Family Engagement as Access and Opportunities For All

Competency

Educator uses knowledge of families and communities to tailor engagement opportunities that reach all families regardless of their race, ethnicity, national origin, language, geographic location, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, physical ability, size, occupation, and marital/parental or economic status.

Key Method

Educator creates a communication plan and identifies barriers to overcoming and ensuring equal access and opportunity for all students, families, and communities.

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 have the opportunity 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.

Access & Opportunity for All

Educators are increasingly working with families who come from economic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds different from their own. For family engagement to be practiced as a form of social justice, educators much reach out to families, especially those that are often most underserved, and see family engagement practices that often go "unseen", and actively work to fight racism and discrimination that many families face.

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 community.

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 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 practices/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?
- Is there additional training that would improve your work with your families (cultural sensitivity training, trauma care, community resources to help with a specific concern or situation, positive/sensitive language usage, research on a specific culture)?
- If not every change is 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.

Develop a Communication Plan

The communication plan will address how information should be disseminated (email, websites, printed reports, and/or presentations) to families. The plan defines what communication channels stakeholders will use to solicit feedback and how communication will be documented and archived. (Refer to Definition of Communication Plan in Resources section). To choose the right communication method, you must consider the intended audience and the purpose of the communication.

Ways to Communicate with families

- Send home with student
- Mail to home
- Text message
- Social media
- Classroom communication app (Class Dojo, Blooms, Remind)
- Phone call
- Agenda
- Email

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

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://drive.google.com/file/d/1wfrWPqN784ns5kqRnym2_EaJ-BSyZz2-/view?usp=drive_link

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

What is a communication plan? - Definition from WhatIs.com

How to Build a Parent Survey that gets Responses

The Secret to Building an Effective Parent Survey

Open House: When First Impressions Matter | Education World

Increase Parent Involvement With First Day of School Activities

Data Analysis - Process

How to Write an Action Plan | Step-by-Step Guide with Templates

What Makes a Photo Essay Unforgettable?

General Family Engagement Resources

[Culturally Responsive Practice — Ohio HCRC]

[A Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships]

[Dual Capacity-Version 2]

[Be A Learning Hero]

[NAFSCE Searchable Resource Library]

[Ohio Statewide Family Engagement Center]

[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. Educator includes 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 **three** 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 Survey
Create an information-gathering survey to learn about the communication needs of your families.
Your survey should include:

- Preferred mode of communication
- Preferred language to communicate
- If the home has internet access
- Special trade, skill, or talent the family could share in class
- Ethnicity, which may be shared during a cultural celebration or learning experience.

Submit a finished copy of your information gathering tool.

Artifact 2: Data Analysis
(500–750 Words)
Administer your survey and summarize your findings. (Refer to Data Analysis link in resources). Your summary should include:

- What have you learned?
- How does what you learned impact your classroom practice?
- Summary of the data using words and/or charts

Artifact 3: Action Plan
(Refer to the How to Write an Action Plan link in the Resources section).
Use the data to develop an action plan to address the needs that you identified in your findings summary. The plan you are going to execute will serve the needs of your families and should be communicated in a way that is accessible to all families. Submit a finished copy of your action plan.

Your action plan should include:

- A well-defined description of the goal to be achieved
- Tasks/ steps that need to be carried out to reach the goal
- People who will be in charge of carrying out each task
- When will these tasks be completed (deadlines and milestones)
- Resources needed to complete the tasks
- Measures to evaluate progress

Artifact 4: Evidence of Implementation
(Submit 3 forms of evidence)
Implement your action plan with your families. After implementing your plan, submit **three different pieces of evidence**. This evidence may be in the form of *slides, handouts, a photo essay, detailed agenda, completed feedback survey, or other appropriate mediums.*

Part 2. Rubric

	Proficient	Basic	Developing
Artifact 1: Information-Gathering Survey	Submitted documentation shows how information is gathered from families. Documentation uses culturally responsive language that is appropriate for all family structures. Language interpretation issues are addressed, as well as the need for multiple attempts for those who do not respond to initial requests.	Submitted documentation may not show how information is gathered from families. Documentation may not use culturally responsive information that is appropriate for all family structures. Language interpretation issues may not be addressed, nor is the need for multiple attempts for those who do not respond to initial requests.	Submitted documentation does not show how information is gathered from families. Documentation does not use sensitive language that is appropriate for all family structures. Language interpretation issues are not addressed, nor is the need for multiple attempts for those who do not respond to initial requests.
Artifact 2: Data Analysis	Submit analysis includes **all** of the following: -What you learned -How this will impact your classroom/school practice -Summary of the data using words and/or charts	Submit analysis includes **some** of the following: -What you learned -How this will impact your classroom/school practice -Summary of the data using words and/or charts	Data analysis is missing
Artifact 3: Action Plan	Action plan includes **all** of the following: -A well-defined description of the goal to be achieved -Tasks/steps that need to be carried out to reach the goal	Action plan includes **some** of the following: -A well-defined description of the goal to be achieved -Tasks/steps that need to be carried out to reach the goal	Action plan is missing **most** of the following: -A well-defined description of the goal to be achieved -Tasks steps that need to be carried out to reach the goal

	-People who will be in charge of carrying out each task -When these tasks will be completed (deadlines and milestones) -Resources needed to complete the tasks -Measures to evaluate progress	-People who will be in charge of carrying out each task -When will these tasks will be completed (deadlines and milestones) -Resources needed to complete the tasks -Measures to evaluate progress	-People who will be in charge of carrying out each task -When these tasks will be completed (deadlines and milestones) -Resources needed to complete the tasks -Measures to evaluate progress
Artifact 4: Evidence of Implementation	Three different pieces of evidence were uploaded. Evidence aligns with the action plan. Evidence clearly shows how it is related to the needs of the families.	Three different pieces of evidence were uploaded. Evidence aligns with the action plan. Evidence does not clearly show how it is related to the needs of the families.	Fewer than three different pieces of evidence were uploaded. Evidence doesn't align with the action plan. Evidence does not clearly show how it is related to the needs of the families.

Part 3 Reflection

(250–400 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 can you provide information to families in three different modes of communication?
2. How will students be affected by access and opportunities for all with family engagement?
3. How will you plan intentionally accessible communication for families moving forward with access and opportunities for all?

Passing: Reflection provides evidence that this activity has had a positive impact on both educator practice and student 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.