



From the Outside In:

RETHINKING PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT

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From the Outside In?



From The Inside Out?



Our Time together



- ▶ Understand our important role in supporting partnerships that deepen the connections between home and school
- ▶ Learn from one another strategies that have been effective in serving our families.
- ▶ Reflect on our changing communities and how we can adapt to better support their needs



This is Equity work.

What do we know?

- ▶ Our families love their kids, and they are their strongest advocates.
- ▶ We see things from our “lens;” our own experiences.
- ▶ Our student and family populations are rapidly changing across all of Maryland.
- ▶ Traditional definition of family has evolved.
- ▶ *Authentic* family engagement is a critical element of successful schools.



Authentic.

Transform Involvement to Engagement

- ▶ Parent **involvement** is often more of the “doing to;” often schools tend to lead with their mouth-sharing information or telling parents what they should be doing.
- ▶ Parent **engagement** is often “doing with;” this has schools leading with their ears; a genuine partnership is more likely to be established.

Elevating Engagement



Empower

Share opportunities

Make it about
Achievement

Make resources
accessible

Encourage involvement

Build Trust

Build relationships

Radiate Warmth

Create inviting
environment

Recognize and respond
to needs

Remove Barriers

Assist without
judgement

Listen without
assumptions

Make connections;
navigate norms

Barriers to Engagement



- ▶ Assumptions
- ▶ Send mixed messages
- ▶ Outreach in the same ways
- ▶ Outreach in ways that make US feel comfortable
- ▶ We don't ask questions
- ▶ We don't validate
- ▶ We rely on the same individuals

Attendance



Love

National Standards for Family-School Partnerships



Standard 1

Welcoming All Families

Goal 1: Creating a Welcoming Climate

- ▶ Developing personal relationships
- ▶ Creating a family-friendly atmosphere
- ▶ Providing opportunities for volunteering

Goal 2: Building a Respectful, Inclusive School Community

- ▶ Respecting all families
- ▶ Removing economic obstacles to participation
- ▶ Ensuring accessible programming

Why Parents Get Involved

Parents are more likely to become involved when they:

- ▶ Understand they *should* be involved
- ▶ Feel *capable* of making a contribution
- ▶ Feel *invited* by the school and their children

Communication is key

- ▶ Communicate warmth and willingness to assist
- ▶ Understand needs
- ▶ Value diversity; understand the community
- ▶ Listen and validate concerns
- ▶ Provide information in a variety of ways
- ▶ Respectfully negotiate conflicts when they occur
- ▶ Share norms and practices
- ▶ Ask Questions

Rethink the Norm

- ▶ Parent/Teacher Conferences
- ▶ Transitions and Articulation
- ▶ Communication modes
- ▶ Communication style
- ▶ Reflective communication
- ▶ Individualize it

Beyond the School walls



- ▶ Home Visits
- ▶ Neighborhood Hubs/Centers
- ▶ Churches/Religious Buildings
- ▶ YMCA, Boys & Girls Clubs
- ▶ Different Schools
- ▶ ...or not “anywhere” at all

Family Engagement: Reflective Practice

- ▶ Be Reflective
- ▶ Adjust our Practice
- ▶ Try, try, try again
- ▶ Avoid Assumptions & the Blame game



**CHANGE YOUR WORDS
CHANGE YOUR WORLD.**



Now, change your statement to reflect a more positive perspective.

Think of a typical response or comment that educators might share regarding their perspective on parent involvement. Write it down.