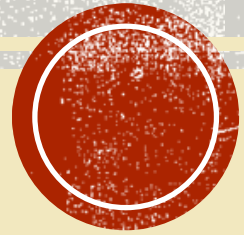
POWERFUL PARTNERSHIPS



Karen L. Mapp. EdD

Harvard Graduate School of Education

PLEASE FILL OUT THE SURVEY.

WHEN YOU ARE FINISHED, PLEASE FOLD IT TWICE AND SET IT ASIDE

GOALS

1. *Why* are educational partnerships with families so powerful?

2. *How* do we cultivate powerful partnerships with our families?

DEFINITION OF FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

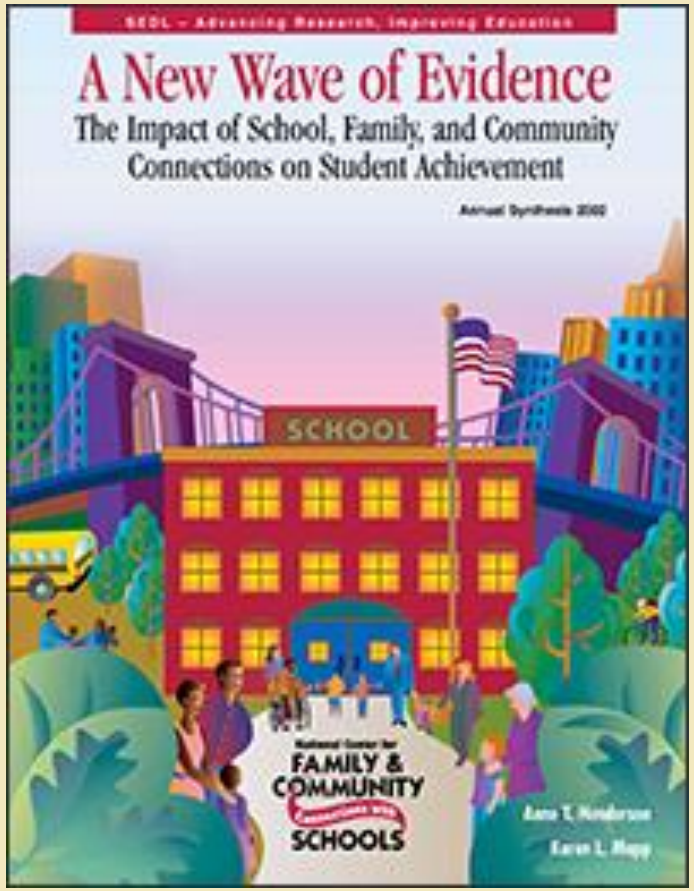
Family Engagement is a *full, equal, and equitable partnership* among families, educators and community partners to promote children's learning and development from birth through college and career.

I USED TO THINK…

I USED TO THINK…

WHY ARE PARTNERSHIPS SO POWERFUL?

OVER 40 YEARS OF RESEARCH



- Published in 2002
- 52 studies
- Qualitative and Quantitative

A new version of "Evidence" is coming out in 2020

IMPACT ON STUDENTS

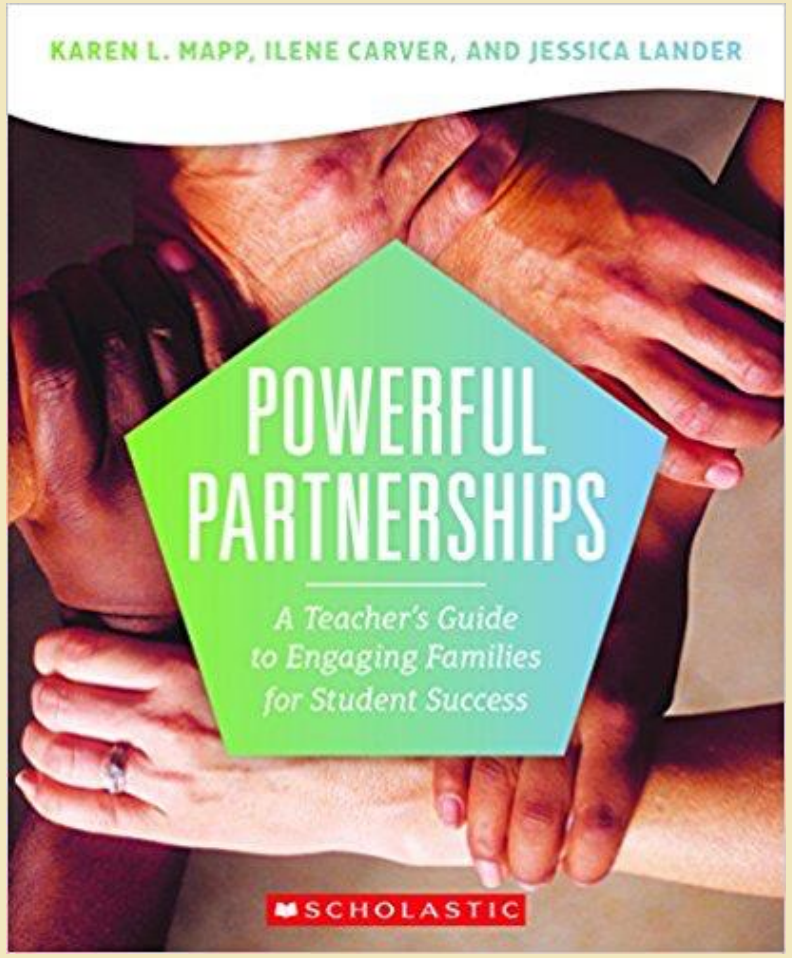
- Exhibit faster rates of literacy acquisition
- Earn higher grades and test scores

John Hopkins Evaluation 2015: Family Engagement Partnership (FEP) in Washington, DC

- Students whose families received a home visit, one of the core strategies in the FEP, had 24 percent fewer absences than similar students whose families did not receive a visit.

- These same students also were more likely to read at or above grade level compared to similar students who did not receive a home visit.

POWERFUL PARTNERSHIPS



JORGE'S STORY

- *Jorge entered our second grade classroom as a new student to the school. He is an English Language Learner and Spanish is the language spoken at home. When Jorge arrived, he didn't yet know any of the sounds that letters make. On a reading assessment in late September, he scored at an early kindergarten level. At the mid-October family conference, both Jorge and his mother were in tears. It was devastating to be seven years old and not to be able to read. During the conference, Jorge set a goal to improve his reading. He pledged to read every chance he got and his mother promised to sit with Jorge each night and to listen to him read.*

JORGE'S STORY

- *Jorge joined a reading intervention group at school, and I sent home many books for him to read, exchanging the books as he mastered them. In less than two months, Jorge could identify all the sounds the letters make, and he had increased his reading by two levels. In late November, Jorge was reading at an end of kindergarten level—with 6 months of the school year still ahead. At the next family conference, Jorge's mother spoke about how she renewed her commitment to listen to Jorge read at home once she understood its importance. Without a doubt, Jorge's ability to make reading progress was multiplied by the home-school connection. (p. 6)*

IMPACT ON STUDENTS

- Exhibit faster rates of literacy acquisition
- Earn higher grades and test scores
- Enroll in higher level programs
- Are promoted more and earn more credits
- Adapt better to school and attend more regularly
- Have better social skills and behavior
- Graduate and go on to higher education

IMPACT ON FAMILIES

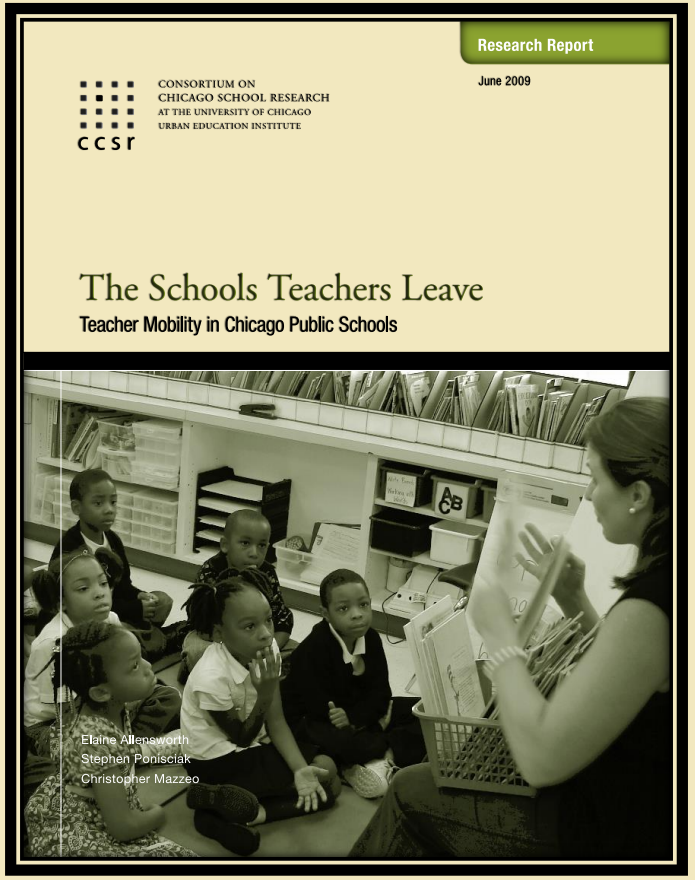
- Families' perception of their "job description" shifts (their "role construction")
- Families gain confidence in their ability to shape and influence their children's learning and development (their "self efficacy")
- Families develop an increased sense of accountability to their school or neighborhood, and advocate for *all* children versus *their* children
- Families are empowered to take on new challenges in terms of their education, careers, and civic participation

IMPACT ON FAMILIES

- Families' perception of their "job description" shifts (their "role construction")
- Families gain confidence in their ability to shape and influence their children's learning and development (their "self efficacy")
- Families develop an increased sense of accountability to their school or neighborhood, and advocate for *all* children versus *their* children
- Families are empowered to take on new challenges in terms of their education, careers, and civic participation

IMPACT ON EDUCATORS

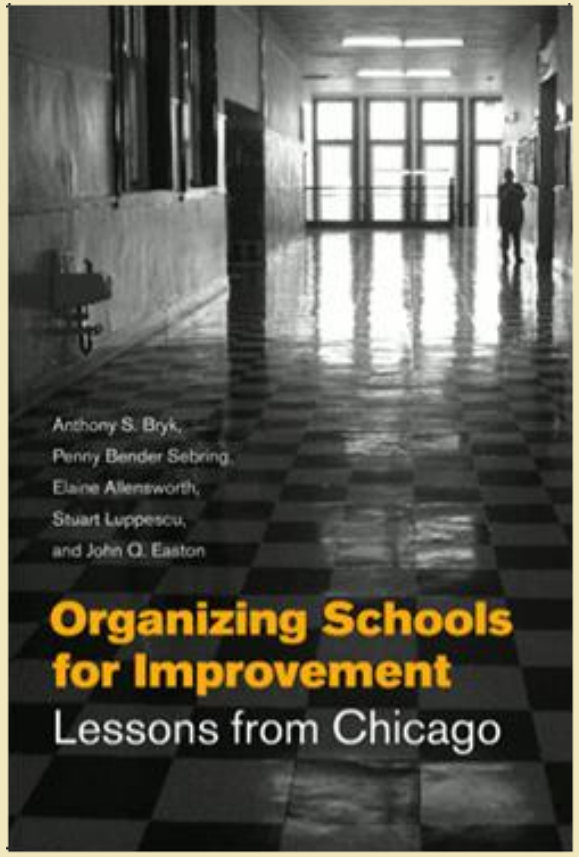
In elementary schools, teachers perceptions of parents as partners in students' education are strongly related to their decisions to remain in their school.



IMPACT ON EDUCATORS

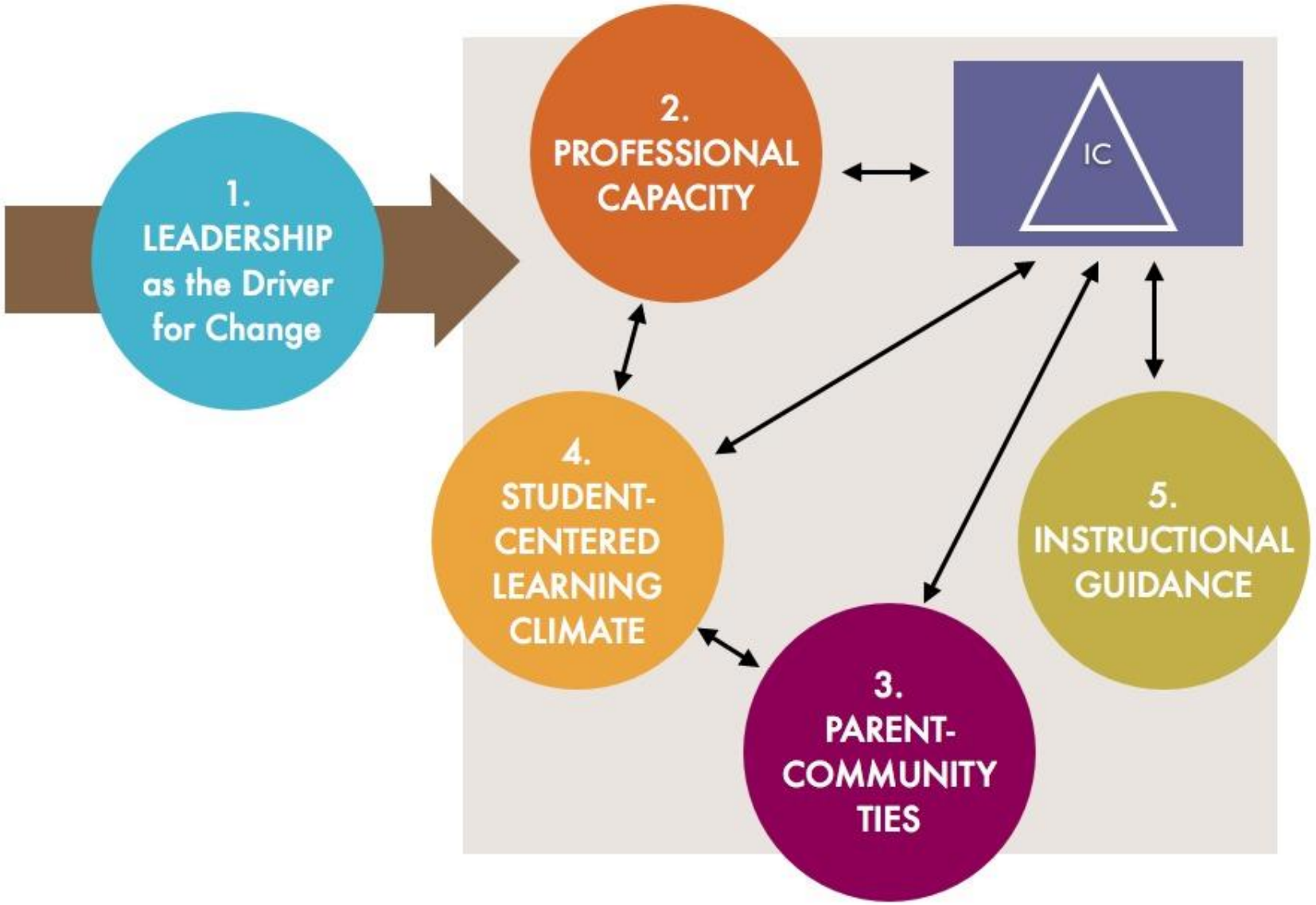
IMPACT ON EDUCATORS

IMPACT ON OUR SCHOOLS



FIVE ESSENTIAL SUPPORTS

The University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research



Why has it been difficult to cultivate and sustain effective family-school partnerships that support student achievement and school improvement?

The various stakeholders (families, district/school leaders and staff) have not had the opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills, in other words, the *capacity* to engage in effective partnerships.

WHERE DO WE START IN OUR WORK TO BUILD EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES?

WE START WITH OUR OWN CORE BELIEFS

OUR CORE

CORE BELIEF ONE

- All parents/families have dreams for their children and want the best for them.

"…I believe that all parents hold big expectations for the role that schools will play in the life chances of their children. They all harbor a large wish list of dreams and aspirations for their youngsters. All families care deeply about their children's education and hope that their progeny will be happier, more productive, and more successful than they have been in their lives." (Lightfoot, 2003)

CORE BELIEF TWO

- All parents/families have the capacity to support their children's learning.

CORE BELIEF THREE

- Families and school/program staff should be equal partners.

CORE BELIEF FOUR

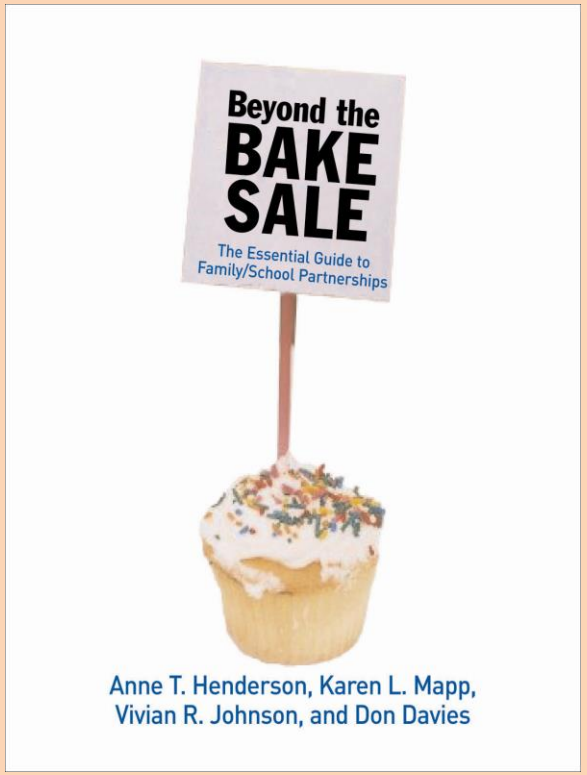
- The responsibility for building and sustaining partnerships between school, home, and community rests primarily with school/program staff, especially school/program leaders.

What does an Effective Family-School Partnership Look Like?

Beyond the Bake Sale

The Essential Guide to Family-School Partnerships

Anne T. Henderson, Karen L. Mapp, Vivian R. Johnson and Don Davies



The New Press, 2007

Fortress School (Below Basic)

- “Parents don’t care about their children’s education, and they are the main reason the kids are failing”

- “Parents don’t come to conferences or at-school events, no matter what we do”
- Principal picks a small group of “cooperative parents” to help out
- “We’re teachers, not social workers”
- “Curriculum and standards are too advanced for these parents”

Come-if-We-Call School (Basic)

- Parents are told what students will be learning at the fall open house

- Workshops are planned by staff with no input from families
- Families can visit school on report card pickup day
- Families call the office to get teacher-recorded messages about homework

Open-Door School (Proficient)

- Parent-teacher conferences are held at least twice a year
- There is an “Action Team” for family engagement

- School holds parent events three or four times a year
- Parents can raise issues at PTA meetings or see the principal
- Diversity of families is recognized through multicultural nights are held once a year

Partnership School (Advanced)

- Families are seen as partners in improving educational outcomes

- All family activities are connected to student learning
- There is a clear, open process for resolving problems
- Parent networks are valued and cultivated
- Families are actively involved in decisions on school improvement
- Staff conduct relationship-building home visits to families

Break

INTENTION OF THE DUAL CAPACITY-BUILDING FRAMEWORK

Instead of a *roadmap*, the framework provides a *compass*; a direction for the development of effective high impact strategies and initiatives.

THE CHALLENGE
Lack of opportunities for School/ Program Staff to build the capacity for partnerships
Ineffective Family–School Partnerships
Lack of opportunities for Families to build the capacity for partnerships
OPPORTUNITY CONDITIONS
Process Conditions
• Linked to learning
• Relational
• Development vs. service orientation
• Collaborative
• Interactive
Organizational Conditions
• Systemic: across the organization
• Integrated: embedded in all programs
• Sustained: with resources and infrastructure
POLICY AND PROGRAM GOALS
To build and enhance the capacity of staff/families in the "4 C" areas:
• Capabilities (skills and knowledge)
• Connections (networks)
• Cognition (beliefs, values)
• Confidence (self-efficacy)
FAMILY AND STAFF CAPACITY OUTCOMES
School and Program Staff who can
• Honor and recognize families' funds of knowledge
• Connect family engagement to student learning
• Create welcoming, inviting cultures
Effective Family–School Partnerships Supporting Student Achievement & School Improvement
Families who can negotiate multiple roles
• Supporters
• Encouragers
• Monitors
• Advocates
• Decision Makers
• Collaborators

The Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships

(Version 2)

The Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships

(Version 2)

The Challenge

Educators

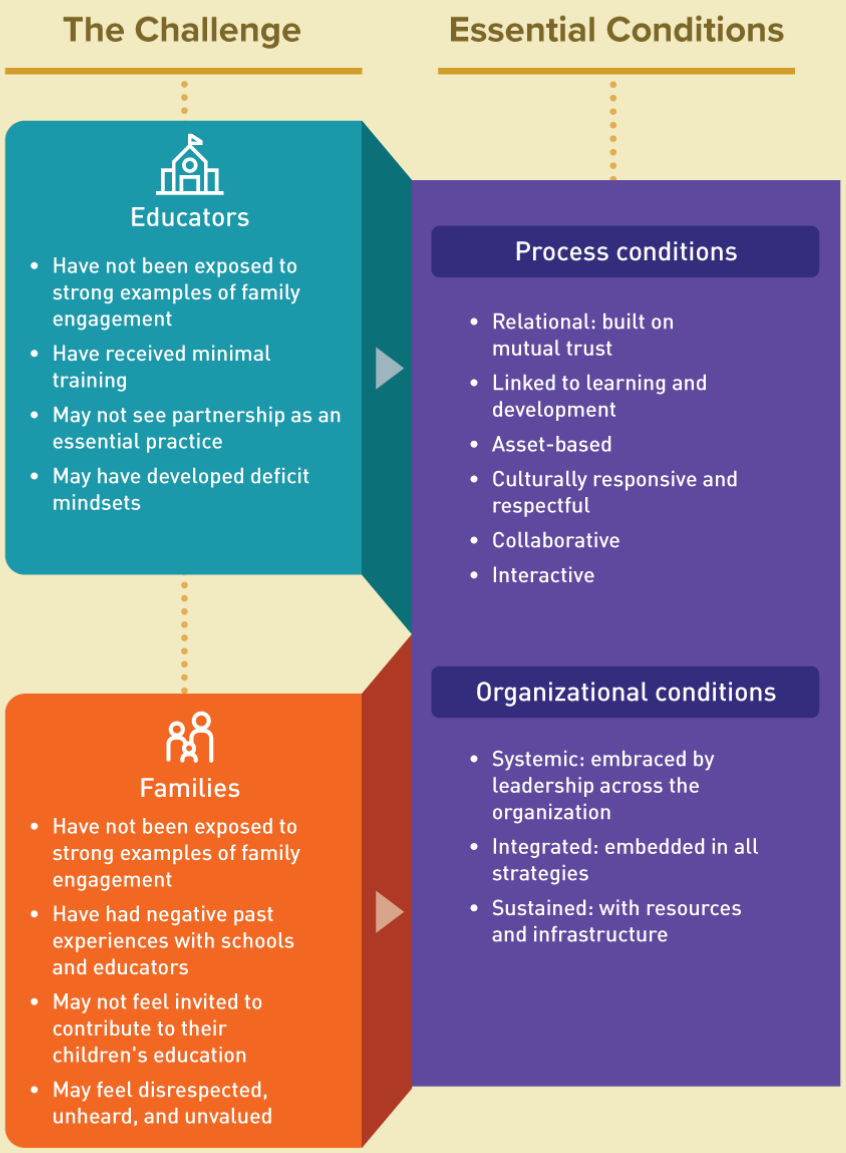
- Have not been exposed to strong examples of family engagement
- Have received minimal training
- May not see partnership as an essential practice
- May have developed deficit mindsets

Families

- Have not been exposed to strong examples of family engagement
- Have had negative past experiences with schools and educators
- May not feel invited to contribute to their children's education
- May feel disrespected, unheard, and unvalued

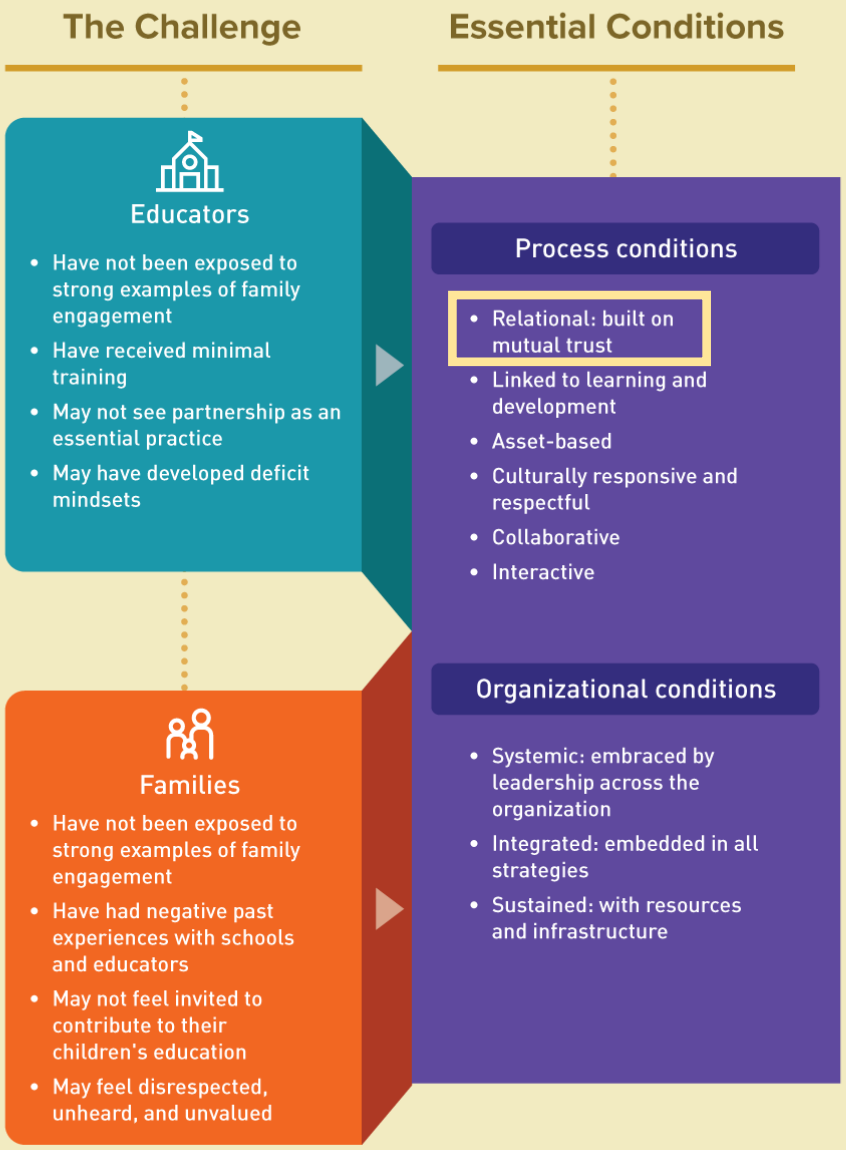
The Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships

(Version 2)



The Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships

(Version 2)



Elements of relational trust

Respect

Competence

Integrity

Personal regard

Bryk, A., & Schneider, B. (2002). Trust in schools: A core resource for improvement. Russell Sage Foundation.

Relational Trust - How Do You Know?

Am I showing trustworthiness to this parent?

Am I seeking input and listening carefully to what families have to say? (Respect)

Am I demonstrating to families that I am competent *and* that I think they are doing a good job as parents? (Competence)

Do I always keep my word with families? (Integrity)

Do I show families that I care about them as people versus objects? (Personal regard)

Elements of relational trust

Respect

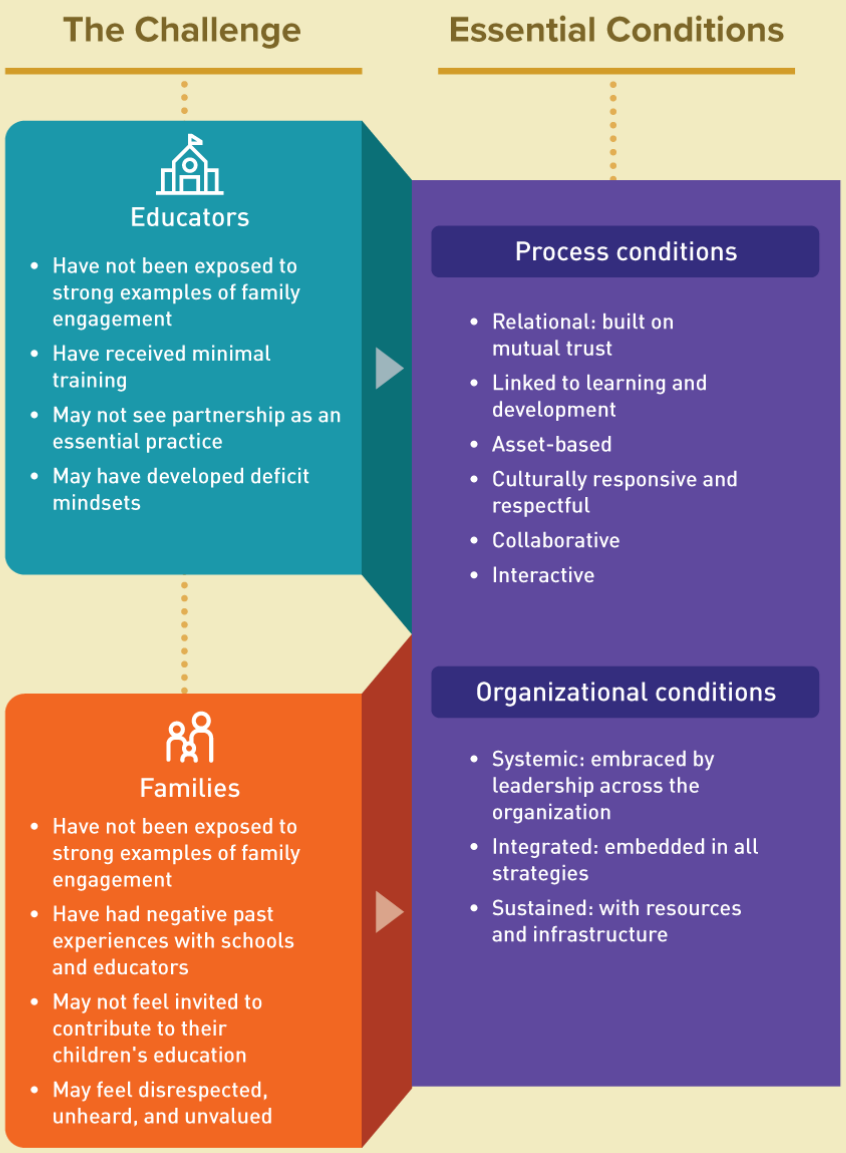
Competence

Integrity

Personal regard

The Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships

(Version 2)

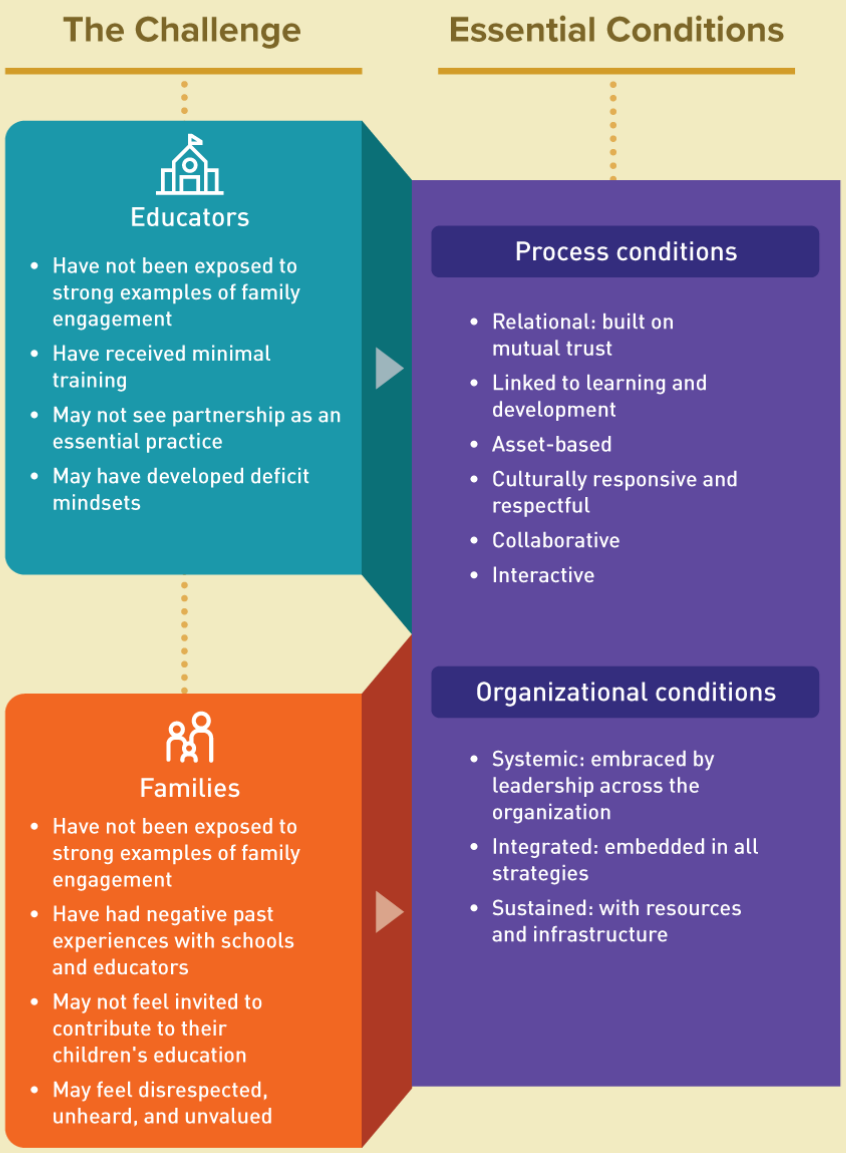


LINKED TO LEARNING/DEVELOPMENT EXERCISE

- List at least five events/activities that schools currently have for families (think across the entire school year)
- Circle all of the activities which fit 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* (through practice) to employ a new tool or activity at home to support those goals

The Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships

(Version 2)



Stanton Elementary School, DC

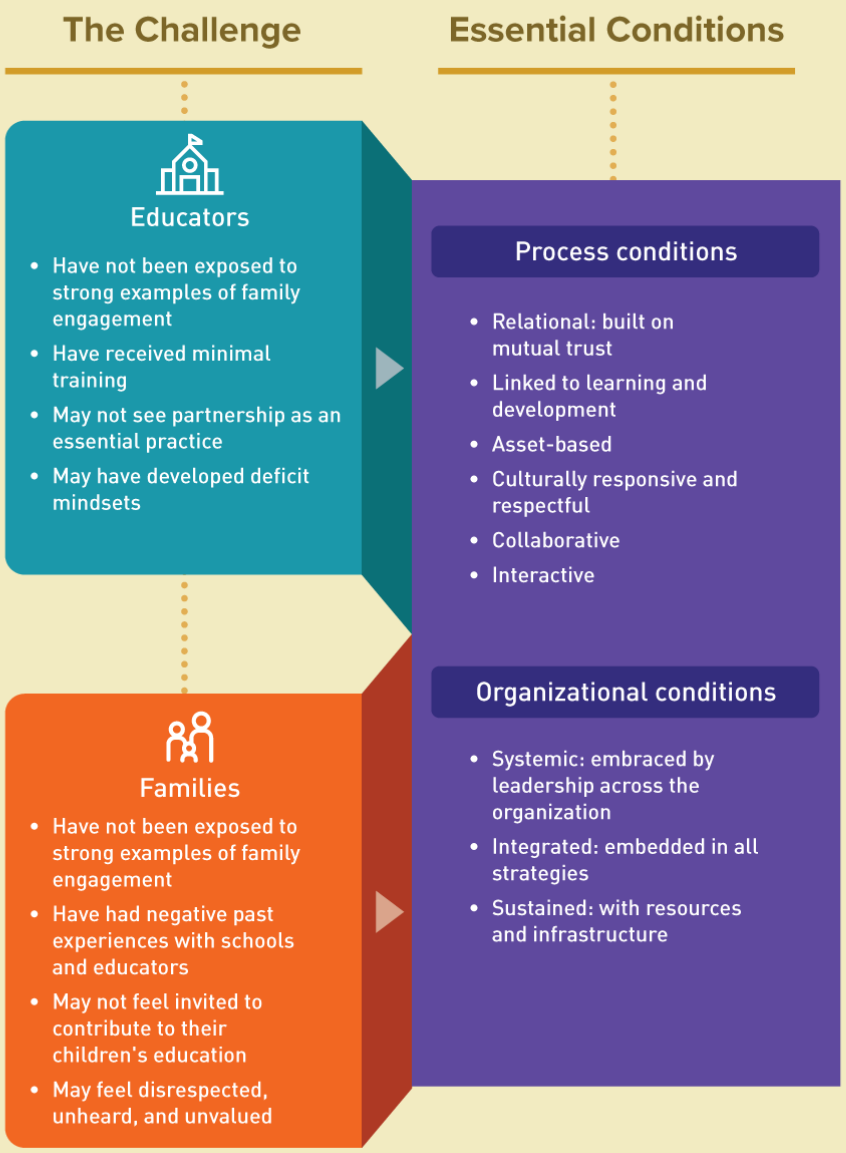
Stanton Elementary School, DC

Video debrief

- What evidence did you see of the process conditions?

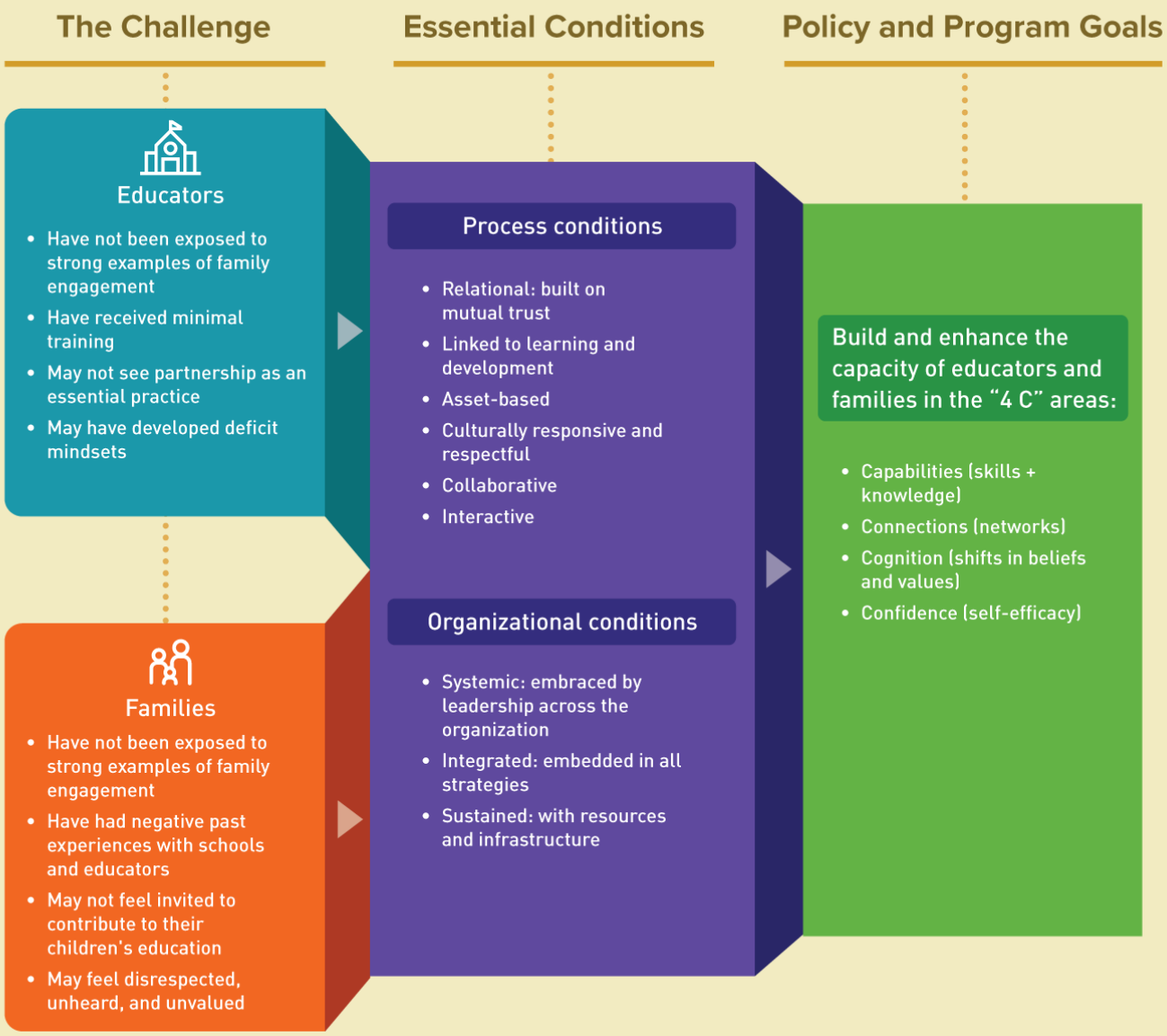
The Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships

(Version 2)



The Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships

(Version 2)



The Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships

(Version 2)

The Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships

(Version 2)

SHIFT IN BELIEFS AND PRACTICE

SHIFT IN BELIEFS AND PRACTICE

A PLACE TO START…

- How might you change:
  - the way phone calls are made to families?
  - your open houses?
  - your conferences?

FREE ONLINE COURSE: INTRODUCTION TO FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

- https://www.edx.org/course/introduction-family-engagement-education-harvardx-gse4x

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

- Annual IEL National Family and Community Engagement Conference, May 2020
- Harvard Professional Education Institute - Family Engagement in Education: Creating Effective Home and School Partnerships for Student Success, July 22-25 2019
- National Association of Family, School and Community Engagement (NAFSCE)
- Scholastic Workshop Series for district/school teams
- *Powerful Partnerships*