

Maryland's PreK-12 Family Engagement Framework

The purpose of the Maryland Family Engagement Framework is to influence intentional thinking and actions necessary to implement family engagement policies and practices at the state, district, and school levels, preK-12. More specifically, the goal of the framework is to create a structure for educators that promote family-friendly schools where everyone – from teachers to parents – has the tools to support student academic achievement and success.

It is important to note that schools and school systems have many supports in place for family engagement, and the framework principles are not additional program requirements, but rather guidelines for helpful practices.

Please review each of the Framework's five core areas and click on the following link to submit comments by May 8, 2015. <http://websurveyor.msde.state.md.us/wsb.dll/s/25g452>

Core Areas

I. Welcoming All Families

- Inclusive of all students and families
- Culturally responsive
- Accessible
- Identify and remove barriers
- Cultivate positive climate

Creating an environment where all stakeholders – parents, students, and school staff – feel valued and connected is key to welcoming all families. School leadership is instrumental in fostering positive relationships among the school and families to build and sustain a welcoming school environment.

Welcoming all families involves a mindset that values cultural proficiency, the importance of diversity, and individual abilities. Understanding and respecting diverse family dynamics and cultures represented in the school community helps to identify and remove barriers and provides opportunities for meaningful engagement.

II. Partnerships among Schools, Families, and Community

- Role of families
- Opportunities for engaging families
- Awareness of child/adolescent development and transition
- Pathways to educational excellence

Families, schools, and communities are partners in education. Together they make educational decisions for children; are represented on state, district, and school-level committees regarding academic policies and programs; create and share an understanding of child/adolescent development; and advocate for the success of all children. Schools and community members work collaboratively, connecting students, families and staff to expand learning opportunities and community services. Through shared decision making, advocacy, and community engagement, schools, families, and communities share the responsibility to strengthen schools and positively support student success.

III. Student Learning and Supporting Student Success

- Shared decision making
- Advocacy
- Community engagement
- Transitioning

Family, school, and community engagement in education is a key lever for student learning and student success. Schools must be intentional and culturally responsive in their efforts to engage all families. Clearly defined goals and strategies help families and teachers work together to ensure that all students succeed. This includes preparing families as students transition throughout their school age years, to support students' academic, social, emotional, and physical needs. When families are equal partners, there is increased student academic performance, better attendance, and a more successful pathway to college- and career-readiness.

IV. Building Capacity

- Policy support
- Professional Development
- Instructional equity

Engaging families as partners in education creates essential relationships that can produce success for students. Ongoing professional development is critical at the state, district, and school levels to provide strategies to assist educators to effectively engage families as well as to build capacity of families to become full partners in education.

V. Effective School-Family Communication

- Targeted outreach
- Awareness
- Authentic two-way communication

Clear, on-going, and two-way communication is essential for successful school-home partnerships. Schools must take into consideration multiple ways of communicating with families and formats that best meet the needs of all families. When parents and educators communicate effectively, positive relationships develop, problems are more easily solved, and students make greater progress. Building respectful and trusting relationships among school staff, families, and community members are more likely to be effective in creating sustained connections that support student learning.