

Family Engagement for Fall School Openings



Dear Massachusetts Teachers, Schools and Family Engagement Personnel,

“We may be physically distant but we remain socially connected” - Kwesi Rollins

From the Statewide Family Engagement Center, we would like to welcome you back to a new school year, whether you are teaching remotely or face to face. These are very challenging times for all, and we appreciate you and your efforts to continue providing meaningful and relevant experiences for ALL of your learners. Clearly, during the first month or so of school, we will all be focusing on social-emotional well being (SEL), [trauma informed practices](#) and [developing relationships](#), which also makes this the perfect time to begin to **build Equitable dual capacity Family Engagement**. Do you agree? [Tell us HERE](#) (anonymous survey).

We are thrilled to engage with you and would like to propose some Teacher Centered Family Engagement Strategies, In light of the 2020 [Research-Based Statewide Framework for Family Engagement](#), (**Strengthening Partnerships: A Framework for Prenatal through Young Adulthood Family Engagement in Massachusetts**). We will soon be providing self paced modules on our website, where you can learn more about how to practice and contribute to more “professionalized” family engagement. The key ideas are: **connection across all systems and services, intentionality, capacity building, strong communication, and strengths-based and culturally responsive practices.**

[Join SFEC’s Mindful Mondays](#) for Yoga, Meditation, journaling and sharing of challenges and successes. Email aparker@fcsn.org with questions. Be well and be safe. Practice self care. Be kind to yourself, enabling you to gracefully serve your own family, your students and their families.

Strategies to Build Family Engagement from Day One
<p>Build Trusting Relationships: establish individual contact with family via phone or text, email or video conference, before school starts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Do a physical wellness check: housing, food, health care and child care: more ideas here ● Do an emotional/mental wellness check ● Collect preferred means of contact. Google forms can be useful for this. ● Ask the family if they are comfortable with porch/street outdoor visits (only if you wish and your school permits this)
<p>Be aware of and sensitive to families’ realities - Consider working with Cultural Brokers / parent leaders, who share cultural beliefs and language from vulnerable/underserved communities.</p>
<p>Record Video introductions - “meet your teacher(s)”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● share daily schedule, hopes and dreams ● include ways families can support learning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ wellbeing check in, setting goals, mid-day check in, dinner conversation, daily reading, gentle nudges and praise (@campkinda)
<p>Create regular opportunities for families to provide low stakes feedback on progress w)ith remote learning at home -ex. Fun Friday check out</p>
<p>Share some of your favorite resources for brain breaks and fun at home(GoNoodle, Brain Breaks)</p>
<p>Make sure your voice is being heard by your administrators (call out to paraprofessionals, specialist teachers and ALL adults in MS/HS)</p>

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