

Board of Regents Policy Statement on Improving Student Achievement and School Performance through Parent and Family Partnerships

The Board of Regents defines “parent” as a natural parent, a legal guardian, or other caretaker standing in loco parentis (such as a grandparent or stepparent with whom the child lives, or a person who is legally responsible for the child’s welfare); and the Board of Regents defines “partnership” as active engagement between parents and families and the education community supporting student achievement.

The Board of Regents recognizes:

- Federal and State laws and regulations require plans, policies and practices that support parental and family involvement in the education of children.
- Schools and districts are responsible for implementing plans, policies and practices that support parental and family involvement in the education of children and the State Education Department is responsible for monitoring school and district implementation of federal and State laws and regulations.
- Improved student achievement is linked to engaging parents and families in the education process.
- Parents and families are the first educators of children.
- Education is the shared responsibility of schools, parents and families, and the community.

The Board of Regents affirms the following components of successful family involvement programs:

- Communication between home and school is regular, two-way, meaningful, and conducted in the language or mode of communication most accessible to parents and caregivers.
- Responsible parenting and pre-parenting is promoted and supported.
- Parents play an integral role in assisting student learning.
- Parents are welcome in the school, and their support and assistance are sought.
- Parents and families are full partners in the decisions that affect children and families.
- Professional development is provided to parents, teachers, and administrators.
- Community resources are made available to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning.
- Educators demonstrate socio-economic and cultural competence in the design, implementation, and evaluation of parental and family involvement policies and programs.

- Data is collected, analyzed and reported to guide program design, operation and evaluation.

In order to ensure that successful family partnerships are created and implemented, it shall be the policy of the Board of Regents that:

- parents and families be encouraged to fully engage in and contribute to the academic development of their child and to the school's learning environment;
- schools and districts inform parents of their rights and responsibilities in a manner that is clear, courteous, consistent, and in a language that they understand;
- schools and districts create opportunities for parents and families to support academic achievement;
- each school board develop and implement a comprehensive parent partnerships policy that ensures that every school develop and implement an effective plan for parental and family engagement;
- the State Education Department develop and implement a plan for USNY coordination and interagency collaboration in support of family partnerships;
- the State Education Department include where appropriate a parent and family involvement component in all policy and program initiatives; and
- appropriate USNY institutions be encouraged to develop and implement a parent and family education and outreach program.

To ensure appropriate implementation of the Board of Regents policy, the Board of Regents directs SED to take actions to:

- Seek statewide partnerships with other governmental agencies and providers of services to families and advocate for the creation of such partnerships in regions throughout New York State.
- Improve the Department's internal and external communication in support of parent and family partnerships.
- Develop and implement a technology and communications plan to support effective and sustainable partnerships with parents and families.
- Increase the Department's oversight of field efforts through regulatory enforcement and the reporting of results.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of current regulations and practices at promoting parent and family partnerships.
- Allocate or reallocate sufficient resources to implement the Department's responsibilities under the policy.

