



Family Engagement Insider

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Sharing Student Data With Families Fosters Partnerships for Learning

Data empowers families to make informed decisions and set high expectations for their children's learning.

Why Is Sharing Data With Families Important?

Sharing student performance data with families helps develop family-school partnerships focused on identifying students' strengths and addressing their challenges.¹ The aim is to help families become confident in reading and interpreting progress data so they can use that information to engage in and support their children's learning.

Creating a structured and direct system of information-sharing for teachers and families enables families to:

- Receive a full and accurate picture of how their child is progressing academically
- Understand the end-of-year learning expectations in core subjects
- Set ambitious learning goals and monitor progress

Informed by student progress data, educators and families can develop mutual goals and agreements — based on high expectations — for how families can reinforce student learning at home and how the school can support the specific needs of each student.

High Expectations Lead to Student Success

The research¹¹ is clear — when families have high expectations for scholastic performance, students:

- Do better in school
- Attend school more regularly
- Develop a positive attitude toward learning and achieving

Which Data Should Be Shared and How Often?

On their own, report cards don't provide enough information to families. Educators should share whole-child, actionable data with families both during *and* between report cards and conferences (or more frequently if a child is receiving interventions or has an individualized education plan). Below are examples of types of data to share at each grade span.

PreK-5

- » Universal screening results
- » Progress-monitoring data
- » District and state assessment scores
- » Results of language assessments for English learners
- » Data related to preparedness for transition from preK to K and from elementary to middle school
- » Information about students' problem-solving ability and critical-thinking skills
- » Attendance and behavior data

Middle School

- » District and state assessment scores
- » Assessment results for high school course placement and thresholds for placement in honors/advanced courses
- » Results of language assessments for English learners
- » Attendance and behavior data

High School

- » Credits earned/credits needed
- » Data on assignments
- » Progress on Student Success Plan
- » Attendance and behavior data

How Can School and District Leaders Help Share and Discuss Data With Families?

School and district leaders need to build teachers' data-sharing capacity, as many teachers feel unprepared to share and discuss student progress data with families.ⁱⁱⁱ

Tips for Supporting Teachers:

- Foster a data-sharing culture among teachers.
- Provide professional learning to build staff capacity and confidence for sharing data with families.
- Emphasize the importance of data sharing in your school or district strategic plan.

Tips for Supporting Families:

- Provide a student-data orientation for families that includes showing them how to:
 - Access data (e.g., through online parent portals)
 - Understand metrics, such as standardized test scores and credits earned
 - Use data to set learning goals and monitor student progress

How Can Teachers Make Data Usable and Accessible to Families?

Teachers can share and discuss data with families regularly to help build their comfort level and capacity to monitor progress and set learning goals.

Practical Tips for Teachers:

- Schedule data-sharing nights with families.
 - Use visual aids to model how to read and interpret the data.
 - Allow time for families' questions, suggestions, and fresh ideas.
- Help families understand end-of-year learning targets in core subjects.
 - Provide examples of student work that show mastery of the standards.
- Explain the purpose and significance of assessments.
 - Explain classroom, district, and state assessments.
- Update families when new data are available so they can track their children's progress.

Data Provide Clarity on Student Performance

Research shows^{iv} a significant gap between families' perceptions of their children's achievement and the reality.

Perception: **90%** of parents, regardless of race, income, and education level, believe their child is at or above grade level in reading and math.

Reality: Only about **40%** of students perform at grade level or higher.

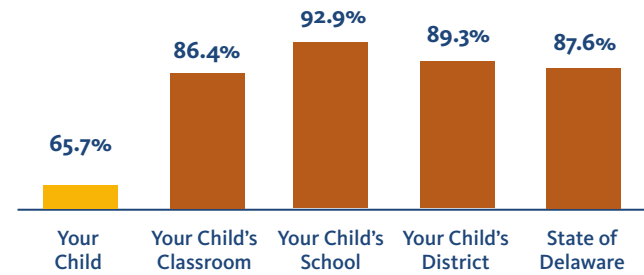
Providing families with regular access to student progress data gives them a more accurate picture of their children's learning.

SPOTLIGHT ON ATTENDANCE

How might you share data with a family to support improving their child's attendance?

Educators could share the following data with families to show how their child's attendance compares to other students. Reviewing the attendance data also provides an opportunity to set attendance goals in partnership with the family, and to follow up to ensure barriers to attendance are removed.

Example Data Graph for Families on Their Child's Attendance



5 Tips for Making Data Useful for Families

- **Make the data meaningful:** Help parents understand the context for the data and focus attention where it needs to be.
- **Make the data user-friendly:** Display the data in a visually appealing and accessible manner without clutter.
- **Make the data actionable:** Tell a story and how families can help.
- **Define the standards and metrics:** Show families the goal that students are trying to reach.
- **Share data regularly:** Equip parents to consistently monitor and support their children's progress.

- i Sebring, P. B., Allensworth, E., Bryk, A. S., Easton, J. Q., & Luppescu, S. (2006). *The essential supports for school improvement*. Consortium on Chicago School Research at the University of Chicago.
- ii Henderson, A. T., & Mapp, K. L. (2002). *A new wave of evidence: The impact of school, family and community connections on student learning*. Southwest Educational Development Laboratory.
- iii MetLife, Inc. (2013). The MetLife survey of the American teacher: Challenges for school leadership. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED542202.pdf>
- iv Learning Heroes. (2020). *Improving public education: Parents as change agents—A research synthesis*.