Trusting Family Partnerships

SWIFT In Sixty DISCUSSION Guide

Before You Watch

▶ Discussion Questions

1. How are family partnerships defined at our school?

2. What roles do family members currently hold at our school?

3. Are family partnerships important to student outcomes? Why or why not?

4. What are our school's goals for partnering with family members?

5. In an ideal parent/family and school relationship, describe the following: a) the role of a teacher, b) the role of a family member, c) the relationship between an educator and parent/family member, and d) the parent/family and school communication systems.

▶ Group Activity

Pair and share: Discuss your positive and challenging experiences partnering with families (or colleagues or others). How can those experiences inform partnerships within our school.

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While You Watch

▶ Discussion Questions

1. Share two noteworthy moments related to family partnerships from the video.

2. How are the family partnerships described in the video the same or different from those in our school?

3. What examples of traditional parent/family roles did you see in the video? Non-traditional roles?

4. How do students, families, and our school benefit from family partnerships?

5. Does our school facilitate and encourage family partnerships in a culturally responsive manner?

6. The video mentions helping "parents to truly trust that they are a part of the whole education process." Are parents and family members currently an authentic part of the whole education process at our school?

▶ Group Activity

In a small group brainstorm examples of how our school can increase family involvement in school governance.

VIDEO TRANSCRIPT

Trusting Family Partnerships extend beyond traditional parent involvement activities. Family members share in decision-making responsibilities, such as in school leadership roles. These partnerships are reciprocal and collaborative, and set the tone for the school through respect, unity, and belonging. Trusting partnerships flourish as schools strategically build meaningful opportunities for families to engage with the school and openly share information about systems, practices, and student progress. Student achievement and engagement rise when families are in authentic partnership with schools. Evidence of these partnerships is the acceptance and celebration of the various cultures and ethnicities of school families, and the presence of family members embedded in all facets of educational life. Educators and administrators model cooperation and balanced decisions, which helps parents to truly trust that they are a part of the whole education process. In Trusting Family Partnerships families are influential participants in important school decisions and teams.

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After You Watch

▶ Discussion Questions

1. How can our school better share power with family members? What meaningful parent/family decision-making roles can we add to our school?

2. How can we develop family leaders to partner with us and other families?

3. What strategies can we use to welcome new families? What specific strategies can we use to engage families of English Language Learners?

4. What can we do to inform all of our families about the following: a) standards and curriculum; b) laws, parent rights, and inclusive practices; and c) academic and behavioral expectations and programs?

5. What strategies can we use to engage families who are reluctant to partner with us?

▶ Group Activity

Design a process for collecting feedback from parents/families. Examples: parent walkthrough day, survey, open door policies, suggestion box.