

MISSISSIPPI

# FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Framework and Toolkit



MISSISSIPPI  
DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION

Ensuring a bright future for every child

**Mississippi Department of Education**  
FAMILY ENGAGEMENT COALITION

## **MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

Carey M. Wright, Ed. D. • State Superintendent of Education

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## Introduction

Mississippi’s vision for family engagement is a multi-generational strategy. Families are the key to a child’s early development and learning. As such, a goal of family engagement must be to support family well-being. Mississippi’s family engagement initiatives and the family engagement practices of educators should promote the safety, health, and financial security of families so they can successfully guide and develop their children. In their separate domains, educators and families both understand the importance of social-emotional skills — that the ability to manage emotions, to empathize, and to collaborate is key to fulfillment and success, in school and in life. But schools, families, and communities are not always in sync on how to develop those competencies.

The Mississippi Department of Education values the role that administrators, teachers, families, and communities play in promoting positive outcomes for lifelong learning. Family engagement is a critical component of high-quality education across the continuum of learning. When done well, family engagement practices can support the healthy social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development throughout the continuum of learning, regardless of ethnic or socioeconomic background.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, families—particularly those with limited access to resources—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, and provide classes and training to enhance family caregiver practices and improve job skills.

In 2017, the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) provided a family engagement technical assistance opportunity to coordinate the development of a framework. The framework contains a set of goals and family engagement practices it also identifies the state’s family engagement initiatives to push the work out to education communities.

Mississippi’s Family Engagement Framework, while informed by research and federal resources, utilizes the overall structure of the Parent, Family and Community Engagement Framework published by the Office of Head Start. It is important to note the strategies are not additional program requirements, but rather guidelines for high-quality practices.

Mississippi’s Family Engagement Coalition has identified innovative strategies to support families as well as opportunities for family members to develop their skills, learn about child development, and become more socially and financially self-sufficient.

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<sup>1</sup>Christenson, S.L. (2000). Families and schools: Rights, responsibilities, resources, and relationships. In R.C. Pianta & M.J. Cox (Eds.), *The transition to kindergarten* (pp.143–177). Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co. and McWayne, C., Hampton, V., Fantuzzo, J., Cohen, H.L., & Sekino, Y. (2004). A multivariate examination of parent involvement and the social and academic competencies of urban kindergarten children. *Psychology in the Schools*, 41(3), 363–377.

This Framework builds on the Mississippi Department of Education Strategic Plan and Goals.

<b>MISSION</b>	To provide leadership through the development of policy and accountability systems so that all students are prepared to compete in the global community.
<b>VISION</b>	To create a world-class educational system that gives the students the knowledge and skills to be successful in college and the workforce, and to flourish as parents and citizens.

## MISSISSIPPI STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

- 1**  
All Students Proficient and Showing Growth in All Assessed Areas  

- 2**  
Every Student Graduates from High School and is Ready for College and Career  

- 3**  
Every Child Has Access to a High-Quality Early Childhood Program  

- 4**  
Every School Has Effective Teachers and Leaders  

- 5**  
Every Community Effectively Uses a World-Class Data System to Improve Student Outcomes  

- 6**  
Every School and District is Rated "C" or Higher  


## Purpose

Mississippi's Family Engagement Framework is designed to support intentional thinking and actions regarding the implementation of family engagement policies and practices both at the state level and among educators who serve ALL children.

Families are the key to a child's academic success. Every educational learning community should invest in a system that embraces and empowers families of students from birth to young adulthood. Family engagement for school success should focus on building trusting relationships with families and maintaining consistent communication throughout the learning experience. Effective family engagement programs should provide and implement activities that prepare, tell, teach, and engage responsible individuals invested in the educational success of a child.<sup>2</sup>

Students with **involved parents** – regardless of income, background characteristics, or level of achievement – **are more likely** to do better in school. **Partnership programs** can increase student achievements, improve attendance and behavior, and promote positive social skills. 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**.

The Framework should be used to assess current family engagement activities and promote policies and practices that support family engagement. More specifically, 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; and
- Offer family engagement strategies for educators and identify resources that support the implementation of those strategies.

It is important to note that a number of community organizations and educators offer family engagement initiatives throughout Mississippi. This document is written to support all community stakeholders such as museums, public libraries, medical offices, hospitals, community colleges, advocacy groups, and other community organizations as they work on a daily basis to support similar goals outlined in this Framework.

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<sup>2</sup> Implementing Effective Programs, Engagement Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships. Joyce L. Epstein, Ph.D., Director of Family and Community for Student Success in School, Family, and Community Partnerships

The guiding principles of the Mississippi Family Engagement Coalition is to effectively empower and foster sustainable family engagement strategies to serve early learning directors, school administrators, educators, children, and families in the following ways:

- Develop positive, respectful, and empathetic relationships between educators and families as the foundation for successful family engagement strategies.
- Encourage family engagement strategies that are appropriately resourced and designed, and which promote ownership and investment to meet the specific needs for improving student achievement and overcoming constraints for all Mississippi families.
- Create and foster advocacy from families, educators, and community members for all children’s educational needs.
- Empower 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.
- Provide ongoing professional development and ongoing conversations for families and educators to obtain the knowledge to build a solid partnership, inform decision-makers, and be effective advocates for all children.

## 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 ongoing, 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.

# The Mississippi Family Engagement Framework Structure

The Mississippi Department of Education Family Engagement Framework establishes a set of goals around high quality learning environments. The Mississippi Family Engagement Framework demonstrates the natural progression of transitioning from early learning settings to formalized school settings by creating a structure for educators that influences family-friendly schools to support student academic achievement, development, and success. As state educators work to support families with young children, they should target these specific family engagement goals.

## GOALS

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



## CONTINUOUS SYSTEMS APPROACH

A continuous systems approach will work together to achieve the ultimate child outcomes for successful lifelong learners. Each section provides guidance of how family engagement outcomes for programs lead to family outcomes, which lead to successful child outcomes. As a result, those observed family interactions can produce positive outcomes in child behavior, social/emotional development, and school success.



Implementing a systematic plan for family, school, and community partnerships involves coordinating the work of guidance counselors, social workers, health professionals, community, parent involvement specialists, instructional staff, staff, administrators, and most importantly, families and children. Epstein (2002), Halgunseth (2009), and NAEYC (2009) describe components of a well- coordinated system:

### **Program standards**

- Ensure that all program guidelines are clear, comprehensive, and emphasize ongoing family/community outreach.
- Provide all education staff, including administrators, teachers, teacher assistants, social workers, counselors, nurses, lunch assistants, and custodial staff with training on cultural awareness, sensitivity, and research-based family engagement practices.

### **Culture and community**

- Promote the acceptance of all families by integrating daily activities in the curriculum that teach awareness and appreciation of the different cultures, practices, and traditions of children in individual classrooms and within the community at large.
- Encourage school staff to be aware of how personal experiences influence cultural perspective and shape approaches to child-rearing, development, and learning.

### **Family engagement**

- Get to know each family and focus on family strengths and knowledge.
- Based on the comfort level of families, make home visits before and during the school year. Visits made by classroom teachers and/or school social workers can provide staff with a foundational understanding of the home environment, child and family interests, and any particular needs.
- Implement activities and services that promote positive child-rearing skills and an understanding of child development, including the importance of play and experiential learning in effective kindergarten classrooms.
- Involve families in learning activities at home with their children, including homework and curriculum-related activities.
- Offer specific, individualized strategies that will help families guide their children to be successful in the school environment.
- Create a browsing and checkout library with books, videos, cassettes, brochures, and magazines. These resources and services should be provided on a flexible schedule to accommodate all parents considering their various work schedules.

### **Communication:**

- Greet families during drop-off and dismissal times. Have teachers use these times to share information about a child with families.
- Whenever possible, converse with families in their home language.
- Consistently communicate with families about school programs and student progress through school-to-home and home-to-school communications, including family conferences.
- Focus on verbal communication when written language is an obstacle for the family.
- Send frequent communications to families about both individual children and classroom content and expectations. This includes face-to-face communication, printed material, and electronic means of communication.

### **Volunteer opportunities**

- Provide flexible opportunities for families to volunteer and to attend school programs.
- Ask families to participate in something that is beneficial of their time and meaningful.

### **Decision making**

- Include families as participants in school decisions, governance, and advocacy through the school advisory council, committees, action teams, and other family organizations.
- Hold meetings at different times of the day to accommodate working schedules of families.
- Make it easy for families to attend meetings and trainings by offering transportation and child care. Organizations should consider providing childcare, transportation, and/or meals in order to ease hardships for families attending engagement events.

### **Community collaboration**

- Provide families with information related to health and social services, refer families to appropriate community agencies when needed, and follow up with community referrals.
- Coordinate community resources and services for children, families, and the school with businesses, colleges, agencies, and other entities serving families and the local community.

## Welcome and Empower ALL Families



### GOAL 1

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

Creating an environment where all stakeholders feel valued, respected, and connected is key to welcoming all families. Educational leadership, teachers, and staff are instrumental in fostering positive relationships to build and sustain a welcoming educational environment. Welcoming and empowering ALL families involves valuing 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.

Family engagement begins prior to a child entering school. It is important to begin with understanding the composition of a family unit and how family engagement has evolved over the years. There has been a shift in thinking from parent involvement to family engagement. The recognition and value around the family impact is integral to creating and sustaining an environment to promote successful lifelong learners.

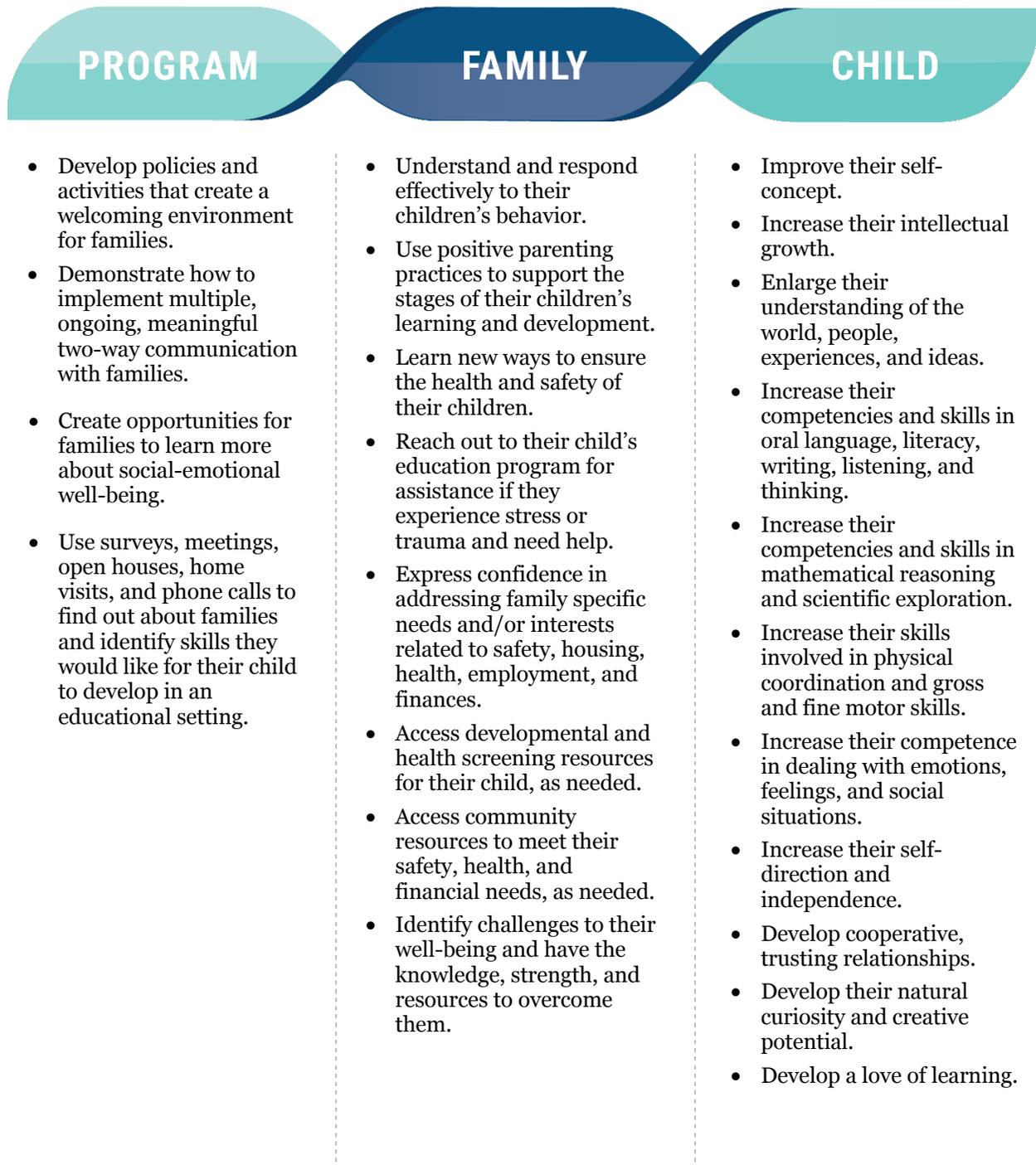
Clear, ongoing, two-way communication and relationship building opportunities are essential for successful school-home partnerships. Education communities must provide multiple methods of communication. Communication should be written in family-friendly terms and available in languages that meet the needs of all families. When families and educators communicate effectively, positive relationships develop, conflicts are easily resolved, and students make greater progress. Building respectful and trusting relationships among school staff, families, and community members is critical for establishing sustained connections that support ongoing student learning and success.



## OUTCOMES

### Welcome and Empower ALL Families

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





## RESOURCES

Welcome and Empower ALL Families

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### **American Library Association**

Comforting Reads for Difficult Times is a helpful list of literature to use with young students in trying times.

[www.ala.org/alsc/sites/ala.org.alsc/files/content/compubs/booklists/comfortingreads/170523\\_ALSC\\_Booklist\\_ComfortingReads\\_FINAL\\_Pages.pdf](http://www.ala.org/alsc/sites/ala.org.alsc/files/content/compubs/booklists/comfortingreads/170523_ALSC_Booklist_ComfortingReads_FINAL_Pages.pdf)

### **Center for Parent Information and Resources**

This website provide parents of students with disabilities guidance on interacting with school staff and working together to provide the best services for students.

<https://www.parentcenterhub.org/>

### **Common Sense Education**

This website provides parents, educators, and advocates with resources, professional development, and support in family engagement.

<https://www.commonsense.org/education/toolkit/family-engagement-resources>

### **Edutopia**

This website provides family engagement training materials, activities, and literature.

<https://www.edutopia.org/home-school-connections-resources>

### **Engage Every Family: Five Simple Principles**

This book by Steven Constantino provides a simple, real-world blueprint for schools to follow that will help those schools create the welcoming atmospheres and productive partnerships that truly serve children. Corwin Press 2016

### **The Flamboyan Foundation**

A Beginning-of-the-Year Toolkit contains sample back-to-school parent letters, welcome packets, and newsletter templates.

<http://flamboyanfoundation.org/resource/beginning-of-the-year-toolkit/>

<http://flamboyanfoundation.org/resource/newsletter-toolkit/>

### **Global Family Research Project**

This site provides videos, handouts, booklets, and other family engagement resources.

<https://globalfrp.org/Archive>

**Illinois Early Learning Project**

The Illinois Early Learning Project website is a source of evidence-based, reliable information on early care and education for families, caregivers, and teachers of young children.

<https://illinoisearlylearning.org/>

**National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)**

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) is a professional membership organization that works to promote high-quality early learning for all young children, birth through age eight, by connecting early childhood practice, policy, and research.

<https://www.naeyc.org/>



## Increase Student Success

### GOAL 2

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

Research clearly documents the link between competent caregiving abilities, strong caregiver-child bonds, and positive school readiness outcomes.<sup>3</sup> Given the importance of adult-child relationships, it is imperative that Mississippi's family engagement initiatives and the practices of educators have the goal, beginning with the transition to parenthood, of supporting families in developing positive relationships that nurture their child's learning and development. This begins with developing positive, nurturing relationships among adults, including between staff members, and between staff and caregivers and other adult family members. Engaging and empowering families as partners in education creates essential relationships that can produce success for students.

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

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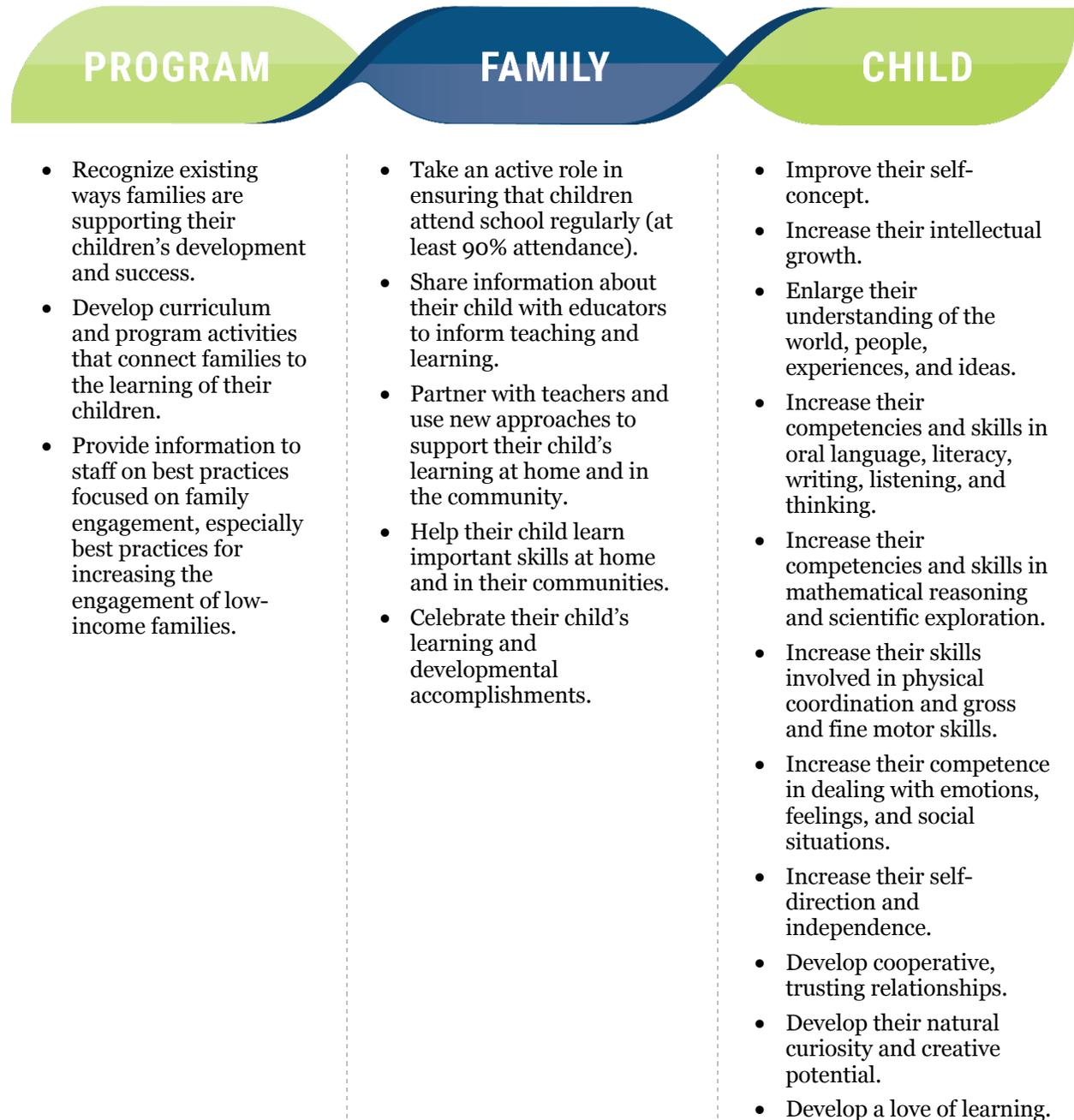
<sup>3</sup> Office of Head Start and the National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement (2011). The Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework: Promoting Family Engagement and School Readiness, from Prenatal to Age 8.



## OUTCOMES

### Increase Student Success

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





## RESOURCES

### Increase Student Success

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#### **Attendance Works**

The mission of Attendance Works is to advance student success and help close equity gaps by reducing chronic absence.

<https://attendanceworks.org>

#### **Authentically Engaged Families: a Collaborative Care Framework for Student Success**

This book by Calvalyn G. Day offers strategies that will transform the experience for your students and their families, and lead to sustainable success. 2016, Sage Publications

#### **Gettocollege.org Woodard Hines Foundation**

This site provides parents, teachers, and counselors tools to assist in college preparation and planning. This website also offers virtual workshops.

<https://get2college.org/>

#### **LENA – Building brains through early talk**

Focuses on increasing interactive talk because it has been proven to be a key factor in early brain development.

[www.lena.org](http://www.lena.org)

#### **Mississippi Department of Education**

The Mississippi Department of Education seeks to create a world-class educational system that gives students the knowledge and skills to be successful in college and in the workforce, and to flourish as parents and citizens.

[www.mdek12.org](http://www.mdek12.org)

#### **Parent Engagement Practices Improve Outcomes for Preschool Children**

This issue brief, created by The Pennsylvania State University with support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, is one of a series of briefs that addresses the need for research, practice and policy on social and emotional learning.

[www.prevention.psu.edu/uploads/files/rwjf432769.pdf](http://www.prevention.psu.edu/uploads/files/rwjf432769.pdf)

#### **Planning Family Engagement**

This is a guide for families and providers to impact student success.

<http://www.parentengagementmatters.ca/planning-parent-engagement>

### **Powerful Partnerships: a Teacher’s Guide to Engaging Families for Student Success**

This book by Karen Mapp shows teachers and administrators how to create the respectful, trusting relationships with families necessary to build the educational partnerships that best support children’s learning. Scholastic Professional 2017

### **Reading Rockets**

This site provides parents and practitioners resources and materials to assist in proficient reading levels for children.

[www.readingrockets.org](http://www.readingrockets.org)

### **Ready at Five**

This site provides information and resources for parents and providers to ensure Kindergarten readiness.

<https://www.readyatfive.org/>

### **Ready Rosie: Active Family Engagement**

Make transformative family engagement a reality in every school or program through simple to use tools and support.

[www.readyrosie.com](http://www.readyrosie.com)

### **Scholastic – Kid & Family Reading Report**

This site provides a statistical report on the benefits of reading to young children.

<http://www.scholastic.com/readingreport/reading-aloud.htm>

### **Virtual Lab School**

This site provides free online courses to early childhood providers.

<https://www.virtuallabschool.org/>

### **Zero to Three**

This site provides various resources for children ages zero to three.

[www.zerotothree.org](http://www.zerotothree.org)

### **Seven Research-Based Ways Families Promote Early Literacy**

This site assist families, schools, communities, and libraries in working together to promote strong literacy pathways for children.

[www.globalfrp.org/Articles/Seven-Research-Based-Ways-Families-Promote-Early-Literacy](http://www.globalfrp.org/Articles/Seven-Research-Based-Ways-Families-Promote-Early-Literacy)



## Build Leadership and Capacity

### GOAL 3

**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.**

When families strive to achieve educational goals, they become a positive example to children regarding the importance of education. Research has documented the link between family focused education—particularly maternal education levels—and positive school readiness outcomes.<sup>4</sup> The practices of educators should support families to advance their own interests through education, training, and experiences to support college- and career-readiness goals. When families are empowered, they can be a strong force for positive change in their child's education and in many other areas of life. Educators should provide support to families to participate in leadership development, decision-making, program policy development, and community and state organizing activities which may improve children's development and learning experiences.

When a child transitions to a new educator, or through the formal education system, the child and the family experience change in this setting, teacher, and/or learning culture. These transitions are challenging for families—and often for educators—to navigate. Educators should build systems of support for families as they make transitions with their children to new education systems. A systems approach will strengthen the family and the education setting as a whole for the betterment of the child.

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<sup>4</sup> Office of Head Start and the National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement (2011). The Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework: Promoting Family Engagement and School Readiness, from Prenatal to Age 8.



## OUTCOMES

### 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.

#### PROGRAM

- 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.

#### FAMILY

- Express questions, concerns, and recommendations about their child's education.
- Express opinions concerning their child's program's goals and policies.
- Know and assert their rights under federal and state laws.
- Participate on program boards and/or participate in other decision-making opportunities.
- Reach out and engage other families (e.g., new families) to offer knowledge and support.
- Volunteer in and/or contribute to their children's classrooms and program.
- Seek out new leadership and/or advocacy opportunities as children transition to new settings.
- Set learning goals that align with their interests and career aspirations.
- Enroll and participate in courses, training programs, and/or learning opportunities that support their education and career goals.

#### CHILD

- 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.
- 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.



## RESOURCES

### Build Leadership and Capacity

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#### **Building Parent-Teacher Relationships**

This is an article from the American Federation of Teachers on building parent-teacher relationships.

[www.readingrockets.org/article/building-parent-teacher-relationships](http://www.readingrockets.org/article/building-parent-teacher-relationships)

#### **Engaging Parents and Developing Leaders**

A Self-Assessment and Planning Tool for Nonprofits and Schools by the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

<https://www.aecf.org/resources/engaging-parents-developing-leaders/>

#### **Families as Advocates and Leaders**

The National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement (NCPFCE) has created a Research to Practice Series on the Family Engagement in Headstart and its many benefits.

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/rtp-advocates-leaders.pdf>

#### **Families First Mississippi**

The main goal for Families First for Mississippi is to impact the entire family by connecting the dots between all of the Mississippi family services.

<https://www.familiesfirstforms.org/>

#### **Mississippi Rotary Clubs**

Rotary is a global network of 1.2 million neighbors, friends, leaders, and problem-solvers who see a world where people unite and take action to create lasting change – across the globe, in our communities, and in ourselves.

<https://www.rotary6820.org/clubdirectory>

#### **National Resource Center for Healthy Marriages and Families**

The National Resource Center for Healthy Marriage and Families (Resource Center) helps agencies develop the capacity to promote healthy relationship skills in a way that meets both their needs and those of the families they serve.

<https://healthymarriageandfamilies.org/>

**Parent Leadership Manual**

A guide to developing and encourage parent leaders written by the Georgia Department of Education.

<https://www.gadoe.org/School-Improvement/FederalPrograms/Documents/Parent%20Leadership%20Manual%20REVISED.pdf>

**WIN Job Centers**

WIN Job Centers are service centers that offer programs and resources geared toward your job seeking and claim needs and are partners in the American Job Center Network.

<https://mdes.ms.gov/win-job-centers/>

**Develop  
Community  
Investment and  
Partnerships**

**GOAL 4**

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

Creating full, equal, and equitable partnerships is a shared responsibility that requires systemic change in policy, resources, and practice. Families, educators, and community partners need and want opportunities to develop their capacity to work together – to build trusting relationships, strengthen their confidence, expand personal networks, and deepen their understanding and core beliefs about family engagement.

Families are their child’s first teachers. Educators should create collaborative relationships with a variety of service entities to support and empower the family in its role as their child’s first teacher. Personal and community networks are a key source of support for families with young children. Learning from one another and sharing common experiences can inform families about resources, expand caregiving strategies, and offer a source of comfort. Educators should support families to form connections with peers and mentors in formal or informal social networks that are supportive and enhance social well-being and community life.

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; advocate for the success of all children, schools and community members; and 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.



## OUTCOMES

### Develop Community Investment and Partnerships

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

#### PROGRAM

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

#### FAMILY

- Exchange knowledge and resources to gain a sense of confidence and empowerment through interactions with other families.
- Reach out to other families to solve problems and support their decision making.
- Be aware of who to contact in their community when questions or needs arise.
- Understand and respond effectively to their children's behavior.
- Use positive parenting practices that support the stages of their children's learning and development.
- Understand how to ensure the health and safety of their children.
- Seek out services and supports for their child's cognitive, developmental, and behavioral challenges.
- Access community resources to meet their safety, health, and financial needs, as needed.

#### CHILD

- 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.
- 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.



## RESOURCES

### Develop Community Investment and Partnerships

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#### **American Academy of Pediatrics**

This site provides information for optimal physical, mental, and social health and well-being for all infants, children, adolescents and young adults.

<https://www.aap.org>

#### **Family Doctor**

This site provides trusted medical advice and updates from the American Academy of Family Physicians.

<https://familydoctor.org/>

#### **GrandFamilies**

This site provides state statistics regarding Mississippi children and families and a comprehensive list of various agencies that provide services and assistance to Mississippi families.

<http://www.grandfamilies.org/Portals/0/State%20Fact%20Sheets/Grandfamilies-Fact-Sheet-Mississippi.pdf>

#### **In Support of Family Teacher Partnership**

This is an article written by Amy Sussna, Ed.D. addressing family teacher partnerships.

[www.earlychildhoodnews.com/earlychildhood/article\\_view.aspx?ArticleID=359](http://www.earlychildhoodnews.com/earlychildhood/article_view.aspx?ArticleID=359)

#### **Mississippi Department of Human Services**

This agency provides a wide range of public assistance programs, social services, and support for children, low-income individuals and families.

<http://www.mdhs.ms.gov/>

#### **National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities**

This site provides detailed information on childhood development and health.

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/index.html>

#### **National Educators Association**

This site provides guidance on partnering with parents and community members.

<http://www.nea.org/home/63601.htm>

**Partnerships to Promote Healthy Lifestyles for Children and Communities**

This website provides a wide variety of health resources for parents, providers, and community. <http://partnershipsforhealthychildren.com/>

**Prevent Child Abuse America**

This site provides information for abuse prevention and child protection.

<https://preventchildabuse.org/>

**Safe Kids Worldwide**

This nonprofit organization works to help families and communities keep kids safe from injuries

<https://www.safekids.org/>

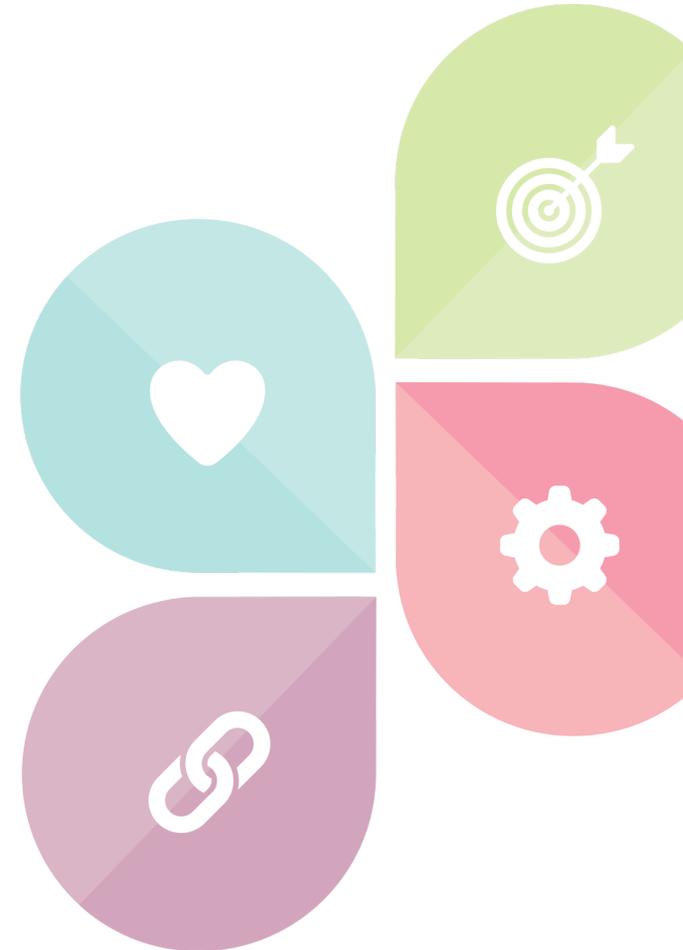
## Family Engagement Self-Assessment

Effective family engagement practices will impact the lives of children, families, administrators, educators, and communities for many generations to come. Family engagement exists as an integral, ongoing component of many systems that considers the strengths, needs, and well-being of families to impact the academic success of a child. Family engagement does not exist in a vacuum, yet as part of a larger growth continuum spanning birth to adulthood.

This self-assessment is a guidance document to identify family engagement practices in place in a learning community. Its purpose is to help learning communities identify specific strategies to engage families and create a foundational level understanding of family engagement. This will aide in sustaining focused and intentional family engagement to reach programmatic outcomes for children and families. As you complete the self-assessment, use it to identify your strengths and identify areas of growth and development that need more direct attention. The data you gather through this process will assist learning communities in strategic planning and continuous implementation of practices to impact student success.

### **Please use the following key when completing Self-Assessment:**

- Emerging – site is developing plans to meet goal
- Progressing – actions are taking place to meet goal
- Mastery – site meets and exceeds aspects of goal
- N/A – not applicable to site





## GOAL 1 Welcome and Empower ALL Families

	STATUS	ACTION STEPS AND PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	MEASURE OF SUCCESS AND TIME FRAME(S)
Program staff implement a program that is easy to navigate and welcoming to families that encourages them to visit and participate and volunteer in diverse program activities, as well as share information relevant to family cultures and traditions.	<input type="checkbox"/> Emerging <input type="checkbox"/> Progressing <input type="checkbox"/> Mastery <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		
Program staff provide resources to families to support and empower a safe, healthy, and stable life for families and children to thrive.	<input type="checkbox"/> Emerging <input type="checkbox"/> Progressing <input type="checkbox"/> Mastery <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		
Program staff contact families at the start of each year, use a variety of formal and informal strategies to get to know about family structure, culture and traditions, preferred child-rearing practices and information families wish to share, and actively use this information to adapt its environment, curriculum, and teaching methods to the families they serve.	<input type="checkbox"/> Emerging <input type="checkbox"/> Progressing <input type="checkbox"/> Mastery <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		

<p>Program staff have a system in place for maintaining regular, ongoing, two-way communication with families about children’s activities, shared care-giving issues, and developmental milestones. The purpose is to ensure a smooth transition between home and program.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Emerging</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Progressing</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Mastery</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> N/A</li> </ul>		
<p>Program staff: greet children and families, intentionally structure pick-up and drop-off to easily exchange information with families, and regularly contact families about accomplishments, child learning, and concerns.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Emerging</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Progressing</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Mastery</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> N/A</li> </ul>		



## GOAL 2 Increase Student Success

	STATUS	ACTION STEPS AND PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	MEASURE OF SUCCESS AND TIME FRAME(S)
Program staff foster opportunities for families to develop warm relationships that nurture their child’s learning and development both at home and in the classroom environments.	<input type="checkbox"/> Emerging <input type="checkbox"/> Progressing <input type="checkbox"/> Mastery <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		
Program staff empower families to observe, guide, promote, and participate in the everyday learning of their children at home, school, and in their communities.	<input type="checkbox"/> Emerging <input type="checkbox"/> Progressing <input type="checkbox"/> Mastery <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		
Program staff encourage families to advance their own learning interests through education, training and other experiences that support their parenting, careers, and life goals.	<input type="checkbox"/> Emerging <input type="checkbox"/> Progressing <input type="checkbox"/> Mastery <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		
Program staff enable families to support and advocate for their child’s learning and development as they transition to new learning environments throughout the continuum of learning from birth - 12th grade.	<input type="checkbox"/> Emerging <input type="checkbox"/> Progressing <input type="checkbox"/> Mastery <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		

<p>Program staff use a variety of formal and informal quality methods to communicate with families about the program philosophy and curriculum objectives. These include the educational goals and effective strategies that can be used by families to promote their children’s learning. Methods may include family handbooks, regular family conferences, home visits, newsletters, orientation, and/or family meetings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Emerging</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Progressing</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Mastery</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> N/A</li> </ul>		
<p>Program staff model nurturing children and families while offering them whole child development information through multiple avenues to meet diverse adult learning styles and embrace a multi-cultural approach to learning. These may include written materials, verbal sharing, and informational events.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Emerging</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Progressing</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Mastery</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> N/A</li> </ul>		

<p>Program staff incorporate family feedback into any plan developed to address child assessment results, child concerns, and how that will have an impact on their child. When challenging behaviors arise, program staff collaborate with families to develop and implement an individualized plan that supports the child’s inclusion and success. Staff offer the family frequent updates on implementation of the plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Emerging</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Progressing</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Mastery</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> N/A</li> </ul>		
<p>Program staff provide support and encourage families’ efforts to negotiate health, mental health, assessment, and educational services for their children.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Emerging</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Progressing</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Mastery</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> N/A</li> </ul>		



### GOAL 3 Build Leadership and Capacity

	STATUS	ACTION STEPS AND PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	MEASURE OF SUCCESS AND TIME FRAME(S)
Program staff collaborate with families to participate in leadership development, decision-making, program policy development, or in community and state organizing activities to improve children’s development and learning experiences.	<input type="checkbox"/> Emerging <input type="checkbox"/> Progressing <input type="checkbox"/> Mastery <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		
Program staff provide opportunities and support for families to serve as leaders and decision-makers regarding issues and policies through focus groups and family meetings.	<input type="checkbox"/> Emerging <input type="checkbox"/> Progressing <input type="checkbox"/> Mastery <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		
The program has an advisory group that includes families as members and active participants.	<input type="checkbox"/> Emerging <input type="checkbox"/> Progressing <input type="checkbox"/> Mastery <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		
Program staff use an assessment tool to measure the quality of family engagement practices and the data from the tool to inform, improve, and develop innovative strategies.	<input type="checkbox"/> Emerging <input type="checkbox"/> Progressing <input type="checkbox"/> Mastery <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		



## GOAL 4

## Develop Community Investment and Partnerships

	STATUS	ACTION STEPS AND PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	MEASURE OF SUCCESS AND TIME FRAME(S)
Program staff actively encourage families to form and facilitate connections with peers and mentors in both formal or informal social networking opportunities that enhance social well-being and community life of new, isolated, and existing families and children.	<input type="checkbox"/> Emerging <input type="checkbox"/> Progressing <input type="checkbox"/> Mastery <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		
Program staff develop partnerships and professional relationships with other agencies and organizations in the community to further the program's capacity to meet the needs and interests of the children and the families that they serve.	<input type="checkbox"/> Emerging <input type="checkbox"/> Progressing <input type="checkbox"/> Mastery <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		
Program staff regularly share lists on a regular basis of support services available in the community with families and assist them with locating, contacting, and using community resources that support children's and families' well-being and development.	<input type="checkbox"/> Emerging <input type="checkbox"/> Progressing <input type="checkbox"/> Mastery <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		

<p>Program leadership and staff actively engage and participate in the effective coordination of services and compliance of the agreement of coordination between the lead State Educational Agencies, Local Education Agencies, Head Start programs, and other early care and education programs as outlined in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Emerging</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Progressing</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Mastery</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> N/A</li> </ul>		
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## Family Engagement Framework Resources

Resources used to develop this framework and toolkit include the following:

- Christenson, S.L. (2000). Families and schools: Rights, responsibilities, resources, and relationships. In R.C. Pianta & M.J. Cox (Eds.), *The transition to kindergarten* (pp.143–177). Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co. and McWayne, C., Hampton, V., Fantuzzo, J., Cohen, H.L., & Sekino, Y. (2004). A multivariate examination of parent involvement and the social and academic competencies of urban kindergarten children. *Psychology in the Schools*, 41(3), 363–377.
- Implementing Effective Programs, Engagement Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships. Joyce L. Epstein, Ph.D., Director of Family and Community for Student Success in School, Family, and Community Partnerships
- Mississippi Early Learning Guidelines for classrooms serving Three- and Four-Year Old Children  
<https://www.mdek12.org/sites/default/files/documents/OAE/OEER/Early%20Childhood/Early%20Childhood%20Early%20Learning%20Guidelines%203's%20%204's%202018%20FINAL%20with%20on%20mark-ups.pdf>
- The Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Interactive Framework  
<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/family/framework>
- The U.S. Department of Education's, Partners in Education A Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships  
<https://www2.ed.gov/documents/family-community/partnership-frameworks.pdf>
- The Early Childhood Family Engagement Framework: Maryland's Vision for Engaging Families with Young Children  
<https://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/family-engagement-toolkit>
- Maryland's PreK – 12 Family Engagement Framework: A Shared Responsibility  
<http://marylandpublicschools.org/parents/Documents/MDPreK12FamilyEngagementFramework2016.pdf>
- Harvard Family Research Project  
<https://globalfrp.org/>
- Epstein's Framework of Six Types of Involvement  
[www.esc16.net/users/0020/Resources/6TypesJ.Epstien.pdf](http://www.esc16.net/users/0020/Resources/6TypesJ.Epstien.pdf)

- **South Carolina ABC Quality: Early Childhood Family Engagement Framework and Toolkit**  
<http://scchildcare.org/media/57088/SC-ABCQ-Family-Engagement-Toolkit-12212017-v2.pdf>
- **Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework, Center for the Study of Social Policy**  
[www.cssp.org/reform/strengtheningfamilies](http://www.cssp.org/reform/strengtheningfamilies)
- **New Early Childhood Coordination Requirements in the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) Toolkit**  
[https://www.aasa.org/uploadedFiles/AASA\\_Blog\(1\)/Toolkit-New%20Early%20Childhood%20Coordination%20Requirements%20in%20the%20ESSA-online.pdf](https://www.aasa.org/uploadedFiles/AASA_Blog(1)/Toolkit-New%20Early%20Childhood%20Coordination%20Requirements%20in%20the%20ESSA-online.pdf)
- **Full, Equal and Equitable Partnerships with Families: Connecticut's Definition and Framework for Family Engagement**  
<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Publications/Full-Equal-and-Equitable-Partnerships-with-Families>