Engaging PARENTS in Schools and Student Learning

FREE WEBINAR:
Thursday, June 21, 2012
2 to 3 p.m. ET

www.edweek.org/go/webinars
Sean Cavanagh
Assistant editor, Education Week
Engaging Parents in Schools and Student Learning

**Expert Presenters:**

**Karen L. Mapp**, lecturer on education, Harvard University

**Steven Sheldon**, professor and research scientist, Center for Social Organization of School, Johns Hopkins University
An on-demand archive of this webinar will be available at www.edweek.org/go/webinar in less than 24 hrs.
Secretary Arne Duncan:

My vision for family engagement is ambitious…I want to have too many parents demanding excellence in their schools. I want all parents to be real partners in education with their children’s teachers, from cradle to career. In this partnership, students and parents should feel connected—and teachers should feel supported. When parents demand change and better options for their children, they become the real accountability backstop for the educational system. (May 3, 2010)
Federal Focus on Family Engagement:

- Proposed Title One increase from 1% to 2% for family engagement (270 million dollar increase)
- Family Engagement and Responsibility Fund
- Districts now required to involve parents and the community as a condition of receiving school improvement grants.
When families are effectively engaged in their children’s education and in the improvement of schools, what are the various roles they can play?
Families are engaged as:

- **Supporters** of their children’s learning
- **Encouragers** of an achievement identity, a positive self image, and a “can do” spirit
- **Monitors** of their children’s time, behavior, boundaries and resources
- **Models** of lifelong learning and enthusiasm for education
- **Advocates** for improved learning opportunities for their children and at their schools
- **Decision-makers/choosers** of educational options for their child, the school, and community
- **Collaborators** with school staff and members of the community
Why are School-Family Partnerships Important?
A New Wave of Evidence

The impact of school, family and community connections on student achievement

www.sedl.org/connections
Impact of Family-School Partnerships:

When parents and school staff work together to support learning, students:

- 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
PISA* Study on Family Engagement (2011):

✓ Fifteen-year old students whose parents often read books with them during their first year of primary school show markedly higher PISA scores than students whose parents read infrequently with them or not at all.

✓ The performance advantage among students whose parents read to them early in their school years is evident regardless of family’s socioeconomic status.

✓ Family engagement with their 15-year olds is strongly associated with better PISA performance.

*Program for International Student Assessment
Impact of Family-School Partnerships:

When parents and school staff work together to support learning, students:

- 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
Impact of Family-School Partnerships:

When parents and school staff work together to support learning, students:

- 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
Impact of Family-School Partnerships:

When parents and school staff work together to support learning, students:

- 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
Impact of Family-School Partnerships:

When parents and school staff work together to support learning, students:

• 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
Impact of Family-School Partnerships:

When parents and school staff work together to support learning, students:

- 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
Organizing Schools for Improvement (2010)

Five Essential Supports for Reform:

1. Leadership
2. Parent-Community Ties
3. Professional Capacity
4. Student-centered learning climate
5. Instructional Guidance
Why has it been difficult to cultivate and sustain effective family-school partnerships that support student achievement and school improvement?
The various stakeholders (parents, school leaders, and school staff) have not had the opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills, in other words, the *capacity* to engage in effective partnerships.

Example: Title One, section 1118 requirement for families to be engaged family engagement policy development for schools and districts.
Requires a paradigm shift:

From seeing parents as a part of the problem to seeing them as a part of the solution.
### Build the Capacity of Stakeholders to Shift the Work:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From</th>
<th>To</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual responsibility</td>
<td>Shared responsibility in partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deficit-based and adversarial</td>
<td>Strengths-based and collaborative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Random Acts of Engagement</td>
<td>Systemic Engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top Down</td>
<td>Collaborative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service focus</td>
<td>Service and Development focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliance driven</td>
<td>Outcomes driven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-time project</td>
<td>Sustained</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Build the Capacity of Stakeholders to Shift the Work:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From</th>
<th>To</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual responsibility</td>
<td>Shared responsibility in partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deficit-based and adversarial</td>
<td>Strengths-based and collaborative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Random Acts of Engagement</td>
<td>Systemic Engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top Down</td>
<td>Collaborative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service focus</td>
<td>Service and Development focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliance driven</td>
<td>Outcomes driven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-time project</td>
<td>Sustained</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Build the Capacity of Stakeholders to Shift the Work:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From</th>
<th>To</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual responsibility</td>
<td>Shared responsibility in partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Deficit-based and adversarial</strong></td>
<td><strong>Strengths-based and collaborative</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Random Acts of Engagement</td>
<td>Systemic Engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top Down</td>
<td>Collaborative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service focus</td>
<td>Service and Development focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliance driven</td>
<td>Outcomes driven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-time project</td>
<td>Sustained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From</td>
<td>To</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual responsibility</td>
<td>Shared responsibility in partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deficit-based and adversarial</td>
<td>Strengths-based and collaborative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top Down</td>
<td>Collaborative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service focus</td>
<td>Service and Development focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliance driven</td>
<td>Outcomes driven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-time project</td>
<td>Sustained</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Build the Capacity of Stakeholders to Shift the Work:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From</th>
<th>To</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual responsibility</td>
<td>Shared responsibility in partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deficit-based and adversarial</td>
<td>Strengths-based and collaborative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Random Acts of Engagement</td>
<td>Systemic Engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top Down</td>
<td>Collaborative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service focus</td>
<td>Service and Development focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliance driven</td>
<td>Outcomes driven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-time project</td>
<td>Sustained</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Build the Capacity of Stakeholders to Shift the Work:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From</th>
<th>To</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual responsibility</td>
<td>Shared responsibility in partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deficit-based and adversarial</td>
<td>Strengths-based and collaborative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Random Acts of Engagement</td>
<td>Systemic Engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top Down</td>
<td>Collaborative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service focus</td>
<td>Service and Development focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliance driven</td>
<td>Outcomes driven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-time project</td>
<td>Sustained</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Build the Capacity of Stakeholders to Shift the Work:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From</th>
<th>To</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual responsibility</strong></td>
<td><strong>Shared responsibility in partnership</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Deficit-based and adversarial</strong></td>
<td><strong>Strengths-based and collaborative</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Random Acts of Engagement</strong></td>
<td><strong>Systemic Engagement</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Top Down</strong></td>
<td><strong>Collaborative</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Service focus</strong></td>
<td><strong>Service and Development focus</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Compliance driven</strong></td>
<td><strong>Outcomes driven</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>One-time project</strong></td>
<td><strong>Sustained</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Build the Capacity of Stakeholders to Shift the Work:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From</th>
<th>To</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual responsibility</td>
<td>Shared responsibility in partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deficit-based and adversarial</td>
<td>Strengths-based and collaborative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Random Acts of Engagement</td>
<td>Systemic Engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top Down</td>
<td>Collaborative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service focus</td>
<td>Service and Development focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliance driven</td>
<td>Outcomes driven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-time project</td>
<td>Sustained</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ENGAGING PARENTS IN SCHOOLS AND STUDENT LEARNING

Steven B. Sheldon, Ph. D.
Johns Hopkins University
School of Education
Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships

Presented at the Ed Week Webinar – June 21, 2012
National Network of Partnership Schools

- 15 years working with schools and districts
- Approximately 800 Schools, 80 School Districts
- Research-to-Practice / Practice-to-Research
- Professional Development Workshops
- Technical Assistance for Partnership Program Implementation
Organizing Partnership Programs

• School systems can make a difference:
  • School districts that organize their work on partnerships well and provide help to their schools have schools with stronger outreach to families
  • Schools that perform better outreach enable more family members to get involved in their children’s education
COMPONENTS OF A STRONG SCHOOL PROGRAM
• Create a Partnership Team:
  • Teachers, parents, administrator, community members

• Sets goals and plans activities:
  • Schedules dates
  • Identify persons responsible for events
  • Helps to meet challenges of outreach

• Distributes the Workload
  • Helps Prevent Burnout
  • Provides a variety of perspectives
Goal-Oriented Partnership Program

School-Based Management Team
School Improvement Plan

ACTION TEAM for SCHOOL, FAMILY, and COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Academic Goal 1
Draw from the six types of involvement to meet this goal.

Academic Goal 2
Draw from the six types of involvement to meet this goal.

Non-Academic Goal 3
Draw from the six types of involvement to meet this goal.

Partnership Goal 4
Draw from the six types of involvement to meet this goal.
…Make an Annual Action Plan

• Establish Goals Using School Improvement Plan
  • Create alignment with existing goals of the school

• Family and Community Engagement is about Student Learning
  • How will the family engagement activities help improve student outcomes like reading and Math?

• More than one activity for each goal
  • Comprehensive Approach Needed
  • Engagement is Multi-dimensional
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL EXAMPLES
for a One-Year Action Plan for Partnerships
to **IMPROVE READING**

TYPE 1  Workshops for parents on various ways to read aloud with young children

TYPE 2  Parent-teacher-student conferences with emphasis on reading goals

TYPE 3  Reading partners or guest readers of favorite stories

TYPE 4  Weekly interactive reading homework activities

TYPE 5  PTA/PTO support for a parent room to provide information on children’s reading and to sponsor other reading activities

TYPE 6  Donations from business partners of books for classrooms, for the school library, or for children to take home

...AND MANY OTHER IDEAS FOR EACH TYPE OF INVOLVEMENT
The Real Thing

McLoughlin Middle School
Pasco School District, WA

Visit the school’s Action Team for Partnerships at http://www.psd1.org/domain/215.
Evaluate

• End-of-Year Evaluations
  • Provide opportunities to reflect on strengths and weakness of program organization and outreach
  • Were all families engaged and/or encouraged to be involved in their children’s learning?

• Activity Feedback
  • Exit Surveys
  • Participants’ perceptions of activity success
Parents: Partners in Decision Making
School set a goal to encourage more parents to support students’ schoolwork and participate at school. In the past, the school notified parents that their child was an award-winner. This year, the ATP and teachers called parents in English or Spanish to invite them to the assembly. The personal touch boosted parent attendance.

Operation Success
Four mini-workshops about children’s work in school:
(1) showed families how to access students’ grades online.
(2) showed families how to access the district’s math curriculum, lessons, and assignments on-line.
(3) helped parents learn about the school’s goals for good behavior and discipline practices, and how to reinforce good school behavior at home.
(4) provided a dessert station where families make their own sundaes.
COMPONENTS OF A STRONG DISTRICT PROGRAM
What have we learned from districts?

- Policy is important but not sufficient for districts to conduct viable partnership programs.

- A district leader for partnerships must be assigned.

- The leader for partnerships must implement thoughtful plans and actions.

- The leader for partnerships needs to support schools in their efforts to engage families.
District-Wide Program of Partnership

District-Level Leadership

Direct Facilitation of Schools

NNPS Program & School Goals
Components of District Leadership and Facilitation

• Create awareness
  • *Information about the partnership approach*

• Align program & policy

• Guide learning & program development
  • *On-going professional development*

• Share knowledge
  • *On-going communication & networking*

• Celebrate milestones

• Document progress & evaluate outcomes
  • *Internal evaluations and assistance to schools*
STEVEN SHELDON, PH.D.
JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND EXAMPLES

Visit:  www.partnershipschools.org

or contact me:  ssheldon@csos.jhu.edu
An on-demand archive of this webinar will be available at www.edweek.org/go/webinar in less than 24 hrs.
Engaging Parents in Schools and Student Learning

Required Reading from *Education Week*:

**Parental Engagement Proves No Easy Goal**
Few would quarrel with the goal of increasing parents' and families' engagement in education in the name of school improvement. But there's far less consensus on what that engagement should look like—and on how educators and policymakers should be promoting it.

*Education Week Spotlight on Parental Involvement*:
Research indicates that students benefit when their parents are engaged in their learning and schools. This Spotlight explores how to encourage meaningful home-school connections.