

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.

Listening to and elevating stories from families, educators, and students can bring 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:

- Elevating family and educator voices at school board meetings.
- Celebrating progress and the impact of new policies or practices from a personal perspective in system communications.
- Open cabinet meetings or leadership retreats with stories of impact to ground discussions in what matters most.
- Illustrate potential outcomes as part of grant or funding proposals.
- Lead social media and traditional media campaigns with an authentic voice, reaching a broader audience.

Amplifying Family and Educator Voices

Effectively using storytelling to make the case for REAL Family Engagement 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](#)