

Using Family Engagement Liaisons Effectively



Why Family Engagement Liaisons Matter

Family Engagement Liaisons are one tool for engaging families - not a silver bullet. Whether called Family Engagement Liaisons, FACE coordinators, Family Engagement Coordinators, or something different, this role can be a powerful lever for student success when it is designed intentionally. When used effectively, liaisons help schools move from one-way communication to deep partnership between educators and families strengthening learning, trust, and overall school culture.

Liaisons & REAL Family Engagement

Family engagement liaisons are most impactful when their work is directly connected to the system's outcomes and strategic plan. This means positioning these individuals as connectors, capacity, builders, and partners to help move schools from events to impact. High-impact liaisons help reinforce relationship building, ongoing communication, and academic partnering.

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

Family engagement liaisons can serve as a welcoming entry point for all families.

Liaisons can assist with building relationships with hard to reach families and can support educators in building relationships by attending home visits, scheduling welcome calls, and making connections between families and educators.

ONGOING COMMUNICATION

Family engagement liaisons should model and reinforce two-way communication efforts across schools, helping to ensure that families don't need to access multiple sources for the same information. Liaisons should also work to remove language and cultural barriers ensuring improved accessibility for all families.

ACADEMIC PARTNERING

Family engagement liaisons can help families understand grade-level expectations by partnering with educators to help review family-facing information to ensure that academic information is communicated clearly and without jargon as well as help create spaces to discuss family engagement at staff meetings in partnership with school leadership.

What Effective Liaisons Do

Effective use of Family Engagement Liaisons looks like:

- Building trusting, culturally responsive relationships with families, especially those who have been traditionally hard to reach.
- Supporting consistent, two-way ongoing communication between families and educators.
- Helping families understand what students are learning and how to support learning at home.
- Soliciting family voice and feedback to help inform school and system decisions and priorities.
- Strengthening educators capacity to engage families through ongoing training, access to resources, and guided conversations in grade level team meetings, staff meetings, etc.
- Serving as a two-way conduit for information sharing between families, school leadership, and educators.
- Sit as members of leadership teams at schools.

Ineffective use of Family Engagement Liaisons looks like:

- Acting as the only point of contact for families.
- Serving as the event coordinator for the school, running all family events.
- Serving only as a translator to support educators
- Being responsible for “doing” the work of family engagement or fixing the problem of disengaged students.

Where Liaisons Fit in a System

Liaisons are most effective when they are part of a systemwide family engagement strategy. While liaisons help to create the conditions for true family-school partnership, school and system leaders must reinforce expectations for educators, including that family engagement is the responsibility of all staff members, not solely the liaisons.

Strong district models for family engagement liaisons:

- Clearly define the liaisons role
- Align the role to support academic and school improvement priorities
- Provide training to liaisons to continue to develop their practice
- Hold liaisons accountable for more than just activities, finding creative ways to measure the impact of their work, not solely the output.
- Liaisons goals should connect back to student achievement.

Additional Resources

[What Kind of Family Engagement Matters](#)

[The Five Roles in Practice](#)