

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT FOUNDATIONS:

BUILDING TRUST



WHY TRUST MATTERS

Trust forms the foundation of effective family-school relationships. Research shows that when schools build strong trust with families, students benefit from improved academic outcomes, increased attendance, and better social-emotional development.

HOW TO BUILD A STRONG FOUNDATION OF TRUST

1 ACTIVELY LISTEN

Listen to the other party without a preconceived idea of what they will share. Work to understand different perspectives and opinions and be prepared to take concerns and requests seriously.

2 USE AN ASSET-BASED APPROACH

Approach all individuals with their strengths in mind. Elevating these strengths can redefine roles and help reimagine new and enhanced ways to partner, maximizing the efforts of all parties.

3 FOCUS ON TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION

Be intentional about how you communicate. Use different channels, and always ensure there is an option for input + response from the other party (vs. just pushing information out). Ask open-ended questions, and reflect responses back to ensure clarity and understanding.

4 COLLABORATE AND CO-CREATE

Use information you gather through communicating and listening to create opportunities to collaborate and co-create learning experiences with family members. Research shows that students make greater gains when educators and families partner on ways to improve student learning!

“If you skip over the step of building authentic and trusting relationships with your families and the community, then all of those wonderful initiatives that you attempt to put into place don't have a strong foundation on which to sit”.

Dr. Karen Mapp

