

# Engaging Families in Afterschool

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# Why Are We Here Today?

- \* To gain a deeper understanding of how to take a systemic approach to family engagement during out-of-school time
- \* To learn how this work is happening in the field



Content on slides 2, 4, 5, 7–11, and 14, from *Engaging Families During Out-of-School Time: A Framework for Meaningful Engagement* (pp. 2-10), and slides 26-30 by the Illinois State Board of Education, May 2014. Copyright 2014 by the publisher. Reprinted by SEDL with permission.



*“One of the first steps in building momentum for any effort is to build shared understanding on key issues and concerns. For family and community engagement efforts to reach their maximum potential, everyone involved needs to develop shared understanding.”*

Source: Ferguson, 2005, p. 8



# Why Do We Partner With Families?

Afterschool is often a family's first point of entry in being involved with the school.

When families, schools, and communities partner on promoting learning, and healthy development for all children, schools thrive and student outcomes increase.

(Henderson & Mapp, 2002)





# Why Do We Partner With Families?

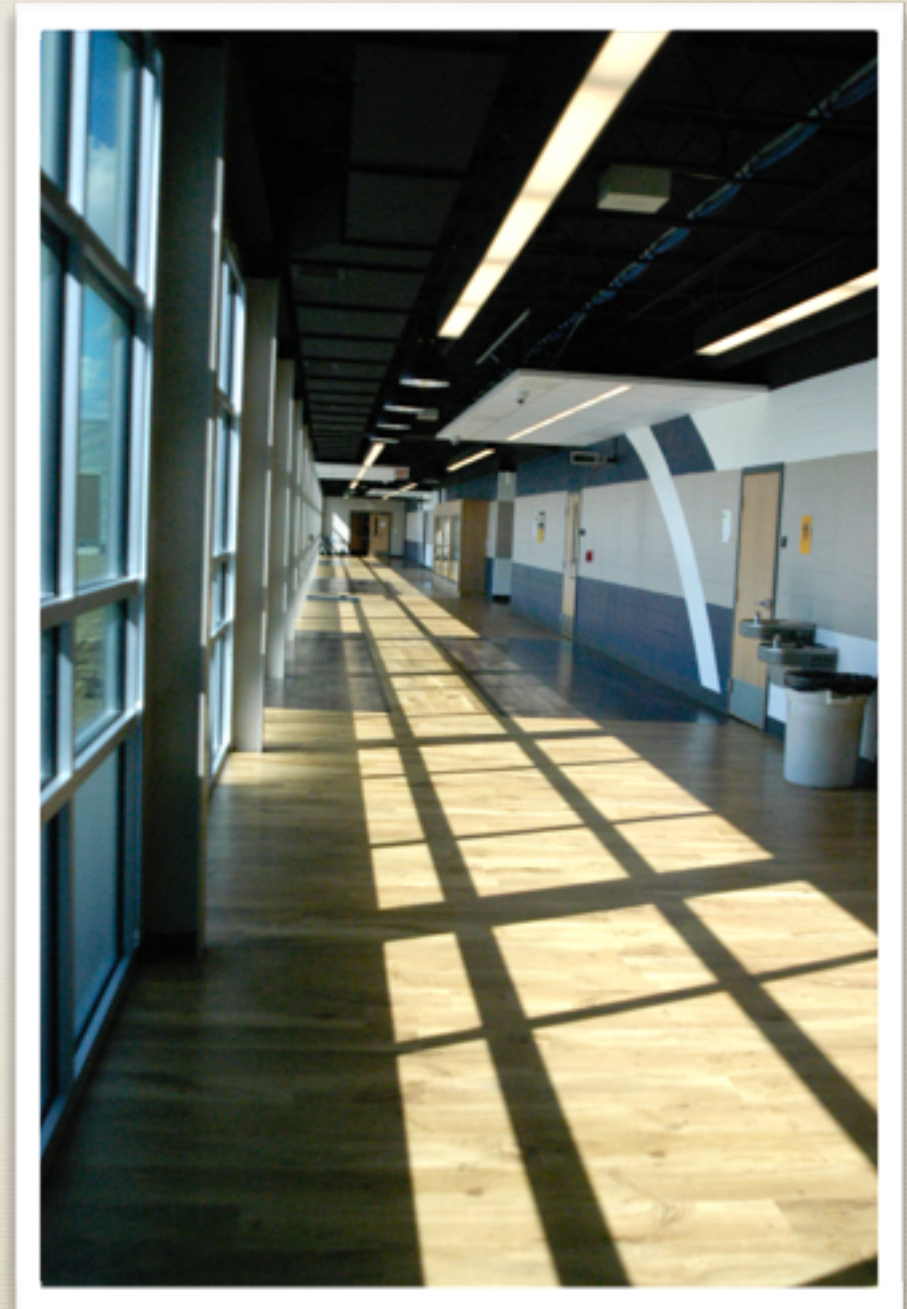
## **U.S. Department of Education Goal:**

Offer literacy and related educational services to the families of participating children.

## **Illinois State Board of Education Goals:**

Programs will collaborate with the community.

Programs will coordinate with schools to determine the students and families with the greatest need.





# Family engagement is...

- \* **“A shared responsibility:** Schools and other community agencies and organizations are committed to engaging families in meaningful and culturally respectful ways, and families are committed to actively supporting their children’s learning and development”
- \* **Cradle to career:** “Continuous across a child’s life, spanning from Early Head Start programs to college” and career
- \* **Across contexts:** “Carried out everywhere that children learn—at home, in prekindergarten programs, in school, in afterschool programs, in faith-based institutions, and in community programs and activities”



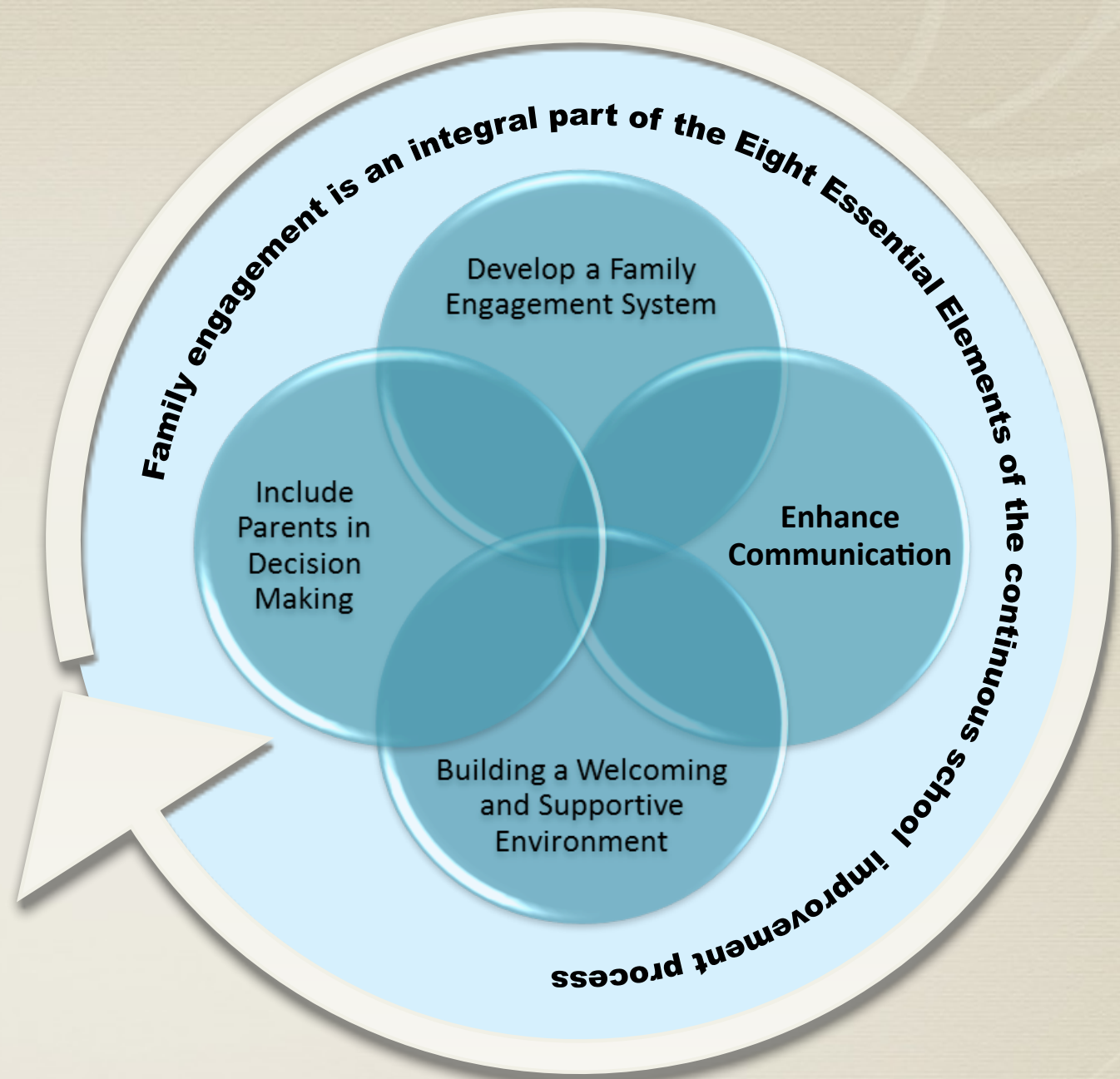
# What Is Meaningful Family Engagement?

- \*Shared responsibility for the academic, physical, social, emotional, and behavioral development of youth
- \*Fostered through a deliberate process
- \*Empowers adults to jointly support student growth, address any barriers to learning, and ensure college and career readiness





# ISBE Family Engagement Framework Guide Overview



- \* Out-of-school time providers partner with families
- \* Families are engaged on a regular basis and it is linked to all program goals and school improvement plans
- \* When critical stakeholders partner, educational systems are stronger and more effective



# Evidence-Based Practice: The Research Review

## Research Review: Developing a Family Engagement System

Substantial research findings reinforce the need for education systems to encourage and support parental involvement. Research has repeatedly demonstrated the positive impact parent involvement, whether in school or at home, has on academic outcomes. Regardless of socio-economic background, students with involved parents are more likely to earn high grades and test scores, enroll in higher level programs, attend school regularly, show improved behavior, and develop better social skills (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). In addition, when people across multiple contexts (e.g., family and school) foster the cognitive, social, emotional, and

reason schools were successful in involving migrant families was that school personnel were individually and systemically committed to meeting the various needs of the families. Districts and schools can begin to express this commitment by jointly developing a vision/mission for family engagement that is shared with all stakeholders and drives policies and practices.

### **Leadership**

Effective partnerships are created when district and school leadership set the tone and expectations for meaningful



# Family Engagement Standards of Effective Practice

## Principle 1: Develop a Family Engagement System



Districts/schools develop a family engagement system that cultivates and empowers adults to jointly support student growth, address any barriers to learning, and ensure college and career readiness.

### Standards:

- 1A. A jointly developed vision/mission for family engagement is shared with all stakeholders and drives policies and practices.
- 1B. Family engagement system, policies and practices are embedded into the district/school continuous
- 1E. The implementation of family engagement efforts is monitored and evaluated through an on-going data collection system.
- 1E.1. District and school personnel strategically collect and analyze necessary data to answer key questions that will drive improvements in family engagement efforts.



# Taking a Closer Look at the Standard

**Principle 1: Districts/schools develop a family engagement system that cultivates and empowers adults to jointly support student growth, address any barriers to learning, and ensure college and career readiness.**

Standard	Descriptors
1D. District and school <b>leadership support</b> the development and implementation of an effective family engagement system that is mindful of diverse school-communities and responsive to student and family needs.	<p>1D.3 District and school leadership <b>model positive interactions</b> with parents.</p> <p>1D.4 District and school leadership <b>allocate/reallocate resources</b> for family engagement efforts.</p>



# An Improvement Strategy

- \* We need to see family engagement as a **strategy**—with the goal of supporting student achievement.
- \* Programs need to move beyond “random acts of parent engagement” so that professional development supports a series of connected activities that, as a whole, can positively affect student learning.





# What Do We Mean by Systemic Family Engagement?

Is focused on improving educational and healthy development outcomes

Aligned with overall goals of the program

Is not a discrete “stand-alone” or “boutique” project operating in a few settings

Out of school time providers develop a family engagement system that cultivates and empowers adults to jointly support student growth, address any barriers to learning, and ensure college and career readiness.

Attempts to change social structures and the culture in which these structures are embedded.

Spans across various stakeholders and there is a shared responsibility



# Systemic Engagement

- \* Connects to the work across various settings
- \* Attempts to change social structures and the culture in which these structures are embedded
- \* Enhances the social and political capital of families and shifts the balance of power between institutions and communities





# Reframing family engagement...

From an individual parent's or teacher's "job"

- To a shared responsibility

From random acts

- To systemic approaches from cradle to career

From events

- To results-driven

From add-on services

- To purposeful connections to learning

From compliance

- To focus on learning, improvement, accountability, and innovation

From limited data

- To transparent data systems



# Key Characteristics of Systemic Engagement

- \* Staff dedicated to family outreach and engagement
- \* Family engagement integrated in program design and improvement
- \* Leadership and commitment to using data for family and community engagement, and to building both staff and family capacity to engage





# Key Characteristics of Systemic Engagement

- \* Staff and parent training on having data-driven discussions
- \* Family use of student data as a core strategy to keep students on track to graduation and postsecondary education





# Engagement Strategies

- \* Creating and strengthening systemic policies, plans, and initiatives that encompass cradle-to-career family engagement
- \* Providing incentives to develop innovative approaches to meaningful engagement
- \* Making student and school performance data accessible, understandable, and actionable





# Engagement Strategies

- \* Sharing clear expectations families and staff have for each other's roles
- \* Ensuring communication between families and staff is two-way and focused on student learning and healthy development
- \* Strengthening the quantity and quality of face-to-face connections at school, in afterschool programs, and in community settings





# Engagement Strategies

- \* Dedicating staff to family and community engagement
- \* Sharing leadership for family engagement between school, afterschool, families, and community
- \* Investing in capacity-building by offering training and leadership opportunities for families and professional development for staff





# Essential Elements Within the Practice of Family Engagement

- \* Helping families to understand what is expected of their children
- \* Providing families with information they need to support their children's learning and healthy development
- \* Letting families know what they need to do to support their children's education





# Building Capacity For Family Engagement

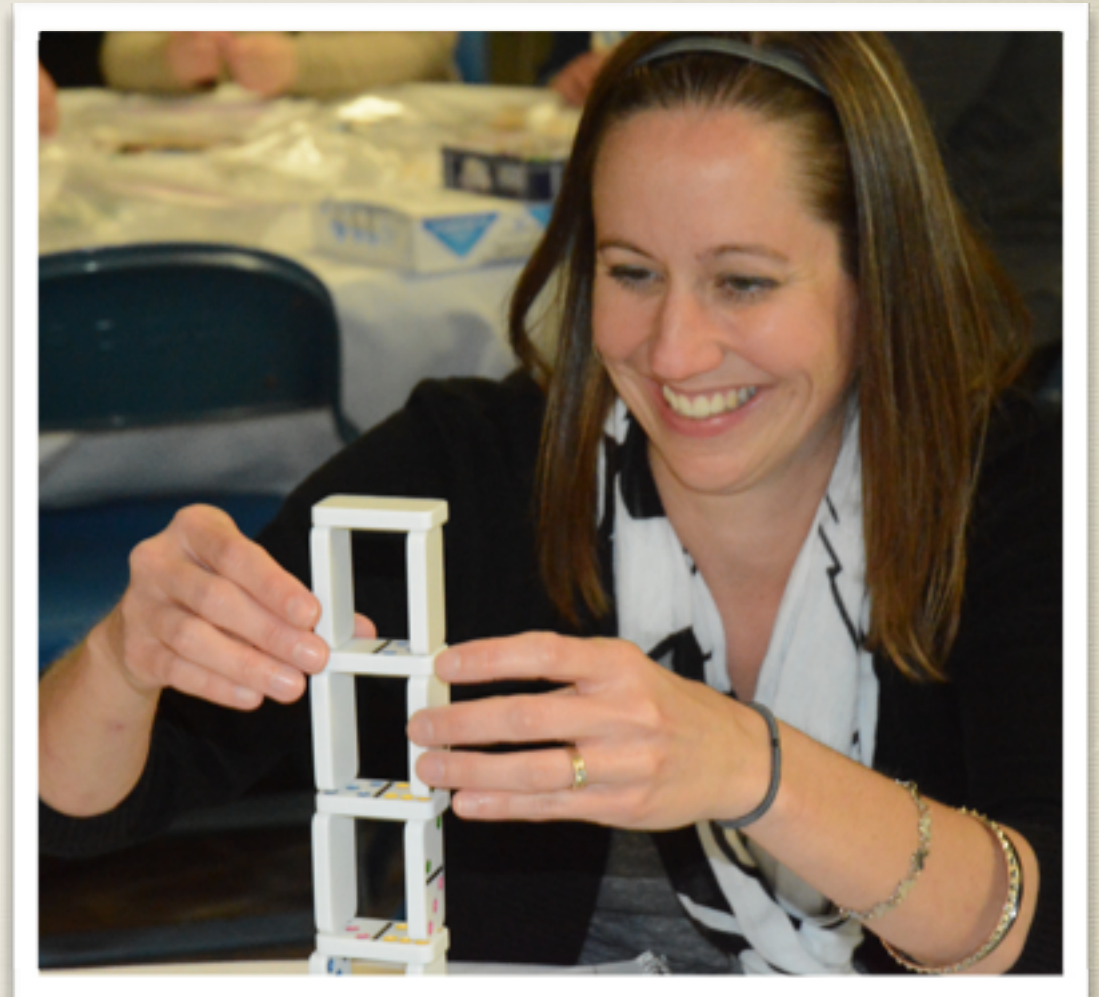
- \* Districts develop supports, policies, and accountability systems that promote engagement as an essential element for student success
- \* Schools and afterschool programs effectively engage families and students in ways that impact school improvement and student outcomes
- \* Families partner with schools for student success and effectively advocate for their children and actively support student learning
- \* Students actively engage in learning and assume greater responsibility for their own achievement





# Making the Framework Actionable

- \* Use ISBE **framework** to align the school's family engagement
- \* Framework tools
  - Family Engagement Standards of Effective Practice
  - Linking Family Engagement Through 8 Essential Elements Matrix
  - Family Engagement Research Review
  - Legislative Requirements and References





# Making the Framework Actionable

- \* Create a **structure** to ensure family engagement efforts are “in-depth” and “over time,” which includes data collection, professional development, access to materials, coaching, and **networking**.





# Resources

IllinoisParents.org

[www.IllinoisParents.org](http://www.IllinoisParents.org)

A variety of family engagement research and resources are available on numerous topics in English and Spanish.

Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE)

Learning Supports: <http://www.isbe.net/learningsupports/html/partnerships.htm>

Common Core: [http://www.isbe.net/common\\_core/htmls/resources.htm](http://www.isbe.net/common_core/htmls/resources.htm)

Special Education: <http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/parents.htm>

Innovation and Improvement: [http://www.isbe.net/grants/pdf/parent\\_involvement\\_guide.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/grants/pdf/parent_involvement_guide.pdf)

Illinois School Report Card: <http://www.illinoisreportcard.com/>

ISBE's Division of College and Career Readiness in the Center for Innovation and Improvement provides leadership and technical assistance to local districts, schools, and programs to support student learning and healthy development.

Illinois Early Learning Project

<http://illinoisearlylearning.org/>

The Illinois Early Learning Project website is a source of evidence-based, reliable information on early care and education for parents, caregivers, and teachers of young children in Illinois.



# Resources

## SEDL

[http://www.sedl.org/expertise/family\\_community.html](http://www.sedl.org/expertise/family_community.html)

Families and communities play an integral role in children's school success. The Family and Community section of SEDL's website links people with research-based information and resources that they can use to effectively connect schools, families, and communities.

## USDE

<http://www2.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/hyc.html>

The Helping Your Child publication series aims to provide parents with the tools and information necessary to help their children succeed in school and life. These booklets are available in English and Spanish. They feature practical lessons and activities to help their school aged and preschool children master reading, understand the value of homework and develop the skills and values necessary to achieve and grow.



# Resources

## **Building Capacity**

Y4Y

<http://y4y.ed.gov/learn/family/coaching/build-staff-skills/>

Find resources for staff development on family involvement, including links to trainings, tips, and tools that staff can use.

MALDEF

<http://www.maldef.org/leadership/programs/psp/index.html>

Since 1989, MALDEF's Parent School Partnership (PSP) Program has trained thousands of parents and community leaders throughout the nation to become change agents in their communities. The 12-session PSP program provides parents with the tools necessary to become more effective advocates in improving their children's educational attainment, schools, and community.

## **Research, Evaluation and Assessment Tools**

Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP) <http://www.hfrp.org/out-of-school-time/publications-resources?topic=30>

HFRP promotes strategies to support family engagement in children's learning and development.



# Impact of Family Engagement

“Students with involved parents, no matter what their income or background, are more likely to

- \* have better social skills, show improved behavior, and adapt well to school; and
- \* graduate and go on to postsecondary education.”



Source: Henderson, & Mapp, 2002, p. 7



“Recognize that all parents, regardless of income, education level, or cultural background, are involved in their children’s learning and want their children to do well in school.”



Parents

Businesses

Teachers

Principals

Organizations

# Educating Everyone Takes Everyone!

Students

Families

Elected Officials

Communities



# References

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