

Working with Families and Caregivers: Family Engagement as a Core Element of Effective Practice

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What We Will Explore

- The definition of family engagement
- Why family engagement is an essential component of instructional practice
- What teachers need to know and be able to do to cultivate and sustain partnerships with families

Teachers feel a sense of well being when:

- Your students are engaged and excited by what they are learning in class and are motivated to practice what they have learned.
- All of your students are meeting academic and growth benchmarks and have in some way, made steady progress.
- You see their progress reflected in student data as well as your observations of them in the classroom
- Your students feel more connected to their peers, their teachers and their school

We know that from over 50 years of research that engaging and partnering with your families will contribute to reaching this sense of well being.

Definition of **Family Engagement**

The various ways that a child's adult caretaker (biological parents, foster parents, siblings, grandparents, etc.), at home, school or in the community, effectively support children's learning and healthy development.



Why is Family Engagement Important to Effective Teacher Practice?

Impact of Family Engagement

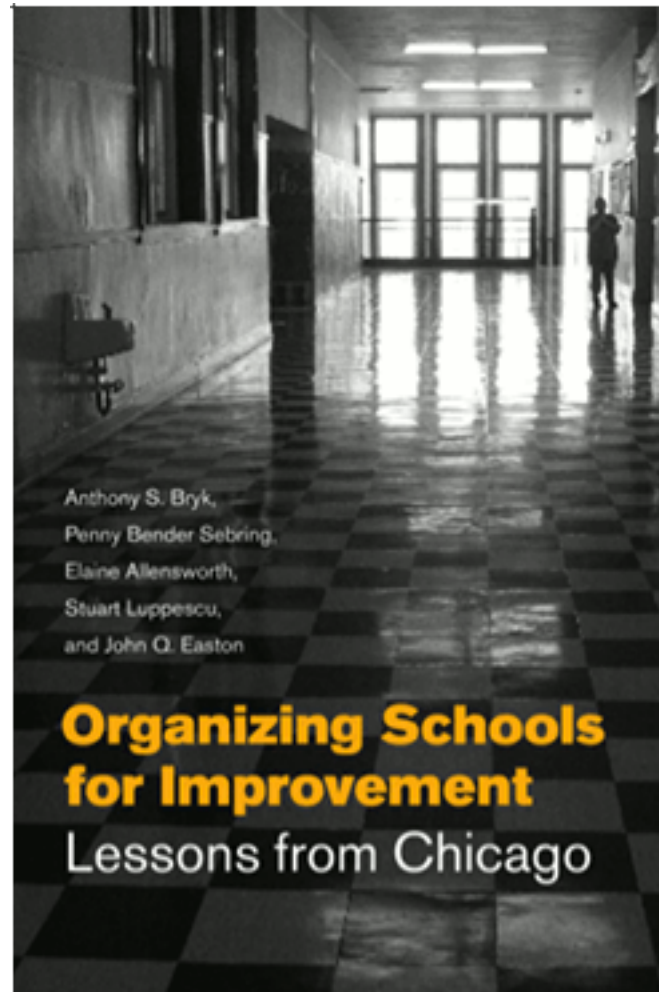
Students with Engaged Families:

- Exhibit faster rates of literacy acquisition
- Earn higher grades and test scores
- Enroll in higher level programs
- Are promoted more and earn more credits
- Adapt better to school and attend more regularly
- Have better social skills and behavior
- Graduate and go on to higher education

John Hopkins Evaluation 2015: Family Engagement Partnership (FEP) in Washington, DC

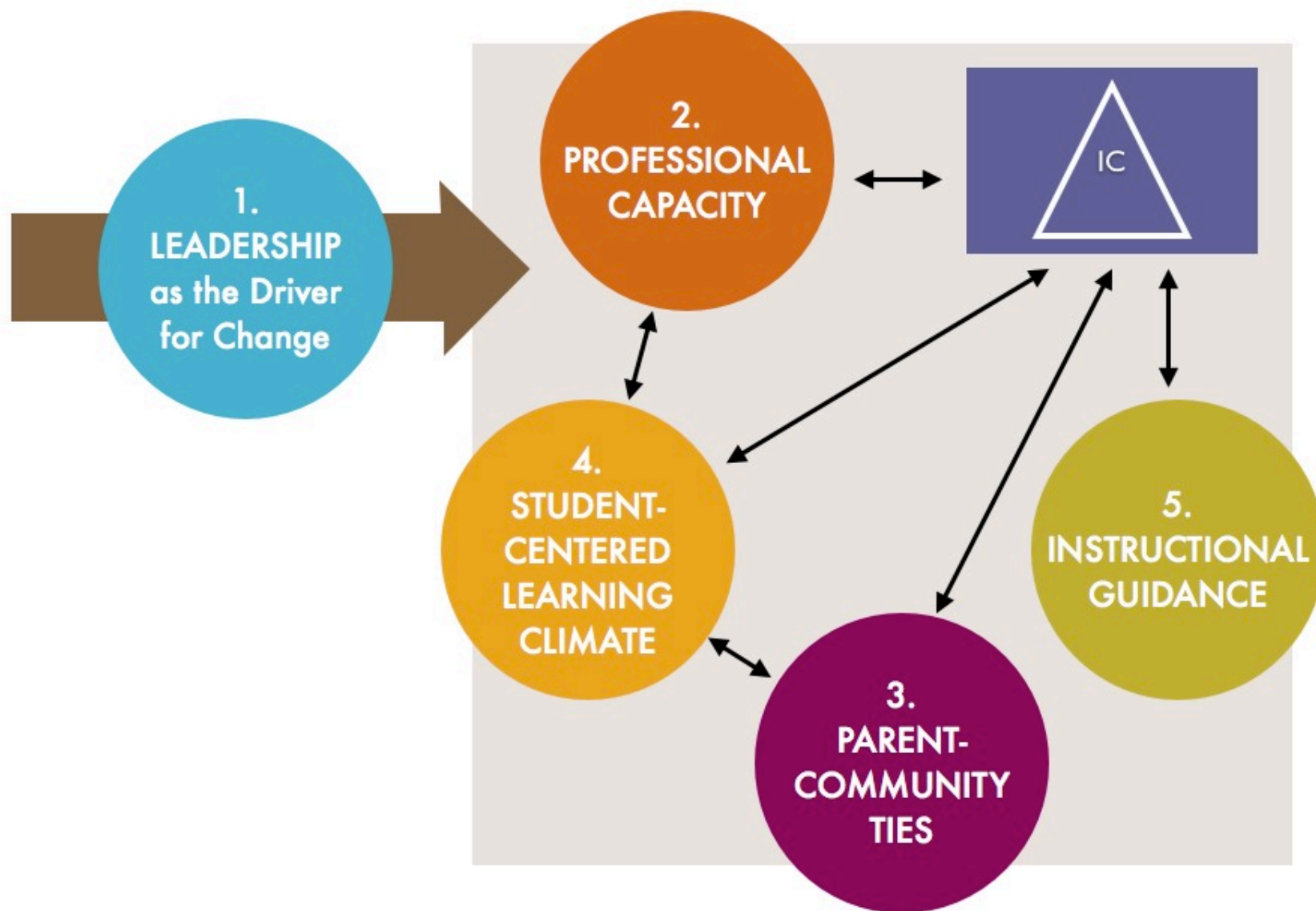
- Students whose families received a home visit, one of the core strategies in the FEP, had 24 percent fewer absences than similar students whose families did not receive a visit.
- These same students also were more likely to read at or above grade level compared to similar students who did not receive a home visit.

Organizing Schools for Improvement (2010)



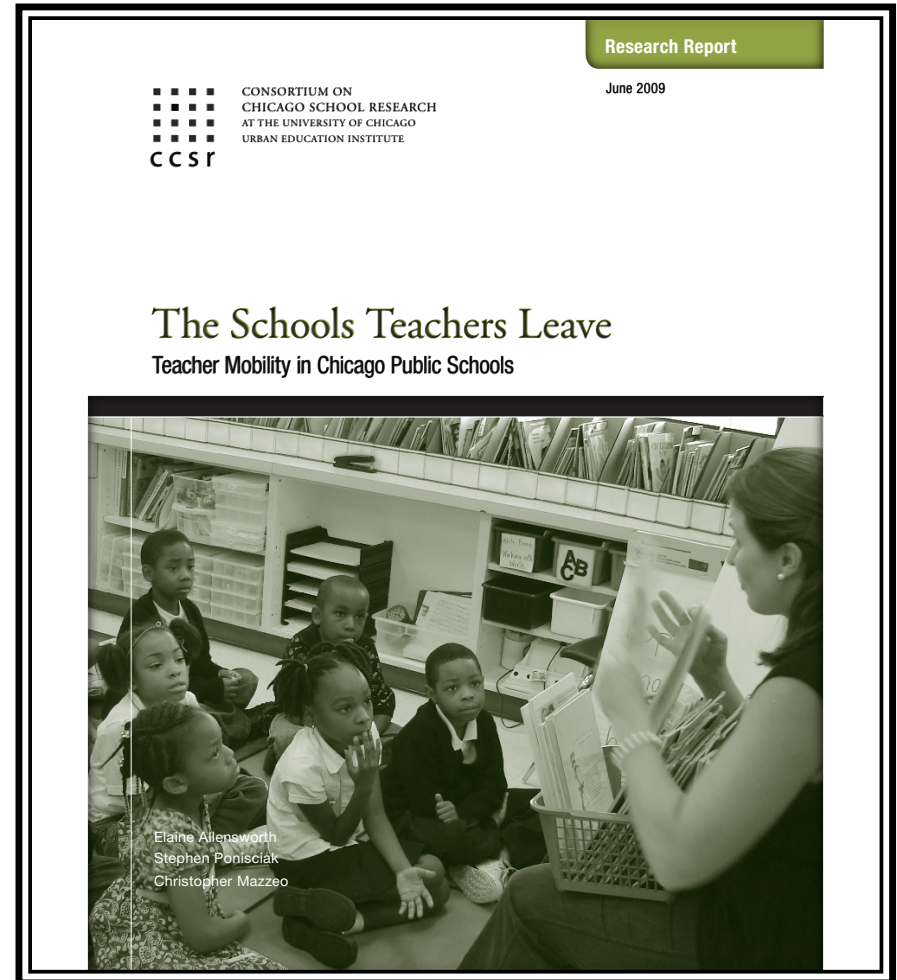
FIVE ESSENTIAL SUPPORTS

The University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research



Impact on Teacher Retention

“In elementary schools, teachers perceptions of parents as partners in students’ education are strongly related to their decisions to remain in their school. Teacher-parent relationships account for *much of the difference* in stability rates between low-income African-American schools and other schools, and all of the difference are explained when we consider parent relationships along with other workforce conditions, including students behavior.”



Ed Week Article- June 2015

Parent Engagement on Rise as Priority for Schools, Districts



The image shows a woman with dark hair and a red scarf presenting a slide. The slide has a purple header and a white body. The header contains the text 'Home Visits Are Always:' and 'Two Visits In School Year'. The body is divided into two columns. The left column is titled 'FIVE negotiables' and lists four items: 1. Voluntary, 2. Staff compensated, 3. Visits, and 4. A hand icon is shown next to the title. The right column is titled 'Visit 1' and 'Visit 2'. 'Visit 1' is labeled 'Relational' and focuses on 'Building Trust and Opening New Lines of Communication'. 'Visit 2' is labeled 'Informational' and focuses on 'Academics and Career'. Both visits are noted to be 'Time: 30-40 minutes'.

Home Visits Are Always:		Two Visits In School Year	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• FIVE negotiables1. Voluntary2. Staff compensated3. Visits4. 		Visit 1	Visit 2
		<u>Relational</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus is on Building Trust and Opening New Lines of Communication	<u>Informational</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus is on Academics and Career
		Time: 30-40 minutes	Time: 30-40 minutes

Why has it been difficult to cultivate and sustain effective family-school partnerships that support student achievement and school improvement?



The various stakeholders (families, district/school leaders and staff) have not had the opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills, in other words, the *capacity* to engage in effective partnerships.

For Example:

Teachers state that engaging families in supporting their children's education is one of the areas that they feel the least prepared when they start their careers - and their principals agree (MetLife Survey of the American Teacher, 2006).

Intention of the Framework

Instead of a *roadmap*, the framework provides a *compass*; a direction for the development of effective high impact strategies and initiatives.

Framework was formulated using:

Research on -

- Effective home-school partnership strategies
- Relational trust
- Parent organizing
- Adult learning and motivation
- Leadership development

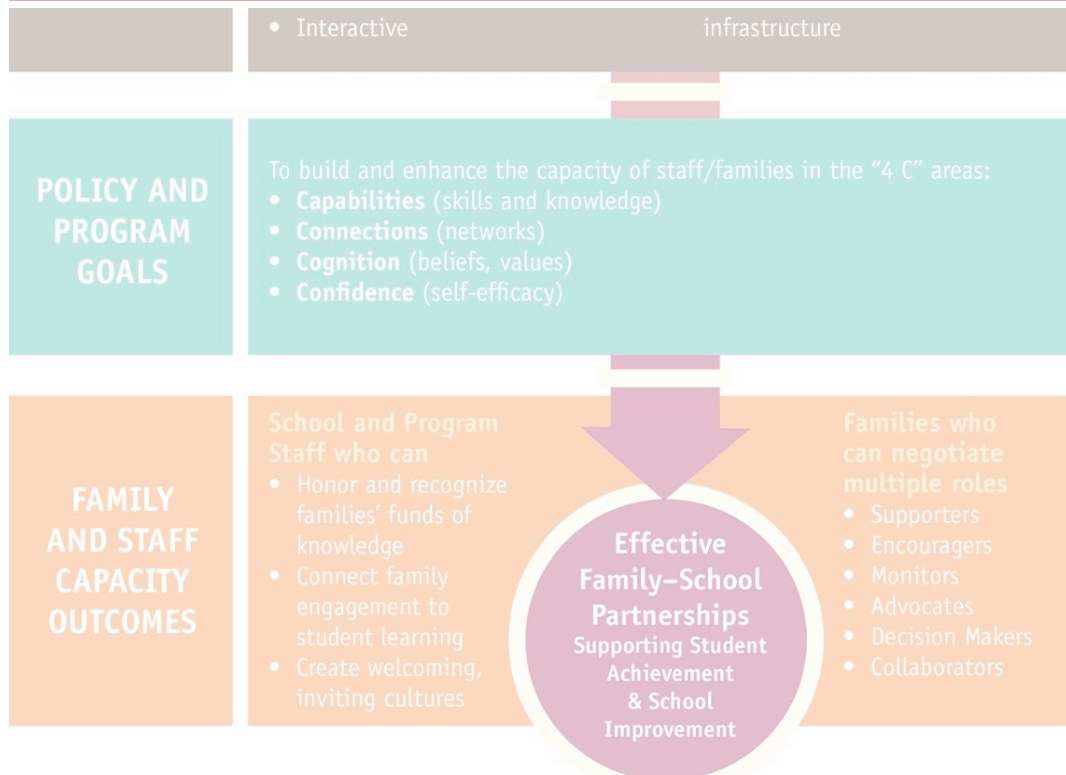


THE CHALLENGE

Lack of opportunities for **School/Program Staff** to build the capacity for partnerships

Ineffective Family–School Partnerships

Lack of opportunities for **Families** to build the capacity for partnerships



The Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family–School Partnerships

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OPPORTUNITY CONDITIONS

Process Conditions

- Linked to learning
- Relational
- Development vs. service orientation
- Collaborative
- Interactive

Organizational Conditions

- Systemic: across the organization
- Integrated: embedded in all programs
- Sustained: with resources and infrastructure

POLICY AND PROGRAM GOALS

To build and enhance the capacity of staff/families in the “4 C” areas:

- **Capabilities** (skills and knowledge)
- **Connections** (networks)
- **Cognition** (beliefs, values)
- **Confidence** (self-efficacy)

FAMILY AND STAFF CAPACITY OUTCOMES

School and Program Staff who can

- Honor and recognize families’ funds of knowledge
- Connect family engagement to student learning
- Create welcoming, inviting cultures

Families who can negotiate multiple roles

- Supporters
- Encouragers
- Monitors
- Advocates
- Decision Makers
- Collaborators

Effective Family–School Partnerships
Supporting Student Achievement & School Improvement

Linked to Learning Exercise

- List all of the events/activities that you currently have for families (think across the entire school year)
- Circle all of the activities which fit the following criteria:
 - Families leave knowing more about what their child should know or be able to do (the learning goals) at that grade/age level -
 - They leave knowing *how* to employ a new tool or activity at home to support that learning goal

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Effective Family–School Partnerships Supporting Student Achievement & School Improvement

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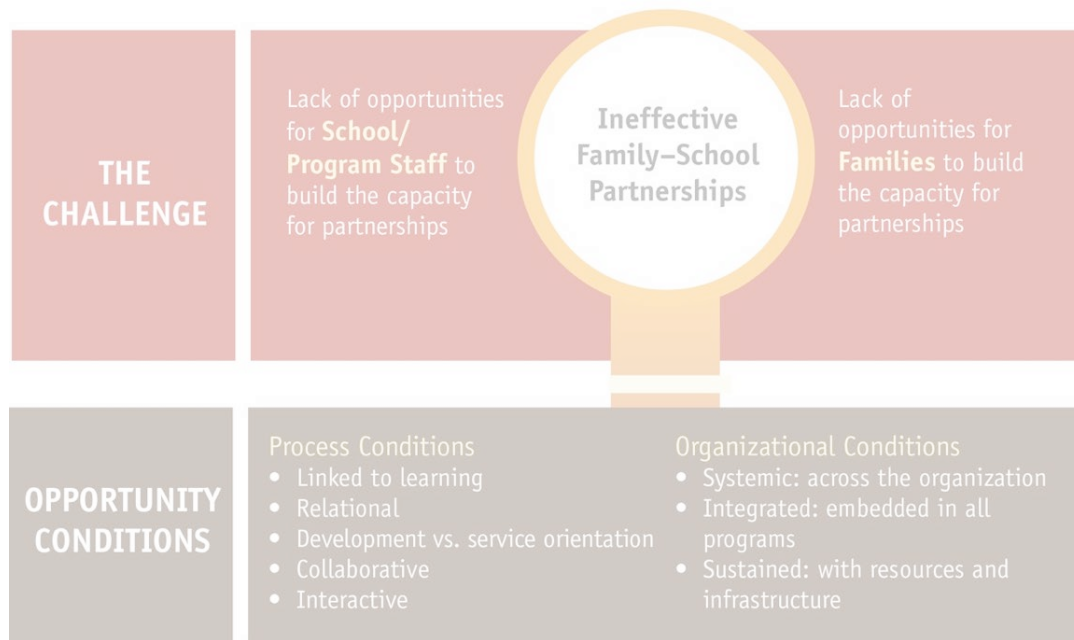
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Effective Family–School Partnerships Supporting Student Achievement & School Improvement

The Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships



Where do we start?



Beyond the Bake Sale

The Essential Guide to Family- School Partnerships

Anne T. Henderson,
Karen L. Mapp, Vivian R.
Johnson and Don Davies

The New Press, 2007



We start with our own core beliefs



Essential Core Beliefs

Core Belief One

- All parents have dreams for their children and want the best for them.

“...I believe that all parents hold big expectations for the role that schools will play in the life chances of their children. They all harbor a large wish list of dreams and aspirations for their youngsters. All families care deeply about their children’s education and hope that their progeny will be happier, more productive, and more successful than they have been in their lives.” (Lightfoot, 2003)

Core Belief Two

- All parents have the capacity to support their children's learning.



Core Belief Three

- Parents and school staff should be equal partners.



Core Belief Four

- The responsibility for building and sustaining partnerships between school, home, and community rests primarily with school staff, especially school leaders.



What happens when we build
respectful partnerships with
families?

A Parent's Perspective

Partnering with Families will:

- Contribute to your sense of accomplishment as a teacher
- Reduce your feelings of isolation—your families can act as source of strength for you as a community that supports your work and goals of student achievement
- Break down the race and class hierarchies that sometimes prevail and prevent healthy and respectful family-school relationships
- Create a productive team of allies that surround and support the child.
- Cultivate mutual respect and trust between home and school—when challenges do arise, they are much more easily resolved.
- Breaks down the us-versus-them dynamic between home and school.

Upcoming Events

- IEL National Family and Community Engagement Conference, June 20-22, 2016
 - <http://www.cvent.com/events/owning-our-movement-maximizing-our-impact/event-summary-3872b4dd0d3d4b60bd1861e61d3c572a.aspx>
- Harvard Professional Education Institute - Family Engagement in Education: Creating Effective Home and School Partnerships for Student Success, July 25-28, 2016
 - <https://www.gse.harvard.edu/ppe/program/family-engagement-education-creating-effective-home-and-school-partnerships-student>

Links

- Summary of the Dual Capacity Framework:
 - www.scholastic.com/face/framework
- Flamboyant Foundation Parent Video
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vbyhao0FtaQ&feature=youtu.be>
- Partners in Education:
 - <http://www.sedl.org/pubs/framework/FE-Cap-Building.pdf>

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@karen_mapp