SPECIAL EDUCATION
FAMILY ENGAGEMENT
STRATEGIES
Strategies to Improve Climate and Education Outcomes

WHY MOVE BEYOND
INVOLVEMENT TO ENGAGEMENT
Raising the next generation is a shared responsibility. When families, communities, and schools work together, students are more successful and the entire community benefits. For schools and districts across the U.S., family engagement is becoming an integral part of education reform efforts.

DUAL CAPACITY FRAMEWORK
IDEA PARENT INVOLVEMENT

- IDEA requires parents or guardians to be equal partners and provide opportunities in shared decision-making within
  - the Individual Education Program (IEP)
  - Home-school collaboration
  - Due process
  - Evaluation, placement, and service implementation decisions
- Compliance with the law is important, but it should not be the only professional emphasis when working with families with
  children with disabilities.
- Communication is a key element of building relationships that engage families in the education of their children.

COMMUNICATION IS KEY

- Communication is a key factor in establishing and maintaining a home-school partnership to support the development of a child
  with a disability.
- Effective communication has critical components
  - Communication: regular and predictable
  - Collaborative, positive, specific, and respectful

ENGAGEMENT HAPPENS AT MANY LEVELS

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Engagement Levels:
- Classroom
- School
- District
- State
- National
SUPPORT AT THE SCHOOL LEVEL

- Provide resources, such as time, planning support, and professional development to enable teams to collaborate and suit providers to establish shared expectations and regulations.
- Establish predictable communication routines with families.
- Before the year begins:
  - Regular contact information of all involved in the education and support of children
  - Establish a main contact person
  - Set up a time and communicate it clearly throughout the year in parents know what is happening.
  - Provide any updated information about the program, including and evaluation of the class performance and set new goals.

- Provide parents with specific ways they can help their child at home.
- Create suggestions about how to handle academic and behavioral issues
- Allow families to observe how their children are engaged in the classroom.
- Model techniques for teachers.

SUPPORT AT THE DISTRICT LEVEL

- Distribution of family-friendly informational materials including translated material in the family's native language.
- Centralize services to families so that they have easy access to social services.
- Support capacity building for school personnel to increase effective communication and collaboration with families.

ACTIVITY

What are the practices you are doing well and what will you add or improve?

😊
RESOURCES

- Handbook on Family and Community Engagement
- Family Empowerment and Disability Council Issue Brief: May 2013
- Partners In Education: A Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships

WE ARE HERE TO HELP YOU

- IRIS Center Modules
  - https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/tran/

LIFECOURSE TOOLS

- www.lifecourse tools.com