

# Fostering Meaningful Family Engagement

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SURN Leadership Conference 2022

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## Priming the Pump

- How does this problem of practice show up in your context?
- What does it look like, feel like, sound like?

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## Collaborative Culture

- Success is interconnected. It's not faster alone, it's better together.
- Small Potential is the limited success you can achieve alone.
- Big Potential is the success you can achieve only with the collaboration of others.

Shawn Achor, *Big Potential*

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## Build Family Efficacy

Families are recognized as essential members of the learning team for each student – their participation is welcomed, valued, and encouraged by the school. The school understands that families are important and influential resources because they know their children best.

Constantino, S. M. (2021). *Engage every family: Five simple principles*. Corwin.

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## Frustration is Real

- ‘I am not welcome...’
- ‘They don’t acknowledge me...’
- ‘No one returned my call...’
- ‘I emailed, and got nothing back...’
- ‘I’m tired of my input going into a black hole...’

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## Building Family Efficacy

- Parental efficacy simply means that one possesses skills, abilities, and resources to parent effectively and to improve the family’s school and community
- Families that believe they can make a positive difference in their children’s educational lives are said to have a high level of efficacy

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## Building Family Efficacy

- Empowered families, meaning families whose efficacy levels have been supported and improved, are more likely to be engaged with their children's educational experiences in a variety of ways, all of which support a healthy learning environment in school

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## Efficacy = Empowerment

The key to effective engagement is to make experiences for families both meaningful and relevant.

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## Key Points in Family Efficacy

- Personalize announcements and activities – impact on child
- NOT about possessing specific content knowledge or skills
- Nurturing family efficacy brings about more desire to engage
- Efficacy provides a parent with the belief that her involvement makes a difference in the child's learning experience
- Families make decisions about their involvement and engagement in part by think about the potential outcomes of that involvement

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## Practices that Promote Efficacy in Families

- Family role in the process of learning welcomed by all staff, consistently, through grade levels and subjects.
- Engaging families as a component of the planning of learning process.
- Processes that encourage dialog between the teacher, family and student.
- Connecting learning with home environments, family culture, experiences, skills and knowledge.

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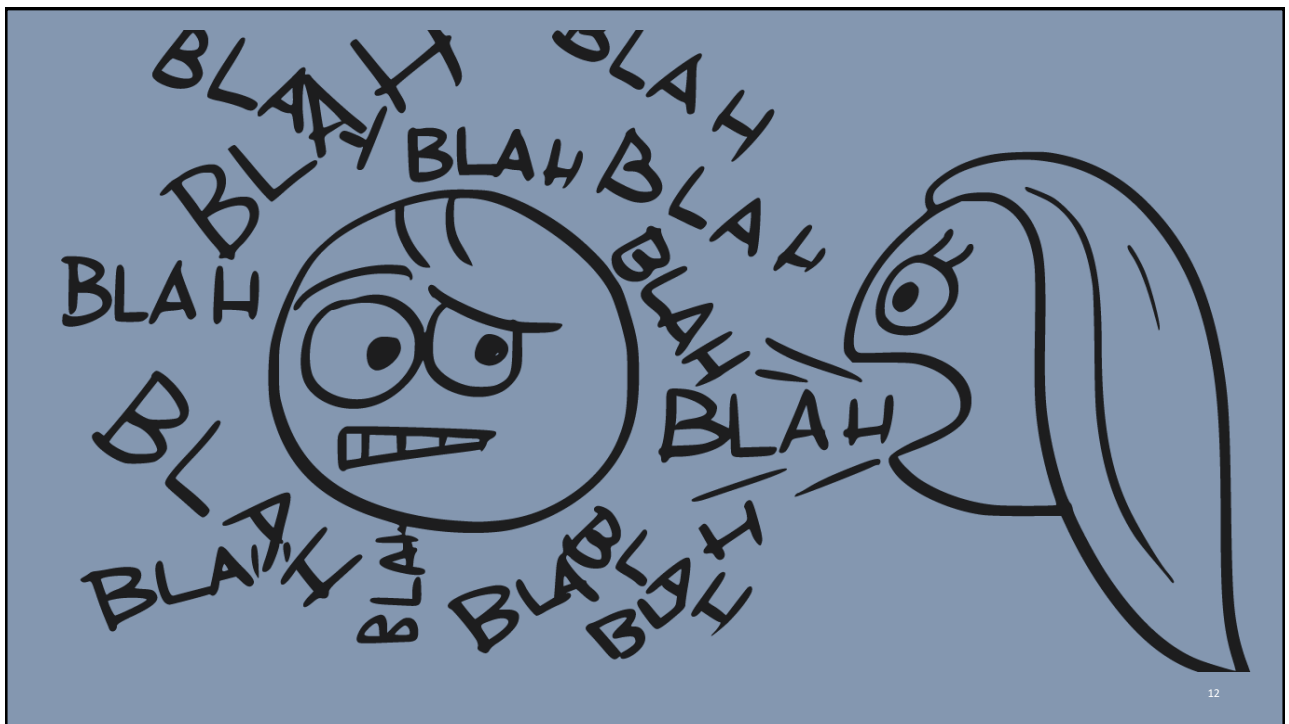
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## Barriers to Collaboration

- Inconsistent messaging
- Talking at people
- Delays
- ‘Spinning’ or ‘massaging’ the truth
- Keeping silent
- Using language that is not understood...even if you think everyone *should* understand

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## Collaborative Conversations

- Name the issue or initiative
- Provide details
- Describe your 'why'
- Clarify what is at stake
- Identify your contribution
- Identify their contribution
- Invite a response

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## Creating Collective Momentum

- Give vivid direction
- Clear is kind – unclear is not
- Dress-rehearse success

Brene Brown, *Dare to Lead*

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## In so many homes, so many evenings ...

1. What did you do in school today?
2. Do you have any homework?

What if the process of promoting family efficacy were as simple as ensuring that these two questions were never asked again in any home?

What if we could develop a system by which we could leverage the efficacy of families such that they would be true partners in learning?

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## Efficacy-Based Learning Checklist

- ✓ Teacher encourages and welcomes the family in the learning process. (Perception)
- ✓ Engages the family as a component of the planning and learning process not in a monitor or compliance role. (Motivation)
- ✓ Encourages dialog between the classroom teacher, family and student. (Feedback)
- ✓ Families are not required to “learn” the lesson to have a role in the learning process. (Motivation)
- ✓ Connects learning with home learning environment, when feasible (Context)
- ✓ The learning experience empowers family participation. (Efficacy)

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## Sample Assignment (Rate Against Checklist)

**Families:** All this week we will be studying the order of operations: multiplication, division, addition, and subtraction. It is important that your child understand the order of operations because all of our work in algebra is built on this important concept. What you could do for me this week is ask your child to share the order of operations and make sure they say “multiplication, division, addition, and subtraction.” You can remember this order yourself by saying the phrase, *My Dear Aunt Sally*. We have a quiz on this information on Friday, so attendance this week is very important. Please reply to this message and let me know if your child had any trouble remembering the order of operations! Thank you.

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- ✓ **Teacher encourages and welcomes the family in the learning process. (Perception)**
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- ✓ **Families are not required to “learn” the lesson to have a role in the learning process. (Motivation)**
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## Creating Collective Momentum

- Give vivid direction
- Clear is kind – unclear is not
- Dress-rehearse success
- Share vision
- Take ownership
- Give constructive feedback

Brene Brown, *Dare to Lead*

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## What Stands in the Way

- We avoid tough conversations, including giving honest, productive feedback
- When something goes wrong, individuals and teams rush into ineffective or unsustainable solutions
- When we fix the wrong thing for the wrong reason, the same problems continue to surface

Brene Brown, *Dare to Lead*

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# 4 big ideas

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## Our Big Ideas

- 01**  
**CULTURE MATTERS**  
Creating and sustaining a collaborative culture is required to successfully engage families.
- 02**  
**EMPOWER FAMILIES**  
Families must feel empowered to be effective partners in their child's education.
- 03**  
**FORWARD MOMENTUM TAKES WORK**  
You must ensure that your staff members know and understand your family engagement vision. And, you must have hard conversations when your goals are not being met.
- 04**  
?  
?

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# Aspirations

Revisit  
Ground  
Align

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# Our Big Ideas

**01**

**CULTURE MATTERS**

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**02**

**EMPOWER FAMILIES**

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**03**

**FORWARD MOMENTUM TAKES WORK**

You must ensure that your staff members know and understand your family engagement vision. And, you must have hard conversations when your goals are not being met.

**04**

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## Rules for Brainstorming

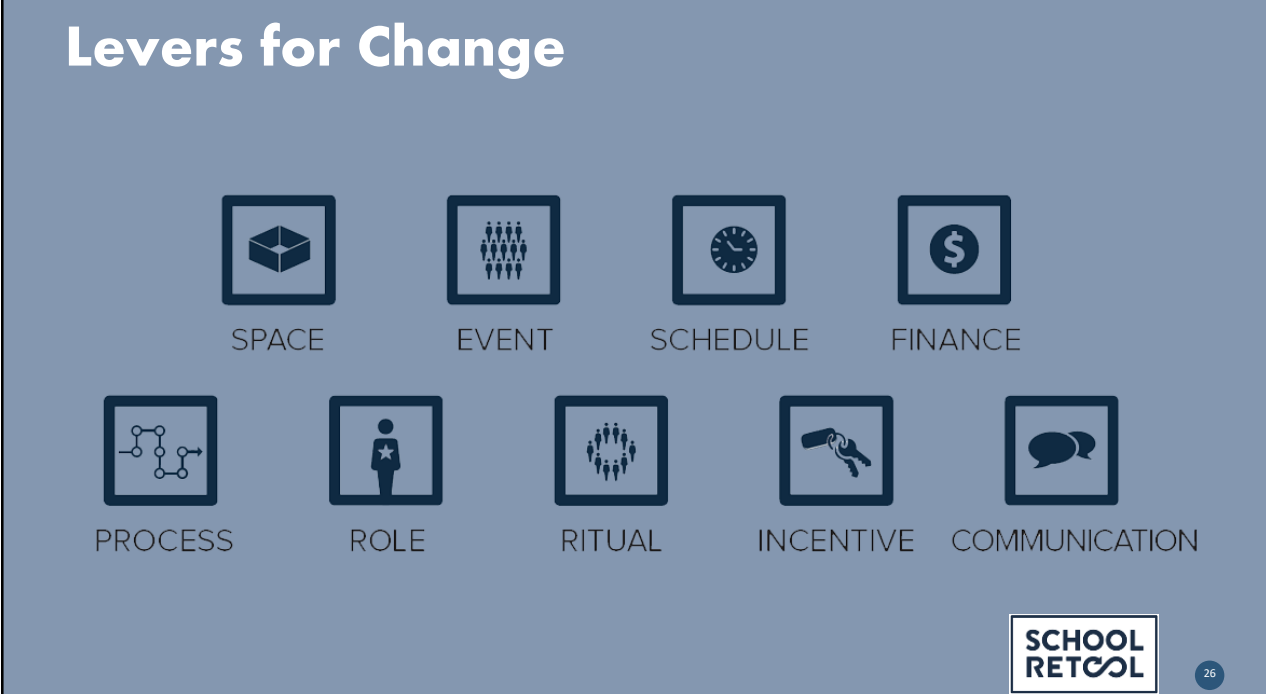





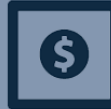
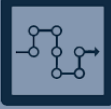



- Go for quantity
- Defer judgment
- Encourage wild ideas
- Build on the ideas of others
- Have one conversation at a time
- Stay on topic
- Be visual if it helps
- Write headlines





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## Levers for Change



 SPACE	 EVENT	 SCHEDULE	 FINANCE	
 PROCESS	 ROLE	 RITUAL	 INCENTIVE	 COMMUNICATION



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# The Hack Mindset

## What we mean when we talk about hacking

Keep the goals small, the team tight, & the timeline short.

start small

Bias to Action

Fail Forward

Don't overthink it; just try it.

Use "failures" as opportunities to learn.



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# Hack Criteria



- In line with aspiration
- Focuses on students farthest from opportunity
- Leads to behaviors you want to see
- Allows you to start small
- Challenges you to do something new



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## Share & Discuss Your Hack Story



- What's really energizing you about the hack you've chosen?
- Which doubts, if any, are you having about your chosen hack? Why?
- What positive effects might your chosen hack have on other problems of practice?
- How will you know if your chosen action is having the desired effect?

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## Commit

2 steps to begin implementing your hack  
Tomorrow, I will...

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