

The Missing Piece: Engaging parents to complete the proficiency puzzle

Objective 1: Relationship-building

School staff builds productive, personal relationships with parents* of all their students.

	Distinguished	Proficient	Apprentice	Novice
a	Teachers and staff have developed collaborative partnering relationships with all parents and students to improve teaching and learning.	Parents report that school staff understands and demonstrates how strong relationships with parents contribute to effective teaching and learning.	Parents report their relationship with school staff is about discussing student academic performance and/or behavior.	Parents report that teacher/parent relationships are limited to discipline issues and/or reports of poor academic performance.
b	Administrators and school staff welcome and actively seek parents of all new and ESL students to encourage early relationship building.	School staff implements systematic steps to welcome the parents of new and ESL students (e.g., home visits, personal calls or letters, open houses, and other methods).	Relationships with parents of new and ESL students are informal, occasional, or accidental, and information is provided if requested.	School staff has limited involvement with parents of new and ESL students.
c	District and school staff provides training to involve all stakeholders in the process of improving the interaction between school, home, and community.	Parents and other stakeholders report they are actively welcomed when they visit the school.	Some parents report they are welcome to visit school.	Parents report that school staff makes little effort to welcome parents or community members when they visit the school.
d	Parents and community stakeholders have authentic participation and help plan and implement school and district improvement activities.	School staff implements systematic steps to encourage parents to attend school activities and participate in decisions about their children's learning.	Parents are invited to attend school activities related to their own child and are encouraged to attend parent teacher conferences.	Parents receive information on school activities and are invited to conference if child is not doing well.
e	District and school staffs encourage continuous and meaningful communication with all parents about their student's academic goals and progress.	School staff involves parents in personal communication about their students' progress at least once a month.	Administrators and school staff are available to parents by appointment only to discuss their student's progress.	Most communication from administrators regards safety and discipline issues.
f	District and school staffs identify family interests, needs and barriers and provide services to ensure academic success.	School staff completes needs assessment with all parents to determine resources necessary for their child's academic success.	Teachers informally collect some student-needs data and some parents are contacted to discuss those needs.	School staff has no plan for gathering information about students' learning needs.
g	Student/family feedback data on school welcoming and engagement efforts is retained in a useable confidential format and can be retrieved for district or school assistance to families.	All parents are asked for feedback on school's efforts to welcome and engage parents, and the feedback is used to improve school's efforts.	Staff occasionally asks for feedback on school's efforts to welcome and engage parents, in an informal or casual way with no regular data collection.	Student/family feedback is not included in any assessment of the school's efforts to welcome and engage parents.

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Objective 2: Communication

Two-way information in many forms flows regularly between school staff and parents about students' academic achievement and individual needs.

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a	Multiple two-way communications in the home language are used to communicate academic goals, class work, homework, and grades. (See Proficient examples).	School staff implements systematic efforts to inform parents about academic goals, class work, grades, and homework for their children in their home language (e.g., classroom contracts, student assignment books, homework Web sites, and online grade books).	School staff relies on one-way communication in English to inform parents about academic goals, class work, grades, and homework (e.g., newsletters, marquees, and agendas).	School staff uses only one-way communication with parents to inform them about student work (e.g., student report cards and behavior reports).
b	District/school staff, parents and community stakeholders work together to learn from and use all resources available to meet the student's and parent's learning needs.	School staff offers varied ways that parents can share information with teachers about their children's learning needs (e.g., phone and e-mail contacts, parent conferences, and home visits).	School staff uses informal conversation and/or a parent-teacher conference to listen to parents or inform parents of students' learning needs.	Parents receive information about student's learning needs when the student is failing academically.
c	School and district staffs use several strategies to involve community leaders to assist in parent education on issues directly related to student achievement.	School staff partners with community leaders and organizations to build parent understanding of academic expectations, school strategies, and student achievement results.	School staff sometimes provides community organizations with information about academic expectations for parents who use their services.	School staff rarely provides general information to the community about academic expectations of students.
d	Parents and community stakeholders have authentic participation and help plan and implement school and district improvement activities.	School staff offers parents opportunities to discuss school-wide achievement issues, including assessment data, at least once a semester.	Student achievement data or achievement results are communicated informally to parents by school staff.	School staff, as mandated by law, addresses data on student achievement.
e	District and school staffs encourage continuous and meaningful communication with all parents about their student's academic goals and progress.	School staff implements systematic efforts to maximize parent-teacher conference participation (e.g., offering multiple locations and convenient times, following up with parents who do not reply to first notices, and allowing student-led conferences).	Parent-teacher conferences are held twice a year on school grounds, and some teachers send invitations to parents.	Optional parent-teacher conferences are offered at school, and parents are notified if a teacher wants to conference.
f	District and school staffs identify family interests, needs and barriers and provide services to ensure academic success.	At least 50% of parents respond to annual school and/or district stakeholder surveys.	District-wide stakeholder surveys are given to parents, and teachers encourage parents to respond.	Parents are not encouraged to give feedback on school or student performance.
g	Student/family feedback data on school welcoming and engagement efforts is retained in a useable confidential format and can be retrieved for district or school assistance to families.	Stakeholder survey data is consistently used to plan school improvement efforts and to evaluate their effectiveness.	School staff develops a survey that is sent to parents—with low response rate—and results are reported in school improvement plan.	School staff develops a short survey that is distributed to parents—with low response rate—and results are not shared with all stakeholders.

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Objective 3: Decision-Making

School staff encourages, supports and expects parents to be involved in school improvement decisions and to monitor and assist school improvement.

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a	All stakeholders are provided with multiple opportunities to learn about the decision-making process and to participate at all levels, including professional learning communities, school council, and its committees.	School staff offers professional learning community opportunities, workshops, and accessible written information to equip parents for service on SBDM council and committees.	Parents elected to serve on school council— and some other parents who serve on SBDM committees—are invited to attend training offered by school or district.	Parents elected to serve on school council are invited to attend basic district training. No effort to include other parents on SBDM committees.
b	School council and committees have all stakeholder groups represented, provide interpreters and translated materials, and hold convenient, well-publicized meetings. At least 60% of parents vote in SBDM parent election.	School council and committees facilitate extensive parent participation by recruiting diverse membership, providing interpreters and translated materials, setting convenient meeting times, and seeking broad parent input. At least 40% of parents vote in SBDM parent election.	School council and committees have some parent members, may provide translators and meet at time and place convenient to staff. Publicized elections are held at convenient times, but fewer than 20% of parents vote in SBDM parent election.	School council has parent members as required by law; parents are not asked to serve on committees; meeting time and place are determined by principal. Voter turnout for SBDM parent election is low.
c	School council seeks input from all parents, participation of mentors through multiple sources and involvement of all stakeholder groups.	Parents on the SBDM council and committees engage and mentor many other parents by reporting to multiple groups and seeking input through surveys, meetings, and varied other methods.	School council chair reports feedback to the largest parent organization, which then decides further dissemination methods or input. There is no provision for parent input other than as required by school law.	School council chair sends council minutes to largest parent organization with no follow-up.
d	Parents and community stakeholders are trained in academic achievement planning and authentic participation, with school council regularly checking the implementation and impact of that work.	School council adopts measurable objectives and plans coherent strategies to build authentic parent participation, and the school council monitors the implementation and impact of that work.	School council has some parent involvement components and action items that deal with specific academic areas. Little or no funding is provided. Little or no implementation and impact checking is done.	School council has some parent-involvement action items imbedded in a few components. They are usually not measurable and have little to no funding, and consistent implementation and impact checking is not done.
e	School council actively recruits parents to serve on committees related to school improvement that, informed by data, review and revise objectives continuously.	School council policies ensure active roles for parents on SBDM committees, in school improvement planning, and in decisions about the education of their children.	School council encourages parents to serve only on SBDM committees that deal with parent involvement and/or school climate.	School council does not encourage parent participation on SBDM committees or in school planning.
f	Parents and stakeholders are trained to create, measure and sustain authentic participation in all areas of school improvement at school and district levels.	Parents report they are treated as valued partners on school leadership teams, SBDM council and committees, and other groups making decisions about school improvement.	Parents report they are sometimes encouraged to take part in discussions about school improvement.	Staff and parents have no knowledge of authentic participation.
g	School staff fosters a community of stakeholders and parents who continually sustain and support each other in school council and committee work.	School staff has a plan to identify new and experienced parent leaders who support and build capacity for parents to serve effectively on the school council and in committee work.	School staff provides opportunities for outgoing parent council members to meet with new parent council members to share knowledge of serving on the council.	Teachers share information from year to year with parents who serve on the school council or overlap council terms of parents.

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Objective 4: Advocacy

For each student, school staff identifies and supports a parent* or another adult who can take personal responsibility for understanding and speaking for that child's learning needs

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a	District and school staff supports a community of trained parents and advocates who work together to ensure all students are meeting their academic goals and learning needs.	School staff ensures every student has a parent and/or another adult who knows how to advocate, or speak up for them, regarding the student's academic goals and learning needs.	There is evidence that school staff know which students have a parent or another adult who can speak up for them regarding their academic goals and learning needs.	School staff does not know which students have a parent or another adult who can speak up for them regarding academic goals and learning needs.
b	District and school staff partners with all parents and advocates to discuss, monitor, and share successful strategies for meeting individual learning needs.	Most parents participate actively in student-led conferences or other two-way communication about meeting their child's individual learning needs.	Some parents are involved in informal conversation with school staff to address their child's individual learning needs.	School staff does not involve parents in addressing their child's learning needs. School staff only informs parents of student's academic progress.
c	Parents report that district and school staff facilitates sharing of ideas and training to effectively participate in developing IEPs, ILPs, GSSPs, 504 plans, and interventions for college readiness.	Parents report participating actively and effectively in required planning for individual learning, e.g., Individual Education Plans, Individual Learning Plans, Gifted Student Service Plans, 504 Plans, and intervention strategies to ensure college readiness (Senate Bill 130).	Parents report they are invited to attend meetings to discuss Individual Education Plans, Individual Learning Plans, 504 plans, and/or intervention strategies.	Parents report they are informed as required by law to participate in Individual Education Plans, Individual Learning Plans, and intervention strategies.
d	School staff collaborates with stakeholders to develop policies and procedures for resolving issues and complaints and for identifying needed improvements.	School staff gives parents clear, complete information on procedures for resolving concerns and filing complaints, and the council reviews summary data on those complaints to identify needed improvements.	School council has a policy and a process to resolve issues or complaints, and outcomes are sometimes tracked and reported to the council.	Teachers handle parent complaints, but outcomes are not tracked or reported.
e	District and school staff ensures that parents and community members are trained to serve as educational advocates or to access trained educational advocates for students to meet their academic goals.	School staff ensures parents and community members are well informed about how to become an educational advocate or how to access an educational advocate when needed.	School staff makes minimal effort to encourage parents to advocate for their child's academic success.	School staff puts forth no effort to encourage parents to advocate for their child's academic success.
f	District and school staffs identify family interests, needs and barriers and provide services to ensure academic success.	When students are identified by school staff as having disabilities or performing at the novice level, additional intentional steps are taken to ensure that the parent has the option to use a trained advocate to assist them in speaking for their child's needs.	Novice level students are identified by school staff to receive targeted strategies for academic improvement. Parents are informed of the strategies but do not receive training on how to use those strategies or how progress will be measured.	Some teachers provide additional help or strategies to novice learners in their classroom but do not inform the parents about strategies used.

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Objective 5: Learning Opportunities

School staff ensures that families have multiple learning opportunities to understand how to support their children’s learning.

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a	District and school leaders involve all stakeholders, use many community resources and opportunities to explain standards and rights defined in Proficient, and expect all parents to have adequate information and understanding of these practices. Parents with barriers to learning are individually assisted.	Parents have multiple opportunities to learn about and discuss: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kentucky standards and expectations for all students • School’s curriculum, instructional methods, and student services • School’s decision-making process, including opportunities to participate on SBDM councils and committees • Their children’s learning and development, along with legal and practical options for helping their children succeed, such as the IEP and/or ILP process • Community resources to support learning • Opportunities to participate in state and district school improvement efforts (e.g., forums, committees, and surveys). 	School provides open house and family nights for some parents to learn about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kentucky standards and expectations for all students • School’s curriculum, instructional methods,-and student services • School’s decision-making process, including opportunities for parents to participate on councils and SBDM committees • Their children’s learning and development, along with legal and practical options for helping their children succeed, such as the IEP and/or ILP process • Community resources to support learning. 	School provides one open house a year and offers some written materials about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kentucky standards and expectations for all students • School’s decision-making process, including opportunities for parents to participate on councils and SBDM committees
b	All stakeholders are engaged in conversation and written communication about the academic progress of all students in the school and district.	School staff makes systematic use of written communications (newsletters, Web sites, bulletin boards) to help parents understand their children’s academic progress and the progress of the school.	School staff provides parents with information about their child’s academic progress and the progress of the school.	School staff provides parents only with information mandated by reporting requirements on student achievement.
c	School staff exhibits and rotates proficient and distinguished work and provides resources for achieving at higher levels.	School staff displays—and regularly updates—proficient student work, along with scoring guides to demonstrate academic expectations, to parents and students.	School staff exhibits some student work with scoring guide and proficient-level work.	Some student work of various levels is exhibited in the classroom.
d	District and school staff collaborates with parents and community members to provide training on how to support children’s learning and district and school improvement efforts.	School staff offers parent workshops or meetings in convenient locations to help parents develop skills for supporting their children’s learning and the school’s improvement efforts.	School staff offers targeted parent workshops and meetings to help parents develop skills to support their child’s learning.	School staff offers some information to parents to learn how to support their child’s learning.
e	School staff has posted council policy on classroom visits, providing access to all classrooms.	School council has a classroom observation policy that welcomes families to visit all classrooms.	School council has a classroom observation policy that allows parents access to most classrooms by appointment only.	School staff allows parents to visit regular education classrooms upon request. There is no school policy.
f	Parent leaders regularly work with all parents to improve parent understanding of learning issues.	School staff develops parent leaders who contribute regularly to other parents’ understanding and who help meet other parent learning needs.	School staff relies on parent organizations to provide learning opportunities for parent leadership.	There is little or no parent training.

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Objective 6: Community Partnerships

School staff engages and partners with community members to plan and implement substantive work to improve student achievement.

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a	School staff networks and partners with multiple businesses and organizations to support student achievement at a school council and a programmatic level.	School leaders regularly share information on student achievement and involve business and community leaders in school improvement efforts.	School leaders periodically meet with some business leaders to discuss information on student achievement.	School leaders inform the community once a year about student achievement. (For example, letter to editor or newspaper article).
b	District and school staff leverages all partnerships to gain maximum benefit to support all students learning from the human and financial resources available.	School leaders develop partnerships with several businesses, organizations, and agencies to support student learning and create mentors for students and parents.	Some teachers ensure that students participate in programs within the community that are linked to student learning.	After-school programs are offered to some students.
c	School leadership and council compacts with an employer network that promotes adult participation in education.	School leaders collaborate with employers to support parent and volunteer participation in students' education.	Employer-partners adopt practices to promote and support parent and volunteer participation in students' education.	School leaders rarely invite employers to support adult participation in education.
d	District and school staff collaborates with all willing organizations to support parents and advocates in addressing individual student needs.	School staff collaborates with businesses, organizations, and agencies to address individual student needs and shares that information with parents.	School staff occasionally collaborates with community agencies to address individual student needs. Information is provided to parents upon request.	Staff sometimes collaborates with community agencies to address general student academic needs.
e	School staff and parents have seamless integration of consistent and sustained family support services from school and the community to reduce student barriers to learning.	Parents make active use of school and community resources and report they provide meaningful help to resolve family challenges that could interfere with student learning. (For example, FRYSC or Title 1 coordinators connect family with community resources and follows up).	Parents are made aware of family support services in school and in the community that are provided for students. (For example, families know about community resources through school coordinators, but it is up to the family to access those resources)	Parents are given information about community resources from school program coordinators or school staff.
f	District staff and school leadership ensures all stakeholders are aware of community-based learning opportunities that are linked to student-specific needs.	School staff offers and publicizes community-based learning activities, such as tutoring linked to the curriculum, for all students and parents.	School staff maintains a resource directory on some agencies, programs, and services that will provide services for students.	School staff rarely updates or communicates with local agencies or programs that provide learning services.

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