

>> SSIP, Coherent Improvement Strategies, Family Engagement, strategy six -- embrace a philosophy of partnership that empowers families and communities to become more meaningfully involved.

>> Family-school partnership standards -- to ensure that every child reaches academic proficiency and core academic disciplines regardless of zip code, economic status, race, ethnicity or disability, schools and districts need to consider the importance of family engagement. Research clearly points to a correlation between parent involvement and student achievement. When schools implement intentional and intensive parent engagement strategies, there is a significant rise in student achievement scores. Here are brief descriptions of the six standards of family and community engagement, modeled after the national PTA standards for family-school partnerships.

Standard one, welcoming all families -- schools that offer welcoming environments and respect and recognize the value of family and community involvement produce positive outcomes for all. Establishing and fostering an inclusive, supportive and accepting culture in the classroom and school engages students, their families and the community. Standard two -- communicating effectively -- school staff and families should engage in consistent, two-way meaningful exchanges about student learning. This helps in establishing and maintaining healthy family-school partnerships. Standard three -- supporting student success -- information must be shared between school and home. This ensures that students are supported across settings, and strengthens their depth of learning and academic performance.

Standard four -- speaking up for every child -- each student should have a family member or another adult who takes personal responsibility for understanding the student's needs academically, physically and emotionally, and who communicates the student's learning needs effectively. Standard five -- shared decision making -- families who understand their child's program and program options, rights and responsibilities are better able to meaningfully participate and contribute to their child's successful outcomes. This knowledge gives parents an equal playing field when participating in educational decision making. Standard six -- collaborating with community -- all stakeholders need to become aware of the benefits of successful partnerships, and how each contribute towards positive effects for students.

Family-school partnership standards -- to ensure that every child reaches academic proficiency and core academic disciplines regardless of zip code, economic status, race, ethnicity or disability, schools and districts need to consider the importance of family engagement. Research clearly points to a correlation between parent involvement and student achievement. When schools implement intentional and intensive parent engagement strategies, there is a significant rise in student achievement scores. Here are brief descriptions of the six standards of family and community engagement, modeled after the national PTA standards for family-school partnerships.

Standard one -- welcoming all families -- schools that offer welcoming environments and respect and recognize the value of family and community involvement produce positive outcomes for all. Establishing and fostering an inclusive, supportive and accepting culture in the classroom and school engages students, their families and the community. Standard two -- communicating effectively -- school staff and families should engage in consistent, two-way meaningful exchanges about student learning. This helps in establishing and maintaining healthy family-school partnerships. Standard three -- supporting student success -- information must be shared between school and home. This ensures that students are supported across settings, and strengthens their depth of learning and academic performance.

Standard four -- speaking up for every child -- each student should have a family member or another adult who takes personal responsibility for understanding the student's needs academically, physically and emotionally, and who communicates the student's learning needs effectively. Standard five -- shared decision making -- families who understand their child's program and program options, rights and responsibilities are better able to meaningfully participate and contribute to their child's successful outcomes. This knowledge gives parents an equal playing field when participating in educational decision making. Standard six -- collaborating with community -- all stakeholders need to become aware of the benefits of successful partnerships, and how each contribute towards positive effects for students.

In addition, work schedules or adverse life circumstances may affect their ability to communicate with their school, attend school meetings or know when and how to advocate for their children. Experience shows that families and communities are eager to get involved in the education process, but they want to feel invited, acknowledged and considered equal partners. They need to know that school doors are open to them.

Three prerequisites of effective family and community engagement -- Dr. Karen L. Mapp is a senior lecturer on education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, and the faculty director of the Education Policy Management Master's program. Over the past 20 years, Dr. Mapp's research and practice focus has been on the cultivation of partnerships among families, community members and educators that support student achievement and school improvement. In this video clip, she describes in brief detail the three most important aspects of effective family and community engagement practices.

>> Turn and Talk -- what are you thinking about the role of family engagement with regard to increasing graduation rates?