

Objectives for Schools

(from “The Missing Piece of the Proficiency Puzzle”)

1. Relationship-building: The school staff builds productive, personal relationships with parents of all their students.

- Parents report that school staff understands and demonstrates how strong relationships with parents contribute to effective teaching and learning.
- School staff implements systematic steps to welcome the parents of new and English as-a-Second-Language (ESL) students (for example, using home visits, personal calls or letters, open houses).
- Parents and other stakeholders report that they are actively welcomed when they visit the school.
- School staff implements systematic steps to encourage parents to attend school activities and participate in decisions about their children’s learning.
- School staff involves parents in personal communication about their students’ progress at least once a month.
- School staff completes needs assessment with all parents to determine resources necessary for their child’s academic success.
- All parents are asked for feedback on the school’s efforts to welcome and engage parents and the feedback is used to improve the school’s efforts.

2. Communications: Two-way information in many forms flows regularly between school staff and parents about students’ academic achievement and individual needs.

- School staff implements systematic efforts to inform parents about academic goals, class work, grades and homework for their children in their home language. (For example, classroom contracts, student assignment books, homework Web sites, and online grade books).
- School staff offers varied ways that parents can share information with teachers about their children’s learning needs. (For example, phone and e-mail contacts, offering parent conferences, making home visits or other methods).
- School staff partners with community leaders and organizations to build parent understanding of academic expectations, school strategies and student achievement results.
- School staff offers parents opportunities to discuss schoolwide achievement issues, including assessment data, at least once a semester.
- School staff implements systematic efforts to maximize parent-teacher conference participation. (For example, offering multiple locations, convenient times, follow-up with parents who do not reply to first notices, and opportunities for student-led conferences).
- At least 50 percent of parents respond to annual school and/or district stakeholder surveys.
- Stakeholder survey data is consistently used to plan school improvement efforts and to evaluate their effectiveness.

3. Decision-making: School staff encourages, supports and expects parents to be involved in school improvement decisions and to monitor and assist school improvement.

- The school staff offers professional learning community opportunities, workshops, and easily accessible written information to equip parents for service on the School-Based Decision Making Council and committees.
- School council and committees facilitate broad parent participation by actively recruiting diverse membership, providing interpreters and translated materials when needed, setting convenient meeting times, and seeking wide parent input. At least 40 percent of parents vote in SBDM parent election.
- Parents on the SBDM council and committees engage and mentor many other parents by reporting to multiple groups and seeking input through surveys, meetings and varied other methods.
- The school council adopts measurable objectives and plans coherent strategies to build authentic parent participation, and the school council monitors the implementation and impact of that work.
- School council policies ensure active roles for parents on SBDM council and committees, and other groups making decisions about school improvement.
- Parents report that they are treated as valued partners on school leadership teams, SBDM council and committees, the school council and other groups making decisions about school improvement.
- School staff has a plan to identify new and experienced parent leaders who support and build capacity for parents to serve effectively on the school council and committee work.

4. Advocacy: For each student, the school staff identifies and supports a parent or another adult who takes personal responsibility for understanding and speaking for each child's learning needs.

- School staff ensures every student has a parent and/or another adult who knows how to advocate, or speak up for them, regarding the student's academic goals and individual needs.
- Most parents participate actively in student led conferences or other two-way communication about meeting their child's individual learning needs.
- Parents report participating actively and effectively in required planning for individual learning, for example, Individual Education Plans, Individual Learning Plans, Gifted Student Plans, 504 Plans and intervention strategies to ensure college readiness (Senate Bill 130).
- School staff gives parents clear, complete information on the procedures for resolving concerns and filing complaints, and the council reviews summary data on those complaints to identify needed improvements.
- School staff ensures that parents and community members are well informed about how to become educational advocates, or how to access a trained educational advocate when needed.
- As students are identified by school staff as having disabilities or performing at the novice level, additional intentional steps are taken to ensure that parents have the option to use a trained advocate to assist them in speaking for their child's needs.

5. Learning Opportunities: School staff ensures that families have multiple learning opportunities to understand how to support their children's learning.

- Parents have multiple opportunities to learn about and discuss the following:
 - Kentucky standards and expectations for all students
 - The school's curriculum, instructional methods, and student services
 - The school's decision-making process, including opportunities for parents to participate on SBDM councils and committees
 - Their children's learning and development, along with legal and practical options for helping their children succeed, such the IEP and/or ILP process
 - Community resources to support learning
 - Opportunities to participate in state and district school improvement efforts, such as forums, committees, and surveys
- School staff makes systematic use of written communications (for example, newsletters, Web sites, and bulletin boards) to help parents understand their own children's progress and the progress of the school.
- School staff displays proficient student work with scoring guides to demonstrate academic expectations to parents and students, and updates the displays regularly.
- School staff offers parent workshops and meetings in convenient locations to help parents develop skills in supporting their children's learning and the school's improvement efforts.
- School council has a classroom observation policy that welcomes families to visit all classrooms.
- School staff develops parent leaders who contribute regularly to other parents' understanding and who help meet other parent learning needs.

6. Community Partnerships: The school staff engages and partners with community members to plan and implement substantive work to improve student achievement.

- School leadership regularly shares information on student achievement and involves business and community leaders in school improvement efforts.
- School leadership develops partnerships with several businesses, organizations, and agencies to support student learning and create mentors for students and parents.
- School leadership collaborate with employers to support parent and volunteer participation in students' education.
- School staff collaborates with businesses, organizations, and agencies to address individual student needs and shares that information with parents.
- Parents make active use of the school's resources and community resources and report that they provide meaningful help to resolve family challenges that could interfere with student learning. (For example, FRYSC or Title I coordinators connect family with community resources and follow up.)
- School staff offers and publicizes community-based learning activities aligned with the curriculum, such as tutoring linked to the curriculum and internships, for all students and parents.