

**ECHO IDAHO**

**K12 Behavioral Health  
in the Classroom**

# **Cultivating Caregiver Involvement and Collaboration**

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**Joy Jansen, PhD, Director of Special Services**

Lake Pend Oreille School District

&

**Greg Bailey, PhD, Retired Superintendent**

Moscow School District

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**University of Idaho**  
School of Health and Medical Professions  
College of Education, Health and  
Human Sciences



# Learning Objectives

- 1. Review the Importance of Caregiver Involvement**
- 2. Identify Challenges Families Face In Engaging Schools**
- 3. Identify Essential Elements of Collaboration**
- 4. Understand Possible Challenges in Collaboration With All Care Providers**

# **Understanding The Importance of Collaboration And Possible Challenges:**

## **Why Is Family Engagement Important For Student Success?**

**Family engagement plays a pivotal role in a student's success for several reasons:**

- 1. Enhanced Academic Performance**
- 2. Improved Behavior and Attitude**
- 3. Better Mental and Emotional Well-Being**
- 4. Stronger School-Home Connection**
- 5. Increased Attendance and Participation**
- 6. Empowerment of Families**

# **Understanding The Importance Of Collaboration And Possible Challenges:**

## **What Challenges Do Families Face In Engaging With Schools?**

**Families can face a variety of challenges when it comes to engaging with schools. Here are some common obstacles:**

- 1. Time Constraints**
- 2. Lack of Awareness or Information**
- 3. Cultural and Language Barriers**
- 4. Socioeconomic Factors**
- 5. Feelings of Intimidation or Inadequacy**
- 6. Health and Well-Being Issues**
- 7. Transportation and Accessibility Issues**
- 8. Negative Past Experiences**

# **Understanding The Importance Of Collaboration And Possible Challenges:**

## **What Challenges Might Arise In This Collaboration?**

**Collaborating to support students with mental health disabilities is rewarding but can come with its fair share of challenges. Here are some potential issues:**

- 1. Communication Barriers**
- 2. Diverse Perspectives**
- 3. Resource Limitations**
- 4. Consistency in Implementation**
- 5. Confidentiality Concerns**
- 6. Emotional Strain**
- 7. Resistance to Change**
- 8. Engagement Challenges**

# Collaboration Basics

## Partnership

### A Strategic Shared Process

### **Relationships>Process>Outcomes**

(work together>toward>common goal/vision)

(Cowan, Haraison, & Weekly, 2009)

# Collaborative Attributes

National Labor Management Partnership, 2022

- Goal alignment** - We seek to align goals among stakeholders in our system by emphasizing our common purpose and shared priorities
- Authenticity** - We are honest with each other about our thoughts, feelings, and opinions
- Psychological safety** - We create an environment where all partners feel comfortable sharing thoughts and opinions, and where participants are not harshly judged for mistakes, voicing concerns, or holding unpopular viewpoints
- Mediation** - We are able to positively negotiate, compromise, and get to agreement
- Reciprocity** - We share information, and we expect sharing in return through reciprocity
- Reliability** - We are consistently reliable, and in return expect our partners to follow through
- Reflection** - We think through the possibilities, and are
- Awareness** - We each see ourselves and each other as necessary parts of a working system
- Motivation** - We have the drive to gain consensus when engaging in joint problem-solving
- Participation** - We are equally committed to participating in a collaborative partnership
- Shared decision-making** - Working together is the default and we collaborate on as many important decisions as possible
- Professional discretion** - We respect the professional autonomy of those within our system and create space for role-appropriate, independent decision-making at all levels
- Peer collaboration** - We support educators in working together for their students' success
- Social support** - We portray each other as valued partners to our peers

# Collaboration Essentials

- 1. Listen & Explore:** What can we do together?
- 2. Learn & Adjust:** How will we learn together?
- 3. Focus & Align:** What should we do together?
- 4. Link & Leverage:** What will we do together?

(Cowan, Haraison, & Weekly, 2009)



# Fostering Successful Partnerships with Caregivers: 5-Point Plan

1. Be positive, proactive, and solution-oriented.
2. Respect caregivers' roles and cultural backgrounds.
3. Communicate consistently, listen to caregiver concerns, and work together.
4. Consider simple, natural supports that meet the individual needs of students.
5. Empower caregivers with knowledge and opportunities for involvement in the context of students' global needs.

(Edwards & Da Fonte, 2012)

# References & Resources (Slide 3)

## 1. Enhanced Academic Performance:

1. Supportive Environment: When families are engaged, students are more likely to receive support and encouragement at home, which can lead to better academic performance. [Ref: Epstein, J.L. (2018). *School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action*. Corwin Press.]
2. Reinforced Learning: Families can reinforce what is taught in school by helping with homework, discussing school activities, and providing additional resources. [Ref: Henderson, A.T., & Mapp, K.L. (2002). *A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement*. SEDL.]

## 2. Improved Behavior and Attitude:

1. Positive Role Models: Engaged families serve as positive role models, setting expectations for behavior and attitude both in and out of school. [Ref: Hill, N.E., & Tyson, D.F. (2009). Parental Involvement in Middle School: A Meta-Analytic Assessment of the Strategies That Promote Achievement. *Developmental Psychology*, 45(3), 740–763.]
2. Increased Motivation: Students whose families are involved in their education tend to have higher motivation and engagement in their schoolwork. [Ref: Fan, X., & Chen, M. (2001). Parental Involvement and Students' Academic Achievement: A Meta-Analysis. *Educational Psychology Review*, 13(1), 1-22.]

## 3. Better Mental and Emotional Well-Being:

1. Emotional Support: Family involvement provides students with a sense of security and emotional support, which is crucial for their mental health and well-being. [Ref: Jeynes, W.H. (2007). The Relationship Between Parental Involvement and Urban Secondary School Student Academic Achievement: A Meta-Analysis. *Urban Education*, 42(1), 82-110.]
2. Resilience Building: Engaged families can help students develop resilience and coping strategies for dealing with stress and challenges. [Ref: Weiss, H.B., Lopez, M.E., & Rosenberg, H. (2010). *Beyond Random Acts: Family, School, and Community Engagement as an Integral Part of Education Reform*. Harvard Family Research Project.]

## 4. Stronger School-Home Connection:

1. Consistent Communication: Regular communication between families and schools ensures that both parties are aware of the student's needs, progress, and any issues that may arise. [Ref: Goodall, J., & Montgomery, C. (2014). Parental Involvement to Parental Engagement: A Continuum. *Educational Review*, 66(4), 399-410.]
2. Aligned Goals: When families and schools work together, they can align their goals and strategies, providing a cohesive support system for the student. [Ref: Christenson, S.L., & Sheridan, S.M. (2001). *Schools and Families: Creating Essential Connections for Learning*. Guilford Press.]

## 5. Increased Attendance and Participation:

1. Accountability: Engaged families are more likely to ensure that their children attend school regularly and participate in school activities. [Ref: Sheldon, S.B., & Epstein, J.L. (2004). Getting Students to School: Using Family and Community Involvement to Reduce Chronic Absenteeism. *The School Community Journal*, 14(2), 39-56.]
2. Support for Extracurricular Activities: Families can encourage and support their children to participate in extracurricular activities, which can enhance their social skills and overall development. [Ref: Eccles, J.S., Barber, B.L., Stone, M., & Hunt, J. (2003). Extracurricular Activities and Adolescent Development. *Journal of Social Issues*, 59(4), 865-889.]

## 6. Empowerment of Families:

1. Informed Decision-Making: When families are involved, they become more informed about their child's education and are better equipped to make decisions that benefit their child's learning and development. [Ref: Hoover-Dempsey, K.V., & Sandler, H.M. (1997). Why Do Parents Become Involved in Their Children's Education? *Review of Educational Research*, 67(1), 3-42.]
2. Advocacy: Engaged families can advocate for their child's needs and work with the school to ensure that appropriate resources and support are provided. [Ref: Anderson, K.J., & Minke, K.M. (2007). Parent Involvement in Education: Toward an Understanding of Parents' Decision Making. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 100(5), 311-323.]

# References & Resources (Slide 4)

## 1. Time Constraints:

1. Busy Schedules: Parents often juggle work, household responsibilities, and other commitments, leaving little time for school involvement. [Ref: Weiss, H.B., Kreider, H., Lopez, M.E., & Chatman, C.M. (2005). Preparing Educators to Engage Families: Case Studies Using an Ecological Systems Framework. Sage Publications.]
2. Conflicting Work Hours: Parents with non-traditional work hours may find it difficult to attend school meetings or events scheduled during typical business hours. [Ref: Lareau, A. (2000). Home Advantage: Social Class and Parental Intervention in Elementary Education. Rowman & Littlefield.]

## 2. Lack of Awareness or Information:

1. Unfamiliarity with School System: Parents who are new to the school system may not be aware of how to get involved or what resources are available. [Ref: Turney, K., & Kao, G. (2009). Barriers to School Involvement: Are Immigrant Parents Disadvantaged? The Journal of Educational Research, 102(4), 257-271.]
2. Limited Communication: Insufficient or ineffective communication from the school can leave parents uninformed about opportunities for engagement. [Ref: Mapp, K.L. (2003). Having Their Say: Parents Describe How and Why They Are Involved in Their Children's Education. School Community Journal, 13(1), 35-64.]

## 3. Cultural and Language Barriers:

1. Language Differences: Non-English-speaking parents may struggle to understand communications from the school and may feel excluded from discussions and decisions. [Ref: Auerbach, S. (2007). From Moral Supporters to Struggling Advocates: Reconceptualizing Parent Roles in Education Through the Experience of Working-Class Families of Color. Urban Education, 42(3), 250-283.]
2. Cultural Differences: Diverse cultural backgrounds may lead to misunderstandings or different expectations regarding the role of parents in education. [Ref: Trumbull, E., & Rothstein-Fisch, C. (2011). The Intersection of Culture and Achievement Motivation. The School Community Journal, 21(2), 25-53.]

## 4. Socioeconomic Factors:

1. Financial Constraints: Families facing financial difficulties may have limited access to resources such as transportation or internet connectivity, which can hinder their involvement. [Ref: Crosnoe, R. (2015). Family-School Connections and the Transitions of Low-Income Youth and English Language Learners from Middle School to High School. Developmental Psychology, 51(2), 243-258.]
2. Stress and Instability: Economic hardship can lead to increased stress and instability at home, making it challenging for parents to prioritize school engagement. [Ref: Jeynes, W.H. (2016). A Meta-Analysis: The Relationship Between Parental Involvement and Minority Children's Academic Achievement. Education and Urban Society, 47(6), 625-654.]

## 5. Feelings of Intimidation or Inadequacy:

1. Intimidation by School Staff: Some parents may feel intimidated by school staff or the formal school environment, making them reluctant to engage. [Ref: Hornby, G., & Lafaele, R. (2011). Barriers to Parental Involvement in Education: An Explanatory Model. Educational Review, 63(1), 37-52.]
2. Lack of Confidence: Parents who feel they lack the education or skills to support their child's learning may hesitate to get involved. [Ref: Bailey, D., & Simeonsson, R.J. (1988). Family Involvement in Early Intervention: Prospects and Challenges. Exceptional Children, 55(2), 173-180.]

## 6. Health and Well-Being Issues:

1. Mental Health Challenges: Parents dealing with mental health issues may find it difficult to engage with the school. [Ref: Cheung, R.Y.M., & Pomerantz, E.M. (2011). Parents' Involvement in Children's Learning in the United States and China: Implications for Children's Academic and Emotional Adjustment. Child Development, 82(3), 932-950.]
2. Health Problems: Physical health problems can also limit parents' ability to participate in school activities. [Ref: Power, T.G., & Woodall, J. (2013). Parenting Dimensions and Styles: A Brief History and Recommendations for Future Research. Childhood Obesity Prevention, 43-63.]

## 7. Transportation and Accessibility Issues:

1. Lack of Transportation: Families without reliable transportation may struggle to attend school events and meetings. [Ref: Sheldon, S.B. (2003). Linking School-Family-Community Partnerships in Urban Elementary Schools to Student Achievement on State Tests. The Urban Review, 35(2), 149-165.]
2. Accessibility: Physical disabilities or geographic distance can also create barriers to involvement. [Ref: Trainor, A.A. (2010). Diverse Approaches to Parent Advocacy During Special Education Home-School Interactions: Identification and Use of Cultural and Social Capital. Remedial and Special Education, 31(1), 34-47.]

## 8. Negative Past Experiences:

1. Previous Negative Interactions: Parents who have had negative experiences with the school system in the past may be hesitant to engage again. [Ref: Baker, A.J.L., & Soden, L.M. (1997). Parent Involvement in Children's Education: A Critical Assessment of the Knowledge Base. Review of Educational Research, 67(1), 3-42.]
2. Perception of School Environment: A perception that the school is unwelcoming or unsupportive can deter parents from getting involved. [Ref: Hoover-Dempsey, K.V., & Sandler, H.M. (1995). Parental Involvement in Children's Education: Why Does It Make a Difference? Teachers College Record, 97(2), 310-331.]

# References & Resources (Slide 5)

## 1. Communication Barriers:

1. Miscommunication: Differences in communication styles or misunderstandings can lead to confusion and frustration. [Ref: Thompson, R.A., & Meyer, S. (2007). *Social Development: Relationships in Infancy, Childhood, and Adolescence*. Guilford Press.]
2. Information Overload: Too much information at once can overwhelm families and care providers, making it difficult to process and act on. [Ref: Coleman, P.K., & Karraker, K.H. (2000). Parenting Self-Efficacy Among Mothers of School-Age Children: Conceptualization, Measurement, and Correlates. *Family Relations*, 49(1), 13-24.]

## 2. Diverse Perspectives:

1. Conflicting Opinions: Different stakeholders might have varying opinions on the best approach to support the student, leading to disagreements. [Ref: Spencer, M.B., Dupree, D., & Hartmann, T. (1997). A Phenomenological Variant of Ecological Systems Theory (PVEST): A Self-Organization Perspective in Context. *Development and Psychopathology*, 9(4), 817-833.]
2. Cultural Differences: Cultural backgrounds can influence how mental health is perceived and addressed, causing potential conflicts or misunderstandings. [Ref: Yeh, C.J., & Arora, A.K. (2003). Multicultural Competence: A Contextual Psychotherapy Perspective. *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research, Practice, Training*, 40(1-2), 121-129.]

## 3. Resource Limitations:

1. Lack of Funding: Limited financial resources can restrict the availability of necessary support services and interventions. [Ref: Adelman, H.S., & Taylor, L. (2003). On Sustainability of Project Innovations as Systemic Change. *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation*, 14(1), 1-25.]
2. Insufficient Training: Care providers and school staff may lack the training needed to effectively support students with mental health disabilities. [Ref: Forman, S.G., & Barakat, N.M. (2011). Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy in the Schools: Bringing Research to Practice Through Effective Implementation. *Psychology in the Schools*, 48(3), 283-296.]

## 4. Consistency in Implementation:

1. Inconsistent Practices: Varying levels of commitment and consistency among care providers can lead to uneven implementation of support strategies. [Ref: Fixsen, D.L., Naoom, S.F., Blase, K.A., Friedman, R.M., & Wallace, F. (2005). *Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature*. University of South Florida.]
2. Changing Staff: High turnover rates among care providers and school staff can disrupt continuity in care and support. [Ref: Bruns, E.J., Walrath, C., Glass-Siegel, M., & Weist, M.D. (2004). School-Based Mental Health Services in Baltimore: Association with School Climate and Special Education Referrals. *Behavior Modification*, 28(4), 491-512.]

## 5. Confidentiality Concerns:

1. Privacy Issues: Balancing the need for open communication with the requirement to protect the student's privacy and confidentiality can be challenging. [Ref: Pumariega, A.J., Rogers, K., & Rothe, E. (2005). Culturally Competent Systems of Care for Children's Mental Health: Advances and Challenges. *Community Mental Health Journal*, 41(5), 539-555.]
2. Trust Building: Establishing trust with families and students to share sensitive information can take time and effort. [Ref: Cook, K.V. (2001). *Trust in Society*. Russell Sage Foundation.]

## 6. Emotional Strain:

1. Burnout: Care providers and families may experience emotional exhaustion and burnout from the continuous effort to support the student's needs. [Ref: Maslach, C., & Leiter, M.P. (2016). Understanding the Burnout Experience: Recent Research and Its Implications for Psychiatry. *World Psychiatry*, 15(2), 103-111.]
2. Stress Management: Managing stress and emotional strain while maintaining a positive and supportive environment can be difficult. [Ref: Lazarus, R.S., & Folkman, S. (1984). *Stress, Appraisal, and Coping*. Springer Publishing Company.]

## 7. Resistance to Change:

1. Reluctance to Adapt: Some stakeholders might resist changes to existing practices or be hesitant to try new strategies. [Ref: Fullan, M. (2007). *The New Meaning of Educational Change*. Teachers College Press.]
2. Fixed Mindsets: Fixed attitudes or beliefs about mental health and support methods can hinder progress and collaboration. [Ref: Dweck, C.S. (2006). *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*. Random House.]

## 8. Engagement Challenges:

1. Low Participation: Families and care providers may struggle to consistently engage due to time constraints, lack of interest, or other barriers. [Ref: Kim, E.M., & Sheridan, S.M. (2015). Foundational Aspects of Family-School Connections: Definitions, Conceptual Frameworks, and Research Needs. Springer International Publishing.]
2. Motivation: Keeping all stakeholders motivated and invested in the collaboration process over time can be challenging. [Ref: Ryan, R.M., & Deci, E.L. (2000). Self-Determination Theory and the Facilitation of Intrinsic Motivation, Social Development, and Well-Being. *American Psychologist*, 55(1), 68-78.]

# References & Resources

- **Collaboration**

Edwards, C. C., & Da Fonte, A. (2012). The 5-point plan: Fostering successful partnerships with families of students with disabilities. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 44(3), 6-13.