



CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

# Talk Tuesdays

Student Attendance, Engagement, and Support Series

August 23, 2022

Developed by the CSDE in collaboration with Attendance Works & SERC



STATE EDUCATION RESOURCE CENTER

EQUITY | EXCELLENCE | EDUCATION

# Who's here today?

Please share in chat:

- name, role, district, or school
- e-mail address



# Today's Agenda

## **Welcome**

Stephen Proffitt, Director for Special Education Programs and Instructional Design, State Education Resource Center (SERC)

## **What's New at CSDE and Partners**

Kari Sullivan Custer, Attendance & Engagement Consultant, CSDE

## **Equitable and Inclusive Partnerships with Families to Support Student Attendance and Engagement**

Judy Carson, Ph.D., Education Consultant, School-Family-Community Partnerships, Connecticut State Department of Education


Alice Farrell, JD, LCSW, MSW, President and CEO, Olive Branch Clinical and Consulting Services, LLC,

## **Upcoming Attendance & Engagement Meetings**



# What's New at CSDE



August 18, 2022

- [Survey on Vacancies in Teaching Endorsements, Special Service Endorsements, and Instructional Paraprofessionals – Due Wednesday, August 24](#) 
- [CSDE Launches into A New School Year; Outlines Priorities for 2022-23](#)
- [COVID-19 Self-Test Kit Ordering Process](#) Reminder and Update: Each Local Education Agency (LEA) MUST identify one COVID-19 Supply Liaison point of contact to place orders on behalf of the entire district.
- [2022-23 Minimum Budget Requirement \(MBR\) Form ED012](#)

August 15, 2022

- [Memorandum Regarding Process for Requesting COVID-19 Self-Test Kits and PPE](#)

August 11, 2022

-  [Connecticut State Department of Education Announces Connecticut PK-12 School Staff Appreciation with a Digital Backpack of Discounts](#)
- [Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plans](#)
- [The CSDE and the Devereux Student Strengths Assessment System \(DESSA\) Information Session](#)  [Dates are here!](#) Upcoming: September 13 at 10 a.m. and September 16 at 1 p.m.

[Superintendent's Digest](#)  
[\(ct.gov\)](#)



# CSDE Launches into A New School Year

## Priorities for 2022-23

1. Promoting what's right with education in Connecticut
2. Launching into healthy learning ([COVID Guidance](#))
3. Promoting the social, emotional, and mental health of students and staff
4. Providing access to high-quality curricula
5. Supporting educator recruitment
6. Supporting student success
7. An enhanced commitment to literacy



- [CT-N Recording: of State Department of Education Commissioner's 2022 Back-to-School Conference with School Superintendents](#)
- [Press Release: Connecticut State Department of Education Kicks off the 2022-23 School Year with Superintendents; Joined by NASA Astronaut Dr. Bernard Harris](#)

# Connecting with Families

## In the chat:

*Share strategies that you use to communicate and build trust with parents in **positive** exchanges about their child/family.*





## CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

SETTING THE STAGE FOR HIGH-IMPACT FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

### **Equitable and Inclusive Partnerships with Families to Support Student Attendance and Engagement**

Judy Carson, Ph.D.  
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## Students do better in school and in life when their families are engaged

Family engagement...

- Leads to increased student achievement.
- Reduces absenteeism.
- Encourages students to have better attitudes towards learning.
- Leads to better social skills and less conduct problems.
- Is associated with reduced drop-out rates and higher graduation rates.

## Schools benefit from family engagement

Family engagement...

- Is associated with higher expectations.
- Better student-teacher relationships.
- More positive school climate.
- Leads to more cultural competence.



# Connecticut's Definition



Family engagement is  
a full, equal and  
equitable partnership

among families, educators  
and community partners  
to promote children's  
learning and development,  
from birth through college  
and career.

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Publications/Full-Equal-and-Equitable-Partnerships-with-Families>



# Standards for High-Impact Practice

## Foundational

- Build collaborative, trusting, respectful relationships focused on learning.
- *Listen* to what families say about their children's interests and challenges.

## Essential

- Co-develop cultural competence among staff and families.
- Support parents to become effective leaders and advocates for children.

The development of relational trust between home and school is **key for any other partnership work** to actually take place.

The level of trust between families and schools is an underlying **predictor of student performance.**

Dr. Karen Mapp, Harvard University  
Effective Family Engagement Starts with Trust

# Standards for High-Impact Practice

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## Essential

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## Linked to Learning

- Model high-quality learning practices.
- Share information frequently with families about how their children are doing.
- Ask *students*: How do they want teachers and families to support their learning?

Communication

Relationships

Trust

Collaboration

Student Learning

# Welcome Calls Tool



“When I started calling parents to tell them what their kids did well, rather than always what they did wrong, my entire classroom dynamic changed for the better - and parents were happy to hear from me.”

“I once called a 7<sup>th</sup> grade student. His mom said she had never had a positive phone call about her son. He was a great kid but had ADHD pretty severely. He didn’t think any teachers cared and was always in trouble, so he quit caring. A call changes things.”

[Welcome Call Planning Tool](#)

[Ongoing Communications Reflection Tool](#)

[Questions for Building Trust](#)

[Family + Student Wellness Check-In](#)

[Connecting with Unreached Families](#)

[Challenging Assumptions Reflections Tool](#)

## Welcome Call Planning Tool

Use this table to plan your beginning of the year relationship-building communication. If these communications happen with a partner, be sure to note who will take the lead in each section.

Component	Talking Points	Notes
1. Introduce yourself (and your partner if applicable) and confirm that this is still a good time to talk.		
2. Outline – quickly – the agenda and goals of the call. Ask if there is anything the family would add.		
3. Share: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Your background</li><li>• Your interests</li><li>• How excited you are to teach their child!</li></ul>		
4. Ask: see <a href="#">Questions for Trust Building</a>		

Component	Talking Points	Notes
5. Share: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Your hopes and dreams for their student</li><li>• Your expectations for engagement during the year</li></ul>		
6. Ask how the family would like to stay in communication over the year and share all the possible ways they can connect with you.		
7. Share any critical school or district updates.		
8. Ask the family if they have any final questions or concerns they'd like to share.		

# Ongoing Communications Reflection Tool (spreadsheet)

## ONGOING COMMUNICATIONS REFLECTION TOOL

Student Name	I know how to get in touch with this student's family.	I have pro-actively communicated with this student's family in the last 4 weeks.	I feel confident that this student's family is monitoring and supporting their child's learning at home.	I have a trusting relationship with this family.


### Focus Students

*Based on trends in the Reflection Tool tab, who do you need to prioritize?*

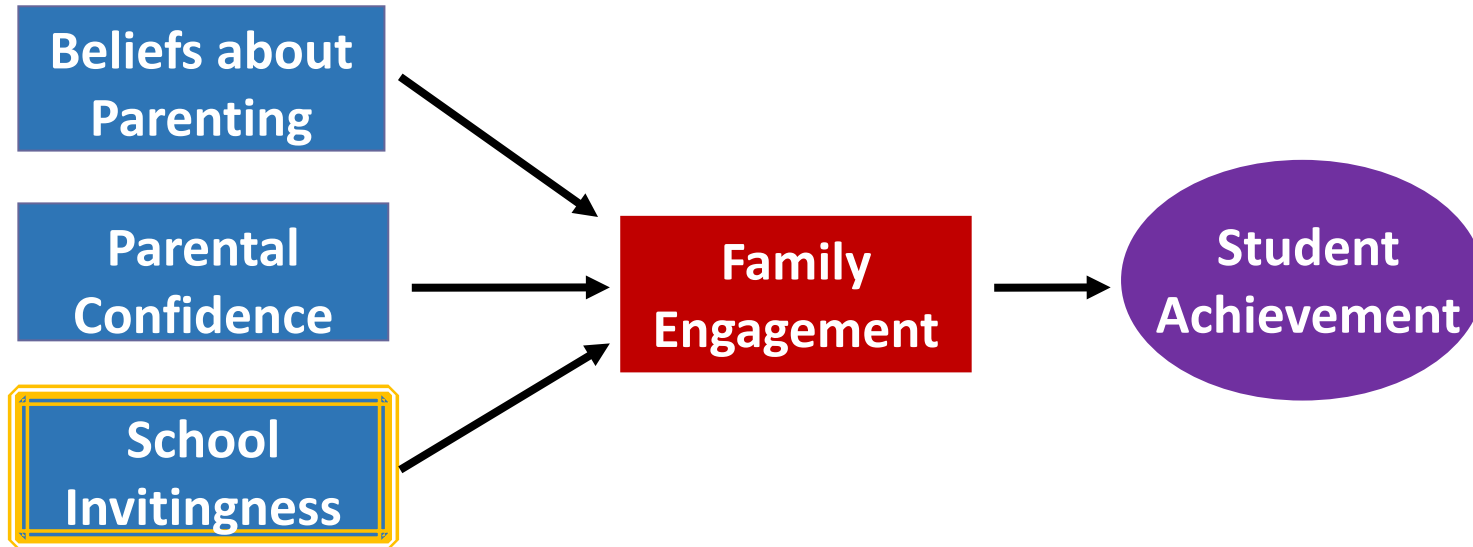
### Action Plan

*What steps will you take? By when?*

## Challenging Assumptions Reflection

Example Negative Beliefs about Families	What assumptions are being made about what it takes or what it looks/sounds like to support a child's learning?	How could this belief potentially impact an educator's actions?	What would you say to yourself/ask yourself (or someone else) if you were challenging this belief?*
 <p>Families aren't invested here.</p>	<p>Investment is when families attend school events, participate in the PTO, and volunteer to chaperone field trips. If parents aren't doing these things, then they are not invested.</p>	<p>If we operate from the belief that families aren't invested, we may limit communication and information sharing with families. We might stop trying to engage.</p>	<p>What are some of the invisible investments families might be making in their child's schooling?</p> <p>Who is this true for and how do you know?</p> <p>What would families say about that belief that they are not invested? Would they agree?</p> <p>What reasons might families have for not "showing up" in ways that we, as educators, hope they will?</p>

# Why do parents get involved with their child's school?





**Community Building Meetings are experiential.** Children and adults alike tend to better understand and retain information when they have a chance to practice things firsthand and get real-time support.

**Community Building Meetings allow families to connect with other families.**

Community Building Meetings are just that – a meeting to build community! Design the event to intentionally make families feel encouraged and connected with other families. This can also include families (and students!) being the designers or leaders of the event.

**Community Building Meetings provide actionable information and resources.** A staple of family events is discussing student data. These engagements should equip families with actionable information and resources so that they can hold high expectations, monitor and support learning at home, and advocate for their child.

## Consider:

- What will families walk away knowing or being able to do to support their child's growth?
- Do families have the tools and resources to take action immediately?

## Ideas:

- At Back to School Night, families log on and navigate the school's grade book, practicing how to check their students' overall grades, view assignments, and message the teacher. In middle or high school, students can teach families how to do this!

## Create Leadership Opportunities

- Tap into the many assets and experiences that families can bring to the table.

# Toolkits for Schools

Leader Actions



The cover features a photograph of two women looking at a document. The Flamboyan Foundation logo is in the top right. The title is in large white letters on a teal background, with the subtitle below it.

**BEGINNING OF YEAR  
RELATIONSHIP BUILDING**  
A Strategy Guide for Educators

Trusting  
Relationships



The cover shows two women walking and talking. The Flamboyan Foundation logo is in the top left. The title is in white on a teal background, with the subtitle below it.

**THE SCHOOL LEADER TOOL**  
Building Your School-wide Approach to Family Engagement



**Academic  
Partnering Toolkit**  
for teachers!

Linking to  
Learning



The cover features a photograph of a woman smiling while looking at a laptop. The title is in white on a dark blue background, with the subtitle below it.

**ACADEMIC PARTNERING  
COMPANION GUIDE**  
For School Leaders

# Links to Resources

## **Family Engagement - Building Trust (from the Flamboyant Foundation):**

[Beginning of Year Relationship Building Toolkit](#)

[Welcome Call Planning Tool](#)

[Questions for Building Trust](#)

[Challenging Assumptions Reflection Tool](#)

[Ongoing Communications Reflection Tool](#)

[Connecting With Unreached Families](#)

[Family/Student Wellness Check-In](#)

[Family Engagement Matters](#)

## **Linking Family Engagement to Student Learning:**

[Academic Partnering Toolkit Parent-Teacher Conversation About Learning](#)

[Academic Partnering Companion Guide for School Leaders](#)

## **School Leaders**

[The School Leader Tool: Building Your School-wide Approach to Family Engagement](#)

[Parent Cafés](#)

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Dr. Alice Farrell - YouTube channel – Eradication of Institutional Racism; Structural and Systemic Oppression; Psychological Slavery/Decolonization; Valuing Lived Experiences; Advocacy/Activism; Promotion of Equity and Social-Emotional Learning and much more!

# Upcoming Attendance & Engagement Meetings

## Talk Tuesdays 2022-23 School Year

- Start on **September 20<sup>th</sup>** at 10 a.m.
- **Watch for registration and new Zoom link!**
- Fall sessions will focus on ***strategies that worked in 2021-22*** and feature districts that improved attendance across the district, in a school, particular grade or group of students.



# KEEP IN TOUCH!

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