

Families as Partners in Learning

Understanding family engagement in your school

What are these?

Following are several surveys school leaders can use to gather perception data from teachers. You can select from among the tools here to provide additional information to your School Council and/or leadership team about how teachers perceive family engagement.

Schools need to recognise that some families may be unable to assist with their child's homework. For example, family members may be illiterate in their home language or may not speak, read or write English. The school therefore may need to organise other help for students. Schools can contact the English as a Second Language unit in DEECD Central Office for advice on how to obtain additional support in these circumstances.

Who should use them?

Surveys included here are designed to gather data from teachers. It is important to gather data from as many teachers in your school as possible.

How much time do they take?

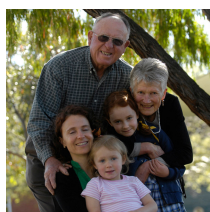
All of these surveys are designed to be easy to complete. The amount of time the surveys will take depends on when and how you choose to collect the data.

What will you be able to do afterwards?

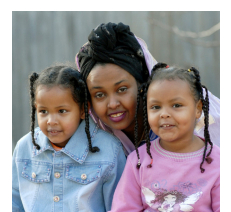
Data from these perception surveys can inform your conversations about family-school partnerships in your school.

Statement of use

The following surveys have been adapted with permission from Hoover-Dempsey, KV & Sandler, HM, 2005, *Final Performance Report for OERI Grant #R305T010673: The Social Context of Parental Involvement: A Path to Enhanced Achievement*. Presented to Project Monitor, Institute of Education Sciences, US Department of Education, March 22, 2005



Every
child,
every
opportunity



Survey #1: Teacher beliefs about family involvement

Please indicate how much you Agree or Disagree with each of the statements.

	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree just a little</i>	<i>Agree just a little</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
1. Family involvement is important for a high performing school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Most families know how to help their children with schoolwork at home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Every family has some strengths that can be tapped to increase student success in school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. All families could learn ways to help their children with schoolwork at home, if shown how	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Family involvement can help teachers be more effective with more students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Families of children at this school want to be involved more than they are	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Family involvement is important for student success in school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. This school views families as important partners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Survey #2: Teacher report of invitations to parental involvement

Please indicate how often you have done each of the following this year.

	Never	Once this year	Once each semester	Once each term	Once every 2 - 4 weeks	Once a week
1. Have meet with a parent separately for parent/teacher interviews	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Contacted a parent if the child has had problems or needs additional support	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Contacted a parent if the child did something well or improved	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Involved a parent as a volunteer/helper in my classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Told a parent about the skills their child must learn in each subject I teach	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Provided specific activities for parents to do with their child in order to improve their child's learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Given a parent ideas about discussing specific TV shows with their child	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Assigned homework that required a parent to interact with their child	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Suggested ways to practice spelling or other skills at home before a test	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Asked a parent to listen to their child read	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Asked a parent to help their child with homework	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Encouraged a parent to ask their child about the school day	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Asked a parent to visit their child's (my) classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Asked a parent to take their child to the library or relevant community events	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Given a parent ideas to help them become an effective advocate for their child	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Sent home letters telling parents what the child has been learning and doing in class	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Survey #3: Teacher beliefs about the importance of specific involvement practices

Please indicate how much you Agree or Disagree with the importance of each of the statements.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree just a little	Agree just a little	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Having a conference with each of my students' parents at least once a year	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Contacting parents about their child's problems or challenges	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Contacting parents when their child does something well or improve	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Involving parents as volunteers in my classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Telling parents about the skills their child must learn in each subject I teach	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Providing specific activities for parents to do with their child in order to improve their grades	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Giving parents ideas about discussing specific TV shows with their child	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Assigning homework that requires parents to interact with their child	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Suggesting ways to practice spelling or other skills at home before a test	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Asking parents to listen to their child read	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Asking my students' parents to help their child with their homework	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Asking my students' parents to ask their child about the school day	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Inviting my students' parents to visit their child's (my) classroom.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Asking my students' parents to take their child to the library or relevant community events	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Giving parents ideas to help them become effective advocates for their child	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Sending home 'letters' telling parents what the child has been learning and doing in class	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

What to do with the data

The importance of beliefs

Both our own and other peoples' beliefs determine the actions we take. If schools believe that families are capable of making a positive difference to their children's learning, schools are more likely to take actions to enable this to happen. Conversely, if schools believe families have little or no positive impact on their children's learning then they are less likely to forge partnerships with families to benefit children.

Our beliefs often sit just below the level of our consciousness. These surveys are one means of helping to surface our belief systems.

Guidelines for discussing the data: Surveys #1 - #4

Use the data to reflect on how your beliefs affect the efficacy of family-school partnerships in your school. You can reflect on the data either individually, with a 'buddy' or as part or all of a staff group. Some points to consider in your reflection are:

Survey #1: Teacher Beliefs about Family Involvement

1. What are your core beliefs about family involvement?
2. How is this reflected in your practice?
3. What could you do, if anything, or increase the involvement of families in the school and with their children?

Survey #2: Teacher Report of Invitations to Parental Involvement and

Survey #3: Teacher Beliefs about the Importance of Specific Involvement Practices

1. Do your responses surprise you?
2. Do you believe that involving parents in their children's learning is part of your job?
3. What are you willing to do differently that will enable a parent to become more involved with their child's learning?

Summary reflection:

1. What are the implications of your belief systems for families? For children and young people? For the school? For you?
2. What might you do differently that will enhance family-school partnerships?