

Family engagement: How can you support your student's success?

Studies have shown that actively engaging families can lead to student success from early childhood all the way through college and career. Family engagement aligns with the Texas Education Agency's strategic priorities to improve education for all students, as indicated by research findings on the potential impacts of engaging families:

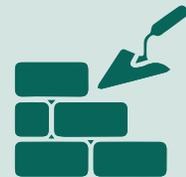
Strategic priority 1: Recruit, support, and retain teachers and principals.

- ▶ A survey conducted in Texas indicates that teachers and administrators need more professional development support to strengthen two-way communication between families and schools, coach families to support learning at home, provide necessary family supports, and build educator cultural and community awareness.¹



Strategic priority 2: Build a foundation of reading and math.

- ▶ Research shows that the reading and math scores of elementary students in high-poverty schools improved when standard teaching practices were combined with family outreach practices including regular family-teacher meetings, materials for families to use at home, and regular two-way communication between scheduled meetings.²



Strategic priority 3: Connect high school to career and college.

- ▶ When schools and families work together as partners in education, students attend school more regularly, earn better grades, enroll in higher level programs, and are more likely to enroll in postsecondary education.³



Strategic priority 4: Improve low-performing schools.

- ▶ To successfully improve, research indicates that low-performing schools need a family base that makes meaningful contributions to the school's practices and environment.^{4,5}



Strategies to Engage With Your Student's School



Families can support student success using several strategies:



Check in with your student regularly about his or her schoolwork, relationships at school, educational goals, and career plans.

Attend parent-teacher conferences and family nights to build connections with your student's teachers and learn about your student's progress, expectations, learning standards, and academic goals.



Reach out to your school or district family liaison, who can help you learn about opportunities to participate in events and programs to support your child.

Join committees or advisory groups and look for other opportunities to shape school and district practices, including practices to engage other families.



Befriend other family and community members and create a support network within the school and larger community.

Remember that engagement isn't just limited to parents—grandparents, aunts, uncles, siblings, cousins, guardians, family friends, and community members are all crucial members of a student's support system, and all should feel welcome engaging in the school and district communities.



References

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- ² Henderson, A. (n.d.) *High-impact family engagement: A core strategy for school improvement.* Retrieved from <https://www.ecs.org/wp-content/uploads/High-Impact-Family-Engagement-A-Core-Strategy-for-School-Improvement.pdf>
- ³ Henderson, A., & Mapp, K. (2002). *A new wave of evidence: The impact of school, family, and community connections on student achievement.* Austin, TX: Southwest Education Development Laboratory. Retrieved from <http://sedl.org/connections/resources/evidence.pdf>
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- ⁵ Anderson-Butcher, D., Lawson, H., Bean, J., Boone, B., Kwiatkowski, A., et al. (2004). *Implementation guide: The Ohio community collaboration model for school improvement.* Chapter 7, Family Engagement and Support. Columbus, OH: Ohio Department of Education. Retrieved from <http://cayci.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/12-30-05-Family-Eng-Support-with-overview.pdf>

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