Family Engagement Training for Educators in Pre-Service:
Common Sense but No Common Practice

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Speakers

Joyce G. Watts, Ed.D.
Advisory Board Co-Chair
Parent Organization Network

Rigel Spencer Massaro
Senior Legislative Counsel
Public Advocates & Parent

Araceli Simeón, MPP
Project Director
Parent Organization Network & Parent

Shulamit N. Ritblatt, Ph.D.
Professor, Child and Family Development
Director, Center for Family, School and Community Engagement
San Diego State University

Yesica Limón
Parent Leader
Gente Organizada in Pomona
Why We Studied this Topic: Challenges Establishing Collaborative Relationships
Why It Is Relevant: Distance Learning Challenges
What We Studied

- Research
- Law
- Requirements by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC)
- Landscape
Common Sense, but Not Common Practice: Disconnect between Research and Practice

Lack of family engagement training in pre-service

- Little to no exposure to strong examples of family engagement
- No strong practice of family engagement
- May not see partnership as an essential practice
- May develop deficit mindsets
- Do not prioritize family engagement

Legal Analysis Findings

In-Service:
• Title I states that LEA’s and schools “shall educate teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals, and other school leaders, and other staff, with the assistance of parents, in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, implement and coordinate parent programs, and build ties between parents and the school…”
• State law extends these requirements to all schools

Pre-Service:
• State law requires the CTC to establish standards for preparation programs to prepare educators to serve as “active partners” to parents and guardians
Teacher Quality Advocacy & Community Partnership

**Educator Preparation to Engage Families is Key:**

- California teachers (63% White) do not yet resemble California students and their families (70% students of color)
- Law is based on research: engagement leads to increased teacher retention, higher student engagement and achievement

**Our Experience is that Families of Color Struggle to Feel Engaged**

- School funding formula (Local Control Funding Formula) requires engagement at the student and system level
- Engagement too often feels like a box to check
CTC Requirements

Filtering System

Filter 1: Standards
Filter 2: Performance & Content Expectations
Filter 3: Accreditation
CTC Requirements

PON reviewed the standards and expectations for five preparation programs:

1. General education teacher program
2. Bilingual education teacher program
3. Special education teacher program
4. Child development permits and
5. Administrator preparation program
CTC Requirements Findings

- The law is not reflected in the standards and expectations.
- The family engagement requirements vary across preparation programs.
- The standards and expectations (filter 1 and 2) are not always aligned to each other or to current family engagement research.
- There was limited information available online about accreditation.
## Programs Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Ed Teachers</th>
<th>Bilingual Ed Teachers</th>
<th>Special Ed Teachers</th>
<th>Early Ed Teachers</th>
<th>Administrators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>Expectation: “Bilingual teachers form a cultural and linguistic bridge that links the bilingual community to the larger society.”</td>
<td>600 hours of practice with some dedicated to family engagement</td>
<td>One class on child and family relations</td>
<td>1 of 6 standards is on “Family and Community Engagement”</td>
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## Themes in Programs

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<td><strong>Standards</strong></td>
<td>Knowledge and understanding of families to support student learning</td>
<td>Parents as partners in decisions concerning their children’s education.</td>
<td>Collaboration with families and others to support student development and learning</td>
<td>Goal-oriented relationships with parents to ensure family well-being for student success</td>
<td>• LCAP development • Values • Community resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Performance Expectations</strong></td>
<td>One-way communication</td>
<td>Same as general education teachers</td>
<td>Collaboration with families and others to support students</td>
<td>Understand, communicate and collaborate with families in culturally appropriate manner</td>
<td>• LCAP development • One-way communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content Expectations</strong></td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>• LCAP development • Theories to engage, collaborate • No fam. engagement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Landscape Analysis Findings

Higher Education Institutions

- The education field considers family engagement an optional “add-on”.

- The 120-unit cap makes it challenging to add new topics.

- The lack of consistency in requirements leads to a wide variance in the amount of:
  - Time spent on the subject;
  - Content that is covered; and
  - Type and rigor of the fieldwork, if any is assigned to candidates.
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Optional

- Embedded some content and fieldwork
- Stand alone course + fieldwork
- Stand alone course + fieldwork
- Stand alone course on community engagement
Landscape Analysis Findings

**Professional Development Providers**

- They start training by reviewing research on family engagement.

- 69% provide training to school-site action teams to plan and implement activities, and administrators focused on community engagement.

- 56% provide teacher training focused on changing mindsets about families, strengthening cross-cultural communication, and relationship building to support student success.
Recommendations:

**Commission on Teacher Credentialing**
- Establish clear and consistent requirements across preparation programs
- Support and evaluate programs through a robust accreditation system
- Survey educator preparation programs to do a full scan of the landscape
- Collaborate with others to update and align pre-service training
- Participate in national family engagement pre-service consortium

**State Board of Education/ California Department of Education**
- Prioritize family engagement training for staff to support families with distance learning
- Evaluate 2019 self-reflection tool results
- Establish an Office of Family Engagement to coordinate work
Voice from the Field
It Takes Three

Student

Education

Teachers

Parents

Education
WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF INVOLVING PARENTS?

**Benefits for students:**
- Increased student achievement
- Fewer behavior problems
- More positive attitudes about homework
- More homework completed, especially on weekends
- More positive attitudes toward school
- Less absenteeism
- More connection between home and school

**Benefits to parents:**
- Increased student achievement
- Appreciation of teacher's efforts to inform them about the instructional program
- Ideas from teachers on how to help their children
- A feeling they should help their children
- Greater understanding of the instructional program
- Increased ability to help their children
- Confidence in the teacher's interpersonal skills and overall teacher ability

**Benefits for teachers:**
- Increased student achievement
- More homework completed and returned
- Happier students and less behavior problems
- More support from parents both at school & at home
4 Principles of Transformative Family Engagement

**INCLUSIVE**
Embracing and valuing diverse perspectives.

**INDIVIDUALIZED**
Meeting the unique needs of every family and child.

**INTEGRATED**
Connecting and aligning with the educational system.

**IMPACTFUL**
Empowering families to support their child’s success.
Questions?