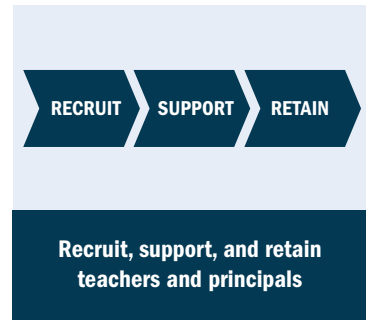


Family Engagement Supports Educators and Promotes Student Success

Recruiting, supporting, and retaining effective teachers and principals is essential to achieve the state’s vision of preparing Texas public school students for success in college, career, or the military. Equally, families want their children to succeed, and they understand that educators play an important role in their children’s success. When schools and families work together toward this common goal, children’s academic outcomes improve. Students attend school more regularly, earn better grades, enroll in higher level programs, and are more likely to enroll in postsecondary education.¹ A positive school climate that encourages family and community engagement benefits educators as well as students and can help schools attract and retain teachers and principals. The quality of supportive and positive relationships between teachers and families characterized by respect, trust, consideration, understanding, equality, and shared responsibility creates a strong foundation for collaborative teacher-family partnerships.² This is why educators, families, and communities have a shared responsibility to work together as equal partners to support student learning and develop and implement programs that meet students’ needs.³

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Strong Family-School Partnerships Benefit Students, Families, and Educators




Young children and older students alike benefit when their families are meaningfully and continuously engaged in their education from PreK through grade 12. Years of research consistently show that students’ academic outcomes improve when parents communicate high academic expectations and foster a shared value for education.⁴ For example, studies have noted that family engagement, though underutilized in middle and high school, is associated with higher academic achievement, better high school completion rates, and positive social-emotional outcomes for students.⁵ Other studies have noted young children are more motivated and have higher attention and persistence when families are more involved at school and at home.⁶ Additionally, family engagement contributes to decreased disciplinary issues, improved parent-teacher and teacher-student relationships, and an improved school environment.⁷ Thus, students are more likely to stay in school and graduate when their families are meaningfully engaged in their education.

Research cites lack of parental support or involvement as one of the workplace conditions associated with teacher attrition.⁸ A study of high-performing Hispanic schools along the Texas/Mexico border found that providing a welcoming environment, positive teacher relations and communication, and addressing barriers to participation serve to increase Hispanic parental involvement, including families considered “hard to reach.”⁹ Similarly, a recent survey on family engagement in Texas schools identified areas for improvement such as strengthening home-school communication, teaching families how to support learning at home, providing needed family supports, and building educators’ cultural and community awareness.¹⁰ Providing access to information about social services and community resources for families was also identified as an unmet need by new teachers in high-needs schools.¹¹ Research notes that when schools have governing bodies that are inclusive of families who represent the diversity of the student population, teachers report increased cultural and community awareness and more schoolwide efforts for all families.¹² By working in partnership, districts, principals, teachers, and families can play a key role in promoting the success of students while at the same time creating a welcoming school-community environment for all families and for educators as well. Creating this positive school climate can be essential to both recruiting and retaining effective teachers and principals.

“We love to have parents more involved in our district because the kids are in school, our attendance has gotten better, our discipline [problems] are lower, and our academics have gone higher. There’s a correlation with having parents involved as partners.”

Maggie Martinez, Asst. Superintendent for Student Services
Laredo Independent School District

Strategies and Actions to Increase Family Engagement

 Districts	 Schools/Educators	 Families
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Provide professional development opportunities for educators as a component of orientation and ongoing professional development on topics such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate ways to effectively engage families in supporting students' academic progress; • Building awareness around cultural and linguistic responsiveness; • Building understanding of school-community context. ▶ Establish a plan for measuring family engagement. For example, in Laredo ISD principals are rated on family engagement in their annual reviews. ▶ Include families in the hiring process. Families in Klein ISD have a voice in the hiring of principals through committees and surveys. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Create warm, welcoming school environments and develop respectful relationships with families. For example, Laredo ISD educators interact with families at sporting and campus events to build relationship and trust. ▶ Establish two-way communication with families. In Frisona ISD, teachers and families effectively stay in touch and communicate with each other using mobile apps. ▶ Inform families about learning expectations by providing grade-level goals, grade-level curriculum, and assessment calendars. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Share academic expectations with your child and discuss the value of education. ▶ Communicate regularly with your child's teacher about your child's progress and needs. ▶ Be a role model for your child by participating in learning opportunities for parents and families. ▶ Engage in organized family engagement activities such as workshops, school functions, and campus events. For example, Klein ISD, Frisona ISD, and Laredo ISD coordinate learning opportunities, skill-building activities, and family supports to create welcoming school environments for all families.

Family Engagement Tools and Resources

- ▶ Partners in Education: A Dual Capacity-Building Framework: <http://www.sedl.org/pubs/framework/>
- ▶ The Family Engagement for High School Success Toolkit: <https://www.americaspromise.org/resource/family-engagement-high-school-success-toolkit-planning-and-implementing-initiative-support>
- ▶ Creating Conditions for Meaningful Family Engagement: <https://healthysafekids.org/sites/default/files/Creating-Fam-Engmnt-508.pdf>
- ▶ Bringing Transformative Family Engagement to Scale: <http://vue.annenberginstitute.org/issues/44>
- ▶ Toolkit of Resources for Engaging Families and the Community as Partners: <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/projects/project.asp?projectID=4509>
- ▶ Creating a Welcoming Environment Video: <https://ksdetasn.org/resources/1290>
- ▶ Rubric of Effective Teacher Practices: <https://www.bostonpublicschools.org/Page/835>

¹ 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>

² Minke, K., Sheridan, S., Kim, E., Ryoo, J., & Koziol, N. (2014). Congruence in parent-teacher relationships: The role of shared perceptions. *The Elementary School Journal*, 114(4), 527-546. doi:10.1086/675637

³ Texas Education Agency. (2018). *Agency strategic plan: Fiscal years 2019 to 2023*. "Strategy 1.2.4: School Improvement and Support Programs." Austin, TX: Author. Retrieved from https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/TEA%20Strategic%20Plan_2019-2023.pdf

⁴ Jaynes, W. (2011). Parental involvement research: Moving to the next level. *The School Community Journal*, 21(1), 9–18. Retrieved from <http://www.adi.org/journal/2011ss/JeynesSpring2011.pdf>

⁵ National Family, School, and Community Engagement Working Group. (2010). *Taking leadership, innovating change: Profiles in family, school, and community engagement*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Family Research Project.

⁶ Fantuzzo, J., McWayne, C., Perry, M., & Childs, S. (2004). Multiple dimensions of family involvement and their relations to behavioral and learning competencies for urban, low-income children. *School Psychology Review*, 33(4), 467–480.

⁷ Henderson & Mapp. *A new wave of evidence*.

⁸ Sutcher, L., Darling-Hammond, L., & Carver-Thomas, D. (2016). *A coming crisis in teaching? Teacher supply, demand, and shortages in the U.S.* Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute. Retrieved from <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/coming-crisis-teaching>

⁹ Scribner, J. D., Young, M. D., & Pedroza, A. (1999). Building collaborative relationships with parents. In P. Reyes, J. D. Scribner & A. Paredes-Scribner (Eds.), *Lessons from high-performing Hispanic schools: Creating learning communities* (pp. 36-60). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

¹⁰ Texas State Board of Education. (2018, November). *Long-range plan for public education. "Community conversations, 2017–2018."* Austin, TX: Author. Retrieved from https://tea.texas.gov/About_TEA/Leadership/State_Board_of_Education/LRP/Texans_provide_input_at_Community_Conversations

¹¹ Marschall, M. (2006). Parent involvement and educational outcomes for Latino students. *Review of Policy Research*, 23(5): 1053–1076. Retrieved from <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/ff13/7ad208b2b8b96afc6eb3a5d41f2c6f5467e1.pdf>

¹² Marschall. Parent involvement.