

Engaging Families to Support Student Achievement

“The Four Equity Partnership Recommendations”

Five Leadership Practices:

Determine student outcomes, Recognize cultural assets and norms, Facilitate collaborative meetings, Communicate effectively, Celebrate student progress together.

Unreached

What Every Educator Wants to Know About Engaging Families for Equity and Student Achievement

Trise Moore

Trise Moore has designed and implemented community outreach and family engagement frameworks for districts and non-profit organizations throughout the U.S.

She was selected as Education Week's 2017 Leader to Learn From, for her outstanding leadership in the field of family engagement and was acknowledged as an emerging leader by the Harvard Family Research Project for her district level work establishing effective, collaborative district wide family and community partnership structures. She offers training, coaching and technical assistance on the four equity recommendations and leadership practices to district's and community-based organizations.



Recommendation:

Earn Trust Early

Equity Questions:

- Have we intentionally asked our families and students to share their views regarding how we can establish effective family engagement and partnership practices?
- In what ways do our school practices, protocols and events help with the process of building trust as it pertains to honoring student and family voice?
- In what ways do our school's practices, protocols and events create barriers to the process of building trust and honoring student and parent voices and partnerships?
- How can we glean parents' knowledge to help us understand our student's strengths, interests, and culture in a way that enhances partnerships and student engagement?
- When we use student and family feedback to improve our school culture and instructional practice, how do we let students and families know?

Recommendation:

Balance Expectations Transparently

Equity Questions:

- When and how do we ask our families about their expectations for their student's progress and their views about their role in their student's progress?
- In what ways do we address limited technology access, language, transportation, childcare and scheduling constraints when we invite families to partner?
- Which parents respond positively to our partnership outreach efforts, and which parents seem less responsive and why?
- How can you avoid burnout and manage your school responsibilities, family engagement efforts and personal self-care with balance?
- What are some ways our families and community partners can provide direct support to the school community?

Recommendation:

Share Responsibility Intentionally

Equity Questions:

- What do parents want us to know about their family norms and their vision of 'shared responsibility' as it pertains to supporting their child's success in school?
- In what ways can we use family insight to inform our prevention, intervention and school improvement planning?
- What type of academic resources, assignments, or opportunities do we share with students and families to help make the most of out-of-school learning opportunities?
- What are some ways we can honor and learn more about the assets and cultural norms our students and families bring?
- How can we invite families to help us incorporate cultural relevance and equity within the district school and classroom levels?

Recommendation:

Measure Efforts Meaningfully

Equity Questions:

- What are some of the immeasurable benefits your students' families hope to gain from a partnership with you and or their child's school?
- What are the measurable outcomes you want to achieve for your students as a result of your partnership with their families?
- What are some of the effective family partnership activities other schools and districts use to produce measurable outcomes for student achievement?
- How can I build on my expanded understanding of effective partnership approaches to enhance my leadership skills and professional goals?
- How can families help us measure our progress toward the goal of reaching families for equity and student achievement?

Motivating Factors That Can Promote Engagement & Partnership with Unreached Families for Student Achievement

Families are more likely to partner when given opportunities to engage in projects and partnerships that match their or their student's passion or interests.

Families respond to partnership invitations more favorably when they believe their insights will be respected and valued.

Families tend to be more open to accepting partnership invitations when they have confidence about their capacity to accomplish the goals of the partnership.

Families are typically more responsive to outreach efforts when there are clear expectations and convenient time parameters.

Families often feel more motivated to accept outreach invitations from staff they already know and trust.