

Effective Classroom Family Engagement Practices Based on the Six Standards (CONTINUED)

5 SHARING POWER

The teacher collaborates with families to establish an **equal voice** in all decisions (early on) that affect their child. The Teacher identifies ways in which he/she can include and consult families in decisions that affect their student.

Encourage families to become **active participants** in the school system (as applicable, in conversation or in writing) to attend school board meetings and planning meetings (as scheduled by principal or district).

Identify and **connect** families from different cultural backgrounds, that represent the overall school population, to be part of family leadership council/group.



EXAMPLES

- Use surveys to garner family input on homework, their understanding of what is going on in the classroom, etc., and use the input in developing changes in the classroom and in family engagement activities
- Provide names of diverse families in your classroom, that reflect the schools' student population, to school committees such as on School Improvement Plan, discipline, etc.
- Encourage families to join their school's PTAs, PTOs, etc.
- Provide information about school and district committees to your classroom families
- Encourage family(s) to take on a leadership role in developing activities in the classroom or in reaching out to fellow families, in partnership with the teacher
- Hold an evening where families can discuss barriers to being involved and brainstorm possible solutions

6 COLLABORATING WITH COMMUNITY

The Teacher informs families about services, makes referrals to programs, and plans activities that provide expanded learning opportunities.

The Teacher makes sure partnership activities **strengthen families** and link to **student learning**. The Teacher connects students and families to **opportunities** in the district and community.

Invite community organizations and services to provide informational meetings on health/wellness, recreation center services, etc. This will allow families to get valuable information without requiring transportation.

EXAMPLES

- Create a community service day
- Discover what community ties families have to businesses, expertise, etc.
- Invite community leaders into the classroom to talk about opportunities in the community, and to mentor, read, or talk about their jobs
- The Teacher takes students on field trips to local businesses



Strengthen Families



ADVISORY COUNCIL ON FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

EFFECTIVE FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PRACTICES



Advisory Council on Family Engagement & Nevada Department of Education Office of Family Engagement

More than 30 years of research indicates that family engagement is key to student achievement, which is the primary goal of the Legislature, the Department of Education, and the 17 school districts. The Advisory Council has been established to build the scaffolding necessary to unify various federal and state requirements for family engagement implementation, assessment, and accountability. (AB224 & NRS 385.600)

Standards for family engagement were developed based on decades of research. Nevada's state and district policies are based on these six standards. The Advisory Council continues to build the

framework for family engagement based on these six standards.

The Advisory Council will provide researched and effective family engagement practices to schools and districts. Current knowledge and research on family engagement will be shared through a database of resources to help inform classroom and school practices.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IS KEY TO STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

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Effective Classroom Family Engagement Practices Based on the Six Standards

1 WELCOMING ALL FAMILIES

¡BIENVENIDO!

The Teacher demonstrates **positive** educational environment for all students and their families by treating families in respectful and culturally sensitive ways and welcomes their engagement in the classroom.

The teacher's interactions are **supportive, courteous, and respectful** with students, families, staff, community members, and other professionals.

The teacher values, respects, and welcomes families and sees them as assets in supporting student learning: The teacher engages families because he or she believes that all families want the best for their children and that family engagement will help students reach their achievement goals, regardless of families' socioeconomic background or education level.

EXAMPLES

- Have welcome signs in the classroom reflecting the languages of your students families
- Offer your students families varied volunteer opportunities that acknowledge unique experiences and skills, at home and in the classroom
- Make home visits the summer before school starts to begin building a relationship with each family
- Work with your students families to help prepare their child's year in the classroom
- Offer your students and their families tours of the school and opportunities to visit, observe and volunteer in the your classroom
- Affirm student cultures and history in the classroom appearance, lessons and activities
- Hold family related activities in the classroom at various times and days of the week to respect families work schedules
- Hold activities at community locations instead of just in the classroom or schools

3 SUPPORTING STUDENT SUCCESS

EXAMPLES



The teacher uses data to show families how their children are doing: Families can access weekly, personalized student performance and/or assessment data and can use the information to describe how their child is doing related to the student's individual goals, and to the class average for that grade-level.

The teacher helps families **support student learning at home**: Families receive information and training on how they can support learning at home and create an environment conducive to learning. This information is tailored to their **child's specific needs** and details what their child needs to do to make progress toward his or her academic goals.

Families receive continuous **individualized** and actionable communication about their child's learning and progress towards goals.

- Include information on standards and exhibits of student work at open houses and back-to-school nights
- Hold literacy and math training nights (and other curriculum-based training and materials) with take-home activities and handouts for families to support learning at home
- Offer interactive homework that involves families with their children's learning
- Provide information about program options, graduation requirements, test schedules, and post-secondary education and career options and how to plan for them
- Discuss student's individual learning styles, family cultural experiences, strengths, and academic and personal needs
- Ask and train families to actively review student data and help your student's families to access grade/attendance software or websites; provide time they can use the classroom computer
- Create a family-classroom compact with a student achievement focus
- Share throughout the year what students are learning and what good work looks like

2 COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY

EXAMPLES

Written and spoken interactions between families and the teacher are respectful and pleasant. Families and teachers know each other's names. Starting in the beginning of the year, families receive **positive, consistent information** and **affirmation** from teachers on the importance of their engagement. Families receive regular, personal invitations to visit the classroom and engage in their child's education.

There is a system for meaningful, consistent home/classroom communication in place: Families receive frequent and consistent, individualized communication about their child that is positive, actionable, and linked to student learning and **progress toward goals**. In addition, families regularly contribute to communication vehicles and provide feedback on procedures and policies.

The teacher communicates with families in a manner and format that is **accessible** and **easy to understand**: Information for families is provided in a variety of formats, including phone calls, written and translated web blasts, and home visits or meetings in community forums. The teacher differentiates communication for families with varying levels of literacy. If families speak a language different from the teacher's, information is made available and meetings are conducted in the family's native language.

Communication is regular, authentic, and two-way—families have avenues to provide input and respond

- Track teacher-family contact frequency and content
- Work with local family groups (PACs, PTAs, Boosters, etc.)—develop communication guidelines
- Keep your student families informed of developing concerns in the school community

4 SPEAKING UP FOR EVERY CHILD

EXAMPLES

The Teacher works with families to take advantage of resources and programs that **support student success** (ex. tutoring, counseling, speech therapy, grade level transition, ELL Services, special education).

The teacher provides outreach to all families on how to access resources and advocate for their child. The Teacher **empowers** families and encourages advocacy for students to resolve problems/conflicts.

The Teacher provides technical assistance and empowers families to navigate complex system such as GT, AP, IEPs, multi-tiered systems of support, family portal systems, etc.



- Develop a family bill of rights
- Use workshops, handbooks and websites, in languages and terms families can understand, to share classroom/school policies
- Make it easy for families to meet and discuss concerns with the teacher and to examine their children's school records
- Hold an evening with your classroom families and the guidance counselor to hear about resources and programs
- Provide information and workshops about school grade and attendance systems
- The Teacher, along with the families, develop clear procedures for resolving concerns or problems
- The Teacher welcomes families to bring in an advocate to help with their child's success
- The Teacher invites families, at the end of the year, to hear from colleagues in the next grades to learn what their child will be learning and what the expectations are

The Teacher Empowers Families

Effective Practices have been restated from many high quality resources on Family Engagement. Please see the list of references on the website. For additional information on best practices in family engagement, please see:

www.NevadaPIFE.com/programs-initiatives

LEARN ABOUT **SHARING POWER** AND **COLLABORATING WITH COMMUNITY** ON THE NEXT PAGE