

MAKING THE CASE

Stories

Why Stories Matter

One powerful way to shift mindsets and build support for family engagement is through storytelling. Stories help people connect emotionally, making the why behind family engagement more concrete and compelling. When decision-makers hear real-life examples of how family engagement has positively impacted students, schools, and communities, it can spark new thinking and deepen commitment.

As a system leader, sharing stories from families, educators, and students can bring your data to life, and inspire action.

The Power of Stories

BUILD BUY-IN

Stories make family engagement real and relatable, increasing support across your system.

STRENGTHEN LEADERSHIP SUPPORT

Compelling narratives can mobilize superintendents, boards, and public officials to prioritize family engagement.

DEMONSTRATE IMPACT

Stories highlight how changes in policy, funding, or practices have made a difference for real people.



Storytelling in Action

Use stories, alongside data and hands-on experiences, to make family engagement a visible, valued priority in your system.

Some ideas for incorporating storytelling could include:

- At school board meetings to elevate family and educator voices
- In district or school newsletters to celebrate progress and the impact of new policies or practices.
- As openers for cabinet meetings or leadership retreats to ground discussions in what matters most.
- As part of grant or funding proposals to illustrate potential outcomes.
- In social media or traditional media campaigns to lead with an authentic voice, reaching a broader audience.

Amplifying Family and Educator Voices

Effectively using storytelling as a way to make the case means recognizing when the story is not yours to tell. Help make space for the people who lived it by:

- Interviewing a family member or teacher and share their words in writing or audio.
- Record a video of them telling their own story, no fancy production needed.
- Invite families or educators to speak directly at meetings, retreats, or external events.
- Support families and educators with storytelling templates or practice sessions.
- Acknowledge and compensate time and expertise (e.g., gift cards, stipends, etc.)

Additional Resources

[Telling Stories of Impact Worksheet](#)

[Video: A Teacher + Parent Talk about the Power of Relationship Building](#)