



Building a Systemic Approach to Engaging Families

Coalition of Community Schools Conference

**Michele P. Brooks, Assistant Superintendent
Boston Public Schools**



BPS Framework for Family & Student Engagement

“Every school will welcome every family and every student, actively engaging them as partners in student learning and school improvement”





BPS Framework for Family & Student Engagement

CORE BELIEFS

The Boston Public Schools is committed to the authentic engagement of families/parents and students that reflects the following core values;

- Every parent* has dreams for their children and want the best for them
- Every parent* has the capacity to support their children's learning
- Parents and school staff should be equal partners in the education of children
- The primary responsibility for building partnerships between home and school rests primarily with school leaders and staff

* *regardless to race, class, culture, socioeconomic status, language limitations, sexual orientation or disability*

BPS Framework for Family & Student Engagement

CORE BELIEFS

- Every student* wants to excel and achieve – it is the role of the adults to listen, engage, support and encourage them in ways that impact their achievement
- When students are at the center of the decision-making process they are more engaged and take “ownership” of their education; enhancing school climate, improving student/adult relationships and increasing overall student achievement



* *regardless to race, class, culture, socioeconomic status, language limitations, sexual orientation or disability*



Defining the Work

Capacity Building of Schools of Families of Students of the District



Defining the Work

- If our goal is to impact student outcomes, who is primarily responsible and where do we need to focus the work?

Schools & Classrooms

Organizing the Work

Establishing Standards

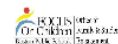
- Provide a guide for establishing authentic family and student engagement in schools
- Provide a guide for the district for aligning professional development and support
- Provide measures for accountability
- Provides clear engagement opportunities for families, students and the community



5 ~Core Family Engagement Elements:

| Element | As Required By: | As Evidenced by: | Benefit to School | |
|----------|---|--|--|--|
| 1 | Home School Compact: This document outlines how parents, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership to help students achieve high standards | Title 1: Section 118 (d) Superintendent Circular: FAM – 3 Standard 3 & 5 | A Compact that has been developed with parents and approved by the SSC or a designated committee. The school has a clearly defined protocol for using the compact to frame conversations about student learning. | Developed and implemented correctly, the home-school compact serves as a tool for mutual accountability between home and school. Discussions using the compact can/should be part of parent-teacher conferences |
| 2 | School Parent Council: The School Parent Council is the formally recognized parent organization in every school. Every parent of a student in a given school is automatically a member of the SPC. The SPC elects member to the School Site Council and sends representatives to City-wide Parent Council and Boston Parent Advisory Council. | Superintendent Circular: FAM-1 Standard 4 & 5 | Elections held and results submitted to OFSE by October 30 th each year. Roster on file in school office and with OFSE. | School Parent Councils are a vehicle for building strong relationships with families. They can assist in communicating the school's policies and programs. They also serve as the collective voice of parents identifying issues, working with school administration to solve problems and to advocate for the school. |
| 3 | School Site Council: The School Site Council is the decision-making body at the school level. Its members include parents, school staff and students at the high school level. They approve policy, programs and discretionary spending and are responsible for all major decisions impacting student learning and school climate. | BSC-BTU Bargaining Agreement: Article III Superintendent Circular: FAM -1 Title 1: Section 118 Standard 5 | The following documents on file & submitted to OFSE: • Election results and SSC Roster submitted October 30 th annually • SSC meeting dates • SSC Bylaws • SSC Agenda & Meeting Notes | The purpose of SSC is shared decision making at the school level. It engages all stakeholders in the development and planning of policies, instructional programs and hiring of teachers. It builds buy-in and a sense of community. |
| 4 | Family Engagement Component of WSIP: The Whole School Improvement Plan is the school's strategic plan for continuous improvement of instruction and student achievement. Every WSIP must include a family engagement strategy that is directly linked to their stated instructional strategy. | 7 Essentials for Whole School Improvement WSIP Development Title 1: Section 118 Standard 2 & 3 | The submission of a clear, coherent strategy to engage parents in ways that are linked to learning with measurable outcomes. | Research has demonstrated that family engagement that is directly linked to learning has the greatest impact on student achievement. |
| 5 | Family Engagement Policy & Plan: The Family Engagement Plan focuses on how the school will build trusting relationships with families that support student learning and school improvement. It is based on data from the district-wide climate survey and school based analysis of family engagement and should include strategies for engaging families at both the school-wide level and the classroom level. | 7 Essentials for Whole School Improvement Dimensions of Effective Teaching Title 1: Section 118 Standard 1-6 | A school wide family engagement policy and plan developed by a Family Engagement Action Team, or other school-based committee that includes parents, teachers and students. The plan utilizes the district-wide climate survey results and family and student engagement rubric to guide plan development. | When families are engaged, students achieve at higher levels and the adults responsible for their education work in partnership for their success. |

Boston Public Schools – Office of Family and Student Engagement, revised 1/14/10



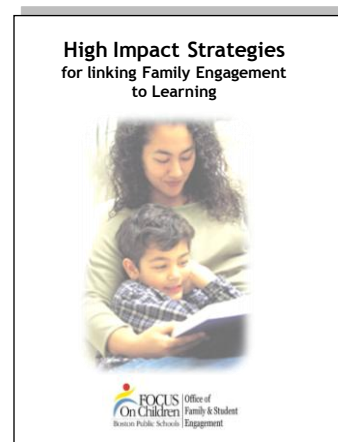
Facilitating the Work

High Impact Strategies that link Engagement to Student Learning

1. The strategy focuses on a specific group of students (such as all 1stgrade students or students struggling with a specific math concept)
2. It is organized around a specific learning task (such as learning 100 high frequency words)
3. It has a home learning activity that engages parents to help students with the learning task (such as flash cards or a game)
4. There is two-way communication between parent and teacher regarding student progress with the learning task and celebrating success

Facilitating the Work: The Tools of Engagement

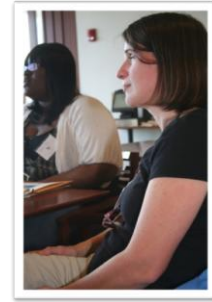
- Tool kit includes:
 - Description of the strategy
 - Connection to the research
 - Alignment to Academic targets
 - Implementation plan (structured for WSIP)
 - Electronic copies of all materials needed
 - List of resources for implementation



Parents Are Powerful!



Enriching - Engaging - Empowering



Preparing Parents to
become Powerful Partners
for Student Learning and
School Improvement



Enriching - Engaging - Empowering



Our Ultimate Goal

The Transformation of Family & Student Engagement in BPS

...from program to practice

...from “what we do” to “who we are”

