



Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION



INTEGRATED MTSS CONFERENCE

Empowering Excellence: Co-Designing
Systems through Instructional Leadership

Sponsored by...



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**Washington State University
Pullman, Washington**

In partnership with...



AESD ASSOCIATION OF
EDUCATIONAL
SERVICE DISTRICTS
Nine ESDs. One Network.
Supporting Washington's Schools and Communities.



**Washington State Association
of School Psychologists**



Washington Statewide
Family Engagement Center
FAMILIES, SCHOOLS, and COMMUNITIES in PARTNERSHIP



Our families

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Capital Region ESD 113



Our **families**

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Our **objectives**

Change the focus:

- From recruitment to engagement
- To a family-centered support system



Recruitment

Recruitment refers to the process of identifying, attracting, and selecting qualified individuals or groups who may be interested in becoming part of an organization, program, or initiative.

Engagement

Engagement involves building and maintaining relationships with individuals or groups who have already shown interest or have already joined an organization, program, or initiative.



Relationship- Centered Family Engagement

An approach that schools and other organizations take to partner with parenting adults, other caregivers, and other family members to ensure that each and every young person is rooted in healthy developmental relationships in all areas of their lives- beginning in organization and in family.

It is family engagement grounded in a foundation of trust and mutual respect for families- particularly those who have experienced marginalization, discrimination, and/or trauma by and within many institutions of society.

Journey of our students and families through our system

- When a student enters your system? At preschool? Missed the beginning of the year? Middle school?
- Transitions families go through? Have they ever experienced age 16? 4th grade?
- How are academic progress, interventions, supports shared with parents at different levels?
- How much communication, type of communication, what is communicated in from classroom to classroom? School to school?
- Assumptions or stereotypes at each level?
- What community connections do they make at each age group/level?



*Entered district
half way through
7th grade*



*In the district
since preschool*



*Parents speak
Mandarin*



*Family members did
not attend school*



Elementary School



Middle School



High School



Six shifts

Take a moment to self-assess your classroom, school, or districts current engagement with families

Conversation:

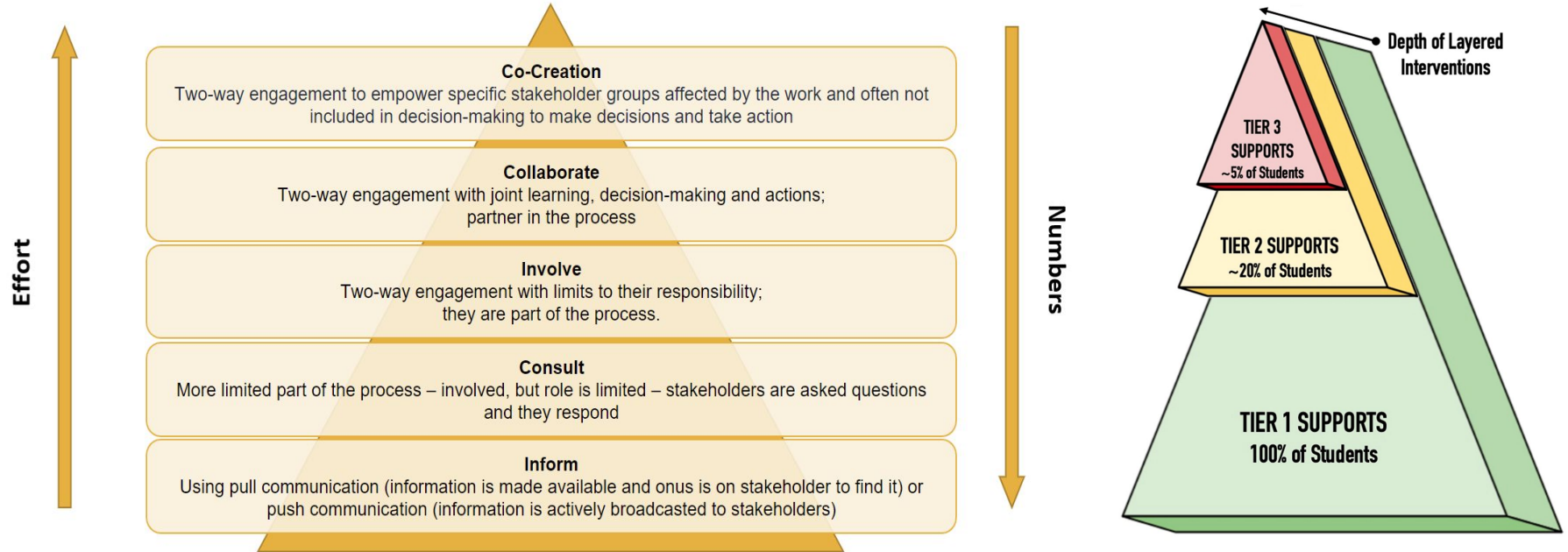
- How was walking through this document for you?
- Any areas that stuck out to you?
- Any areas you would like to dive into more learning?

Search Institute

The Six Shifts of Family Engagement PDF



Levels of engagement



Developmental Relationship Framework

Like roots, an interrelated network of strong and healthy relationships among educators, families and students offers connection, stability, encouragement, guidance, and opportunities to thrive.

Search Institute

Developmental Relationships Framework PDF





Express Care

- When possible, start conversations by listening to families. Notice things that are going well and that are **worth celebrating**.
- Keep track of **significant events** in the lives of families you work with regularly. Follow up to see how they're doing after important events or milestones.





Challenge Growth

- Ask families about their own **goals** or **hopes**, and then check up on them to see what kind of progress they're making. If they're not, encourage them to reset and to take a new next step toward their goal.
- When families have setbacks, **reflect** with them about what they can learn from what happened and how they can reset to move forward from where they are now.





Provide Support

- Ask families about other **formal** and **informal** sources of support they have in their lives. How can those sources be tapped and strengthened, when needed?
- When identifying new supports or services families may need, introduce them to a specific person so they have a **personal connection** to the new resource.





Share Power

- When possible, involve both **youth and parents** in discussions, planning, and training when decisions or learning could benefit everyone in the family.
- Identify parents who have **strong gifts** and invite them to play **leadership** roles in your organization or community, potentially organizing and leading other families to give voice to family priorities and concerns.





Expand Possibilities

- Keep track of things families express **interest** in. Then when opportunities come up, send a quick text or note to highlight the opportunity. (It also lets them know you remember their interests.)
- Ask parenting adults about things they wish they could learn or do, then **connect** them with **opportunities** to learn those things in your community.



Actions

How educators act toward families is a critical component for the success of engaging students & families. These actions can be organized into three categories:

1. Communication
2. Collaboration
3. Support



Beliefs

How educators act toward families is a critical component for the success of engaging students & families. These actions can be organized into three categories:

1. Affirm value
2. Respect
3. Trust



Connections

How educators connect with families is a critical component for the success of engaging students and families. These actions can be organized into three categories:

1. Connect professionally
2. Connect personally
3. Promote inclusion and reduce bias



Actions

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Connection

1. Connect professionally
2. Connect personally
3. Promote inclusion and reduce bias

- Make a list of five trait that make you **YOU**.
- Make a list of three traits you appreciate in the families you serve—that make them who they are.
- Where are there overlaps?



Have adults been telling us their barriers all along?

“What are we doing again?”



Barrier: The plan was not communicated in a way that I could understand its purpose.

“Why are we even doing this?”



Barrier: The plan doesn't feel relevant to me.

“I don't want to work with them.”



Barrier: The family is telling you that working with that individual is a barrier for them.



Naming and reframing the barrier

Name the problem:

The families don't read their email.

Reframe the problem:

As an agency we are not communicating our steps in a way that is accessible to families.

*Reminder: Just because something is **available** does not mean that it is **accessible**.*

Name the problem:

The families don't understand why we are doing this.

Reframe the problem:

Our communication plan is not clearly explaining why this is relevant to families. Families may need a different mode of communication (visuals, examples, emails, Q&A time, etc.)

Name the problem:

The families are not utilizing the time and space created to meet with them.

Reframe the problem:

The established structure does not have clear expectations in order to guide conversations and action steps that is meaningful to families.



Unseen barriers to partnering with families

Practical and logistical

Families

- ☐ Busy
- ☐ Schedule conflict
- ☐ Transportation
- ☐ Robo-message, communication app, flyer doesn't reach families
- ☐ Cost
- ☐ Location

Organization

- ☐ Busy
- ☐ Schedule Conflict
- ☐ Space is not accessible
- ☐ Competing demands
- ☐ Work-life balance
- ☐ Too many to get to know
- ☐ No or little budget



Unseen barriers to partnering with families

Individual and interpersonal barriers

Families

- ☐ Only contacted for problems
- ☐ Unclear communication
- ☐ Language barriers
- ☐ Prior negative experiences
- ☐ Feeling unwelcome, unsafe
- ☐ Discomfort with other families
- ☐ Low trust of organization
- ☐ Unclear expectations
- ☐ Blamed, shamed for problems
- ☐ Feel inadequate or powerless
- ☐ Loss of privacy and fear of consequences

Organization

- ☐ “Not my job”
- ☐ Uncomfortable with parents
- ☐ Limited intercultural experience
- ☐ Language barriers
- ☐ Unclear expectations from leadership



Unseen barriers to partnering with families

Institutional, structural, and cultural barriers

Families

- ❑ See participation as mandated and/or as punishment
- ❑ “Family Bubble” mindset: Family is private and is solely responsible for making sure children have “good outcomes”.
- ❑ “Total Parenthood” mindset: Parents dedicate their lives to meeting all of their own children’s needs.

Organization

- ❑ Family engagement a low priority for staff and leaders.
- ❑ Few clear roles for families at middle school and high school levels
- ❑ Unequal power dynamics
- ❑ Racial-ethnic (or other) gaps between staff and families
- ❑ One group of parents has always run this place. Don’t even think about making changes.

Families & Organization

- ❑ Social norm/mindset: No one expects parents to be involved after third grade
- ❑ Conscious and unconscious bias
- ❑ Systemic racism in the system, society



Reframe the problem

Name the problem <i>The problem is with families</i>	Reframe the problem <i>The problem is with the design</i>



Our **Objectives**

Change the focus:

- From recruitment to engagement
 - Multiple entry points
 - Six shifts–How we see families
 - Levels of engagements
- To a family-centered support system
 - Building developmental relationships
 - Recognizing barriers
 - Reframing barriers



THANKS *for joining us!*



Capital Region
ESD 113