Relationships Matter!

Building Relationships with Parents/Families

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Engage

Empower

Educate
Objectives

● Understand why relationships matter in cultivating effective home school partnerships.

● Identify family engagement’s four essential core beliefs.

● Learn strategies on how to maximize relationships with students and families within the school structure (i.e., parent teacher conference, communication tools, and classroom).
Norms

- Start and end on time
- Stay open-minded to new ideas
- Be present-actively participate
- If you need to use the phone, please step out.
- Keep families and students at the center of our work.
- Enjoy the work-stay positive
KNOW ME
30 seconds to 1 minutes
“You don’t know about me”
Switch
Where Did We Start!

• Nellie Mae - partnered with Great Schools Partnership and Everyday Democracy!
• Panorama Data!
• Community Feedback in person, committees, and partners!
• What we saw / heard!
  o Surveys - decreased student – school connection / “I matter” / People care scores after 5\textsuperscript{th} grade! – Same for Community / Family.
  o Verbal feedback
Where we are as a District

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Safe and Supportive Schools</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Trauma Sensitive School</td>
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<tr>
<td>- 7 Pilot Schools</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Lesley Graduate Courses</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Northstar LS – community based Trauma lens.</td>
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<td>- PBIS – whole school tier 1</td>
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<td>- Curriculum</td>
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<td>- Professional Development</td>
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<th>Climate and Culture Research</th>
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<tr>
<td>Relationships</td>
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<tr>
<td>We see Wraparound Services impacting and coordinating these two Pillars.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Building a safe and supportive school system.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harnessing the power of families and community</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Family and Community Engagement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Bedford’s Three E’s</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cultural Competency</td>
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<td>Professional Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Based Community Resource Centers at NBHS</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Middle Schools</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Elementary Schools</td>
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</table>
SEL
Relationships
Family Engagement

How our Lens – Impacts our Work!

Driving Force / Theory

Trauma Sensitive school:
Lens

Family Engagement

Goal: Safe and supportive classroom / schools

PBIS

- Social Thinking
- Zones of Regulation
- Mind-up etc.

SEL curriculum

PBIS

SEL curriculum

Trauma Sensitive schools
Harnessing the Power of Family Engagement

**Family and Community Engagement**

- New Bedford’s Three E’s
- Cultural Competency
- Professional Development
- School Based Community Resource Centers
- at NBHS
  - 3 Middle Schools
  - 4 Elementary Schools
The HOW & The WHAT

Empower

Educate

Engage

Family

School

Community

Student Success
# New Bedford Public Schools
## Family Engagement RTI model

### Three E’s

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Universal Level Tier 1</th>
<th>Target Engagement Tier 2</th>
<th>Intensive Engagement Tier 3</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>“Engage”</strong></td>
<td><strong>“Educate”</strong></td>
<td><strong>“Empower”</strong></td>
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**Universal Level Tier 1 “Engage”**

At this level we engage parents / families in a way that builds trust, relationships, and accessibility. These activities / events are universal for all students, parents, and families.

**Target Engagement Tier 2 “Educate”**

Builds family and community capacity through targeted approaches that create educational opportunities for families, educators, and community partners that will impact student success.

**Intensive Engagement Tier 3 “Empower”**

Ultimate goal is to empower parents and families with the access and tools to being active participants in their school community.
New Bedford Public Schools Family Engagement RTI model

**Three E’s**

**Highest Intensity “Empowerment”**

**Targeted**
Provides family-school collaboration to support identified students, families, and school community.

At the Universal Level, family-school collaboration is provided to support all students and families.

“Essential, Trust, Familiarity”

**Tier I**

“Engage”

**Tier II**

“Educate”

**Tier III**

“Empower”
Relationship Matters

Video

It’s All About
Relationships
Share out

Turn and Talk

- What stood out?
- What did you hear in the video that resonated with you?
- How does our ice breaker tie into what we just saw?
BECAUSE...

Relationships yield Partnerships

If you’d like your students to be successful, you will need to rearrange the letters in “parent,” add an “R” from relationship, and turn a parent into a

PARTNER!

Katy Ridnouer, author, *Managing Your Classroom With Heart*
Why Partner?

It boils down to one thing... RELATIONSHIPS!

According to Karen Mapp, the key to building partnerships is ...“when programs and initiatives focus on building trusting and respectful relationships among school staff, families and school staff, families, and community members, these programs are effective in creating and sustaining meaningful partnerships.” (A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement, 2002).
### 4 Versions of Family-School Partnerships

Check the boxes that have the most statements under them marked or circled. Check only 1 box in each row.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partnership School</th>
<th>Open-Door School</th>
<th>Come-If-We-Call School</th>
<th>Fortress School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Building Relationships</strong></td>
<td>□ Family center is always open, full of interesting materials to borrow</td>
<td>□ Teachers contact families once a year</td>
<td>□ Better-educated parents are more involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Home visits are made to every new family</td>
<td>□ Parent coordinator is available if families have questions or need help</td>
<td>□ Many immigrant parents don't have time to come or contribute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Activities honor families' contributions</td>
<td>□ Office staff is friendly</td>
<td>□ Staff are very selective of who comes into the school</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Building is open to community use &amp; social services are available to families</td>
<td>□ Staff contact community agencies &amp; organizations when help is needed</td>
<td>□ It is important to keep community influences out of the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Linking to Learning</strong></td>
<td>□ All family activities connect to what students are learning</td>
<td>□ Teachers explain test scores if asked</td>
<td>□ Parents are told what students will be learning at the fall open house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Parents &amp; teachers look at student work &amp; test results together</td>
<td>□ Holders of student work go home occasionally</td>
<td>□ Parents can call the office to get teacher-recorded messages about homework</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Community groups offer tutoring &amp; homework programs at the school</td>
<td>□ Staff let families know about out-of-school classes in the community</td>
<td>□ Workshops are offered on parenting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Addressing Differences</strong></td>
<td>□ Translators are readily available</td>
<td>□ Office staff will find a translator if parents ask in advance</td>
<td>□ We can't deal with 20 different languages&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Teachers use books &amp; materials about families' cultures</td>
<td>□ Multicultural nights are held once a year</td>
<td>□ Parents can bring a translator with them&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ PTA/PTO includes all families</td>
<td>□ &quot;Minority parents have their own group</td>
<td>□ &quot;This school just isn't the same as it used to be&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Local groups help staff reach families</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Supporting Advocacy</strong></td>
<td>□ There is a clear, open process for resolving problems</td>
<td>□ Principal will meet with parents to discuss a problem</td>
<td>□ School calls families when children have problems</td>
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<td></td>
<td>□ Teachers contact families each month to discuss student progress</td>
<td>□ Regular progress reports go to parents, but test data can be hard to understand</td>
<td>□ Families visit school on report card pickup day &amp; can see a teacher if they call first</td>
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<td></td>
<td>□ Student-led parent-teacher conferences are held 3 times a year for 30 minutes</td>
<td>□ Parent-teacher conferences are twice a year</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sharing Power</strong></td>
<td>□ Parents &amp; teachers research issues such as prejudice &amp; tracking</td>
<td>□ Parents can raise issues at PTA/PTO meetings or see the principal</td>
<td>□ PTA/PTO gets the school's message out</td>
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<td></td>
<td>□ Parent group is focused on improving student achievement</td>
<td>□ Parent group sets its own agenda &amp; raises money for the school</td>
<td>□ Parents are not experts in education</td>
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<td>□ Families are involved in all major decisions</td>
<td>□ Resource center for low-income families is housed in a portable classroom next to the school</td>
<td>□ Community groups can address the school board if they have concerns</td>
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<td></td>
<td>□ Parents can use school's phone, copier, fax, &amp; computers</td>
<td>□ PTA/PTO officers can use the school office</td>
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<td>□ Staff work with local organizers to improve the school &amp; the neighborhood</td>
<td>□ A community representative sits on the school council</td>
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—From "Beyond the Bake Sale—The Essential Guide to Family-School Partnerships" (2007) by Henderson, Mapp, Johnson, & Davies
Very important members of your classroom community are FAMILIES BECAUSE
Families have the capacity to support their children’s learning.

Families have hopes and dreams for their children.

THUS
What are your core beliefs?

- What do you know about your students’ lives outside their academic and/or behavior realm?
- What are the strengths of their family?

These core beliefs impact your ability to build vibrant relationships with students and families.
Relationship hijacker is..

- While we might not always recognize it, many past experiences, both positive and negative, shape our interactions with students and families.

- Our own family experiences with our elementary school teacher, our memories of how welcoming our school was to us as a child, our previous conversations with families of our students, strained or relaxed, all subtly affect how we will build relationships and interface with our families.
Reflection time

Personal Belief Handout
We all need a set of belief that guides our work with families to strengthen relationships and cultivate powerful partnerships with them as co-creators of excellent educational opportunities for their children and our classroom.
Core Beliefs

- All families have dreams for their children and want the best for them.
- All families have the capacity to support their children’s learning.
- Families and school staff are equal partners.
- The responsibility for cultivating and sustaining partnerships among school, home, and community rests primarily on us—the educators.

Core Beliefs at Play

Principal Medina
Carlos Pacheco Elementary School
Independent Activity

- Which of the Core Beliefs are representative in the Relationship Matters’ video?
- Which of the Four Core Beliefs are most reflected in the work you do with families?
- What is your experience with building partnerships with families across race and class?

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- All families have the capacity to support their children’s learning.
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- All families have the capacity to support their children’s learning.
- Families and school staff are equal partners.
- The responsibility for cultivating and sustaining partnerships among school, home, and community rests primarily on us—the educators.
Think about how you want the relationship with families to be equal and mutual to benefit everyone.
Example of relationship with families

**Lopsided relationship**

“Have your child follow my directions about their homework and other assignments.”

**Mutual relationship**

“Here are some ways to help your child’s homework and build their skills. Tell us what else you do to support your child.”
1. Think of a positive relationship you had with a teacher or other school adult when you were a student. Spend two minutes writing down how this relationship affected you.

1. Think of a positive relationship you have had with a student. Spend two minutes writing down how you believe this relationship affected your students.

Group Activity
Q1: How were you as a student affected by positive relationships in school:

○ Who were the relationships with?

○ What made them meaningful?

Q2: How are students affected by positive relationships with their teachers:

○ Who were the students?
○ How did the relationships form?
○ What made them meaningful?
WHAT

NOW?
What should we do next?

A Plan to Strengthen Authentic Relationships
Instructions

- Identify a core belief at the top of the form. (If you have more than one core belief, use one form for each).
- Choose one statement from the Barriers and Commitment column on your Personal Belief Reflection form.
- Once you selected a barrier and commitment statement from each column, discuss the activity(ies) to either address the barriers or improve the commitment to strengthen authentic relationships with your families. For each activity, identify progress indicators that will help you know if the activities are underway and how effective they are.
- Share out how the activities will be integrated school-wide or in the classroom.

Materials needed:
Personal Belief Handout and Core Belief Slide
Let’s Remember This
Partnering with Parents to Establish Community

“Schooling is first and foremost about relationships between and among students, teachers, and [parents], and... community building ...[which improves] teaching and learning.”

Thomas Sergiovanni in Building Community in Schools
"The most important day of a person's education is the first day of school, not Graduation Day."

– Harry Wong
Elissa May, MSW Intern
NBPS Staff, Parents, Students and Community members who participated in the Relationship Matters Video
Please take a “sweet” reminder of the importance of establishing and maintaining a positive relationship with parents!

Contact us:

Family Engagement Leadership Team
References

