Engaging with All Families Using the Five Simple Principles

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FOREWORD BY KIRSTEN BAESLER

SECOND EDITION

ENGAGE EVERY FAMILY

FIVE SIMPLE PRINCIPLES

CORWIN

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1 A Culture that Engages Every Family

2 Communicate Effectively and Build Relationships

3 Empower Every Family

4 Engage Every Family in Decision making

5 Engage the Greater Community

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Today's Presenters

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Would Every Family Choose You (your school or classroom?

Think about the Why

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Reflect on WHY they are Choosing Your School

❏ If families truly have a choice as to where their children will receive an education, will they choose our school district? Our School? My classroom?

❏ If your answer to this question is unequivocally yes, then you must ask yourself the logical follow-up question: Why? Why would families choose your school? Why would families choose your classroom or you as a teacher?

❏ What is it that is so compelling about your product that a customer will choose it over the growing list of options?

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Equity, Bias, and Disengagement

❏ Those Kids

❏ That Neighborhood

❏ Those Parents

❏ I know all about that family. I had the older brother in my class.

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Disengaged versus Unreached

Consider the Label of Disengaged versus Unreached

❏ *Need to reframe the labeling of a family as "unengaged" or "uninvolved".*

❏ *It is critical that we shift the language and understand [that] these families are not unengaged, they are unreached.*

❏ *It is the responsibility of the school to drive student success, and it is therefore our responsibility to initiate efforts to reach out [to families]".*

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Unreached: What Every Educator Wants to Know About Engaging Families for Equity & Student Achievement, T. Moore

Equity, Bias, and Disengagement
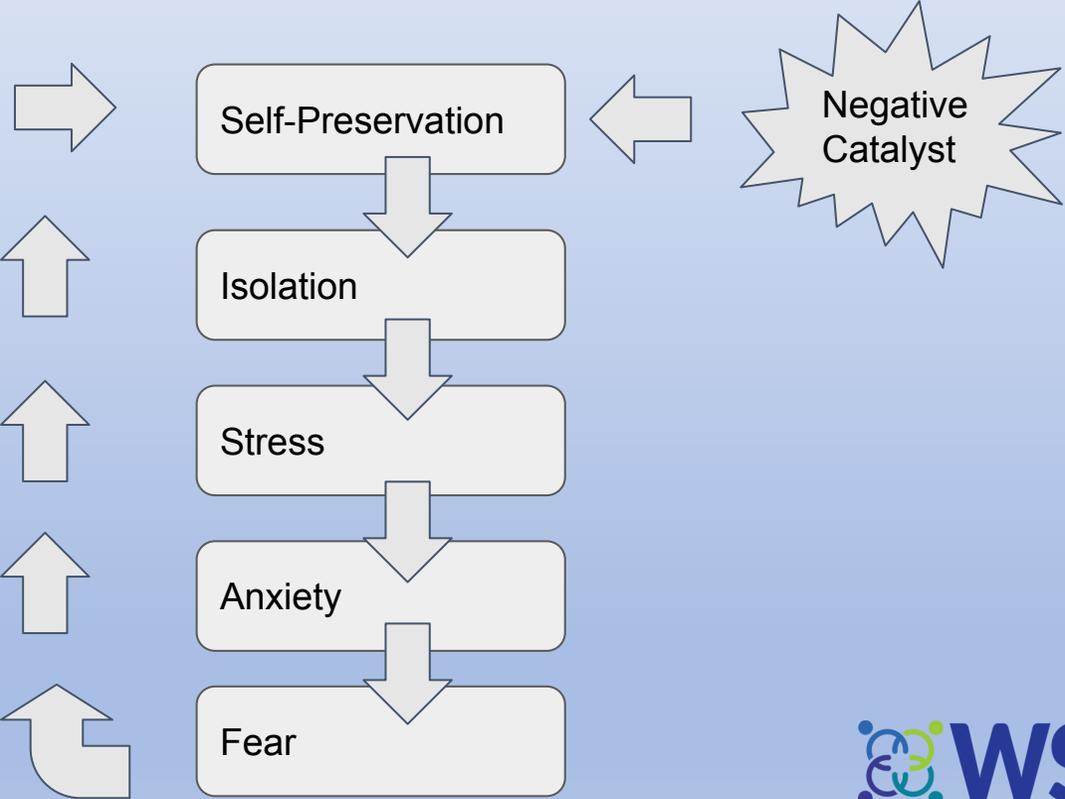
Disengagement Cycle

Figure 3.1 Engage Every Family, Page 34

What is the root cause of disengagement?

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Academic Socialization

❏ Academic socialization encompasses the variety of parental beliefs and behaviors that influence children's school-related development.
❏ Parents are considered to be the primary agents of child socialization.

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Relationships with All Families

❏ Make positive personal phone calls home on a regular basis
❏ Invite families to share their knowledge about their child and support them to be able to do so
❏ Use a home-school communication system with the family
❏ Send regular updates on student progress and follow up with the families

Scheduling

❏ Determine the best times for the family to meet

❏ Offer alternative forms of engagement

❏ Respect special days with family culture

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Language Barriers

❏ Determine the preferred home language of family members
❏ Ensure that all communication and school signage represent languages spoken by families
❏ Invite interpreters to every school event

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A Culture that Engages Every Family

Creating a culture and climate for family engagement is the first and most important step in the process to bring about systemic reform in family engagement

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Indicator 8 Family Engagement Survey - School Age

A Culture that Engages Every Family Principle 1

Description: The collective beliefs, attitudes, norms, values, actions, and assumptions of the school organization explicitly embrace and are committed to the notion of families as a foundational core component to improvement and greater student learning and performance. The culture is reflected in the actions of those in the organization, in the artifacts, and in the organizational practices.

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School-Family Culture Inventory

Culture drives everything and is something that is barely noticed or thought about.

Complete this School-Family Culture Inventory Survey as a beginning reflection for your school or district

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A Culture that Engages Every Family

Objective 1.1

The school has created and sustained a culture that is conducive to family engagement through explicit beliefs, actions, norms, values, and assumptions made about the value of families being engaged with their children's school experiences.

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A Culture that Engages Every Family

Objective 1.2

A culture of family engagement exists within the school such that policies, programs, practices, and procedures specifically connect families with student learning to support increased achievement and enhance student learning and performance.

A Culture that Engages Every Family

Objective 1.3

A culture of family engagement exists within the school and community that directly and positively impacts the social and emotional growth of all students.

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School Culture Defined

"Culture shapes what people think and how they act and is shaped by the very same."

Does not fall from the sky. It is created and manipulated by people

Can be counter-productive and an obstacle to success

Affects the behavior and academic achievement

Lasting change requires a change in school culture, which is a slow process.

Becomes the cohesion that bonds the school together.

School cultures are unique; no two are alike.

Can be oppressive for various subgroups

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Breaking the Cycle
About Family Engagement Beliefs

"If we truly desire families to be engaged with schools and in the academic lives of their children, then we must work to change the culture of schools so that the process of educating children is more humanized. If **WE** are to succeed, **WE** have to be responsive to the individual, regardless of their background."

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Why Start with Policy?

❏ Family engagement is more than an education issue, it is a civil rights issue for many families.
❏ Without an intentional and strategic approach to culturally respond to, welcome, and engage [unreached] families, children are at a distinct disadvantage to achieve.

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Components of an Effective District-Level Family Engagement Policy

1. Involve parents/families in the development.
2. Build the capacity of parents/families.
3. Empower parents/families, particularly in matters of decision making.
4. Coordinate strategies with parents/families in other programs.
5. Conduct annual evaluations of the effectiveness of parent and family engagement efforts.
6. Design strategies for school improvement from annual evaluations.
7. Annually revise the district policy.
8. Involve families in school activities.

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Start with Policy Handout

Case Study: The Field Trip

Self Reflection:

1. Do you think that situation could happen in your school?
2. What specific changes to the culture do you see that are necessary to provide a different outcome to this situation?
3. How effective was the communication with the family? How could it have been better?

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Points to Ponder

1. What do I think [believe] about family engagement?
2. Will family engagement work in my school or district?
3. What is my role in promoting family engagement at my school or district?
4. Am I willing to rearrange time, resources, and energy to work on family engagement to bring about more achievement for my students?

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Jamboard

Communicate Effectively and Develop Relationships Principle 2

There is consistent evidence that effective communication and relationship development create environments in the schools that are welcoming, respectful, and conducive to family engagement. The school places an emphasis on effective two-way communication with every family and stakeholder within the learning community and seeks to develop relationships based on mutual trust.

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Communicate Effectively and Develop Relationships

2.1 The school creates and maintains a welcoming and respectful environment that is inviting, supportive, and encouraging to every family.

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Communicate Effectively and Develop Relationships

2.2 The school employs strategies that extend opportunities to develop relationships beyond the school walls so that every family can substantially contribute to the education of their children.

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Communicate Effectively and Develop Relationships

2.3 The school ensures that healthy, two-way communication is consistently maintained. A sense of caring to truly collaborate with every family exists, as evidenced by numerous mechanisms to allow families to communicate easily and directly with the school.

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Welcoming and Respectful Environment

It's The Little Things

All Visitors Must Report to the Main Office

The Parking Lot Is For Faculty / Staff Only

Your Presence is Being Recorded

Welcome to our school! We are glad you are here! Please sign in at our main office. This way.

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Welcoming and Respectful Environment

Customer Service

- ❏ Attitude of personnel and sending the message that we care
    - ❏ Greeting people warmly, with a caring attitude and genuine smile
    - ❏ Being good at what we do
    - ❏ Model excellence, always
    - ❏ Follow-through and trustworthiness are essential
    - ❏ Sending the message that "We care"

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Relationships
<u>Issue and Solution</u>

Relationships between families and schools are dependent on policies that have nothing to do with family engagement.

Building successful relationships with all families should be embedded into procedure and practices of a school district, rather than implied or ignored

Relationships
Issue and Solution

These policies can be punitive in nature, not inclusive of the family voice, and can hinder the relationship building between families and school districts

Look through the lens of every family and conduct a thorough inventory of procedure, practices, and policies to better understand how family engagement practices are interpreted in your school.

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Relationships
The Role of Trust in Relationships with Families

❏ There can be no relationships without trust
❏ There is a need in today's society to work towards building trust between home and school
❏ Before they come to you, you must come to them

Relational home visits are one way to build trusting relationships

❏ To help to build trust, let's also look at building families up so that they recognize their value

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Parent-Teacher Home Visits

Relationships
Issue and Solution

Perceived value plays a huge role in whether or not relationships to support students will be fruitful

We can convince every family, regardless of their station in life, that they have value and are truly needed to complete the circle of people that will successfully educate their children.

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Working with the "Hard to Reach"

"We have labeled families hard to reach when they don't seem to conform to our perceptions of our standard communication protocols. However, they can be reached. It just takes knowing how and the willingness to make the necessary changes"

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Working with the "Hard to Reach"

❏ Believing that reaching out to these families has value and is worth our time
❏ Embodying the ethic of caring
❏ Keeping an open mind about the family
❏ Setting high expectations for the relationships
❏ Being sensitive to the needs of families

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Communicate Effectively

❑ A key ingredient in building relationships with families is understanding the importance of communication and conversations that are open, honest, and a true exchange of ideas.

❑ One-sided conversations, talking without listening, talking down to parents, or simply putting everything in an email are surefire ways either to destroy relationships or never build them in the first place.

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Communicate Effectively

Am I communicating or engaging?

❏ **Communication:** The imparting or exchange of information or news.
❏ **Engagement:** The act of engaging; being engaged; emotional involvement and commitment

We can move the needle from simple communication to engagement

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Takeaways

❏ Share two things from the information that we shared that you can you commit to sharing and/or implementing?

❏ What could you try with a family and model for others in your school or district?

FEAP Rubric Principles and Objectives

Create a document with the rubric/objective document

go thru the schoolwide 1.2 and have conversation

Thank you for attending
Are there any questions?

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