

Evolving Together Towards Equity:

Journeying from Family Involvement to Asset-Based Family Engagement

Rita Fuller – Education Consultant

Chrissy Thuli – Education Consultant

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WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Carolyn Stanford Taylor, State Superintendent

Objectives

- **Understand where we are with Family Engagement – Involvement to Asset-Based Family Engagement**
- **Understand Ineffective Culture Practices - Barriers**
- **Utilize the Equity Decision and Policy Tool to Increase Asset-Based Family Engagement**



But in my building - Activity

**List at least five
events/activities that
your school currently
has for families**



But in my building - Activity

Circle activities/events that meet the following criteria:

- Families leave knowing more about what their child should know or be able to do (the learning/developmental goals) at that grade/age level.
- They leave knowing how to employ a new tool or activity at home to support those goals.
- Activities are directly linked to learning

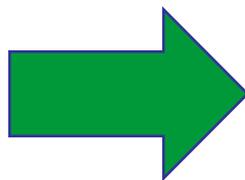


New Charge for Schools

Moving From:



**What a school does to bring
parents into the school**



**Family-school collaboration
to drive student learning and
achievement**



Wisconsin's State ESSA Plan

Wisconsin has set the ambitious goal of cutting the achievement gap in half for each student subgroup within six years.

Wisconsin will base calculations on the subgroups required in ESEA section 1111(c)(2)(B). They include:

- **Major racial and ethnic groups:** American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic/Latino, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, Two or More, and White;
- **Economically disadvantaged students**
- **Students with disabilities**
- **English Learners**



What is High-Impact Family Engagement?

High-impact family and community engagement is **collaborative, culturally responsive, and focused on improving children's learning.**

*From the National Association of Family, School, and Community Engagement:
<https://nafsce.site-ym.com/page/definition>*



High Efficacy-Based Activities

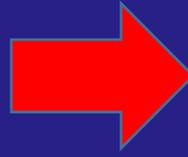
- Foster Cooperative Continuous Dialogue
- Allow opportunities for family participation
- Motivates families to contribute to learning
- Invites family feedback
- Looks to present and future learning
- Yields measurable results of student learning

Practices are even more effective when combined.

From <https://www.drsteveconstantino.org>



Involvement Activities



Engagement Strategies

Learning and Teaching

Low Impact	Moderate Impact	High Impact
Teachers tell families school rules and expectations for the year	Teachers invite families to share their hopes and dreams for their child	Teachers communicate frequently about short and long-term student goals, hold parent-teacher conferences in the community, make home visits

Adapted from NEA Priority Schools Campaign
<http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/Family-School-Community-Partnerships-2.0.pdf>



Examples of High-Impact Family Engagement

- Home visits
- Family Academic Socialization
- Modeling effective teaching practices / Home learning support
- Listening to families talk about children; differentiating instruction
- Incorporating content from families' home cultures into classroom lessons
- Aligning family engagement activities with school improvement goals/
Efficacy-based activities

Practices are even more effective when combined.

From <https://nafsce.site-ym.com/page/definition>





It's not enough for us to talk about...how to run a better parent-teacher conference or family literacy night.

It's about exploring **how we SEE those families sitting across from us...** Do we see dysfunction? Do we see someone who is inferior...because of the clothes they wear or the education they didn't get a chance to explore?

We're talking about **having families not sit across from us, but with us,** making decisions about our schools and communities.

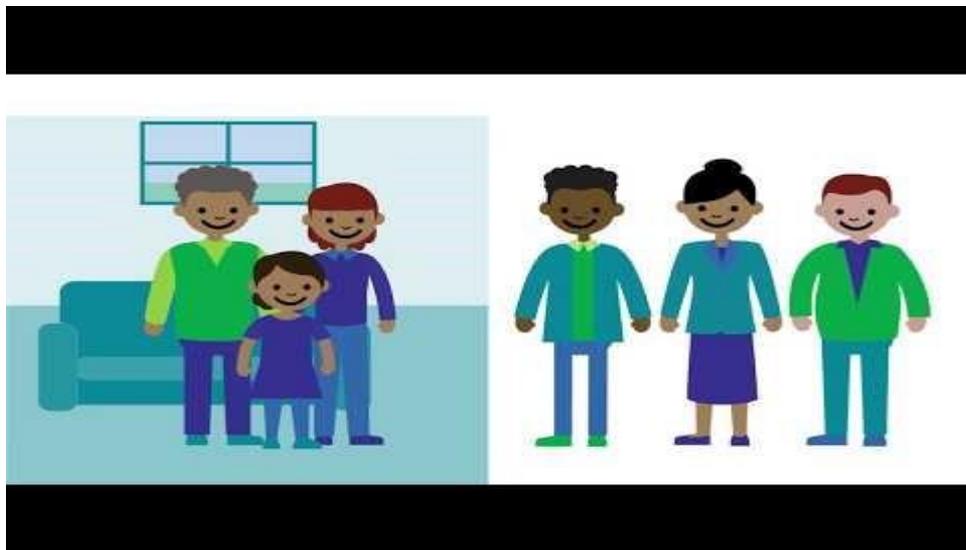
--Karen Mapp, Harvard Graduate School of Education

<http://nafsce.org/blog>

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Asset-Based Family Engagement Could Look Like This.



Making Decisions with Families

- Personally invite families where they are to **help shape** school meeting agendas and events
- Invite “**community connectors**” to bring other parents to the table
- Invite families to be **panelists at teacher inservices and parent meetings** and to serve on school leadership teams
- Provide families **opportunities to showcase** their skills/talents to students (in class, after school, in family workshops).



System-Wide Engagement

- Create **district-wide goals** for engagement of all students' families
- **Create structures** –partnership action teams, focus groups, and advisory councils – to empower families for student progress
- Invite families to help shape district-wide **policies**
- **Commit resources** to PK-12: parent liaisons; Titles I, II, and IV
- Use **Professional Development** days to explore high-impact FE
- Invite **community agency and university representatives** to educate teachers about changing dynamics and opportunities for families



New USDE Family Engagement “Dual Capacity” Framework

“Future policy and programming in family engagement should focus on building and enhancing the capacity of school/program staff and families to partner in ways that support student achievement and development, as well as school improvement.”



Organizational Conditions

- Systemic
- Integrated
- Sustained

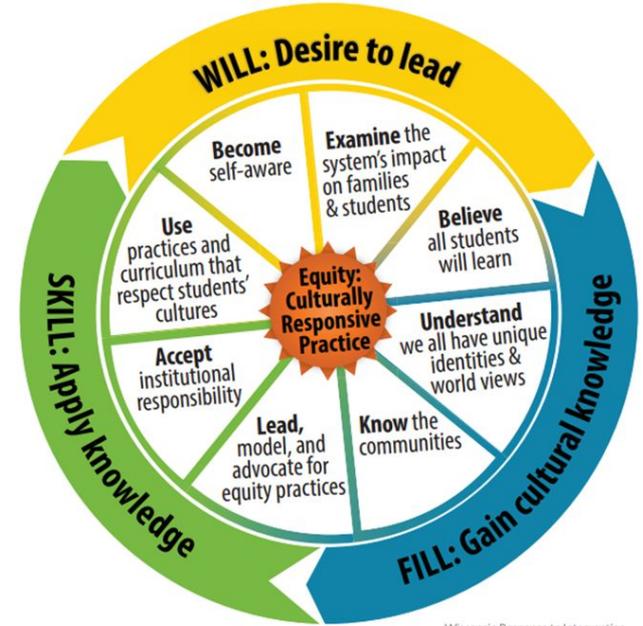


www.dualcapacity.org



What do I need to do?

- Build Leadership Team
- Develop Staff
- Instructional Transformation
- Culture Shift



Wisconsin Response to Intervention
Center, IDEA CFDA #84.027



Ineffective Culture Practices

- **Defensiveness**

There is a belief that the way things are being done are the best way, and nothing needs to be changed. Innovation is blocked.

- **Sense of Urgency**

It is more important to keep things moving and taking on more work than to slow down, step back to re-prioritize, or take care of oneself or others. The important can be sacrificed for the urgent.

- **Quantity Over Quality**

Things that are measured are prioritized, examined and discussed. People's emotional needs or attention to process are secondary to concrete outcomes.



Ineffective Culture Practices

- **Paternalism**

Those with power feel authorized to think and act on behalf of those without power.

- **Fear of Open Conflict**

Problems and conflicts are seen as challenges to authority and dismissed or squashed. It is better to be complicit rather than rabble rousing.

- **Right to Comfort**

Those with power take steps to preserve their own physical and emotional comfort, at the expense of others. This can be accelerated when those with less positional power also represent a marginalized group.



Culture Practices

Turn and Talk:

What are some of the ineffective culture practices you notice in your district/school?



Challenging Factors Hindering Progress

- Lack of training for staff to reflect on and navigate
- Staff that doesn't reflect the diversity of the community they serve
- Not enough time to support parents in their partner roles
- Structural barriers for families to have a pathway to staff positions, such as education requirements for employment



Challenging Factors Hindering Progress

- Inadequate, short-term funding dedicated to family engagement
- Realistic outcomes and timeframes
- Difficulty shifting the organization's mindset from “doing for” and “doing to” families to “doing with families”



Successful Strategies For Engaging Families

- Developing values and principles that support families as assets, partners and decision-makers
- Developing trusting relationships with families and supporting their leadership through multiple levels of training
- Strengthening organizational capacity to support parents in new roles, such as paid, part-time “family partner” positions and parent-led projects



Successful Strategies For Engaging Families

- Sharing power with families, even if their actions challenge “business as usual”
- Increasing your organization’s commitment to equity
- Involving parent leaders as decision-makers on policies and budgets



Reflection Questions on FE Section

- How could you add or upscale practices to utilize families as stakeholders in your district/school?



Equity Decision and Policy Tool

Equity Decision and Policy Tool to Advance Educational Equity



Educational Equity

Educational equity means that every student has access to the educational resources and rigor they need at the right moment in their education across race, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, sexual orientation, family background and/or family income.

Council of Chief State School Officers

“Leading for Equity: Opportunities for State Education Chiefs”



What is DPI's equity decision and policy tool?

Address systemic and institutional barriers to equity



Monitor personal commitments to equity and interactions



Instructions

INSTRUCTIONS TO USE Equity Decision and Policy Tool

Who?

The Equity Decision and Policy Tool is for all staff. We make decisions on a regular basis – when we answer the phones, as we prioritize work within our programs, when we develop technical assistance and guidance, and as we make policy recommendations. Employees know their jobs best and are best equipped to integrate equity into practice and routine operations.

What?

Use the Equity Decision and Policy Tool to:

- Shape and monitor your thinking when making decisions, developing policy or implementing a program.
- Examine how your program and policy decisions support or compromise DPI's commitment to equity.
- Consider the intentional and unintentional consequences of your work.

Why?

- To continue work toward DPI's mission of closing the racial achievement gap in Wisconsin.
- To continue to promote and support equity throughout all educational systems in Wisconsin.

How?

Use the Equity Decision and Policy tool to:

- Ensure alignment with DPI's agency-wide equity goals.
- Ensure all learners benefit from the policies, programs and decisions that you make.
- Gauge how and the extent to which your work promotes college and career readiness for all learners.



Interpersonal

LEADING FOR EQUITY

In my interactions . . .



I create a sense of **belonging** for myself and others



I seek out information to understand the **diverse perspectives** of people with whom I interact



I notice and respond to **micromessages**



I actively work to **recruit racially diverse candidates** for open positions on my team

Equity Prompts

LEADING FOR EQUITY Equity Decision and Policy Tool

When our policies, programs, and efforts affect Wisconsin students, families, communities, and educators . . .



Through your work, how are you accelerating **growth**/positive change for learners who most need it, based on data, while increasing opportunities for all students?



What intentional and unintentional **consequences** on educational equity could result from this?



Based on data, which groups of learners have not yet accessed your work? Specifically, what evidence-based strategies will you use to increase **access** by these learner groups?



How have you engaged **stakeholders** who are members of the communities impacted by your work? How will you continue to partner with diverse stakeholders to ensure educational equity for all students?

Mindset for Today's Discussion

“I create a sense of belonging for myself and others.”

- How do **you** create a sense of belonging for **your family at home**? How do **you** welcome **others** to your home?
- How does **your school/district** create a sense of belonging for **families**?
- From a family engagement perspective, **what else could schools do to create an environment of equity and help all families** feel a sense of belonging? How can schools invite families to help welcome other families?



Equity Decision and Policy Tool

Turn and Talk:

How might you utilize the Equity Decision and Policy Tool in your school or district?



Questions



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