

Fostering Parent Engagement: Removing Barriers to Data Accessibility

Parental engagement has been shown to be a key lever for improving outcomes for all students. It can positively influence grades, test scores, and graduation rates for all students. Increased engagement is also shown to improve the outcomes of underserved student populations, positively impacting low-income, Black, and Latinx students in both primary and secondary settings. Additionally, parental engagement has been found to be a critical support in blended and distance learning environments—a need that has intensified with the shift to distance learning in response to COVID-19. Current state policies and tools for parental engagement fail to provide the necessary scaffolding parents need to support student learning or participate in local education decision-making. Here we outline three key principles and related actions that Local Educational Agencies can take to remove barriers to data access and support parent engagement.

PRINCIPLE	ACTIONS
 <p>Make data easily accessible so that parents and other stakeholders can engage with the information-sharing process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Share data so that it is easy to find, manipulate, and understand.• Use familiar rating systems for presenting data and share data broadly in a variety of formats.
 <p>Structure data sharing so parents start with a broad view that can then be focused to better understand information relevant to their individual child(ren).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide parents access to more information.• “Progressively disclose” data in chunks of general information with the option to explore specifics.• Provide data that is relevant to families and anticipates future needs.
 <p>Consistently include parents in data-sharing conversations to build relational trust, improve data literacy, and utilize parents’ abilities to share and process information with peers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make space for parents in more data-sharing conversations.• Share accurate data regularly with parents to build trust and credibility in the data provided and clearly communicate any procedural changes.• Build parents’ capacity to engage with available data to support active participation in local planning efforts.• Empower parents to share accurate information with their peers and drive community learning.