



FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

GOAL

Encourage and sustain family engagement in afterschool and summer learning programs.

SUMMARY: Family engagement is about increasing the involvement of family members and caretakers in afterschool and summer learning programs. Partnership and coordination between afterschool programs, school partners and families is key to student success academically, behaviorally and socially.

BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES

Action items focused on high quality youth development and program development efforts. You can choose from these elements and adopt the ones that will help meet your program’s needs.

COMMUNICATE

with family members and caregivers frequently and in positive ways, using a variety of formal and informal methods to update them on program activities, events and goals.

CONDUCT

family events and meetings at times and locations that are convenient for families and caretakers.

COORDINATE

volunteer opportunities that family members and caretakers can fill to support the program. Communicate with family members to determine their areas of interest.

CREATE

a welcoming environment that embraces diversity by greeting family members by name and providing language appropriate documents and information.

DEVELOP

a “Family Handbook” (or flier) that welcomes families, defines family engagement and outlines ways for families to get involved. Family engagement can be:

- Direct participation in regular program activities.
- Involvement in program design.
- Participating in special events.
- Serving on advisory committees.

PARTNER

with community agencies to identify resources where families can receive assistance (ex. Food bank, health department, community action program, etc.).

REQUEST

feedback from family members and caregivers about activities that are offered and activities they would like to engage in with their child.

REVIEW

family engagement efforts and identify areas of success and areas that need improvement:

- What activities were the most effective at engaging family members?
- What time or day of the week were family members most engaged?
- How can you build on the successful efforts?

SURVEY

engaged family members to solicit their input and identify the reasons they participate in afterschool programs.

TRAIN

and develop staff to understand the needs of families and available community resources.

DIG DEEPER

To dig deeper, check out beyondschoolbells.org on the Beyond School Bells website.



PROGRAM WORKSHEET

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

SCALE	3	2	1	N/A
Description	EXCEEDS STANDARD	MEETS STANDARD	DOES NOT MEET STANDARD	NOT APPLICABLE/ UNSURE OF STATUS
Consideration	Others can look to our program to see how to do this well.	Others can see this area in our program.	We need to focus on this area, and we might need help with it.	This doesn't apply to our program, or we're not sure about this element.

PROGRAM PRACTICES	GUIDING QUESTIONS		NOTES
Family Engagement <i>Actively seek out, involve, and solicit input (formal and informal) from student's family and caretakers.</i>	How do we engage family members and caretakers in all parts of our program?		
Partner & Community Engagement <i>Cultivate relationships and community support to advocate for programs and contribute to program success.</i>	How are we working with partners to offer family activities and events during our program?		
Staff Development & Expectations <i>Provide staff and volunteers with program training, resources, and tools, including youth development information and training.</i>	How are our staff trained to engage family members and caretakers? How do they receive this training?		
Program Focus <i>Provide a variety of age-appropriate activities, including academic achievement, service learning, and career exploration programming.</i>	How do we get input from family members and caretakers about our programs? How do we incorporate their feedback?		
Youth Focus <i>Incorporate age appropriate student-led efforts, mentoring opportunities (formal and informal), and social enrichment activities.</i>	How do we include youth in planning activities for families? What is their role in these activities?		
Administration <i>Foster continuous improvement using program data, monitoring, and evaluations; and communicate program status and outcomes.</i>	What information do we need to focus on family engagement? What does successful family engagement look like?		
Tools, Environment, & Physical Space <i>Ensure the safety, security, and protection of all students.</i>	What type of environment do we need to increase family engagement?		
TOTAL			