

Family Engagement Training for Educators in Pre-Service: Common Sense but No Common Practice

July 15, 2020



Center for Family, School, Community Engagement
San Diego State University | College of Education

Speakers



Joyce G. Watts, Ed.D.
Advisory Board Co-Chair
Parent Organization
Network



Rigel Spencer Massaro
Senior Legislative Counsel
Public Advocates
& Parent



Araceli Simeón, MPP
Project Director
Parent Organization
Network
& Parent



Shulamit N. Ritblatt, Ph.D.
Professor, Child and Family
Development
Director, Center for Family,
School and Community
Engagement
San Diego State University



Yesica Limón
Parent Leader
Gente Organizada in
Pomona



Why We Studied this Topic: Challenges Establishing Collaborative Relationships





Why It Is Relevant: Distance Learning Challenges

What We Studied



Research



Law



**Requirements by the
California Commission on
Teacher Credentialing
(CTC)**



Landscape

Common Sense, but Not Common Practice: Disconnect between Research and Practice



Lack of family engagement training in pre-service

- Little to no exposure to strong examples of family engagement
- No strong practice of family engagement
- May not see partnership as an essential practice
- May develop deficit mindsets
- Do not prioritize family engagement



Legal Analysis Findings



In-Service:

- Title I states that LEA's and schools “shall educate teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals, and other school leaders, and other staff, *with the assistance of parents*, in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, implement and coordinate parent programs, and build ties between parents and the school...”
- State law extends these requirements to all schools

Pre-Service:

- State law requires the CTC to establish standards for preparation programs to prepare educators to serve as “active partners” to parents and guardians



Teacher Quality Advocacy & Community Partnership

Educator Preparation to Engage Families is Key:

- California teachers (63% White) do not yet resemble California students and their families (70% students of color)
- Law is based on research: engagement leads to increased teacher retention, higher student engagement and achievement

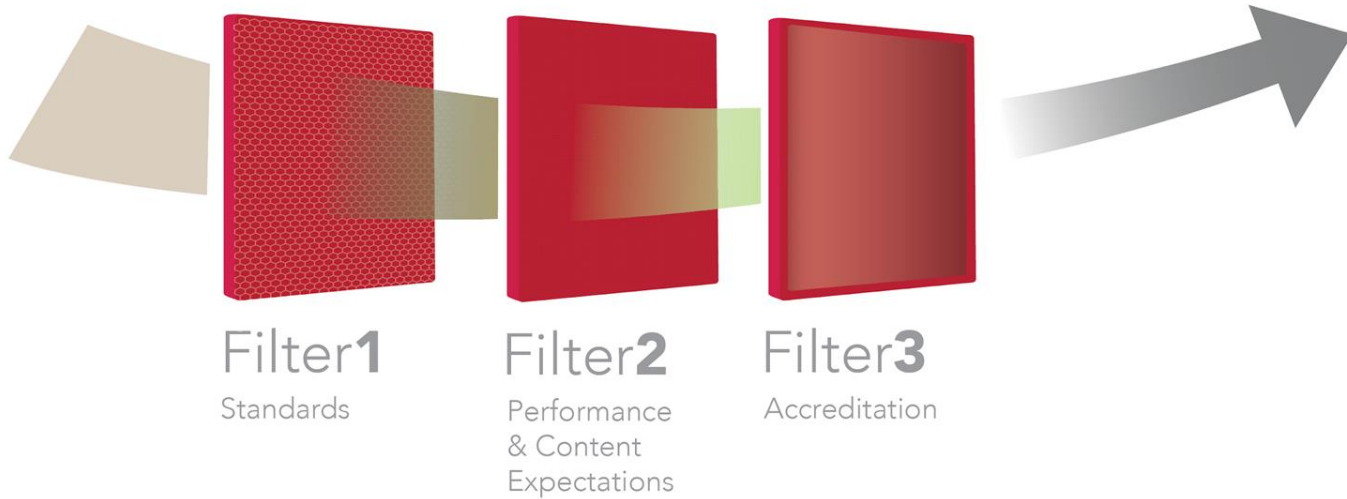
Our Experience is that Families of Color Struggle to Feel Engaged

- School funding formula (Local Control Funding Formula) requires engagement at the student and system level
- Engagement too often feels like a box to check



CTC Requirements

Filtering System





CTC Requirements

PON reviewed the standards and expectations for five preparation programs:

1. **General education teacher program**
2. Bilingual education teacher program
3. Special education teacher program
4. Child development permits and
5. **Administrator preparation program**



CTC Requirements Findings

- The law is not reflected in the standards and expectations.
- The family engagement requirements vary across preparation programs.
- The standards and expectations (filter 1 and 2) are not always aligned to each other or to current family engagement research.
- There was limited information available online about accreditation.



Programs Requirements

General Ed Teachers	Bilingual Ed Teachers	Special Ed Teachers	Early Ed Teachers	Administrators
None	Expectation: “Bilingual teachers form a cultural and linguistic bridge that links the bilingual community to the larger society.”	600 hours of practice with some dedicated to family engagement	One class on child and family relations	1 of 6 standards is on “Family and Community Engagement”



Themes in Programs

	General Ed Teachers	Bilingual Ed Teachers	Special Ed Teachers	Early Ed Teachers	Administrators
Standards	Knowledge and understanding of families to support student learning	Parents as partners in decisions concerning their children's education.	Collaboration with families and others to support student development and learning	Goal-oriented relationships with parents to ensure family well-being for student success	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• LCAP development• Values• Community resources
Performance Expectations	One-way communication	Same as general education teachers	Collaboration with families and others to support students	Understand, communicate and collaborate with families in culturally appropriate manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• LCAP development• One-way communication
Content Expectations	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• LCAP development• Theories to engage, collaborate• No fam. engagement



Landscape Analysis Findings

Higher Education Institutions

- The education field considers family engagement an **optional “add-on”**.
- The 120-unit cap makes it challenging to add new topics.
- The lack of consistency in requirements leads to a wide variance in the amount of:
 - Time spent on the subject;
 - Content that is covered; and
 - Type and rigor of the fieldwork, if any is assigned to candidates.



Programs Requirements

General Ed Teachers	Bilingual Ed Teachers	Special Ed Teachers	Early Ed Teachers	Administrators
None	Expectation	600 hours of practice with some dedicated to family engagement	One class on child and family relations	1 of 6 standards is on “Family and Community Engagement”

Optional

**Embedded
some content
and fieldwork**

**Stand alone
course +
fieldwork**

**Stand alone
course +
fieldwork**

**Stand alone
course on
community
engagement**



Landscape Analysis Findings

Professional Development Providers

- They start training by reviewing research on family engagement.
- 69% provide training to school-site action teams to plan and implement activities, and administrators focused on community engagement.
- 56% provide teacher training focused on changing mindsets about families, strengthening cross-cultural communication, and relationship building to support student success.

Recommendations:

Commission on Teacher Credentialing

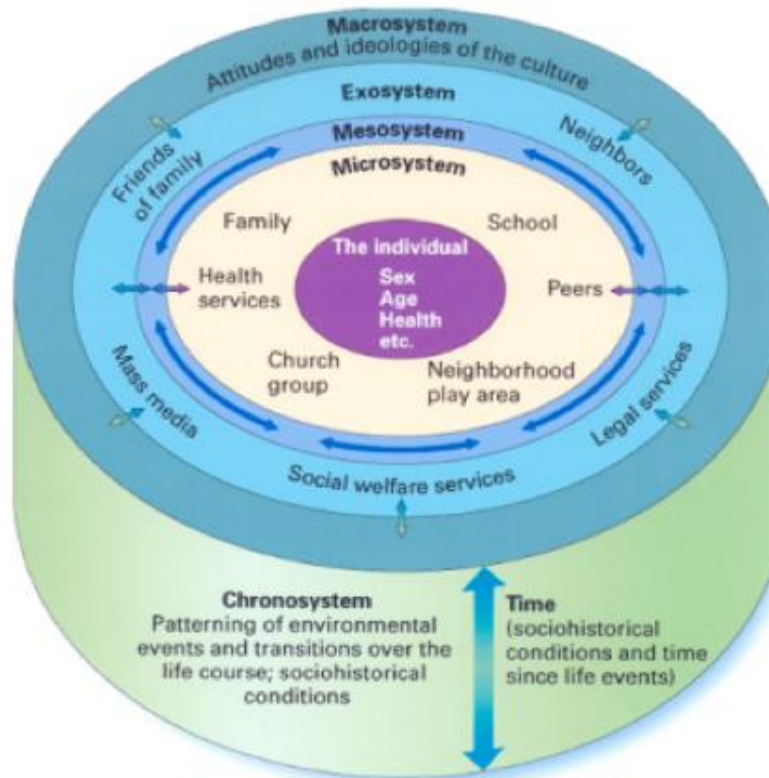
- **Establish clear and consistent requirements across preparation programs**
- **Support and evaluate programs through a robust accreditation system**
- Survey educator preparation programs to do a full scan of the landscape
- Collaborate with others to update and align pre-service training
- Participate in national family engagement pre-service consortium

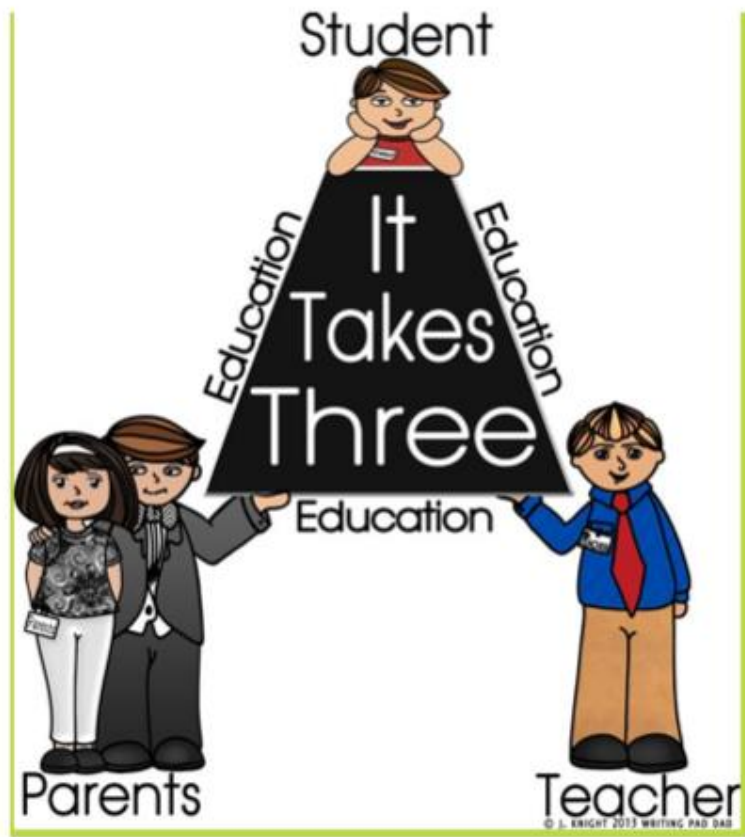
State Board of Education/ California Department of Education

- **Prioritize family engagement training for staff to support families with distance learning**
- **Evaluate 2019 self-reflection tool results**
- Establish an Office of Family Engagement to coordinate work

Voice from the Field







WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF INVOLVING PARENTS?

Benefits for students:

- ✓ Increased student achievement
- ✓ Fewer behavior problems
- ✓ More positive attitudes about homework
- ✓ More homework completed, especially on weekends
- ✓ More positive attitudes toward school
- ✓ Less absenteeism
- ✓ More connection between home and school

Benefits for teachers:

- ✓ Increased student achievement
- ✓ More homework completed and returned
- ✓ Happier students and less behavior problems
- ✓ More support from parents both at school & at home

Benefits to parents:

- ✓ Increased student achievement
- ✓ Appreciation of teacher's efforts to inform them about the instructional program
- ✓ Ideas from teachers on how to help their children
- ✓ A feeling they should help their children
- ✓ Greater understanding of the instructional program
- ✓ Increased ability to help their children
- ✓ Confidence in the teacher's interpersonal skills and overall teacher ability

4 Principles of Transformative Family Engagement

INCLUSIVE

Embracing and valuing diverse perspectives.



INDIVIDUALIZED

Meeting the unique needs of every family and child.



INTEGRATED

Connecting and aligning with the educational system.



IMPACTFUL

Empowering families to support their child's success.

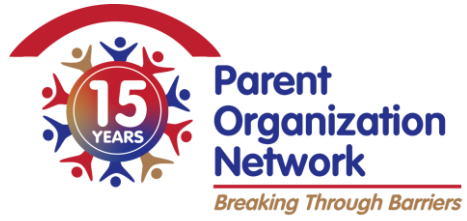


Parent Voice: Cultural & Linguistic Barriers





Questions?



www.parentnetwork-la.org