

# ***RISE TO PROFICIENCY:*** Councils and Family and Community Partnerships

A Three-hour Training for Experienced SBDM Members

## **SESSION OVERVIEW**

This module focuses on ways in which school-based decision making (SBDM) councils can engage parents, families and communities in the work they do. The module also addresses how engagement differs from involvement. As a council member, you have an important role in creating policies and making decisions that will lead to improved student achievement. Focusing on engaging parents, families and communities in the education of students will help schools meet and sustain increased achievement and proficiency.

## **STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

The school council's mission is to improve student achievement (KRS 160.345(2)(c)). Each school council must create an environment in its school that will result in students achieving at high levels. All policies and decisions made by the school council must contribute to the achievement of the overall school's mission.



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## Building Strong Partnerships for Effective Learning

Family engagement is a common term heard in the educational realm and is even referenced in federal and state legislation governing how state and local educational agencies operate. But what exactly is family engagement and more importantly, what is the school-based decision making (SBDM) council's role in ensuring high-quality family engagement?

In 2021, the Kentucky Collaborative for Families and Schools Council revised its anchor publication "The Missing Piece of the Proficiency Puzzle" (originally created in 2006) which morphed into "[The Kentucky Family and School Partnership Guide](#)." This resource was designed to help school and district groups work together more effectively so that Kentucky can rise to proficiency in the practice of family and community engagement and to help Kentucky schools and districts realize an equitable and excellent education for every Kentuckian.<sup>1</sup>

*The Kentucky Family and School Partnership Guide* defines family engagement as the following:

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"A productive, equitable and inclusive partnership among families, educators and the community to promote children's learning and development from birth through college and career, and across home, school and community settings. Family, school and community partnerships are about building active, reciprocal relationships in which schools, families and community agencies and organizations engage in meaningful and culturally appropriate collaboration to improve student outcomes."

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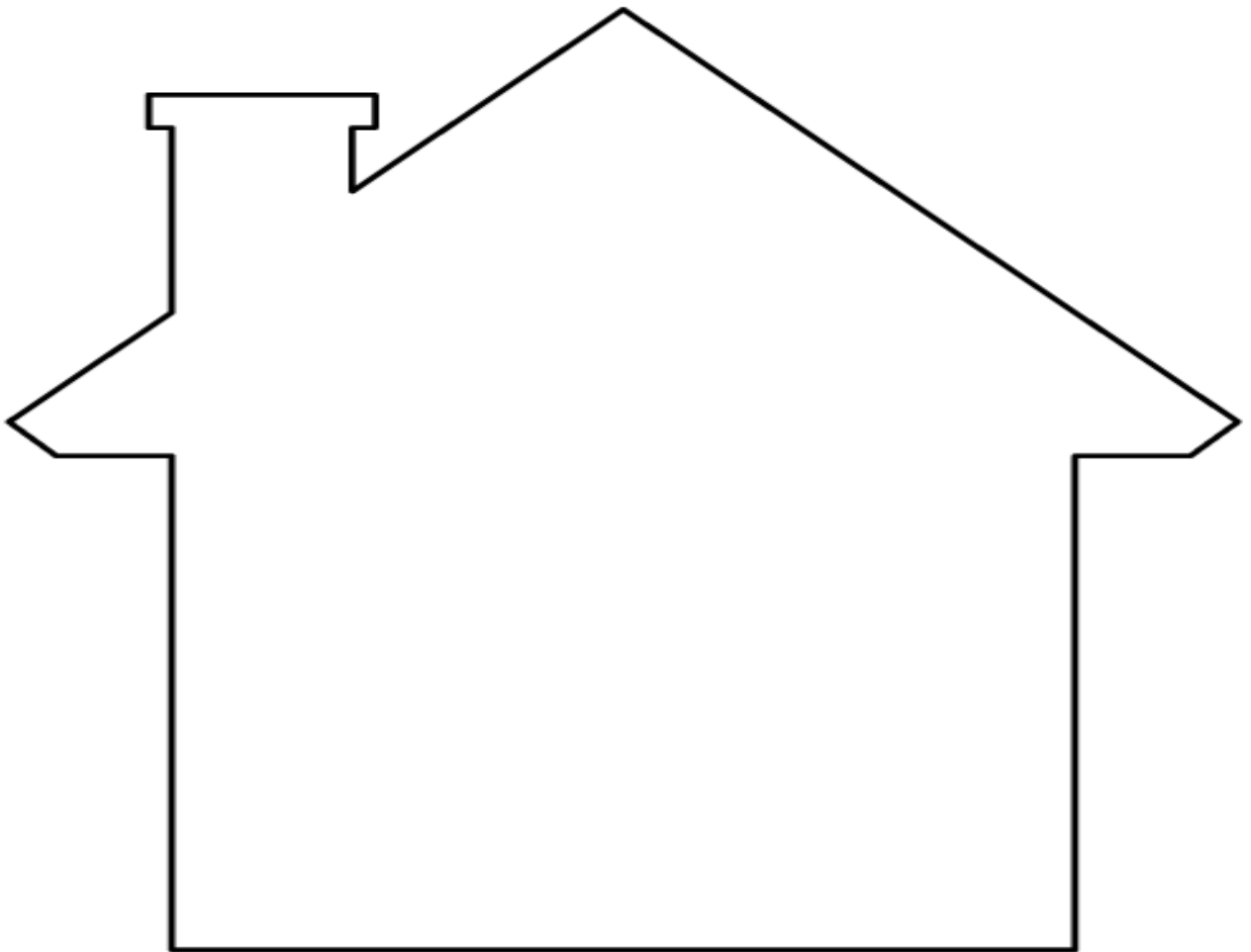


**Write It Out!** What **key words** from the definition do you believe adequately captures what it means to engage and partner with families?

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<sup>1</sup> Kentucky Collaborative for Families and Schools. "The Kentucky Family and School Partnership Guide: A Complete Resource Guide for Strengthening Family, School and Community Partnerships to Support Student Success." August 2021. [https://cdn.prod.website-files.com/663be5fade0f1eefa5d46904/669511748bec1f81688ebf3a\\_KYFamilyandSchoolPartnershipGuideWeb-1.pdf](https://cdn.prod.website-files.com/663be5fade0f1eefa5d46904/669511748bec1f81688ebf3a_KYFamilyandSchoolPartnershipGuideWeb-1.pdf).

**Activity:** While watching the video “Family Engagement: Jessica Solano<sup>2</sup>,” list several examples, definitions, scenarios, etc., that the speaker shares that aids in your understanding of what **family engagement** is and what it can look like in your school. You may even want to list non-examples to help differentiate between engagement and involvement. Be sure to list your examples in the building outline below.



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<sup>2</sup> Teacher2Teacher. “Family Engagement: Jessica Solano.” Jan. 26, 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1zILvq4YpyM>.

## Involvement vs. Engagement

To create the kinds of school and family partnerships that raise student achievement, improve local communities and increase public support, it is imperative to understand the difference between involvement and engagement. One dictionary definition of involve is "to enfold or envelope," whereas engage is "to come together and interlock." Involvement implies *doing to*; in contrast, engagement implies *doing with*.

A school striving for involvement often leads with its mouth—identifying projects, needs and goals and then telling families and communities how they can contribute. A school striving for engagement, on the other hand, tends to lead with its ears—listening to what families and communities think, dream and worry about. The goal of engagement is not to serve clients, but to gain partners. It's not that involvement is bad; research suggests that any kind of increased family and community interest in supporting students can help. But almost all the research also says that family engagement can produce even better results for students, families, schools and for their communities.

**Activity:** Refer back to your video notes on the previous page and list the engagement activities Jessica Solano used that were focused on *doing to families* instead of *doing with families*. Then brainstorm ways that the activity can actively engage families instead of simply involving them.

Activity	Changes to Engage Families

## Why Engagement Matters to Councils



School councils promote shared leadership among those who work closely with students. Membership of each council includes parents, teachers and an administrator of the school. The council has the responsibility to **set school policy** and **make decisions** outlined in statute, which should provide an environment to **enhance student achievement**. The policies should assist in meeting the goals established in KRS 158.645 and KRS 158.6451.

SBDM councils are tasked with a variety of responsibilities related to student achievement including the following:

1. Policy development, including, but not limited to the following: staff time, technology, discipline, school schedule, extracurricular and wellness
2. Determining use of school space
3. Collaborating with other shareholders to develop the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP)
4. Adopting a budget aligned to instructional needs
5. Determining the school's writing program, emergency plan and professional development plan
6. Setting targets to close the achievement gap
7. Annually reviewing school assessment data
8. Helping to write the parent and family engagement policy
9. Consulting on both certified and classified vacancies
10. Determining the number of positions for each job classification

Several federal and state laws mandate minimum parent and family engagement requirements that SBDM councils are responsible for overseeing. For example:

- Each school receiving [Title I, Part A](#) funds must develop a written **parent and family engagement policy** that is developed jointly, agreed upon and distributed to parents of participating children. The policy should be reviewed (and revised as needed) by parents of participating children. The creation of the parent and family engagement policy must involve stakeholders beyond the SBDM council.
- All of Kentucky's schools are required by 703 KAR 5:225 to create a CSIP with the input of parents, faculty and staff, based on a review of relevant data to eliminate achievement gaps among groups of students. The development of the CSIP must involve other stakeholders besides SBDM council members.

More importantly, family engagement matters to SBDM councils because helping families and community members become more engaged in their child's learning ensures conscious decision-making and intentional policy writing that creates those opportunities for learning to be extended outside of the classroom.



When writing policies or making council decisions from an engagement lens, councils are concerning themselves with creating opportunities for parents, families and communities to become a more active part of their student's learning so that all students can learn at very high levels. A question that council members can be asking themselves is, "How can we bring more engagement opportunities into our policies and decisions?"

Family-school partnerships can look different. Review the four versions of family school partnerships and answer the questions on the following page.<sup>3</sup>

	<b>Partnership School</b> All families and communities have something great to offer—we do whatever it takes to work closely together to make sure every single student succeeds.	<b>Open-Door School</b> Parents can be involved at our school in many ways— we’re working hard to get an even bigger turnout for our activities. When we ask the community to help, people often respond.	<b>Come-If-We-Call School</b> Parents are welcome when we ask them, but there’s only so much they can offer. The most important thing they can do is help their kids at home. We know where to get community help if we need it.	<b>Fortress School</b> Parents belong at home, not at school. If students don’t do well, it’s because their families don’t give them enough support. We’re already doing all we can. Our school is an oasis in a troubled community. We want to keep it that way.
<b>Building Relationships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family center is always open, full of interesting materials to borrow</li> <li>Home visits are made to every new family</li> <li>Activities honor families’ contributions</li> <li>Building is open to community use and social services are available to families</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers contact families once a year</li> <li>Parent coordinator is available if families have questions or need help</li> <li>Office staff are friendly</li> <li>Staff contact community agencies and organizations when help is needed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better-educated parents are more involved</li> <li>“Many immigrant parents don’t have time to come or contribute”</li> <li>Staff are very selective about who comes into the school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Families do not “bother” school staff</li> <li>“Minority families don’t value education”</li> <li>Parents need security clearance to come in</li> <li>It is important to keep community influences out of the school</li> </ul>
<b>Linking to Learning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All family activities connect to what students are learning</li> <li>Parents and teachers look at student work and test results together</li> <li>Community groups offer tutoring and homework programs at the school</li> <li>Students’ work goes home every week, with a scoring guide</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers explain test scores if asked</li> <li>Folders of student work go home occasionally</li> <li>School holds curriculum nights three or four times a year</li> <li>Staff let families know about out-of-school classes in the community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents are told what students will be learning at the fall open house</li> <li>Parents can call the office to get teacher-recorded messages about homework</li> <li>Workshops are offered on parenting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Curriculum and standards are considered too complex for parents to understand</li> <li>“If parents want more information, they can ask for it”</li> <li>“We’re teachers, not social workers”</li> </ul>
<b>Addressing Differences</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Translators are readily available</li> <li>Teachers use books and materials about families’ cultures</li> <li>PTA/PTO includes all families</li> <li>Local groups help staff reach families</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Office staff will find a translator if parents ask in advance</li> <li>Multicultural nights are held once a year</li> <li>“Minority” parents have their own group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“We can’t deal with 20 different languages”</li> <li>“Parents can bring a translator with them”</li> <li>“This school just isn’t the same as it used to be”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Those parents need to learn English”</li> <li>“We teach about our country—that’s what those parents need to know”</li> <li>“This neighborhood is going downhill”</li> </ul>
<b>Supporting Advocacy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a clear, open process for resolving problems</li> <li>Teachers contact families each month to discuss student progress</li> <li>Student-led parent-teacher conferences are held three times a year for 30 minutes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Principal will meet with parents to discuss problem</li> <li>Regular progress reports go to parents, but test data can be hard to understand</li> <li>Parent-teacher conferences are held twice a year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School calls families when children have problems</li> <li>Families visit school on report card pickup day and can see a teacher if they call first</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents don’t come to conferences</li> <li>Problems are dealt with by the professional staff</li> <li>Teachers don’t feel safe with parents</li> </ul>
<b>Sharing Power</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents and teachers research issues such as prejudice and tracking</li> <li>Parent group is focused on improving student achievement</li> <li>Families are involved in all major decisions</li> <li>Parents can use the school’s phone, copier, fax and computers</li> <li>Staff work with local organizers to improve the school and the neighborhood</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents can raise issues at PTA/PTO meetings or see the principal</li> <li>Parent group sets its own agenda and raises money for the school</li> <li>Resource center for low-income families is housed in a portable classroom next to the school</li> <li>PTA/PTO officers can use the school office</li> <li>A community representative sits on the school council</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Principal sets agenda for parent meetings</li> <li>PTA/PTO gets the school’s message out</li> <li>“Parents are not experts in education”</li> <li>Community groups can address the school board if they have concerns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Principal picks a small group of “cooperative parents” to help out</li> <li>Families are afraid to complain. “They might take it out on my kid”</li> <li>“Community groups should mind their own business; they don’t know about education.”</li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> From “Beyond the Bake Sale – The Essential Guide to Family-School Partnerships” (2007) by Henderson, Mapp, Johnson and Davis

**Activity:** For each of the categories, decide which type of school (Partnership, Open-Door, Come-If-We-Call or Fortress) your school most closely resembles. If your school is not a Partnership School, what steps can your school take to try to resemble the qualities of one. Also, consider what roadblocks currently exist that prevent your school from resembling a Partnership School.

	<b>What is your school's current partnership style?</b>	<b>What steps can your school take to be a Partnership School?</b>	<b>What roadblocks exist to prevent you from being a Partnership School?</b>
<b>Building Relationships</b>			
<b>Linking to Learning</b>			
<b>Addressing Differences</b>			
<b>Supporting Advocacy</b>			
<b>Sharing Power</b>			

## The Kentucky Family and School Partnership Guide

The Kentucky Collaborative for Families and Schools Council understands the importance of increased family engagement in schools. Within “The Kentucky Family and School Partnership Guide,” the advisory council proposed specific school-level descriptors that include provisions that every student in Kentucky will have a parent, or another adult, who knows how to support that student’s academic achievement. The objectives are as follows:



**Relationship Building:** Staff build productive, meaningful relationships with students and families to build trust, confidence and authentic partnerships.



**Communications:** A variety of constructive, two-way communication flows regularly between staff, students and families about academic achievement and individual needs.



**Shared Responsibility:** Staff ensures that families have multiple learning opportunities to understand how to support their student’s learning and to participate in decision-making and school improvement efforts.



**Advocacy:** Staff identifies and supports at least one family member or another adult in the school for each student who is willing to take personal responsibility for understanding and speaking up for the student’s learning strengths and needs.



**Community Partnerships:** Staff engages and partners with community members and families to plan and implement substantive work to improve student achievement and school improvement.

**Reflect:** Of the five objectives noted above, where does your school shine? Where could it strengthen its practices?



## Making Connections: Improvement Planning

School improvement efforts are a collaborative process involving multiple stakeholders. Through the improvement planning process, leaders focus on priority needs, funding and closing achievement gaps among identified subgroups of students. When implemented with fidelity, the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP) cultivates an environment that promotes student growth and achievement.

**Activity:** Visit the [Family Engagement Digital Playbook](#) (companion piece to the Family and School Partnership Guide) online and follow the steps outlined below:

1. Visit the following website: <https://online.fliphtml5.com/caxbp/xvrb/>.
  2. Select the Policies, Practices and Compacts tab.
  3. From the Resources List, locate and select Sample CSIP.
  4. When the Digital Playbook page turns to the Sample CSIP, select Download.
  5. Skim the sample CSIP and complete the below tasks:
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- |         |   |
|---------|---|
| Task #1 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. The development of the CSIP should not be limited to a principal or an assistant principal. It should also extend beyond your council's membership. What's more is that the strategies and activities should address how parents and even the community can help the school rise to proficiency. After reviewing the sample CSIP, which indicators on the plan involve or engage parents, families and/or the community?</li><li>b. On the surface, does it appear that parents, families and the community were involved in the development of this school's CSIP?</li><li>c. What are some ways that you could involve parents, families and the community in the development of your school's CSIP?</li></ol> |
|---------|---|

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- |         |   |
|---------|---|
| Task #2 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. List one statement from the plan that it is involvement focused.</li><li>b. List one statement from the plan that is engagement focused.</li></ol> |
|---------|---|

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- |         |   |
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| Task #3 | Rewrite the involvement statement that you noted in Task 2a so that it becomes engagement centered. |
|---------|---|
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### Making Connections: Parent, Family (and Community) Engagement Policy

Involving families and the community as partners in the education process is critical throughout a child's academic career. When families and communities support learning, children are more successful in school, and school success helps children become successful adults. There are innumerable ways in which schools can involve parents, families and communities in the school's happenings. One such way is through the development, implementation and review of the school's parent and family engagement policy.

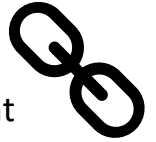
Each school receiving Title I, Part A funds must develop a written parent and family engagement policy. The policy is developed jointly, agreed upon and distributed to parents of participating children. The policy should be reviewed (and revised as needed) by parents of participating children at the school's annual Title I meeting<sup>4</sup>. Even if your school is not a recipient of Title I, Part A monies, how could the adoption of a parent and family engagement policy be of benefit to your school?

**Activity:** Read the sample engagement policy on the next pages and respond to the questions that follow.

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<sup>4</sup> For more information on the requirements of this policy, please review Appendix D of the [Title 1, Part A Handbook](#).

# Proficient County High School's Parent, Family and Community Engagement Policy<sup>5</sup>



## **Purpose:**

Parents, families and the community serve as key shareholders in the educational processes of the students attending Proficient County High School. The Parent, Family and Community Engagement Policy of Proficient County High School ensures equitable participation in the planning, reviewing and implementing of this policy and all parent, family and community programs and activities.

## **Parent Definition:**

A parent is legally defined as a biological parent, stepparent or a foster parent of a student **or** a person who has legal custody of a student pursuant to a court order **and** with whom the student resides; however, for the purpose of this policy, parent encompasses **all** family situations.

## **Engagement Definition:**

Engagement is defined as a productive, equitable and inclusive partnership among families, educators and the community to promote children's learning and development from birth through college and career, and across home, school and community settings. Family, school and community partnerships are about building active, reciprocal relationships in which schools, families and community agencies and organizations engage in meaningful and culturally appropriate collaboration to improve student outcomes.

## **Commitment to Engagement:**

Proficient County High School recognizes the following:

1. All families have dreams for their children and want the best for them.
2. All families have the capacity to support their children's learning.
3. Families and school staff are equal partners.
4. The responsibility for cultivating and sustaining partnerships among school, home and community rests primarily with school staff, especially school leaders. ("Beyond the Bake Sale," Henderson, Mapp, Johnson and Davies. The New Press. 2007.)<sup>6</sup>

## **Procedures:**

Proficient County High School will convene an annual meeting at a time that is convenient for parents, families and the community with particular attention given to reaching those parents, families and community members who are economically disadvantaged, disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy or are of any racial or ethnic minority background.

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<sup>5</sup> Those schools receiving Title I, Part A funds must meet the requirements for a school-level parent and family engagement policy in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) 1116(b) and ESSA 1116(c)-(f). Please consult [this checklist](#) to ensure your school's policy meets the federal requirements.

<sup>6</sup> Kentucky Collaborative for Families and Schools. "The Kentucky Family and School Partnership Guide: A Complete Resource Guide for Strengthening Family, School and Community Partnerships to Support Student Success." August 2021. [https://cdn.prod.website-files.com/663be5fade0f1eefa5d46904/669511748bec1f81688ebf3a\\_KYFamilyandSchoolPartnershipGuideWeb-1.pdf](https://cdn.prod.website-files.com/663be5fade0f1eefa5d46904/669511748bec1f81688ebf3a_KYFamilyandSchoolPartnershipGuideWeb-1.pdf).

During the annual meeting, parents, families and the community will be informed of the school's participation in a Title I Schoolwide Program, the purpose and requirements of Title I, and their right to be involved. Beyond understanding the basic requirements of the federal program, parents, families and community members will learn about ways in which they can authentically partner with the school to increase academic achievement and proficiency.

Proficient County High School (PCHS) will involve parents in an organized, ongoing and timely manner throughout the academic year in a variety of ways. PCHS will (at minimum):

1. Assist parents and families in understanding Kentucky's assessment and their child's performance.
2. Provide training and materials to help parents and families work with their children to improve their achievement.
3. Implement and coordinate parent and family programs.
4. Inform parents and families about school activities and meetings in a language they can understand.
5. Offer meetings at a variety of times and places to encourage parent and family involvement.
6. Establish a volunteer program for parents, families and community members that gives volunteers specific and meaningful tasks.
7. Ask for volunteers with specific interests, hobbies or jobs that they would be willing to share with students as a classroom resource.
8. Involve civic clubs, businesses and community organizations in school projects including asking for their help and resources for specific school events (e.g., career days, science fairs, etc.)
9. Ask local businesses to set up simulations with groups of students to simulate real-life learning experiences.
10. Cover school council and school activities in a newsletter published at regular intervals throughout the year and will utilize social media to ensure a wide array of mediums are used to reach parents, families, and the community.
11. Ask teachers, parents and families to volunteer to make presentations to the board of education, family groups, civic groups and others about good things that are happening at the school.
12. Post the minutes of school council meetings in a prominent place in the school and distribute them widely through a variety of mediums (i.e. print, non-print and digital).
13. Set up a school council booth at back-to-school nights or events, open houses and family orientation sessions to allow families an opportunity to know how they can serve as a school council member or on a school council committee.
14. Provide parents and families reasonable access to instructional staff before school and after scheduled classes for phone calls or conferences.
15. Provide meaningful opportunities for parents and families to understand their child's curricular programming.
16. Coordinate and integrate parent, family and community involvement programs and activities with other federal, state and local programs.

PCHS and its parents, families and the community will build and develop a partnership that will assist students in achieving proficiency. Through this commitment each shareholder agrees to the following:

**PCHS will:**

- Provide high quality instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables the participating students to meet Kentucky's student academic achievement standards;
- Allow parents, families and community members an opportunity to provide input on the school's academic and extracurricular offerings (i.e. 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Title I, Part A schoolwide program plan and/or gifted and talented programming) and provide reasonable support to parents and families;
- Provide frequent reports on student progress;
- Utilize evidence-based materials and methods;
- Educate teachers and other instructional and non-instructional staff on the importance and value of engaging parents, families and community members in the education of students;
- Provide a safe, positive and healthy learning environment for each student; and
- Address the individual needs of each student.

**Parents and families will:**

- Ensure their child attends school regularly, is punctual, and prepared to learn;
- Create an atmosphere that supports learning;
- Encourage their child to demonstrate respect for school personnel, classmates and school property;
- Remain informed about their child's education; and
- Model respect by connecting with the teacher first regarding educational concerns.

**Students will\*:**

- Come to school on time and be prepared to learn;
- Obey all school and classroom rules;
- Pay attention to their teachers, tutors and family members and ask for help when needed; and
- Commit to learning and do their best work each day.


**Background Checks for Volunteers:**

PCHS welcomes volunteers! Any parent or family member wishing to serve as a parent or family volunteer in the school must complete a criminal background check and attend confidentiality training.

Date Adopted:	<u>Jan. 18, 2023</u>
Date Reviewed/Revised:	<u>Jan. 22, 2024</u>
Date Reviewed/Revised:	<u>Jan. 23, 2025</u>

### **Policy Annotation and Analysis**

Now that you have read the sample policy, complete the annotation and analysis activity below. After having located the items noted below within the policy, please address the questions that follow:

1. Draw a  around two activities that involve parents in a meaningful way.
2. Underline the definition of engagement according to this policy.
3. Double underline two responsibilities parents and families have in this policy.
4. Put an asterisk\* by the responsibilities that students have.
5. Do families and the community have meaningful opportunities to participate in the school and its happenings? Why or why not?
6. Does the policy lean more heavily towards involvement or engagement or does there appear to be a good balance between the two? Explain.
7. List two equitable practices noted in the policy.

8.

a. Does your council's family and community engagement policy look like the provided sample? If so, in what ways? What would you like to see added to your school's policy to promote family engagement?

b. If your school does not have a family and community engagement policy, elaborate on why it does not. Do you hope to adopt one this year?



**Did You Know?**

In 2024-2025, 2,507 parents served on SBDM councils in Kentucky.

## Making Connections: Council Membership

In the 1990 legislative session, the Kentucky General Assembly passed House Bill 940, commonly known as the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA). Essentially, this landmark legislation changed the face of education in Kentucky. One drastic change that came along with KERA was KRS 160.345, which outlined SBDM councils. Since the inception of KERA and the creation of SBDM councils, voting membership was limited to principals, teachers and parents.

On April 7, 2021, the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) unanimously approved the amendment to [701 KAR 5:100](#), which provides guidelines for alternative models for SBDM. One significant change, as a result of the amendment, is the ability for school councils to add additional voting members, such as students, additional parents and classified staff, to their council's membership through an alternative SBDM application process.

In addition to adding voting students and classified staff to councils pursuant to [KRS 160.345\(7\)](#), a school may develop a model that includes non-voting council members without the prior approval of the KBE. Students or classified staff may be added to the council in an advisory role to offer insight and opinions but may not have voting rights unless the council seeks and is granted approval by the KBE for an alternative SBDM.

Having this approved amendment is a viable option to get additional family and community members on council to serve as an active voice with the ability to help make decisions in the best interest of the students and become more engaged in their child's education.

**Think:Pair:Share:** Think about the impact of what it would mean for your council to add another voting parent, family or community member (or even a student) or to simply add a non-voting member on the council. Address your thoughts below in the chart. Be prepared to share with a partner!

A benefit to **adding an additional voting member** (parent, student, classified staff, community member) is...

A positive outcome from additional parent/student/staff/community member **voice** is...



## Benefits of Focusing on Engagement

The best predictor of student success is the extent to which families encourage learning at home and involve themselves in their child's education. Encouraging engagement is more than a common courtesy. It's one of the best ways to create a positive learning environment for every student. The more families are involved in their children's education, the better their entire class's motivation, behavior and grades become.

Students and children benefit through engagement in the following ways:<sup>7</sup>

- Earn higher grades or test scores
- Graduate from high school and attend post-secondary education
- Develop self-confidence and motivation in the classroom
- Have better social skills and classroom behavior
- Have higher attendance rates

As we learned earlier in this training, one of your responsibilities as a council member is to help develop the CSIP. In this plan, council members, the principal and other stakeholders create a needs assessment focusing on social, emotional, physical and academic needs of all students in the school building. Goals are also set to help schools meet these needs and ultimately improve student achievement. When schools and families work together on these goals but also on the strategies to meet them, everyone benefits. Parents, teachers, schools, the community and the principal all see better success!

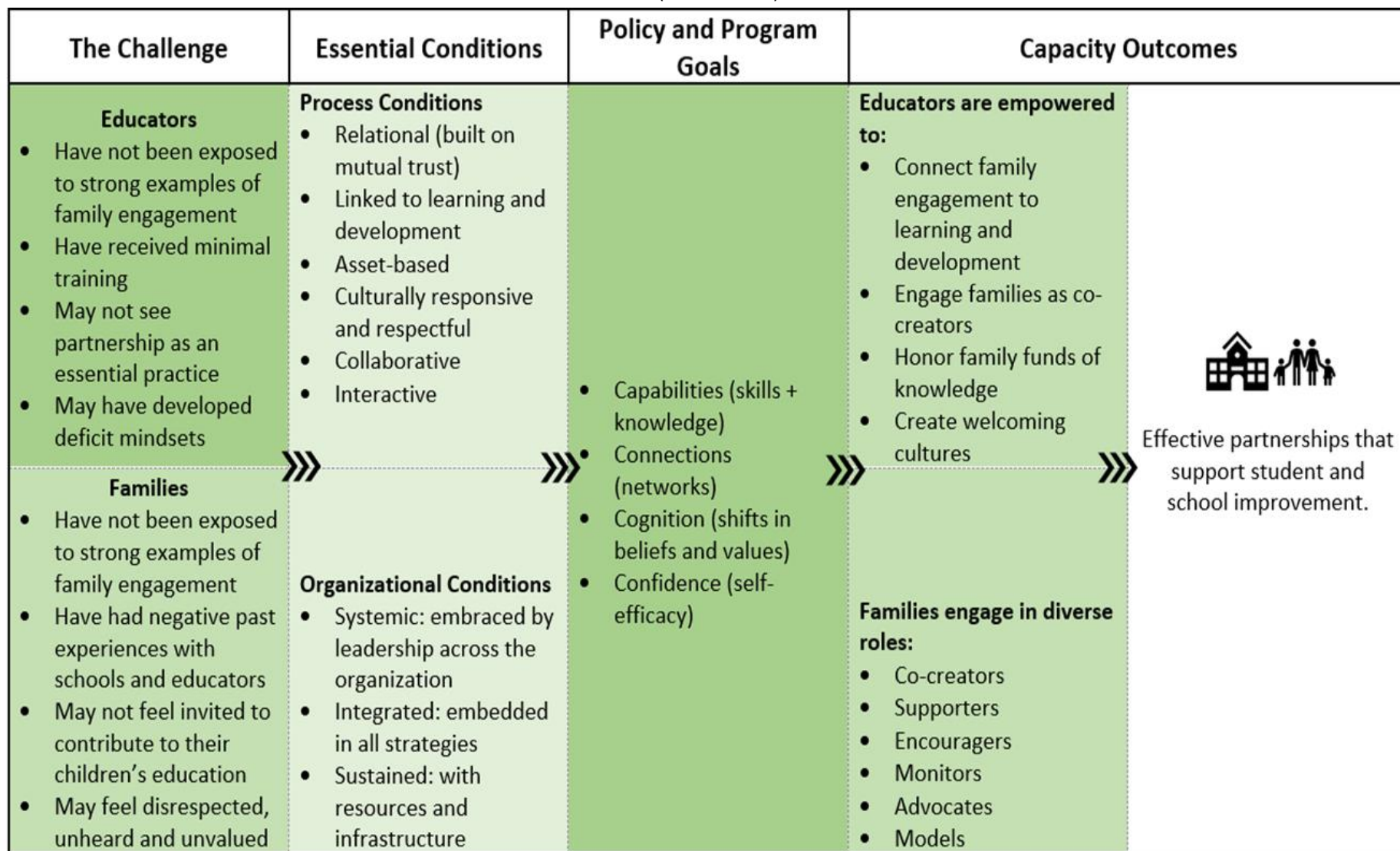
## The Dual Capacity Building Framework

Karen Mapp created the dual-capacity building framework designed to support the development of family engagement strategies, policies and programs. This framework is comprised of some goals and conditions that are necessary to pave the way for stronger family engagement efforts in the schools. Review the framework on the next page and complete the activity that follows.

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<sup>7</sup> Waterford.org. "How Parent Involvement Leads to Student Success". Nov.1, 2018.  
<https://www.waterford.org/education/how-parent-involvement-leads-to-student-success/>.

The Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships  
(Version 2)



**Activity:** After having reviewed “The Dual Capacity Framework,” respond to the reflection questions and tasks below.

1. How would you determine which conditions are present in your school and which ones may need additional work?
  - a. How would these conditions benefit your work as a council?
  
2. Do your policies and practices support the capacities noted in the outcomes section? Give some examples.
  
3. Read the SBDM policy excerpts in Column I below. Using the framework, evaluate the excerpt by responding the questions in Column II. Record your thoughts in the blank space in Column II.

Policy Excerpt	SBDM Policy and Dual Capacity Consideration
<p><b>Committee Policy:</b> Each committee at Cardinal Middle School will meet every Monday from 5 until 6 p.m. in the school’s library. This includes holiday and summer months. One representative from each committee will speak at the regularly scheduled SBDM monthly meeting to update the council on all committee work and progress. Each committee is required to have only one parent serve and parents are not obligated to attend weekly meetings, nor should they be the designated spokesperson for the committee at SBDM monthly meetings.</p>	<p>This policy excerpt obviously does not empower parents, families or the community. One <b>challenge</b> noted by Mapp in “The Dual Capacity Framework” is that families may not feel invited to contribute to their children’s education. What language within this policy creates an unwelcoming environment to parents? And, based on the excerpt, what values and beliefs can you infer about the school?</p>

<p><b>Student Assignment Policy:</b> Students in kindergarten and 1st grade will be in multiage classes where students will remain with the same teacher for two years. Students that need an extra year in the primary program, after consultation with the child's teacher, parent(s), the guidance counselor and/or the principal, will complete an extra year prior to promotion to 2nd grade. Any student completing an additional year will be placed with a different teacher for that additional year. Parents may appeal the decision; however, the principal shall make the final determination of placement.</p>	<p>The Student Assignment Policy excerpt allows for collaboration and conversation among parents, teachers and principals regarding a decision about the student's education through consultation. What else in this excerpt can be linked to positive conditions in the framework that will lead to higher student engagement?</p>
<p><b>Discipline Policy:</b> Any student or family that disagrees with a consequence administered by a teacher or principal may not appeal the decision unless they have followed the below steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Professionally arranged for a private meeting with the teacher before a principal meeting.</li> <li>2. If the teacher cannot accommodate meeting in person, parents will be offered an opportunity to connect by phone.</li> <li>3. To protect the principal's time, he/she will not be involved in any disputes until the aforementioned steps have been exhausted.</li> </ol>	<p>This excerpt obviously does not create a welcoming culture that leads to parents feeling like advocates or collaborators. What could be changed in this excerpt that would help families feel a more respectful partnership? What behaviors do you believe led a council to include this information in its policy?</p>

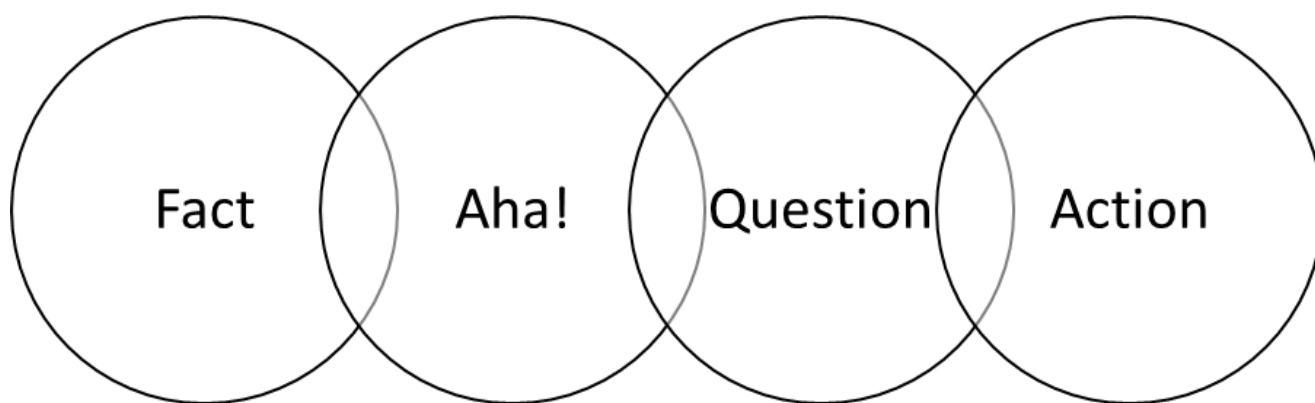
### Closing Activity:

The National Institute for School Leadership (NISL) believes that transformational change is often met with resistance. But, why is that? Have you experienced this in your role as an SBDM council member?

*Change is threatening. It threatens one's sense of competence. People fear they will fail at new tasks—their security is threatened. That is because change is like hitting a reset button: It resets everything—or almost everything—back to zero. New situations may be neither safe nor predictable, and learning new “rules” of engagement may be unclear. How to behave in the new “normal” is unsettling to many people.*

According to NISL, “[e]very organization faces change—sometimes small, sometimes massive—but rarely when the organization is fully prepared and enthusiastically looking forward to the innovation.”<sup>8</sup> As you move forward in your term on council, consider ways that you can engage more parents, families and the community in your work and decisions—even if it is met first with resistance. At each turn when an important decision needs to be made, whether it is budgetary, in the creation of a policy or if a crucial conversation needs to take place, remember that when you involve stakeholders outside of the council, your school will benefit greatly.

Consider what you have learned and discussed today about parent, family and community engagement. In the first circle, list one fact that you learned during today’s training. In the second circle, list an Aha! moment—one or more new ideas you now have. Write a question that you still have in circle 3. Lastly, list the action(s) that you will take as a result of your new learning.



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<sup>8</sup> Adapted from the National Institute of School Leadership’s “Driving and Sustaining Transformation.”

## Additional Resources

The below list includes a variety of resources and a brief description of each to assist schools in strengthening their parent, family, and community engagement efforts.

[Family and School Partnerships](#): A robust KDE webpage that includes a list of resources to assist schools and families with building and strengthening family-school partnerships.

[Family Friendly School Certification Process](#): A certification process that schools can undergo to demonstrate a commitment to viewing families as equal partners in student education, focus continuous improvement efforts on research-based practices that improve student and school outcomes and achieve national and statewide recognition for meeting established standards of quality family engagement practices.

[Family Partnership Council](#): The family partnership council is an advisory council to the KDE. It provides input on topics of interest to families, such as ways families and communities can assist schools to increase student achievement for all students. The council meets three times a year.

[Kentucky Academic Standards \(KAS\) Family Guides](#): The family guides were developed to help families familiarize themselves with the concepts of each grade level's standards and include suggestions for how families can reinforce standards content at home. Each guide contains a standards overview for reading and writing, mathematics, science and social studies. Guides are available for grades K-8 and high school and are available in Spanish for Spanish-speaking families.

[Kentucky Collaborative for Families and Schools: Kentucky Family and School Partnership Guide](#) and the [Family Engagement Digital Playbook](#): These resources were designed to help school and district groups work together more effectively so that Kentucky can rise to proficiency in the practice of family and community engagement and to help Kentucky schools and districts realize an equitable and excellent education for every Kentuckian.

[Parent, Family and Community Engagement Evidence-based Database](#): The clearinghouses and/or databases can be consulted when locating evidence-based activities, strategies, and interventions for engaging parents, families and communities. This is not an exhaustive list; however, the clearinghouses and databases linked within are some of the evidence-based resources available to districts and schools. KDE is committed to maintaining an unbiased approach to resource distribution. None of the items on this list were created or evaluated by KDE and inclusion on this list should not be interpreted as an endorsement of the site or program.

[School-based Decision Making \(SBDM\) Handbook \(KDE\)](#): Research has shown that student achievement improves when families and community members are welcomed into the school and become a part of the school's daily business. School councils must actively seek the involvement of families and community members and consistently try to bring them into the daily work of the school. Chapter 14 of the SBDM Handbook addresses how SBDM councils can involve families and communities in their work to increase student achievement.

[Title I, Part A Handbook \(KDE\)](#): The Title I, Part A Handbook addresses the requirements for parent and family engagement for those schools receiving Title I, Part A funds. The handbook also includes recommendations for developing effective parent and family engagement.

[United We Learn](#): In an effort to create a vision for education in Kentucky, the Kentucky Coalition for Advancing Education developed the "United We Learn: Hearing Kentucky's Voices on the Future of Education" report which lays out how education can be transformed into an enriching experience that prepares students for life in this rapidly changing world. One way in which educators can reach this vision is by building capacity for family engagement.