

POLICY 101-14
FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/PARTENERSHIP

In setting expectations and creating a climate conducive to effective engagement/partnership implementation, the Board acknowledges the importance of administrative leadership at all levels, including its own. Therefore, the Board directs the Department to establish an organizational culture characterized by practices and programs that build and sustain positive and engaged relationships with families and communities by:

Building the capacity of staff and families to engage in partnerships;

Aligning with school achievement goals and connecting families to the teaching and learning goals for the students;

Taking a comprehensive and coordinated approach to family school engagement and community partnerships;

Addressing family school engagement/partnership in strategic planning processes;

Assigning formal responsibility, accountability and necessary authority for engagement/partnership implementation to appropriate staff at the State, Complex Area and School levels;

Embracing the diverse cultures, languages, strengths and needs of all families;

Providing adequate and appropriate time, resources and opportunities to include families in the design, implementation, evaluation and oversight of all relevant programs and services.

Establishing statewide standards, administrative guidelines, associated metrics/indicators, timelines and reporting requirements that support the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of family and community engagement/partnerships based upon national evidence-based best practices including, but not limited to:

Standard 1: Welcoming all families into the school community—Families are active participants in the life of the school and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to school staff, and to what students are learning and doing in class.

Standard 2: Communicating effectively—Families and school staff engage in regular two-way, meaningful communication about student learning.

Standard 3: Supporting student success—Families and school staff continuously partner to support students' learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.

Standard 4: Speaking up for every child—Families are empowered to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.

Standard 5: Sharing power—Families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.

Standard 6: Engaging/partnering with community—Families and school staff engage/partner with community members to connect students, families and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

Rationale: The Board of Education (“Board”) recognizes that a child’s growth and educational success are responsibilities and goals shared by the Department of Education (“Department”), communities, schools and families. It follows that achievement of these goals depends on the establishment of a broad array of informed partnerships among stakeholders that address the strengths and needs of all students.

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