

WEBINAR SERIES
Achieving Excellence and Innovation in
Family, School, and Community Engagement

**Sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education
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Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP)



**Harvard Family
Research Project**

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Achieving Excellence and Innovation in
Family, School, and Community Engagement

Webinar 1:

***Transforming Schools Through Family, School, and
Community Engagement***

Presenters:

- **Jim Shelton**, *Assistant Deputy Secretary, Office of Innovation and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education*
- **Anna Hinton**, *Director, Parental Options and Information, Office of Innovation and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education*
- **Heather Weiss**, *Founder and Director, Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP)*
- **Nina Sazer O'Donnell**, *Vice President, Education, United Way Worldwide*
- **Ron Mirr**, *Iowa State Parental Information Resource Center (PIRC) and RM Consulting; with Jaynette Rittman, Garton Elementary Principal, Des Moines, IA*

April 29, 2010

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Welcome and Opening Remarks



James H. Shelton III

Assistant Deputy Secretary

Office of Innovation and Improvement

U.S. Department of Education

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Family Engagement and ED's Core Areas of Reform



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Challenges:

- What are the key indicators of successful family and community engagement?
- What are effective ways to engage families and communities in turnaround and low-performing schools?
- What are the best practices for engaging families?
- What are best practices for training educators and families to support systemic, sustained, and effective family and community engagement?

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Reframing Family, School, and Community Engagement to Transform Schools



Anna Hinton

Director, Parental Options and Information

Office of Innovation and Improvement

U.S. Department of Education

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What is our GOAL?

- To ensure that all families have access to the information they need to effectively support their children's education from cradle to career.

&

- To ensure that schools and districts have the infrastructure and capacity to develop systemic family and community engagement strategies that are aligned with instructional goals.

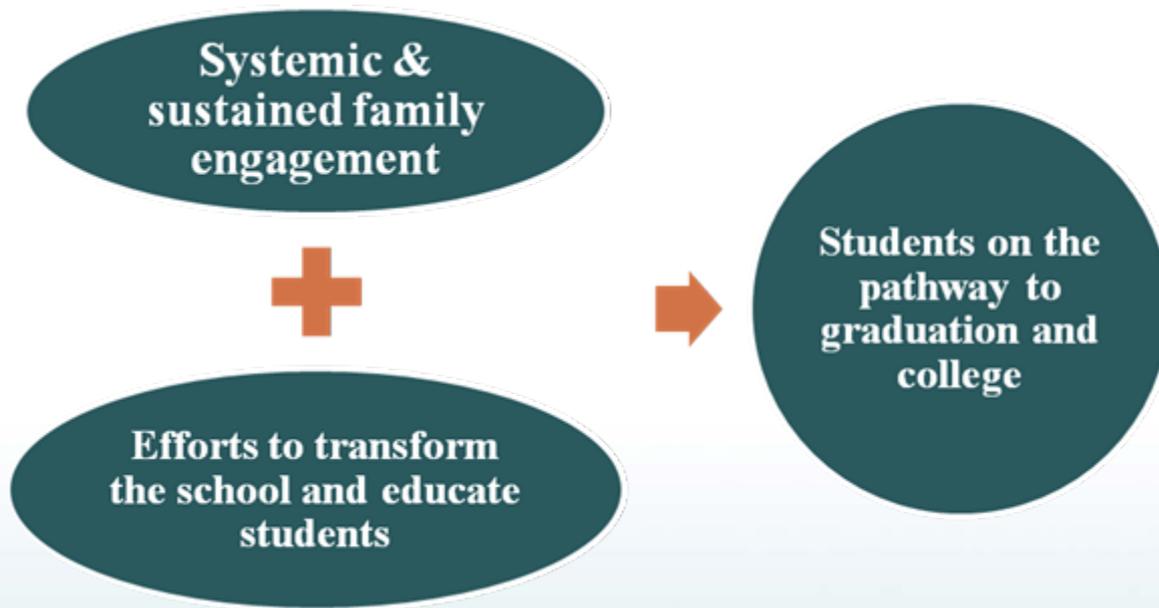
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**Research shows that
family engagement is . . .**



**One of the most powerful
predictors of student academic
success**

New evidence about family engagement and turning around low-performing schools



“Effective” family and community engagement is

- a **shared** responsibility
 - **continuous** from cradle to career
- and*
- **reinforces** learning that takes place in all settings

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How do you create an integrated, systemic, and sustained family and community engagement strategy? What does it look like?

- Create systemic state, district, and school policies, and plans for a cradle-to-career family engagement pathway
- Dedicate staff at the state, district, and school level to family, school, and community engagement
- Invest in capacity-building (e.g. professional development and technical assistance) at the state, district, and school levels
- Invest in making student and school performance data accessible, understandable, and actionable
- Hold states, districts, and schools accountable
- Create incentives to develop and test innovative approaches

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Reframing family engagement . . .

From an individual parent's
or teacher's "job"

- To a shared responsibility

From random acts

- To systemic approaches from cradle to career

From events

- To results-driven

From add-on services

- To purposeful connections to learning

From compliance

- To focus on learning, improvement, accountability, and innovation

From limited data

- To transparent data systems

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Challenges the next three presentations will address:

- Leveraging investments in performance data to support family engagement
- Moving beyond random acts of engagement to systemic, cradle-to-career approaches
- Building and supporting innovations that emphasize a shared responsibility for family engagement
- Investing in capacity-building for educators
- Building a results-driven framework for family engagement

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Remember. . .

- All families should have access to the information they need to effectively support their children's education from cradle to career.

&

- Schools and districts need to build the infrastructure and their capacity to develop systemic family and community engagement strategies that are aligned with instructional goals.

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Participant Poll

- Does your school/district purposefully connect family engagement to school improvement goals and instructional support strategies?

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The Power of Data to Transform Schools with Family, School, and Community Engagement



Heather Weiss

www.hfrp.org

Founder and Director

Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP)

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The opportunity to leverage data investments to support effective family, school, and community engagement

- School districts and states have spent more than \$1 billion to build and implement data systems and are on track to spend \$1 billion more in the next five years.
- According to the Data Quality Campaign, by 2011, all 50 states will have longitudinal data systems that track student performance from year to year.
- Data system development and use is a high priority for the U.S. Department of Education.

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But at this point, data are not routinely used...

- To engage families and communities and enable them to play their roles as partners in learning, advocates and advisors, and decision makers
- To build systemic, integrated, and sustained engagement and cradle-to-career pathways to college readiness
- To build effective and targeted family, school, and community engagement strategies focused on achieving school learning goals
- To guide data-based family, teacher, and student conferences and performance improvement

The Moment of Opportunity:

This national investment in data presents an unprecedented opportunity to develop innovative efforts to incorporate

accessible, understandable, and actionable

performance data and information as a core element in cradle-to-career family, school, and community engagement strategies designed to support children's learning, school improvement, and pathways to college readiness.

Design principles for smarter data systems to support student learning (from Education Sector)

- From institutional to learner-centered, away from compliance to information that students, families, and teachers can use to support day-to-day decisions about learning and achievement.
- Information flows across institutions and learning opportunities from cradle to career.
- Information and tools support day-to-day practices not only to assess performance but to suggest ways to improve performance.

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Innovative pilot efforts to provide performance data to build cradle-to-career family engagement:

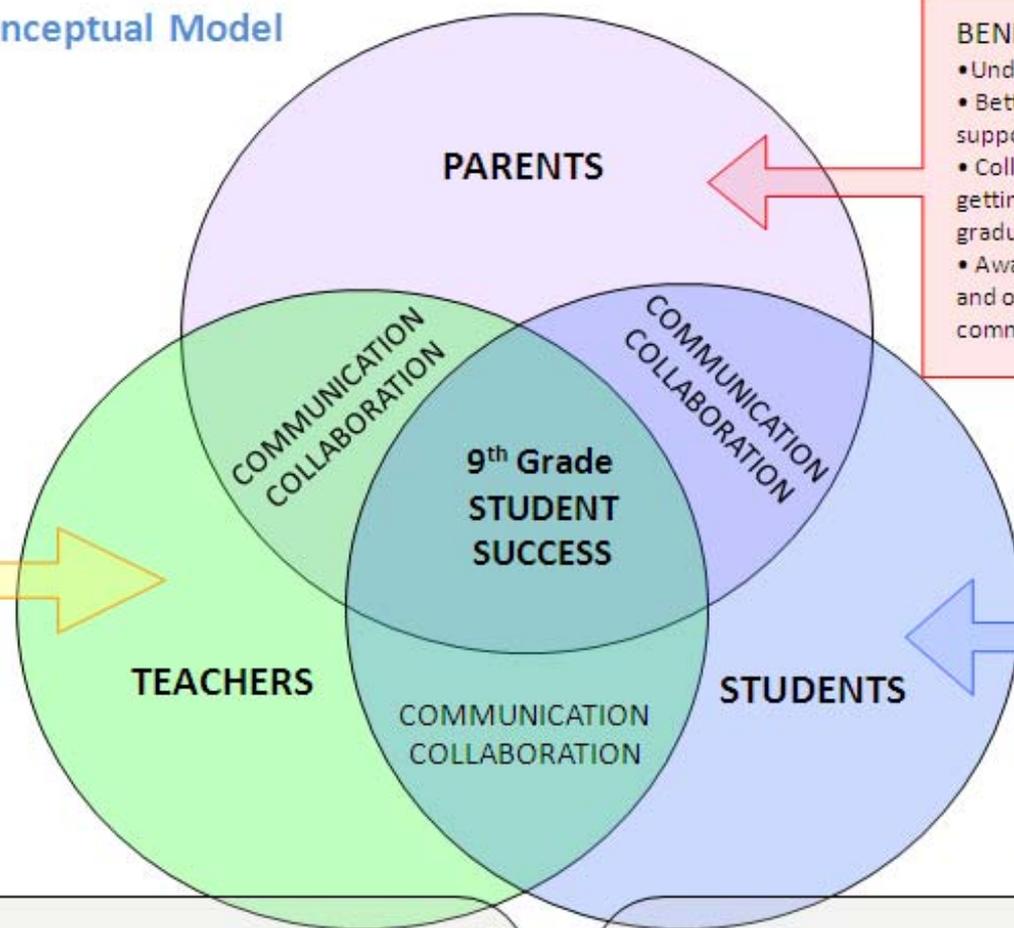
- Save the Children's early childhood Early Steps for School Success initiative
<http://www.savethechildren.org/programs/>
- NYC Aris Parent Link
<http://schools.nyc.gov/Teachers/QuickLinks/arisresources.htm>
- NYC New Visions 9th Grade Parent Involvement College Readiness Initiatives
<http://www.newvisions.org/the-road-to-college/overview>

**New Visions model of systemic,
integrated, and sustained engagement
for college readiness**

(next slide)

9th Grade Parent Involvement

Conceptual Model



BENEFITS for **Parents**

- Understand college readiness benchmarks
- Better able to monitor student's progress and to support his/her college-career aspirations
- Collaborate with teachers and school staff in getting/keeping their student on track for graduation and post-secondary education
- Aware of and able to access academic enrichment and other resources in the school and the community to support student's progress

BENEFITS for **Students**

- Understanding college readiness benchmarks
- Setting and monitoring progress toward graduation and post-secondary education
- Feeling supported by parents and teachers in setting/reaching graduation and post-secondary education goals
- Working with teachers to improve academic performance

BENEFITS for **Teachers**

- Understand college readiness benchmarks
- Positive interaction with parents & students
- Feeling supported by parents in getting and keeping students on track
- Collaborating with other staff to involve parents in improving student performance

School-Level Capacity Building

- Professional development sessions for teachers and school staff on parent involvement and college readiness
- Student performance data tools to monitor student progress and drive academic interventions
- Intensive PE institutes, workshops and TA on 9th Grade parent involvement in college readiness

Parents/Students Support & Resources

- Bilingual Parent development sessions on college readiness
- 9th Grade CR goals setting sessions with students
- Parent-Student friendly data tool to monitor progress
- Bilingual, parent-friendly publication on college readiness
- College-Career Resources Fair for parents & 9th graders to connect them to community resources to enhance CR

New Visions Data Tracker Tools for ensuring families have the data and supports they need to support education from cradle to career

NEW VISIONS' DATA RESOURCE GUIDE

Sample Trackers and Examples of Use

Student Tracker

AMINATA MARQUEZ

Sample School, Class of 2009

Required Credits Accumulated

You have earned a total of 29.65 credits.
You need 44 credits to graduate.

This chart shows only required courses. See Credit Count and Course History on the reverse for details about total credits and electives taken.

English	Social Studies	Math	Science	Foreign Language	P.E.	Health	Art	Music
8	8	8	8	2	4			
7	7	7	7	3.4				
6	6	6	6	2.0				
5	5	5	5	2.0	1		1	1
4	4	4	4	1.7				
3	3	3	3	1.1				
2	2	2	2	1				
1	1	1	1	.4				

Attendance

The attendance rate is the percentage of school days you attend class. Students who attend school every day have a 100% attendance rate. You should have at least a 92% attendance rate.

School Year	Days Present
2007-08	91%
2006-07	86%
2005-06	92%
2004-05	

Regents

To earn a Regents Diploma, you must score at least 65 on each of these Regents exams.
A score of 75 or higher on the ELA and Math exams indicates college readiness in those subjects.

Exam	Score
ELA	Not Taken
Math	56
Science	45
Global	70
US	Not Taken

Advanced Regents

To earn an Advanced Regents Diploma, you must score at least 65 on each of these Advanced Regents exams.

Exam	Score
2nd Science	Not Taken
2nd Math	Not Taken
Foreign Language	Not Taken

Key

	Regents	Credits	Attendance
Blue	75+ (ELA and Math)	N/A	N/A
Green	65+	On Track	92%+
Yellow	55-64	Almost On Track	90% - 91.9%
Red	Below 55	Off Track	Below 90%

New Visions Data Tracker Tools for ensuring families have the data and supports they need to support education from cradle to career

NEW VISIONS' DATA RESOURCE GUIDE

AMINATA MARQUEZ

Sample School, Class of 2009

Course History

Year	Term	Code	Course	Mark	Credits Attempted	Credits Earned	Subject
2005		1 E1	English 1	75	1	1	ELA
2005		2 E2	English 2	68	1	1	ELA
2006		1 E3	English 3	65	1	1	ELA
2006		2 E4	English 4	70	1	1	ELA
2007		1 E5	English 5	71	1.5	1.5	ELA
2005		1 H1\$	Global Hist. 1	79	1	1	Global
2005		2 H2\$	Global History 2	69	1	1	Global
2006		1 H3\$	Global Hist. 3	65	1	1	Global
2006		2 H4\$	Global Hist. 4	69	1	1	Global
2007		1 H5	U.S. History 1	65	1.5	1.5	US
2005		1 M\$A	Math A T1	65	1	1	Math
2005		2 M\$B	Math A T2	65	1	1	Math
2006		1 M\$C	Math A T3	65	1	1	Math
2006		2 M\$D	Math A T4	55	1	0	Math
2007		1 M\$E	Math B Term 1	65	1.5	1.5	Math
2005		1 \$S1	Liv. Env 1	P	1	1	Science - Life
2005		2 \$S2	Liv. Env 2	64	1	1	Science - Life
2006		1 \$P1	Physics 1	55	1	0	Science - Physical
2007		1 \$E1	Earth Science 1	65	1.5	1.5	Science - Physical
2007		1 \$E2	Earth Science Lab	65	0	0	Science - Physical
2006		2 \$P2	Integrated Science	68	1	1	Science - General
2006		1 \$F1	French 1	55	1	0	For. Lang.
2006		2 \$F2	French 2	70	1	1	For. Lang.
2007		1 \$F3	French 3	65	1.5	1.5	For. Lang.
2005		1 P\$A1	Phys. Ed.	P	0.58	0.58	PE
2005		2 P\$A2	Phys. Ed.	P	0.58	0.58	PE
2006		1 P\$A3	Phys. Ed.	P	0.58	0.58	PE
2006		2 P\$A2	Phys. Ed.	P	0.58	0.58	PE
2007		1 P\$A5	PE 5	75	0.58	0.58	PE
2005		2 PH1	Health	80	1	1	Health
2005		1 UT	Music	89	1	1	Music
2005		1 GOA9	Advisory	P	0.25	0.25	Elective
2005		1 GOC	Club	P	0.25	0.25	Elective
2005		2 GEXDAYX	Extended Day Program	F	1	0	Elective
2005		2 GOC	Club	P	0.25	0.25	Elective
2005		2 GOA9	Advisory	P	0.25	0.25	Elective
2006		1 GOA10	Advisory	P	0.25	0.25	Elective
2006		1 GOC	Club	F	0.25	0	Elective
2006		2 GOA10	Advisory	P	0.25	0.25	Elective
2007		1 ZBL11	Elective 11 grade	P	0.25	0.25	Elective
2007		1 GOA11	Family Group	P	0.25	0.25	Elective

Credit Count

The best way to be on track is to earn 11 credits each year, including your freshman year.

Subject	Credits Earned	Credits Required
English	5.5	8
Social Studies	5.5	8
Global	4	4
US	1.5	2
Government	0	1
Economics	0	1
Math	4.5	8
Science	4.5	8
General	1	-
Life	2	2
Physical	1.5	2
Foreign Language	2.5	2
PE	2.9	4
Health	1	1
Art	0	1
Music	1	1
Other Credits	2.25	-
Total Credits	29.65	44

AMINATA MARQUEZ's Plan for Graduation

Amanita needs to attend a credit recovery course this semester in science, and should plan to attend summer school to make up the missing math credit. Amanita can attend afternoon tutoring to improve her grades and hopefully will be ready to retake the math and science Regents this spring.

Early lessons suggest the importance of

- Principal leadership and commitment to using data for family and community engagement, and to teacher and family capacity building
- Family involvement in initiative design and improvement
- District and school staff dedicated to family outreach and engagement with the data and performance improvement effort

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- Development of tools to make data accessible, understandable, and actionable and to support planning as well as performance improvement
- Importance of training teachers and parents to have data-driven discussions at parent–teacher–student conferences and meetings
- The catalytic effect of integrating family data use into the core of efforts to keep students on track to graduation and college

Participant Poll

- Has your school/district taken steps to make student data accessible, understandable, and actionable so families can use it to help support their children's academic success?

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United Way Worldwide



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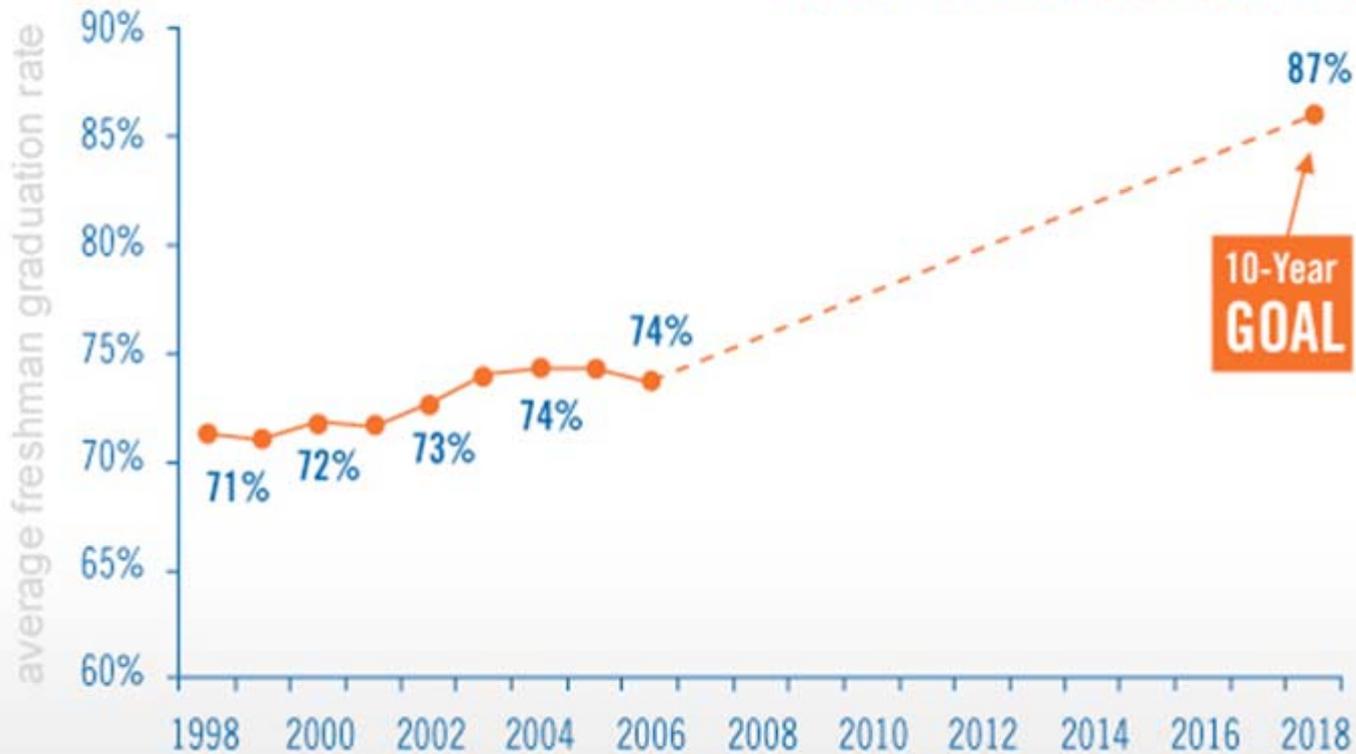
Vice President, Education

United Way Worldwide

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Our 2018 Education Challenge

**EDUCATION 10-YEAR GOAL:
RAISE THE GRADUATION RATE**



Source: Common Core of Data, National Center for Education Statistics.

Education is a Birth–21 Continuum

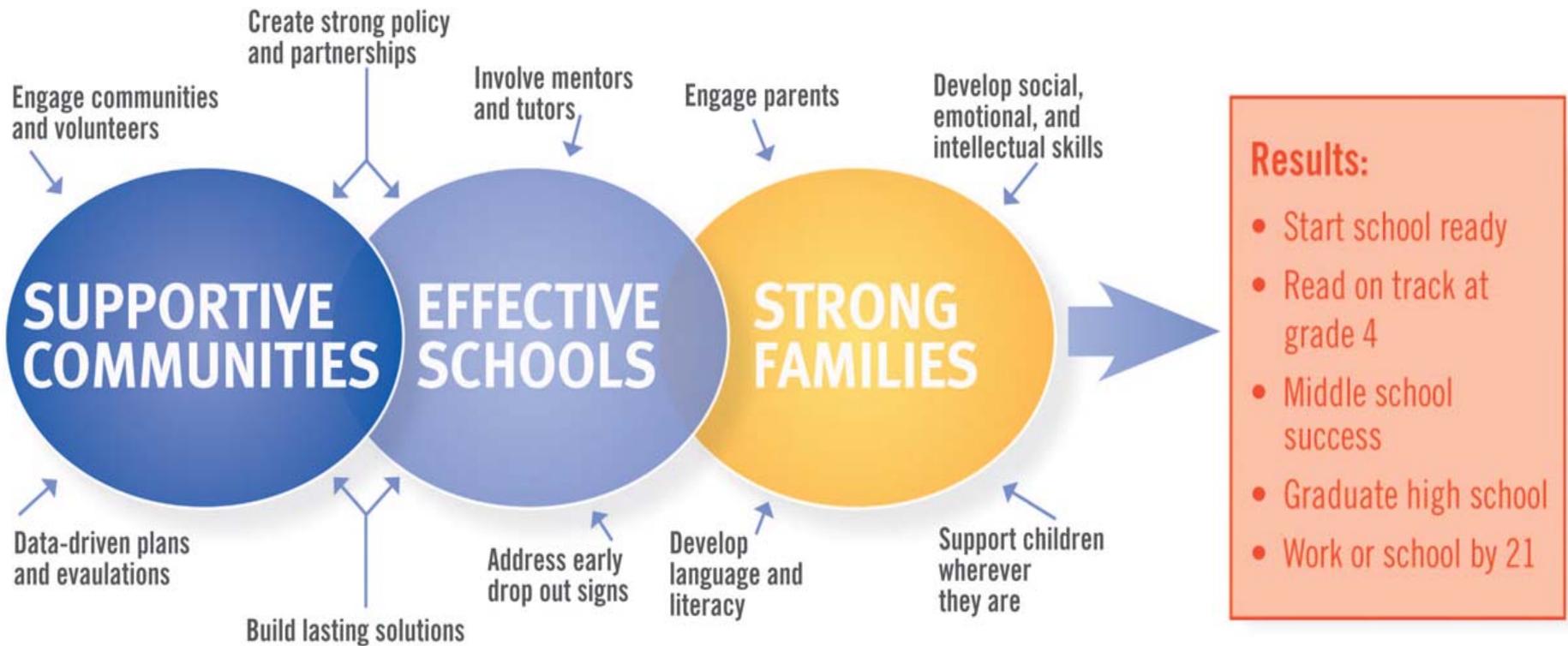
We must give our children the tools to:

- Enter school ready to succeed
- Read proficiently by 4th grade
- Make a successful transition to middle and high school
- Graduate from high school on time
- Be ready for success in college, work and life



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EDUCATION



CONTINUED SUPPORT, FOCUS AND ENGAGEMENT



Assets to Build on for Success

United Ways have unique assets to build upon to achieve change:

- A **network** of leaders committed to community change
- **Partners** who offer knowledge, expertise, and resources for change
- Brand and established community presence to **mobilize** individuals, organizations, and communities

Fully leveraging assets maximizes our impact

AT&T Family Engagement for High School Success Project

- Participatory, data-driven planning process
- Evaluation
- Learning Community

Participant Poll

- Has your school/district implemented strategies to engage families of high school students to help prevent dropouts and promote on-time graduation?

AT&T Family Engagement for High School Success Project

- United Way knows we can help communities, schools, and families
- We are thrilled to co-sponsor this learning series
- We look forward to continuing to partner

Iowa Parent Information Resource Center (PIRC)

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Iowa Parent Information Resource Center

- **Then (1995-2002)**
 - One of the initial group of PIRCs funded by the U.S. Department of Education in **1995**
 - Capacity building in 1995 meant helping schools establish a parent involvement goal as part of their school improvement process—parent engagement was the “end”
- **Now (2002-present)**
 - In 2002 we significantly strengthened our approach to capacity building
 - Capacity building in 2010 means parent engagement is no longer just a goal--it is an important **strategy** at the state and local level to help increase student achievement
 - We engage in **continuous improvement** within our PIRC to assess and improve our capacity-building efforts
 - We help **state-level** partners **embed** effective parent engagement strategies into their existing initiatives
 - At the **local level** we provide schools with a framework and a structured process for effectively engaging parents

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What changed?

- We no longer see parent engagement as a goal, but a **strategy**—one that helps schools use parent engagement to support student achievement
- We work with our state-level partners to make sure all groups in Iowa promote a **similar definition** of parent engagement
- We help schools move beyond “random acts of parent engagement” so that our professional development supports a **series of connected activities** that, as a whole, can positively effect student learning. We have established local “learning laboratories” that help schools to increase knowledge about parent engagement, have opportunities for exploration of effective concepts, and ultimately commit to **in-depth work over time**
- We employ a **continuous improvement process** for both our state and local partners that infuses what we learn from national experts and our current partners

State-level strategy

- Build the **capacity of multiple state-level partners** to integrate effective parent engagement into **existing initiatives**
 - State-level **partners**:
 - School Administrators of Iowa
 - Iowa Department of Education
 - Iowa Association of School Boards Foundation
 - Iowa Empowerment (early childhood)

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State-level strategy (*continued*)

- Examples of our state-level **capacity building**
 - Training Department of Education staff about best-known practices and including this as a part of the **accreditation** process
 - Working with Department staff who support **schools not making AYP** to integrate best-known practices into local improvement plans
 - Embedding parent engagement into **administrator and teacher evaluation** processes
 - Helping the **administrator's professional organization** adopt and promote parent engagement as an important strategy for improving student learning
 - Providing **school board members** with information and training opportunities about parent engagement practices
 - Working with **teacher training institutions** to integrate parent engagement as part of their curricula

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School-level strategy

- Build the capacity of individual schools to employ parent engagement as a strategy to improve learning
 - How the Iowa PIRC supports school teams (iSPIN)
 - We provide a **framework** to help align all of the school's parent engagement
 - We provide a **structure** to help ensure parent engagement efforts are “in-depth” and “over time,” which includes data collection, professional development, access to materials, coaching, and **networking** of the iSPIN sites with one another

School-level strategy (*continued*)

- Areas addressed by school-level teams
 - **Sharing leadership** for parent engagement between school staff and parents
 - Making explicit the **expectations** parents and school staff have for each other
 - Developing/clarifying **policies and practices** which promote parent involvement
 - Ensuring **communication** between parents and schools is two-way
 - Providing **professional development** for school staff and **training opportunities** for parents
 - Increasing the quantity and quality of **face-to-face connections** both at school and in the community (including home visits)

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Participant Poll

- Does your school have a core group of dedicated, knowledgeable, and skilled teachers/staff to engage families to support student academic success?

Garton Elementary

- Jaynette Rittman, Principal
- Located in Des Moines, IA
- 600 Students in grades K-5
- Title I School
- 80% of students receive free/reduced lunch prices
- In the second year of iSPIN implementation

iSPIN at Garton Elementary

- **Framework** and **structure** strengthened current efforts
 - What are the benefits of shared responsibility?
 - Team including parents, teachers, SUCCESS worker, counselor, and administrator
 - Data collection and analysis
 - Why did teachers buy in to the process?
 - Shared data
 - Grade level meetings
 - What has the school done to get parents who are the least likely to be engaged to join the process?
 - Home Visits, Parent Workshops, Partnership

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Parent Quote

- “As a parent I am finding this program more interesting each time we meet. The idea of a compact or agreement to better help parents understand their role is amazing. iSPIN is helping to say you don't need to be a stay-at-home parent to be an active member in your child's academic achievement. iSPIN allows us to help teachers and parents see more clearly the standards and expectations needed to achieve success in each grade level. I think iSPIN is needed in this day and age to help parents who are sometimes at a loss of their role in the school and lives of their children academically. I consider myself an involved parent in the school environment, and in just these few months I have begun to think differently about all the ways I can help to keep my own children more engaged in school. This is all in thanks to this wonderful program.”

—*Michele Clayton, Parent at Clive Elementary, West Des Moines, IA*

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Principal Quotes

- “Our work with the Iowa Parent Information Center’s iSPIN program has been most important to us. The capacity building it provides our team and our entire staff along with a set of structured agenda items around important practices on parent engagement has given us a framework for our work. We have focused on the role of the school in engaging parents with dignity and with ideas to provide parents for learning at home. It has helped us develop stronger relationships with parents so we can have important conversations about learning. It is like a breath of fresh air. This work is focused and sustainable. We are off the Schools in Need of Assistance designation list and are meeting our AYP (Annual Yearly Progress) goals. Our internal work and parents being more engaged in their children’s learning at home is certainly helping.”

—*Jean McDonald, Principal, Fulton Elementary, Dubuque, IA*

- “Our iSPIN work with the Iowa Parent Information Center has been a huge advantage to us as we have carved out time to work on parent engagement. The culture of our school has changed in a significant way. Our staff has embraced this work as we have increased our communication with parents on homework, learning standards, parents’ role in their children’s learning, and expectations we have for each other. We are seeing student achievement growth at every level.”

—*Jaynette Rittman, Principal, Garton Elementary, Des Moines, IA*

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Superintendent Quote

- “We have 3 elementary schools and 1 junior high school involved in the iSPIN program. The teams of parents, teachers, and principals are pleased with the structure, services, and research-based resources provided. They benefit from the opportunities to learn together, talk about issues that matter, expectations of each other, and generate ideas. Through the intentional support of iSPIN, parents and staff members are learning ways to help their schools become more welcoming to all families. The iSPIN surveys have been particularly useful in identifying areas to address. One of our principals reported an inspired sense of advocacy for the school among parents who serve on the team. The research is clear about the impact of parent partnerships on student achievement. Our district is committed to closing the achievement gap, and we see effective parent partnerships as one of the keys to reaching our goal. We want to see an increase in parent involvement for all of our students—at school as well as in their homes—and we are eager to learn from the iSPIN team members so that we can expand this positive influence throughout our district.”

—*Dr. Tom Narak, Superintendent, West Des Moines Community School District*

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Additional Resources:

[U.S. Department of Education](#)

[Webinar Series](#)

[United Way Education Strategies](#)

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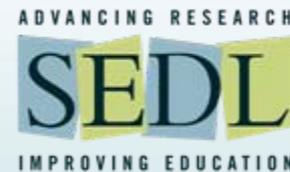
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