

FSE Summer Institute Workshop: Developing a Family Engagement Policy

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2

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Goals of the Workshop

- Present a framework for making schools accountable to families, students, and other members of the school community for providing a high quality education to all children.
- Introduce the legal provisions in Title I that require each school to develop a Family Engagement Policy intended to lead to meaningful school-level change.

3

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Introduction

- Overview of CLE's Parent School-Level Change Initiative
- Plan for the workshop – backward mapping

4

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Impediments to Student Learning

- What do we know about student achievement in our schools?
- What are some of the barriers preventing students from learning to high standards?

Impediments to Student Learning (cont'd)

- Which barriers/problems can be addressed through school-level change?
- Whose voices need to be included in that discussion?

Seven Questions of School Reform

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| 1. What should my child be learning? | Challenging and rigorous standards |
| 2. Is that what the school is teaching my child? | Accelerated and enriched curriculum |
| 3. Is the school teaching it well? | Effective instructional methods; highly qualified teachers; and strong professional development |

Questions of School Reform (cont'd)

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| 4. What about my child's particular needs in learning it? | Individual attention and special needs; one-on-one help for students who need it |
| 5. Is my child learning it? | Regular and ongoing, high quality assessments |

Questions of School Reform (cont'd)

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| 6. How are important decisions made about my child? | High-stakes decisions |
| 7. What's my role in making all this happen (and in getting an effective response when it is not)? | Democratic governance and involvement rights; school as learning community |

Whole School Improvement Plan

Under Title I, plan must:

- Be *jointly* developed with and agreed upon by parents.
- Include a comprehensive needs assessment.
- Describe how the entire school community will provide a high quality education for every child.

“Communications Gap”

- What are some of the barriers to effective communication between schools and families?
- How can we engage families as full participants in this process?

Family Engagement Policy

Each school district and school receiving funds under Title I must develop *jointly* with parents a written policy that:

- Describes *how* parents will be involved in *joint* planning, development, and review of district and school plans.
- Addresses training and capacity building for parents and school personnel.
- Is *jointly* developed and agreed upon.

Basic Elements of a Family Engagement Policy

1. Informing parents about their rights pertaining to involvement
1. Shared responsibility (School-Parent Compact)
2. Capacity building for families and educators
3. Engaging parents in the development of the WSIP
4. Follow-up/ review of the policy

School-Parent Compact

- Describes shared responsibilities of schools and parents; addresses importance of communication between parents and teachers.
- Describes school's responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in effective learning environment that enables students to meet state standards.
- Describes parents' responsibility for supporting their children's learning.

Capacity Building

To promote partnership with parents and build capacity for improving student achievement, each school must:

- Provide training and assistance to parents about standards, assessments, monitoring children's progress.
- Provide materials and training to help parents work with their children (e.g., literacy training and training in the use of technology).

Capacity Building (cont'd)

Each school must:

- Educate school staff about parental outreach, communication and working with parents as "equal partners."
- Ensure that information, materials, and learning opportunities are accessible to parents.

Connecting the SSC/SPC with the FEP

- What is the relationship between the school site council/school parent council and the family engagement requirements of Title I?
- How can we make sure that a broad spectrum of parents are involved?

Title I Family Engagement Provisions as Tools for Providing a High-Quality Education

- Require schools and school districts to work with parents to close the achievement gap between children of color and white children, rich and poor children, and students with and without disabilities.
- Focus on school-level change.