

Recommendations for Local School Boards and Districts

These recommendations were developed through an assessment of current state and federal legislation and requirements, a review of current literature from the field of family engagement and education policy, and input from family engagement policy experts, educators, administrators, and families.

Establish families as partners in education.

- Respect families as experts and value families and the learning and growth that takes place in the home. Engage families as by building trust, honoring relationships, and shifting culture to engage families as active leaders in the school.
- Establish strategies and pathways for families of all backgrounds to be involved in school decision-making. This includes the regular inclusion of families on standing leadership teams.
- Include family input and feedback, as well as other data collected on family engagement practice via the school improvement process. Honor the various ways that families teach children at-home, and encourage teachers and other school staff to have families share these methods and traditions in the classroom.
- Leverage the expertise and experiences of families to hear their needs and partner with reputable community partners who reflect the cultural values of the families in your school and can address an expressed need.

Establish effective communication between schools and families.

- Create multiple means and opportunities for families to contact the school and individual educators to ask questions, provide feedback, and share concerns and ideas about their child's education and school activities. A reminder of these means and opportunities should be included in all information shared with families.
- In multiple formats that will be understood and accessible to all families, provide information on Ohio's academic standards; state and local assessments; and legal requirements so that they can make informed decisions about their children's academic future.
- In multiple formats that will be understood and accessible for all families, provide families with essential information about what students are learning in school along with resources and strategies, so that families can engage students in their learning at home and foster an environment that supports the development and success of students and families.
- Prepare families to be involved in meaningful meetings and discussions with administrators, teachers, and staff. Included in this may be parent-teacher conferences, Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meetings, discussions with families regarding Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), and gifted education meetings.

Ensure all families can contribute, participate, and partner with schools and community organizations.

- Coordinate and integrate parent and family involvement programs and activities into Head Start, Reading First, Early Reading First, Home Instruction Programs for Preschool

Youngsters, Parents as Teachers Programs, public preschool, special education, gifted students' services, parent resource centers and other community activities.

- Create welcoming and supportive school environments for parents and families that are child-centered and family-strengthening. Include parents, families, and caregivers in the designing and developing of open, communal, and physical spaces in the school building.
- Establish physical environments that are comfortable for families and encourage family to be present in the school building. Consider the cultural diversity of students and families and ensure that it is reflected throughout the school space.
- Ensure that family-focused activities are at times that suit families and have strategies that allow for full participation from families including childcare or transportation. Ensure that there is a plan in place to provide the information to those unable to attend in a way that is accessible to them and provide opportunities for those families to share their thoughts and ideas with the school.

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