make annual presentations at orientations for teachers and administrators. 7. Develop additional activities specifically geared toward the interest of fatherhood.
<p>The District will improve public confidence in the School District of Hillsborough County by strengthening the commitment among parents, educators, and community to accept responsibility for student learning, supporting the relationship between teacher and student, and bolstering respect among all segments of the community.</p>	<p>100% of parents will be provided with ongoing information regarding school programs, services, and resources including Whole School Effectiveness by July 2006.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Research and examine Best Practices for reaching parents and increasing participation. 2. Distribute the parent guide that includes ongoing information regarding available services, programs, and resources with the School District of Hillsborough County. 3. Offer an annual event to inform parents and the community of school programs, activities, and services. 4. Distribute School District Controlled Choice information and materials. 5. Distribute information to bring greater understanding of the School District's Strategic Plan and school's Adequate Yearly Progress performance.

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES
<p>The District will receive and catalogue all projected parenting services and activities within the School District of Hillsborough County by the end of September each school year.</p>	<p>The Parent /Family Involvement Consortium will provide a clearinghouse for sharing parent involvement activities, programs and resources, lowering the incidence of duplication, and fragmentation of parent services.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Compile and distribute information regarding "Best Practices," parent involvement programs, and training or workshops for parents and educators to all schools.
	<p>Parent involvement program, service, and activity information will be provided throughout the District's web site for all divisions, schools, and community organizations to share.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a calendar for the District web site of parent involvement activities and events to assist parents, district, and community in learning more about parent involvement activities at all levels.
<p>The District will support student achievement through an increased focus on community involvement.</p>	<p>The District will provide 100% of the Hillsborough County schools with information regarding community, services, resources, and partnerships available to parents and schools.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Encourage family literacy. 2. Provide opportunities for School Advisory Councils to work together and with other school programs. 3. Disseminate community information about programs supporting parent involvement and family life to schools and families, i.e., Parents As Teachers, The Goals 2000 Family Involvement Partnership, The Partnership Parent Training series, Fathers Resource And Networking Center (FRANC), Home Improvement Program for Pre-School Youngsters (HIPPPY), PTA-PTSA, Positive Parenting, Hillsborough's Promise, Florida Kinship Center, special needs and disabilities resources, support systems, etc. 4. Collaborate with community businesses and agencies that provide services and resources to schools, parents, and families.

Source: Hillsborough County Public Schools.⁷³

⁷³ "Parent and Community Involvement," Op. cit.

APPENDIX

Figure A.1: Parent Involvement Assessment Checklists for Policy and Practice Reviews

PARENT INVOLVEMENT ASSESSMENT CHECKLISTS	
Parenting	Communicating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ We sponsor parent education workshops and other courses or training for parents. ✓ We provide families with information on child or adolescent development. ✓ We conduct family support programs with parent-to-parent discussion groups. ✓ We provide families with information on developing home conditions that support learning. ✓ We lend families books or tapes on parenting or videotapes of parent workshops. ✓ We ask families for information about children’s goals, strengths, and talents. ✓ We sponsor home visiting programs or neighborhood meetings to help families understand schools and to help schools understand families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ We have formal conferences with every parent at least once a year. ✓ We provide language translators to assist families as needed. ✓ We provide clear information about report cards and how grades are earned. ✓ Parents pick up report cards. ✓ Our school newsletter includes: a calendar of school events; student activity information; curriculum and program information; school volunteer information; school policy information; samples of student writing and artwork; a column to address parents’ questions; and recognition of students, families, and community members. ✓ We provide clear information about selecting courses, programs, and/or activities in this school. ✓ We send home folders of student work weekly or monthly for parent review and comments. ✓ Staff members send home positive messages about students on a regular basis. ✓ We notify families about student awards and recognition. ✓ We contact the families of students having academic or behavior problems. ✓ Teachers have easy access to telephones to communicate with parents during or after school. ✓ Teachers and administrators have e-mail and/or a school website to communicate with parents. ✓ Parents have the telephone numbers and/or e-mail addresses of the school, principal, teachers and counselors. ✓ We have a homework hotline for students and families to hear daily assignments and messages. ✓ We conduct an annual survey for families to provide reactions to school programs and share information and concerns about students.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT ASSESSMENT CHECKLISTS	
Volunteering	Learning at Home
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ We conduct an annual survey to identify interests, talents, and availability of volunteers. ✓ We have a parent room or family center for volunteer work, meetings, and resources for families. ✓ We encourage families and the community to be involved at school by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ assisting in the classroom (e.g., tutoring, grading papers, etc.) ○ helping on trips or at parties ○ giving talks (e.g., careers, hobbies, etc.) ○ checking attendance ○ monitoring halls, or working in the library, cafeteria, or other areas ○ leading clubs or activities ✓ We provide ways for families to be involved at home or in the community if they cannot volunteer at school. ✓ We have a program to recognize our volunteers. ✓ We organize class parents or neighborhood volunteers to link with all parents. ✓ We schedule plays, concerts, games, and other events at different times of the day or evening so that all parents can attend some activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ We provide information to families on required skills in all subjects. ✓ We provide information to families on how to monitor and discuss schoolwork at home. ✓ We provide information on how to assist students with skills that they need to improve. ✓ We have a regular schedule of interactive homework that requires students to demonstrate and discuss what they are learning with a family member. ✓ We ask parents to listen to their child read or to read aloud with their child. ✓ We provide calendars with daily or weekly activities for families to do at home and in the community. ✓ We help families help students set academic goals, select courses and programs, and plan for college or work.
Decision-Making	Collaborating with the Community
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ We have an active PTA, PTO, or other parent organization. ✓ Parent representatives are on the school’s advisory council, improvement team, or other committees. ✓ We have an Action Team for Partnerships to develop a goal-oriented program with practices for all six types of involvement. ✓ Parent representatives are on district-level advisory councils or committees. ✓ We develop formal networks to link all families with their parent representatives for decision making. ✓ We involve all parents to get input and ideas on school policies. ✓ We provide information on school or local elections for school representatives. ✓ We involve parents in selecting school staff. ✓ We involve parents in revising school and/or district curricula. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ We provide a resource directory for parents and students with information on community agencies, programs, and services. ✓ We provide information on community activities that link to learning skills and talents, including summer programs for students. ✓ We work with local businesses, industries, and community organizations on programs to enhance student skills. ✓ We offer after-school programs for students, with support from community businesses, agencies, or volunteers. ✓ We sponsor intergenerational programs with local senior citizen groups. ✓ We provide “one-stop” shopping for family services through partnerships of school, counseling, health, recreation, job training, and other agencies. ✓ We organize service to the community by students, families, and schools. ✓ We include alumni in school programs for students. ✓ Our school building is open for use by the community after school hours.

Source: New Carolina.⁷⁴

⁷⁴ “Increasing Parent Involvement in Education,” Op. cit., pp. 33-36.

Figure A.2: Federal Way Public Schools Family and Community Engagement Logic Model

<p>Objective</p> <p>*Family members become partners in their children’s education in a variety of ways, on a variety of levels throughout the district and within each school-(helping students attend and engage in school successfully by practicing learning at home, completing and turning in assignments on time, participating in partnership conversations with staff)</p> <p>*The district has a sustainable process for ensuring two-way communication and collaborative practices that help staff and parents become informed, prepared and involved as partners in keeping students effectively engaged in learning pre-k- through high school graduation.</p>		
Inputs	Activities	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shared vision for family engagement Family engagement connected to student learning Strategic Investments in staff/parent collaboration and leadership Evaluation for accountability and continuous learning 	<p>Align family engagement practices and activities with district policies and goals, examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Standards-based parent workgroup *Academic Acceleration Policy Parent Communication Systems <p>Create a cadre of trained parent/staff leaders and workshop facilitators connected to schools, the Family & Community Partnership Office through Neighborhood, Regional and State level education venues, examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Family/Community Partnership Office Advisory Leadership team * ‘What Every Parent Wants to Know’ Q &A sessions and ‘Partnership 101’ workshops, ‘Parent Leadership Institute’ <p>Provide staff with on-going professional development opportunities, examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Administrative Training Institute * Continuous Learning Center *Cel 5D Fam/Comm Eval Criteria <p>Create feedback loops with families to plan, implement, and assess progress toward objectives examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Key Communicator’s Quarterly Family/Staff Stakeholder Meetings *Partnership Workgroups and Forums 	<p>Short-term outcomes:</p> <p>Parents and staff have an early and increased awareness of the “student-focused” benefits of family engagement (more informed)</p> <p>Parents and staff have an increased knowledge of policies and strategies that support student-focused family engagement (more prepared)</p> <p>Parents and staff are more engaged in the use of family partnership strategies and resources to support student learning (helping students attend and engage in school successfully by practicing learning at home, completing and turning in assignments on time) (more involved)</p> <p>Interim outcomes:</p> <p>Improved perception of welcoming environment and parents as partners as it pertains to school culture/policies</p> <p>More participation and use of programs and resources that support student learning</p> <p>Long-term outcomes:</p> <p>Effective use of family partnerships as a resource to raise student achievement levels</p> <p>Effective transitions for students across schools and grades (pre-k/k, 5th-6th, 8th-9th ,)</p> <p>Higher enrollment and greater success levels for students in challenging courses</p> <p>Higher graduation rates amongst students</p>
<p>Measures of effort</p> <p>% of opportunities provided for collaborative discussions, activities, workshops/forums/quarterly meetings, activities connected to student focused family engagement partnerships</p> <p>#of hours of parent/staff partnership training provided</p>		<p>Measures of effect</p> <p>%(increase)change in student enrollment and success in advanced courses</p> <p>%(increase) attendance</p> <p>%(increase)change in student graduation rates</p>

Source: Federal Way Public Schools.⁷⁵

⁷⁵ “Logic Model,” Op. cit.

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