# Families in Society and Cultural Contexts

## Competency

Educator understands, values, respects, and honors the unique variations that exist among families and the ways families support and advocate for their child(ren).

## Key Method

Educator gathers information on students and families and uses that information to create culturally responsive practices.

## Method Components

### Meaningful Family Engagement

Family engagement is about every adult in a child's life working together to help the child reach their full potential. Just like a space launch needs engineers, mathematicians, and physicists to work side by side to send astronauts to space, families, schools, and communities need to form partnerships for all children to succeed. Strengthening family, school, and community bonds is a critical factor in raising student achievement, closing achievement gaps, and attaining school improvement goals. Research shows that engaged families and communities have a positive impact on students' academic achievement, aspirations, and well-being. Research also shows that family engagement and community engagement improves school climate and teacher satisfaction and retention, and is a common feature of high-performing schools. Most importantly, family engagement benefits all students regardless of their family income, education, or background.

Family engagement is not a one-size-fits-all approach. Families come in many different configurations, have different work schedules, speak many languages,

and have different past experiences with schooling. Some parents have said they lack the resources to help their child, and some express frustration with school bureaucracies or policies they find hard to understand or change. Fortunately, teachers, administrators, and support staff can take steps to reach out, partner with, and engage with students' families, but they need to employ a wide range of skills to do so. This micro-credential stack is designed to promote the development of these much needed skills.

## Families in Society & Cultural Contexts

Anti-bias and culturally responsive teaching means understanding the culture of the families and students in a classroom or school, and their everyday lives in their homes and communities.

A first step to understanding families and culture is gathering information to gain insight into their routines and everyday lives. Culture is much more than just flags and holidays. It's the different types of families that students go home to; for example, blended families, their work schedules, the languages they speak, living arrangements, incarcerated loved ones, those experiencing homelessness, socioeconomic situations, interests, values, and beliefs.

## Analyze

Once you have gathered information about the families and cultures represented in your classroom or school, begin to look at patterns and trends. Some questions you can ask include:

- What language and cultures are represented in your school and classroom?
- Do you have all the data you need?
- Are groups of families missing from your responses?
- What are the main stories that families are telling you?

## Apply

Based on your analysis, how will you change your teaching/work practices? Think about your grade level(s) and your content area(s). Some questions you might ask about application include:

- What changes can be made to your curriculum and classroom/school that allow you to be more sensitive to the cultures of your students?
- What changes can be made to how you communicate with students and families?
- Are there additional training that you need (cultural responsive training, trauma care, community resources to help with a specific concern or situation, positive/sensitive language usage, research on a specific culture)?

- If every change is not successful, what will your next steps be?

Once you have carried out the changes to your teaching practices/work practices, reflect on the effectiveness of the changes.

- How have students been impacted?
- How have families been impacted?
- How has your mindset changed?
- Have there been building-wide impacts?
- Be prepared to include specific examples of each.

# Supporting Rationale and Research


Bachman, H. F., Anderman, E. M., Zyromski, B. E. & Boone, B. J. (2019). Partnering with families for the middle school transition: Research-based strategies for middle level educators. Retrieved from https://ohiofamiliesengage.osu.edu https://ohiofamiliesengage.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Middle-School-Transition-Research-Brief-FINAL-11.7.19-1.pdf

Epstein, J. L. (2005). Developing and sustaining research-based programs of school, family, and community partnerships: Summary of five years of NNPS Research. Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships, National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS), Johns Hopkins University. http://nnps.jhucsos.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Research-Summary.pdf

Global Family Research Project (2018). Joining together to create a bold vision for next generation family engagement: Engaging families to transform education. Retrieved from https://globalfrp.org/Articles/Joining-Together-to-Create-a-Bold-Vision-for-Next-Generation-Family-Engagement-Engaging-Families-to-Transform-Education

Redford, J., Huo, H., & McQuiggan, M., (January 2019). Barriers to parent-school involvement for early elementary students. U.S. Department of Education. https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2017/2017165.pdf

Stem Next. San Diego (2019). Changing the Game in STEM with family engagement: A white paper for practitioners and field leaders to empower families in STEM. https://stemnext.org/changing-the-game-in-stem-with-family-engagement/

Wood, L., Bauman, B., Rudo, Z., & Dimock, V., (February, 2017). How family, school, and community engagement can improve student achievement and influence school reform. Nellie Mae Education Foundation, Washington, D.C. https://www.nmefoundation.org/resources/how-family-school-and-community-engagement-can-improve-student-achievement-and-influence-school-reform/

# Resources

## Information Gathering

What is Culture from Global People@University

Family and Community Engagement | Learning for Justice

## Classroom Changes

Welcoming all students to Room 202

30 Ways to Become a Culturally Sensitive Educator | InformED

Creating culturally responsive instruction: For students' and teachers' sakes

## Other Useful Information

Ohio Statewide Family Engagement Center

National Association for Family, School and Community Engagement

## General Family Engagement Resources

Culturally Responsive Practice — Ohio HCRC

A Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships

Version 2 of Dual Capacity-Building Framework

Articles | Global Family Research Project

Be A Learning Hero

NAFSCE Searchable Resource Library

The School Community Journal

# Submission Guidelines & Evaluation Criteria

*To earn this micro-credential, you must receive a passing score in Parts 1 and 3, and be proficient for all components in Part 2.*

## Part 1. Overview Questions (Provides Context)

Please answer the following contextual questions to help our assessor understand your current situation. Please do not include any information that will make you identifiable to your reviewers.

(200–400 words)

1. Prior to beginning this micro-credential, what was your understanding of the cultural make-up of your classroom/school?
2. What is the racial, linguistic, socioeconomic, family structure make-up of your classroom/school?
3. What is your reason for selecting this micro-credential, and what do you hope to gain from it?

**Passing:** Response provides reasonable and accurate information that justifies the choice of this micro-credential to address specific needs of both the teacher and the student. Educators include a learning goal that describes what they hope to gain from earning this micro-credential.

## Part 2. Work Examples/Artifacts/Evidence

To earn this micro-credential, please submit the following **two** artifacts as evidence of your learning. *Please do not include any information that will make you or your students identifiable to your reviewers.*

**Artifact 1: Information-Gathering Documentation**
(1500–2000 words)
Create a plan to gather information about your students and their families. Your plan should include:

1. A list of at least 10 age-appropriate questions for your students
2. A list of at least 10 culturally responsive questions for the students' families
3. A description of how you will collect the information
4. Your timeline for collecting the information
5. A list of challenges you foresee and how you plan to overcome them
6. A summary of your findings in this information-gathering process

**Artifact 2: Documentation of Changes and Results**
(1000–2000 words)
For each area below you need to:

- Describe at least one change for each of the areas below that you made in your classroom practices to be inclusive of families.
- Explain your reasoning for each change. Cite the information you gathered in Artifact 1 to support your reasoning.
- Write a brief summary of results for each area.

Areas to Address

1. Curriculum enhancement
2. Classroom/school practices
3. Communication with students and families
4. Training needed (even if training is not completed)
5. Family/cultural needs that were identified in the information-gathering phase

## Part 2. Rubric

| | Proficient | Basic | Developing |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Artifact 1: Information-Gathering Documentation and Analysis** | Documentation shows how information is gathered from both students and adults in the home. Documentation uses sensitive language that is appropriate for all family structures and across cultures. Language interpretation issues are addressed, as well as the need for multiple attempts for those who do not respond to initial requests.<br><br>Summary includes reasonable challenges and strategies for overcoming them. | Documentation shows how information is gathered from both students and adults in the home. Language used is not sensitive to all potential family structures.<br>Language interpretation issues are not addressed. Multiple attempts to gather information are addressed. | Documentation shows how information is gathered from students or adults, but not both. Language used is not sensitive to all potential family structures.<br>Language interpretation is not addressed and multiple attempts to collect information are not addressed. |
| **Artifact 2: Documentation of Changes and Results** | Changes made address **all** of the following:<br>-Curriculum classroom/school practices<br>-Communication with students and families.<br>-Training needed (even if training is not completed).<br>-Family/cultural needs that were identified in the information-gathering phase.<br>-Results of each change. | Changes made address **3-4** of the following<br>-Curriculum classroom/school practices<br>-Communication with students and families.<br>-Training is needed (even if training is not completed).<br>-Family/cultural needs that were identified in the information-gathering phase.<br>-Results of each change. | Changes made do not address both students and families and do not address specific family/cultural situations identified in the information-gathering phase. Results are not shared.<br><br>Summary and/or reasoning is missing. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Reasons listed are based on information gathered.<br><br>Summary of results connects to the reason for the change. | Reasons may not be based on information gathered.<br><br>Summary is disconnected from the reason for the change. | |

## Part 3 Reflection

(150–200 words)
Use the word count as a guide to write a personal reflection about your work on this micro-credential. For tips on writing a good reflection review the following resource:

How Do I Write a Good Personal Reflection?

*Please do not include any information that will make you identifiable to your reviewers.*

1. How has your mindset changed?
2. How have students and families been impacted?
3. Have there been any building wide impacts?
4. What are some actionable steps you will implement moving forward?

**Passing:** Reflection provides evidence that this activity has had a positive impact on both educator practice and student success, even if not every change was a success. Specific examples are cited directly from personal or work-related experiences to support claims. Also included are specific actionable steps that demonstrate how new learning will be integrated into future practices.