

Mississippi's Family Engagement Framework & Toolkit

2019 Mississippi Literacy Conference

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VISION

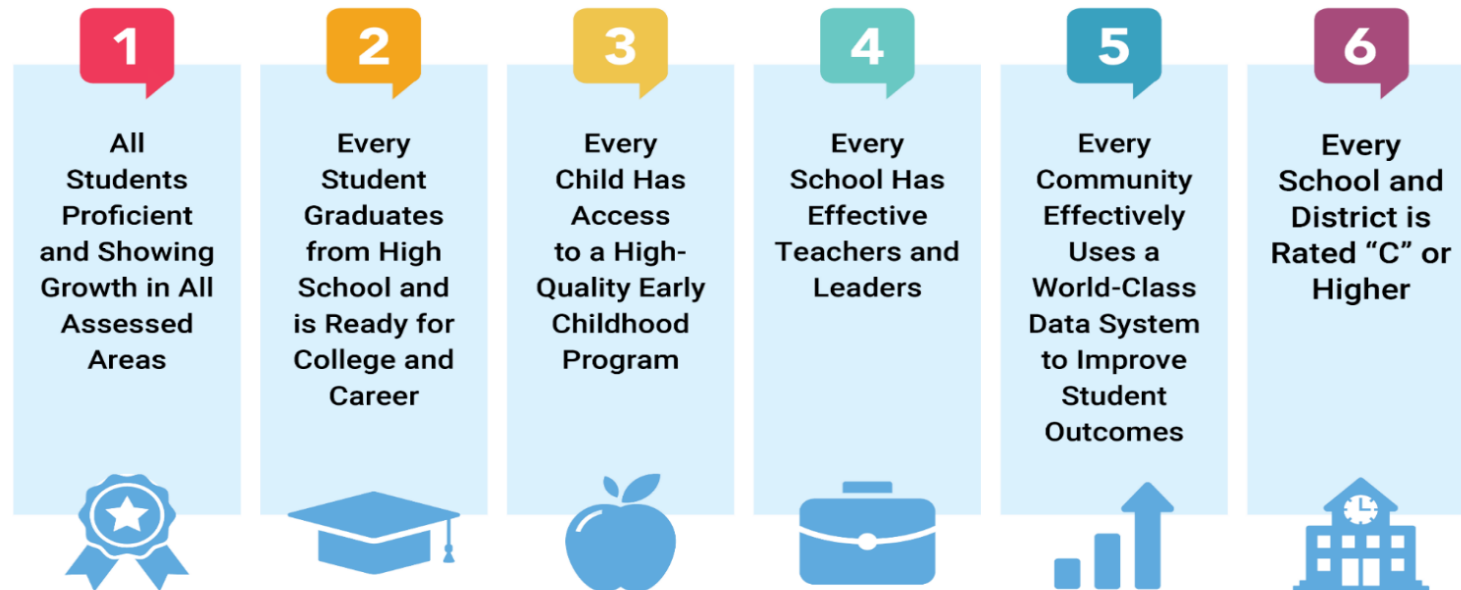
To create a world-class educational system that gives students the knowledge and skills to be successful in college and the workforce, and to flourish as parents and citizens

MISSION

To provide leadership through the development of policy and accountability systems so that all students are prepared to compete in the global community

Mississippi Department of Education

MISSISSIPPI STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS



What does
family engagement
mean to you?



Family Engagement is less about...

families
that are
engaged,

And more about...

reaching
families that
aren't engaged.

Involvement vs. Engagement

Definition

THEN

Parent Involvement

NOW

*School, family, and community
partnerships*

Implementing Effective Programs
Engagement Center on School,

Joyce L. Epstein, Ph.D.,
Director of Family and Community for Student Success in School Family, and Community Partnerships

Responsibilities

THEN

Organized by one person or just a few

Mainly in preschool classrooms

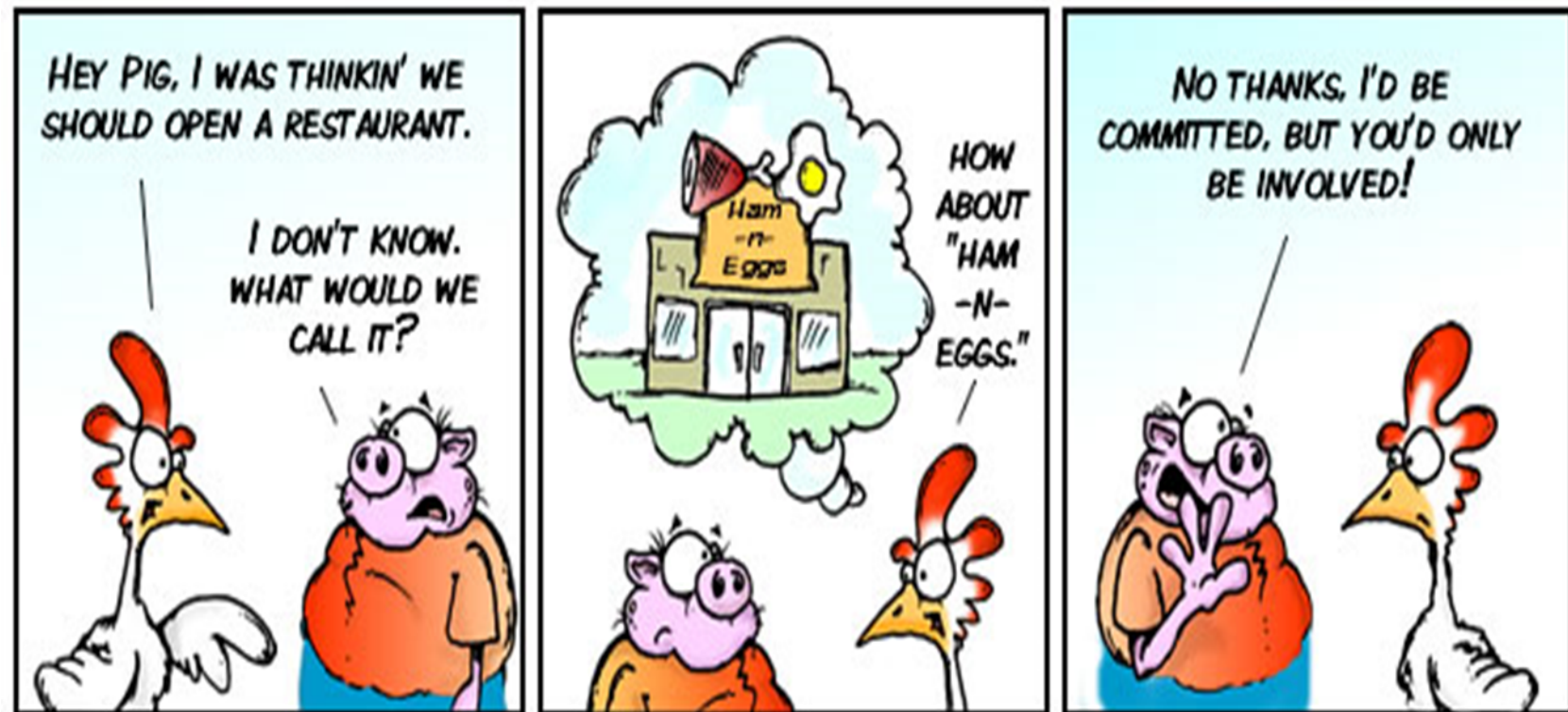
Implementing Effective Programs
Engagement Center on School,

NOW

Part of school and classroom organization at ALL grade levels

*Organized by an **Action Team for Partnerships***

Joyce L. Epstein, Ph.D.,
Director of Family and Community for Student Success in School Family, and Community Partnerships



By Clark & Vizdos

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There is a positive and convincing relationship between family involvement and benefits for students, including improved academic achievement. This relationship holds across families of all economic, racial/ethnic, and educational backgrounds and for students at all ages.

Anne T. Henderson, Karen L. Mapp

INVOLVEMENT

Conversations led by the schools telling families what they should be doing

Communication is one sided with schools sending home sheets of information and automated phone calls

Pre-determined and limited list of ways families can help

Focuses on improving what goes on within the four walls of the school

ENGAGEMENT

Conversations that include schools listening to families' ideas about what works best for their child

Utilized two-way conversation such as home visits and personal phone calls

Offers opportunities for families to come together to identify needs

Recognizes that schools must participate as an institution in community-wide improvement efforts

Critical to creating a successful learning environment

Research Highlights

1. Students with **involved families** – regardless of income, background characteristics, or level of achievement – are **more** likely to do better in school.
2. Partnership programs can increase student achievements, improve attendance and behavior, and promote positive social skills.
3. When partnership practices are linked to school goals (e.g., reading, math, attendance, etc.), more and different families become involved in ways that directly assist students' learning and development.

Implementing Effective Programs
Engagement Center on School,



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To have a successful partnership:

- Both parties must feel valued
- Both parties must contribute



It's not one size fits all...

“greater understanding of the personal situations of parents helps teachers improve their communication and ability to provide support and resources when needed”

www.urban.org

Improving Prekindergarten Attendance

Importance of Family Engagement

- Family engagement is a critical component of high-quality education throughout the continuum of learning.
- Positive family engagement practices support healthy development in:
 - social skills
 - emotional skills
 - cognitive skills
 - physical development

Importance of Family Engagement cont...

- Families benefit from family engagement practices when educators:
 - link them to the support they need
 - help build their peer networks
 - increase their understanding of child development
 - provide classes and training to enhance family caregiver practices and improve job skills

Systems Approach

Systems Approach

A continuous systems approach will work together to achieve the ultimate child outcomes for successful lifelong learners.



***Everyone wants
EXCELLENT and SUCCESSFUL
SCHOOLS and STUDENTS.***

How will we reach these goals?



Family Engagement for School Success

- Build relationships
- Communication
- Family Engagement Activities
- Prepare them, tell them, teach them, and engage them



Family Engagement...What's the big deal?



Mississippi's Family Engagement Framework & Toolkit

Evolution of MS Family Engagement Framework

Prior to 2017

- **Head Start utilizes** the Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework
- School districts and early childhood programs **did not have access** to a formal, comprehensive family engagement framework

July 2017

- Mississippi Department of Education is invited to participate in a national technical assistance opportunity with the following partners:
 - Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)
 - The Policy Equity Group
 - National Association of Family, School, and Community Engagement (NAFSCE)
 - Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium
 - Campaign for Grade Level Reading

Evolution of MS Family Engagement Framework

July 2017 - Launch

- **MDE team** embarks as **pioneers in the state** to establish collaborating partnerships that will result in a **statewide family engagement coalition, framework, and toolkit**
- 24-month product development process

Family Engagement Coalition

- Mississippi Department of Education Internal Stakeholders
- External Stakeholders
 - Focus groups with families
 - Professional Development trainings focus groups

Mississippi's Family Engagement Definitions

- **FAMILY** is a fundamental social group in communities consisting of a child/ren and a parent, grandparent, guardian, caregiver, or any responsible individual invested in the educational success of a child.
- **FAMILY ENGAGEMENT** is an on-going, shared responsibility of families, educational programs, and communities for all student learning and academic achievement that continues from birth to young adulthood.
- **EQUITABLE** means that families are empowered to work with educators, public officials, and community partners to remove any barriers that prevent them from being fully engaged in their child(ren)'s education. This includes access to ample opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills to become full and equal partners in that deliberate and intentional work.

Mississippi's Family Engagement Framework

The purpose of this document is to:

- Recognize the importance of family engagement as a core, foundational component of education
- Put forth a set of common goals for family engagement across the education system and within individual educators
- Offer family engagement strategies for educators and identify resources that support the implementation of those strategies
- Empower stronger family-centered partnerships to gain a greater understanding of how a family's strengths, needs, and resources affect a child's safety, stability, well-being and school readiness success.



Framework Implementation

- Natural progression of transitioning from early learning settings to formalized school settings
- Implemented with a solid foundation
- Family-friendly schools to support student academic achievement, development, and success

Mississippi's Family Engagement Toolkit includes...

- Four (4) Goals
- Intended outcomes for each goal
- Resources for each goal
- Self-assessment for Directors/Administrators
- Strategies for effective family engagement implementation
- Activities

Family Engagement Goals

1. Welcome and Empower ALL Families
2. Increase Student Success
3. Build Leadership and Capacity
4. Develop Community Investment and Partnerships



GOAL 1

Welcome and
Empower ALL
Families



To ensure that families have the skills, resources, and confidence to address their basic needs and can take on roles that contribute to their child's learning.



GOAL 1: Welcome and Empower ALL Families

What does it look like?

- Develop policies and activities that create a welcoming environment for families.
- Demonstrate how to implement multiple, on-going, meaningful **two-way** communication with families.
- Create opportunities for families to learn more about social-emotional well-being.
- Use surveys, meetings, open houses, home visits, and phone calls to find out about families and identify skills they would like for their child to develop in an educational setting.



Example Activity Card

Daily Diary

LEVEL	Easy
COST	Low

TARGET AUDIENCE Families with children PreK— 6th grade

DURATION Throughout the year

MATERIALS NEEDED Notebook

DESCRIPTION

These notebooks, kept in children's backpacks, are an excellent way to send messages to and from school and home regarding a child's progress/questions/suggestions/concerns/praise. Teachers write a note and families write a note. This creates a feedback loop of conversation.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

Have interpreter help families whose first language is not English.



Family Engagement Activity Carousel



Think about our discussion of
**Goal 1: Welcome and Empower
ALL Families**

On your **BLUE** Post-it, share a family engagement activity that your child's school currently does, or an activity that you would like them to do, that aligns with Goal 1.

Share with your neighbor and post your note on the poster with the **BLUE** petal.

GOAL 2

To promote positive, encouraging relationships that provide opportunities to focus energy towards learning and continued success in school.



GOAL 2: Increase Student Success

What does it look like?

- Recognize existing ways families are supporting their children's development and success.
- Develop curriculum and program activities that connect families to the learning of their children.
- Provide information to staff on best practices focused on family engagement.



Example Activity

MAKE DIFFERENT EMOTION FACES AND HAVE YOUR CHILD GUESS THE EMOTION. CAN ANIMALS EXPRESS EMOTION? HOW?

 MAY 2019						
KINDERGARTEN READINESS CALENDAR						
CREATIVE ARTS	LANGUAGE ARTS	SCIENCE	LETTER M	SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL	MATH	PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
 HOW MANY SONGS DO YOU KNOW ABOUT A FARM? WHAT ARE YOUR FAVORITE SONGS? COMPARE YOUR LISTS! HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY! BE SURE TO LET ALL THE SPECIAL WOMEN IN YOUR LIFE KNOW JUST HOW IMPORTANT THEY ARE TO YOU! WHAT KIND OF THINGS GROW ON A FARM BESIDES ANIMALS? FIND SOME LEAVES FROM OUTSIDE AND PAINT WITH THEM.	 READ ONE OF THE BOOKS FROM THE LIBRARY ABOUT FARMS. ARE THERE ANY WORDS FROM THE STORY THAT ARE NEW FOR YOUR CHILD? THERE ARE SO MANY ANIMALS THAT CAN LIVE ON THE FARM! DRAW A PICTURE OF A FARM AND TALK ABOUT ALL THE ANIMALS THAT ARE IN THE PICTURE.	 FARMERS NEED TO USE MANY TOOLS & MACHINES ON THE FARM. WHAT TYPES DO THEY NEED? HOW DO THEY HELP WITH WORK ON THE FARM? THE DOCTOR THAT CARES FOR ANIMALS IS A VETERINARIAN. DO VETERINARIANS JUST TAKE CARE OF FARM ANIMALS?	HAPPY MAY DAY! - OUR LETTER IS M FOR THE MONTH OF MAY! LOOK THROUGH THIS CALENDAR FOR THE LETTER M! ARE THERE MORE UPPERCASE OR LOWERCASE LETTER M? GO FOR A LETTER M HUNT! WHAT ARE SOME THINGS IN YOUR HOME THAT BEGIN WITH THE LETTER M? LOOK AT YOUR LIST FROM MONDAY. DO ANY FRUITS AND VEGETABLES HAVE THE LETTER M?	TALK ABOUT SOME TRADITIONAL OR SPECIAL EVENTS IN MAY FOR YOUR FAMILY OR IN YOUR COMMUNITY! WHAT WOULD IT BE LIKE TO LIVE ON A FARM? HOW WOULD IT BE DIFFERENT THAN WHERE YOU LIVE NOW? MAKE DIFFERENT EMOTION FACES AND HAVE YOUR CHILD GUESS THE EMOTION. CAN ANIMALS EXPRESS EMOTION? HOW? TALK WITH YOUR CHILD ABOUT SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE FRUITS & VEGETABLES. WHAT ARE YOUR CHILD'S FAVORITES? HAVE THEY CHANGED?	THERE ARE A LOT OF FRIDAYS IN MAY! HOW MANY? WHICH MONTH HAS MORE FRIDAYS, APRIL OR MAY? THERE ARE LOTS OF SHAPES ON THE FARM! WHAT SHAPES DO YOU SEE ON THE FARM IN YOUR BOOKS? HOW MANY FARM ANIMALS HAVE YOU TALKED ABOUT THIS WEEK? WHAT DO YOU THINK WAS THE BIGGEST ANIMAL? SMALLEST? HOW DO FARMERS PLANT FRUITS AND VEGETABLES? TALK ABOUT LINES AND PATTERNS.	GO TO THE LIBRARY & CHECK OUT BOOKS ABOUT FARMS! GO OUTSIDE WITH A GROUP OF FRIENDS AND PLAY DUCK, DUCK, GOOSE! RETURN THE BOOKS TO THE LIBRARY AND CHECK OUT MORE! TALK WITH YOUR CHILD ABOUT WHAT IT MUST BE LIKE FOR A FARMER TO HARVEST THE LAND. WHAT BODY PARTS WOULD YOU USE?
26 GO OUTSIDE WITH FRIENDS AND PRETEND THAT YOU LIVE AND WORK ON THE FARM.	27 HAPPY MEMORIAL DAY! DID YOU KNOW MEMORIAL DAY STARTED IN COLUMBUS, MS?	28 MAY IS THE LAST MONTH OF SPRING. WHAT SEASON BEGINS NEXT MONTH?	29 WHAT WOULD YOUR NAME SOUND LIKE IF IT STARTED WITH THE LETTER M?	30 DOES YOUR CHILD KNOW HIS OR HER COMPLETE NAME? FIRST NAME, MIDDLE NAME, AND LAST NAME? DO THEY KNOW YOUR COMPLETE NAME?	31 TODAY IS THE LAST DAY OF MAY! WHAT MONTH STARTS TOMORROW?	

Family Engagement Activity Carousel



Think about our discussion of
Goal 2: Increase Student Success

On your **GREEN** Post-it, share a family engagement activity that your child's school currently does, or an activity that you would like them to do, that aligns with Goal 2.

Share with your table group and post your note on the poster with the **GREEN** petal.

GOAL 3

**Build
Leadership
and Capacity**



To support the educational aspirations of families as leaders and advocates through the educational transitions from early childhood to completion of their child's secondary education.



GOAL 3: Build Leadership and Capacity

What does it look like?

- Obtain knowledge and skills to create leadership and advocacy opportunities for families.
- Provide professional development for local educational agency and school personnel regarding family engagement strategies.
- Provide supportive programs that reach family members at home, in the community, and at school.
- Monitor and evaluate efforts of effectiveness through high quality, evidenced-based strategies.
- Utilize various reciprocal communication strategies to build individual relationships with families.



Example Activity



Family Survey

LEVEL	Intermediate
COST	Moderate

TARGET AUDIENCE Families with children PreK—12th grade

DURATION On an annual basis

MATERIALS NEEDED Family assessment document

DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the family survey is to give family members the opportunity to provide their opinion and thoughts on various aspects of their child's early childhood program. Results of these surveys can be used to assess program progress, make decisions, and change or revise program goals and actions. Surveys can be done in person or online.

THINGS TO CONSIDER



- Ensure that the assessment is designed in a way to allow families to provide thoughts on many different components of program operations.
- Assessments should be developed in a manner in which families are able to comprehend what is being asked of them.
- Translate assessments into multiple languages.
- Utilize free online survey tools such as [surveymonkey.com](https://www.surveymonkey.com), Google Forms, or Microsoft Forms.

Family Engagement Activity Carousel



Think about our discussion of
Goal 3: Build Leadership and Capacity

On your **PINK** Post-it, share a family engagement activity that your child's school currently does, or an activity that you would like them to do, that aligns with Goal 3.

Share with your neighbor and post your note on the poster with the **PINK** petal.

GOAL 4

To connect families to their peers, all school personnel, and community partners for continuous support, encouragement, and resources.



GOAL 4: Develop Community Investment and Partnerships



The concept of “partnership” recognizes that families, educators and others in the community share responsibility for students’ learning and development.
(Epstein, 4th Edition)

Goal 4: Develop Community Investment and Partnerships

What does it look like?

- Obtain knowledge and skills to connect families with peers and community resources.
- Obtain knowledge and skills to help families make effective transitions to kindergarten.
- Collaborate and/or provide subgrants to schools. This allows schools to collaborate with community based or other organizations with a record of success in improving and increasing family engagement.



Example Activity



Adopt-A-School

LEVEL	Intermediate
COST	Low

TARGET AUDIENCE Families with children PreK—12th grade who have low incomes

DURATION Ongoing

MATERIALS NEEDED Volunteers to collect/organize/distribute material goods to meet needs of students

DESCRIPTION

The school adopter (churches or local community organizations or businesses would work well for this project) provides food bags on Friday for students who need food at home. When students need shoes, coats, hygiene products, the adopter collects those items and gets them to the school. Student information must be kept confidential.

THINGS TO CONSIDER



- Currently implemented in Petal school district - contact for pros/cons/ assistance with planning and development.
- Responding to the needs during school breaks.
- Defining criteria for students to determine eligibility.

Family Engagement Activity Carousel



Think about our discussion of
**Goal 4: Develop Community
Investment and Partnerships**

On your **PURPLE** Post-it, share a family engagement activity that your child's school currently does, or an activity that you would like them to do, that aligns with Goal 4.

Share with your table group and post your note on the poster with the **PURPLE** petal.

Strategies

Strategies for Effective Family Engagement Implementation

- Strategies are offered to:
 - Support the foundational areas of a program, which include leadership and professional development.
 - Support family engagement initiatives at the program or educators “foundational impact” areas.

Foundational Impact Areas

- Program Leadership
- Professional Development
- High Quality Program Environment
- Family Partnerships
- Community Investment and Partnerships

Child Outcomes

Outcomes

- Improve their self-concept.
- Increase their intellectual growth.
- Enlarge their understanding of the world, people, experiences, and ideas.
- Increase their competencies and skills in oral language, literacy, writing, listening, and thinking.
- Increase their competencies and skills in mathematical reasoning and scientific exploration.

Outcomes continued...

- Increase their skills involved in physical coordination and gross and fine motor skills.
- Increase their competence in dealing with emotions, feelings, and social situations.
- Increase their self-direction and independence.
- Develop cooperative, trusting relationships.
- Develop their natural curiosity and creative potential.
- Develop a love of learning.

Contact the “A Team”

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Questions and comments



Upcoming Opportunities

- **Mississippi's Family Engagement Connections Conference**
 - Oxford – September 27 & 28, 2019
 - Jackson – October 25 & 26, 2019
 - Hattiesburg – November 15 & 16, 2019
- **Family Engagement Coaching and Technical Assistance**
 - At the request of Administrator, Child Care Director or School District
 - 8-month commitment over school year
- **On the Horizon - Mississippi Early Childhood Leadership Institute**
 - 20 Administrators and/or Child Care Directors
 - 6 group trainings
 - 6 face-to-face coaching meetings
 - 1-year commitment