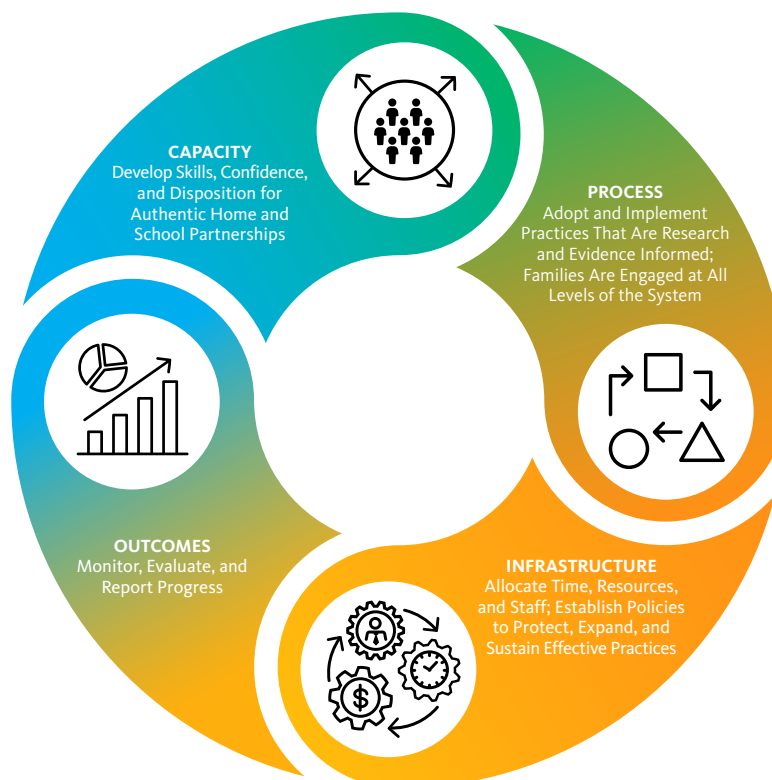


Delaware Framework for Integrated and Equitable Family Engagement

Developing a meaningful and equitable family engagement plan that is integrated with academic and socioemotional development efforts and that elevates school and district improvement priorities provides helpful guidance to education leaders. This digest provides a high-level introduction to the Delaware Framework for Integrated and Equitable Family Engagement, developed collaboratively by the DDOE and the Regional Educational Laboratory Mid-Atlantic. The framework is intended to support state and local leaders each year in developing a strategic family engagement plan that is integrated, adaptable, and sustainable.

The framework is organized into four essential areas called pillars. Each pillar has key priorities that allow the overall vision for effective family engagement to work cohesively. To provide substantive support for the use of the framework, the next four digests will take a deeper dive and provide more practical detail for each of the four pillars that form the framework.

Guiding Pillars for Family Engagement in Delaware



► PILLAR 1: CAPACITY

School staff and families develop skills, confidence, and the disposition for authentic home and school partnerships.

Building capacity in the area of family engagement is a prerequisite for doing meaningful work in partnership with families. Professional learning helps educators understand *why* it is important to work with families and helps them value families' perspectives and experiences. Developing capacity encompasses learning new skills and abilities. It also includes developing or strengthening healthy core beliefs about families, which is necessary for enabling educators to recognize and remove barriers that stand in the way of families fully participating in their children's education.

Capacity Examples

Schools

- Teachers and support staff know how to create strong connections with all families.
- Teachers facilitate engaging meetings with families using adult learning strategies.

Families

- Families participate in data-sharing meetings with teachers, are clear on their children's progress and achievement levels, and are able to set learning goals.
- Families know how to reach and engage teachers, staff members, and administrators.

► PILLAR 2: PROCESS

Districts and schools adopt and implement practices that are research and evidence informed; families are engaged at all levels of the system.

The process is *how* the work gets done—the practices and procedures that are adopted and implemented by schools to engage families in their children's learning and in collaborative decision-making. Research and practice demonstrate that effective engagement requires intentional processes to be implemented: Barriers must be identified and removed, parents must be informed and empowered as advocates, and schools must collaborate with families and community partners to support robust student and family experiences at all levels of learning.

Process Examples

Schools

- Schools adopt home visits as a way to build meaningful relationships with families.
- Teachers make monthly positive phone calls to families.

Families

- Families know and understand the purpose of home visits and sign up to be part of the process.
- Families know helpful questions to ask teachers about learning priorities and ways to support learning at home.

► PILLAR 3: INFRASTRUCTURE

Districts and schools allocate time, resources, and staff; they also establish policies to protect, expand, and sustain effective practices.

Infrastructure is the foundation of resources and coordinated efforts that support and sustain equitable home and school partnerships. Family engagement infrastructure within schools and communities can be established, protected, expanded, and sustained through the purposeful allocation of staff time and resources. As knowledge is gained about which engagement practices work or do not work, schools must review and alter practices to ensure they achieve their stated goals and objectives.

Infrastructure Examples

Schools

- A central office director oversees all areas of family engagement and supports schools in adopting and implementing best practices.
- Teachers have dedicated time to connect and work collaboratively with families.

Families

- Funding is allocated for families to receive learning activities to use at home to support learning.
- Time and funding are allocated for a family engagement specialist or instructional coach to work with families needing specialized coaching and support.

► PILLAR 4: OUTCOMES

Districts and schools monitor, evaluate, and report progress.

Evaluation is critical to understanding the effects that engagement opportunities have on children, families, and schools. Schools must review their efforts to determine if they are achieving their desired outcomes. Outcome data empower educators and families to set and achieve high expectations, make informed decisions, and strengthen effective practices while changing those that are ineffective. Data are most useful when they are meaningful, user-friendly, actionable, and regularly shared with community partners.

Outcome Examples

Schools

- Schools monitor implementation of the adopted plans to ensure fidelity.
- Schools share and discuss findings with families and community partners.

Families

- Families share opinions to inform adopted plans and practices.
- Families are thought partners to improve the yearly family engagement plan.

Together, the four pillars of the framework help foster a shared understanding and approach to planning for integrated and equitable family engagement. The framework is not a fixed set of directions, but rather a compass. And working together with families is a process—it takes time and practice. Each year of planning will bring each pillar into greater focus. Over time, it will become more seamless for educators and families to integrate family engagement efforts with other learning and school improvement priorities.