



## Tip Sheets for Educators

# What's a Cultural Broker?

Cultural Brokering is a research-based practice that seeks to intervene and dismantle the power dynamic that families experience when dealing with educators, schools, and districts.



**Cultural brokers** are particularly helpful to schools and districts so that they can communicate critical information in culturally relevant ways that are sensitive to the needs of diverse families. For families of diverse cultural backgrounds, cultural brokers are useful to communicate the unique needs and values of their family/culture to the school/educational system and to understand the benefits of/request special education eligibility evaluations and revisions to IEPs.

The **process** for cultural brokering consists of recruiting and identifying individuals who serve as leaders in their specific communities (racial, linguistic, and/or cultural/religious group). When an equal partnership is created, cultural brokers learn how to serve as a liaison or bridge, between the school or education system and the diverse families it serves.

The ultimate **goals** are focused on dual capacity building (Mapp, 2019): 1) for the broker to connect and build relationships with all members of their particular community 2) for schools and systems to better understand and truly respect the values and beliefs of each community, and 3) to strengthen the asset-based and funds of knowledge approach (Mapp, 2021), which values families as equal partners, who feel welcomed at their child's school and understand their roles, rights, and responsibilities.

### References

A Framework for Prenatal through Young Adulthood Family Engagement in Massachusetts <https://masfec.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/family-engagement-framework.pdf>  
Mapp, K., and Bergman, Eyal, Embracing a New Normal: Toward a More Liberatory Approach to Family Engagement, Carnegie Corporation of New York, 2021. Available at: [https://media.carnegie.org/filer\\_public/f6/04/f604e672-1d4b-4dc3-903d-3b619a00cd01/fe\\_report\\_fin.pdf](https://media.carnegie.org/filer_public/f6/04/f604e672-1d4b-4dc3-903d-3b619a00cd01/fe_report_fin.pdf) (Accessed 28 June 2021)  
Anne T. Henderson, Karen L. Mapp, Vivian R. Johnson, and Don Davies, Beyond the Bake Sale: The Essential Guide to Family-School Partnerships (New York: New Press, 2007).