

Connecticut State Department of Education Evidence-Based Practice Guide  
Supporting Local Education Agencies' (LEA) Use of ESSA Title Funds

Student/Family/Community Engagement

DRAFT

Under ESSA, there are four tiers, or levels, of evidence. Throughout this guide, the level indicator key is used to identify the evidence level at a quick glance.

Tier	Evidence Level	Evidence Descriptor
1	Strong Evidence	Supported by one or more well-designed and well-implemented <b>randomized control experimental</b> studies.
2	Moderate Evidence	Supported by one or more well-designed and well-implemented <b>quasi-experimental</b> studies.
3	Promising Evidence	Supported by one or more well-designed and well-implemented <b>correlational</b> studies.
4	Demonstrates a Rationale	Practices that have a well-defined <b>logic model</b> or <b>theory of action</b> , are supported by research, and have some effort underway to determine their effectiveness.

Interventions applied under Title I, Section 1003 (School Improvement) are required to have strong, moderate, or promising evidence (Tiers 1-3) to support them. All other programs under Titles I-IV can rely on Tiers 1-4.

Suggested citation: Connecticut State Department of Education. (2018). *CSDE and ESSA Evidence-Based Practice Guide*.

## Systems

The Connecticut State Department of Education supports the national *Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships\** and adheres to research that demonstrates the organizational conditions that promote effective programs of family-school partnerships.

\*Dual capacity-building refers to creating the conditions necessary to develop the skills and mindset of both educators and families to work in partnership.

Partners in education: [A dual capacity-building framework for family-school partnerships](#). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, SEDL:

Evidence-based practice and rationale	Grade band	Evidence level and source
<p><b>Build the capacity of staff and families to implement a dual capacity framework through systemic, integrated and sustained family-school partnership initiatives.</b></p> <p><i>“Systemic” initiatives are purposefully designed as core components of educational goals such as school readiness, student achievement, and school turnaround.</i></p> <p><i>“Integrated” initiatives are part of all aspects of district/school improvement strategies, such as recruitment and training of effective teachers and leaders, and mechanisms of evaluation and assessment.</i></p> <p><i>“Sustained” programs operate with adequate resources and infrastructure support, and senior-level district leadership promote family-school partnership strategies as a component of the overall improvement strategy.</i></p>	<p>PreK-3 4-5 6-8 9-12</p> <p>PreK-3 4-5 6-8 9-12</p>	<p><b>Tier 3, Promising</b></p> <p>Source: Bryk, A., Sebring, P. B., Allensworth, E., Luppescu, S., &amp; Easton, J. (2009). <i>Organizing schools for improvement: Lessons from Chicago</i>. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.</p> <p><b>Tier 3, Promising</b></p> <p>Source: <a href="#">Weiss, H. B., Lopez M. E., &amp; Rosenberg, H. (2011). <i>Beyond random acts: Family, school, and community engagement as an integral part of education reform</i>. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Family Research Project.</a></p>
<p><b>Provide district support for school-level Action Teams to develop comprehensive partnership programs.</b></p> <p><i>District assistance contributes significantly to both basic program implementation as well as to advanced outreach to involve families.</i></p>	<p>PreK-3 4-5 6-8 9-12</p>	<p><b>Tier 3, Promising</b></p> <p>Source: <a href="#">Epstein, J. L., Galindo, C. L., &amp; Sheldon, S. B. (2011). <i>Levels of leadership: Effects of district and school leaders on the quality of school programs of family and community involvement</i>. <i>Educational Administration Quarterly</i>, 47(3), 462–495.</a></p>

## Instructional Practice

The Connecticut State Department of Education adheres to research that is consistent with the national *Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships* and supports the explicit instructional practice of linking family engagement to student learning and development, and welcoming parents and guardians as true partners.

Evidence-based practice and rationale	Grade band	Evidence level and source
<p><b>Conduct frequent, in-person communication with families linked to teaching and learning goals.</b></p> <p><i>Title I students' reading and math scores improve 40-50 percent faster when teachers routinely:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>meet with families face-to-face;</i></li> <li>• <i>send materials on ways to help their child at home; and</i></li> <li>• <i>telephone/text routinely about progress.</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>PreK-3 4-5</b></p>	<p><b>Tier 2, Moderate</b></p> <p>Source: <a href="#">Westat and Policy Studies Associates (2001) The Longitudinal Evaluation of School Change and Performance in Title I Schools, Volume I: Executive Summary, Washington, DC: US Department of Education, Office of the Deputy Secretary, Planning and Evaluation Service.</a></p>
<p><b>Connect school and home literacy by recognizing and incorporating home literacy practices in the curriculum.</b></p> <p><i>It is essential that teachers value students' backgrounds and encourage them to bring their experiences into the classroom. Teachers must also be informed about individual students and understand their larger social-cultural backgrounds in order to alter curriculum and discourse patterns to include all children. This can be accomplished through strategies like home visits and gathering information about students' home literacy activities.</i></p>	<p><b>PreK-3 4-5</b></p>	<p><b>Tier 3, Promising</b></p> <p>Source: <a href="#">McCarthy, S. J. (2000). Home school connections: A review of the literature. The Journal of Educational Research, 93(3), 145–153.</a></p>
<p><b>Create “structured conversations” between teachers and parents about student learning multiple times per year.</b></p> <p><i>When teachers provide detailed information and training, family engagement increases. Parents' informed coaching efforts at home contribute to students' improvement in reading and math. “Structured conversations” provide parents with information about their student's performance, demonstrate skills taught in the classroom, allow parents to practice the activities together in small groups, and help parents set academic goals for their child.</i></p>	<p><b>PreK-3 4-5 6-8</b></p> <p><b>PreK-3 4-5 6-8</b></p>	<p><b>Tier 2, Moderate</b></p> <p>Source: <a href="#">Henderson, A.T. (2011). Coaching Parents as team members: Academic parent-teacher teams. In Family-School-Community Partnerships 2.0: Collaborative Strategies to Advance Student Learning. Washington, DC: National Education Association.</a></p> <p><b>Tier 2, Moderate</b></p> <p>Source: <a href="#">Humphrey, N. &amp; Squires, G. (2011). Achievement for All National Evaluation: Final Report. London: Department for Education</a></p>

Evidence-based practice and rationale	Grade band	Evidence level and source
<p><b>Provide parents with weekly text messages about their child’s progress.</b></p> <p><i>Weekly one-sentence messages from teachers about their children’s schoolwork, empowers parents to support students’ efforts to earn course credit towards graduation. In the process of increasing student-passing rates, this intervention improves student attendance, and shapes outside-of-school parent-student conversations.</i></p>	<p>9-12</p>	<p><b>Tier 1, Strong</b></p> <p>Source: <a href="#">Kraft, M. A., &amp; Rogers, T. (2015). The underutilized potential of teacher-to-parent communication: Evidence from a field experiment. Economics of Education Review, 47 (2015), 49-63.</a></p>
<p><b>Create a welcoming school culture that invites family engagement as a core value.</b></p> <p><i>Research on why families get involved indicates that a welcoming environment is one of the most influential indicators of family engagement. The degree to which parents feel welcome at the school, trust staff, and have positive interactions with staff is positively associated with student outcomes (i.e., students’ grades, problem behaviors at school, and repeating a grade).</i></p>	<p>PreK-3 4-5 6-8 9-12</p> <p>PreK-3 4-5 6-8 9-12</p>	<p><b>Tier 3, Promising</b></p> <p>Source: <a href="#">Hoover-Dempsey, K. V. &amp; Sandler, H. M. (1997). Why do parents become involved in their children’s education. Review of Educational Research, 67(1), 3–42.</a></p> <p><b>Tier 3, Promising</b></p> <p>Source: <a href="#">Froiland, J. M., &amp; Davison, M. L. (2014). Parental expectations and school relationships as contributors to adolescents’ positive outcomes. Social Psychology of Education, 17(1), 1–17.</a></p>
<p><b>Conduct “relational” home visits with families to build trust and respect between school and home.</b></p> <p><i>Students whose families receive a “relational” home visit have 24 percent fewer absences than similar students whose families do not receive a visit. These same students also are more likely to read at or above grade level compared with similar students who do not receive a home visit.</i></p>	<p>PreK-3 4-5 6-8 9-12</p>	<p><b>Tier 3, Promising</b></p> <p>Source: <a href="#">Sheldon, S.B. &amp; Jung, S.B. (2015). The family engagement partnerships: Student outcome evaluation. Baltimore, MD: Center on School, Family and Community Partnerships.</a></p>

## Professional Learning

The Connecticut State Department of Education supports evidence-based models of teacher professional learning that are consistent with the national *Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships* and that build the capacity of educators to partner with families. Partnerships between home and school can only develop and thrive if families and staff have the requisite collective capacity to engage in partnership.

Evidence-based practice and rationale	Grade band	Evidence level and source
<p><b>Provide professional learning that enhances educators’ capabilities, connections, confidence and cognition for partnerships.</b></p> <p><i>“Capabilities” refers to skills, and knowledge, including skills in cultural competency and building trusting relationship with families. “Connections” refers to networks and social capital. “Confidence” refers to levels of self-efficacy related to engaging in partnership activities and working across lines of cultural difference. “Cognition” refers to assumptions, beliefs and worldview regarding the value of partnerships for improving student learning. Teacher professional learning programs designed to enhance practicing teachers’ beliefs, skills and strategies related to parental involvement result in teachers’ own increased sense of efficacy and enhanced beliefs about parents’ efficacy for helping children learn. Teachers participating in these programs offer more frequent invitations to parents to become involved in their child’s learning.</i></p>	<p><b>PreK-3</b>  <b>4-5</b>  <b>6-8</b>  <b>9-12</b></p> <p><b>PreK-3</b>  <b>4-5</b>  <b>6-8</b>  <b>9-12</b></p>	<p><b>Tier 4, Demonstrates a Rationale</b></p> <p>Source: <a href="#">Mapp, K. L., &amp; Kuttner, P. J. (2013). Partners in education: A dual capacity-building framework for family-school partnerships. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, SEDL.</a></p> <p><b>Tier 1, Strong</b></p> <p>Source: <a href="#">Hoover-Dempsey, K., Walker, J., Jones, P., &amp; Reed, R. (2002). Teachers Involving Parents (TIP): Results of an in-service teacher education program for enhancing parental involvement. Teaching and Teacher Education, 18(7), 843–847.</a></p>
<p><b>Provide professional learning that is linked to student learning, relational, developmental, collective/collaborative and interactive.</b></p> <p><i>Effective professional learning for family engagement is aligned with school and district achievement goals and connects families to the teaching and learning goals for the students; focuses on the skills, knowledge and dispositions necessary for building respectful and trusting relationships between home and school; builds the intellectual, social, and human capital of stakeholders engaged in the program; is conducted in groups</i></p>	<p><b>PreK-3</b>  <b>4-5</b>  <b>6-8</b>  <b>9-12</b></p> <p><b>PreK-3</b>  <b>4-5</b>  <b>6-8</b>  <b>9-12</b></p>	<p><b>Tier 4, Demonstrates a Rationale</b></p> <p>Source: <a href="#">Mapp, K. L., &amp; Kuttner, P. J. (2013). Partners in education: A dual capacity-building framework for family-school partnerships. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, SEDL.</a></p> <p><b>Tier 3, Promising</b></p> <p>Source: Warren, M. &amp; Mapp, K. L. (2011). A match on dry grass: Community organizing as a catalyst for school</p>

Evidence-based practice and rationale	Grade band	Evidence level and source
<p><i>rather than individual settings and is focused on building learning communities and networks; brings families and staff together for shared learning; and provides coaching and opportunities to practice new skills.</i></p>		<p>reform. New York: Oxford University Press.</p>
<p><b>Provide training for principals and support for school action teams to implement school-family partnership program.</b></p> <p><i>Strong principal leadership and support for school action teams is associated with better implementation of basic partnership programs and more advanced outreach strategies. Stronger school partnership programs increase the prevalence and diversity of engaged parents, and produce higher rates of student attendance.</i></p>	<p><b>PreK-3 4-5 6-8 9-12</b></p>	<p><b>Tier 3, Promising</b></p> <p>Source: <a href="#">Epstein, J. L., &amp; Sheldon, S. B. (2016). Necessary but not sufficient: The role of policy for advancing programs of school, family, and community partnerships. Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences, 2(5), 202–219.</a></p>
<p><b>Provide training and support for educators to conduct “relational” home visits.</b></p> <p><i>The process of relational home visits reduces educators’ implicit biases and previous deficit assumptions about families and students. By visiting families in their homes, educators report newfound understanding and empathy, which results in changes in their behaviors including incorporating students’ interests and home culture in the classroom, more empathic disciplinary methods, and increased communication with families. Relational home visits also shift families’ previously negative beliefs about educators and schools and increase their confidence in reaching out to educators and communicating about students’ needs.</i></p>	<p><b>PreK-3 4-5 6-8</b></p>	<p><b>Tier 3, Promising</b></p> <p>Source: <a href="#">McKnight, K., Venkateswaran, N., Laird, J., Robles, J. &amp; Shalev, T. (2017). Mindset Shifts and Parent Teacher home visits. Berkeley, CA: RTI International.</a></p>

## Extended Learning

The Connecticut State Department of Education supports evidenced-based models of extended learning that are consistent with the national *Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships* and build the capacity of family members to partner with schools. Partnerships between home and school can only develop and thrive if both families and staff have the requisite collective capacity to engage in partnership.

Evidence-based practice and rationale	Grade band	Evidence level and source
<p><b>Provide learning opportunities for families that enhance their capabilities, connections, confidence and cognition for partnerships.</b></p> <p><i>“Capabilities” refers to skills, and knowledge including skills in cultural competency and building trusting relationship with families. “Connections” refers to networks and social capital. “Confidence” refers to levels of self-efficacy related to engaging in partnership activities and working across lines of cultural difference. “Cognition” refers to assumptions, beliefs and worldview regarding the value of partnerships for improving student learning.</i></p>	<p><b>PreK-3</b>  <b>4-5</b>  <b>6-8</b>  <b>9-12</b></p>	<p><b>Tier 4, Demonstrates a Rationale</b></p> <p>Source: <a href="#">Mapp, K. L., &amp; Kuttner, P. J. (2013). Partners in education: A dual capacity-building framework for family-school partnerships. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, SEDL.</a></p>
<p><b>Provide information and training for families to support high expectations for their children’s education.</b></p> <p><i>Parents’ high academic expectations for their children’s education — which include developing and maintaining communication with them about school activities and school work, and promoting reading habits — are strongly related to academic achievement.</i></p>	<p><b>PreK-3</b>  <b>4-5</b>  <b>6-8</b>  <b>9-12</b></p> <p><b>PreK-3</b>  <b>4-5</b>  <b>6-8</b>  <b>9-12</b></p>	<p><b>Tier 2, Moderate</b></p> <p>Source: <a href="#">Castro, M., Expósito-Casas, E., López-Martín, E., Lizasoain, L., Navarro-Asencio, E. &amp; Luis Gaviria, J. (2015). Parental involvement on student academic achievement: A meta-analysis. Educational Research Review, 14, 33-64.</a></p> <p><b>Tier 2, Moderate</b></p> <p>Source: <a href="#">S. Wilder. (2014). Effects of parental involvement on academic achievement: a meta-synthesis. Educational Review, 66, 377-397.</a></p>

