

Engaging Families, Schools, and Community Partners

September 2013

“Afterschool: A Key to Successful Parent Engagement”

by The Afterschool Alliance and MetLife Foundation

Overview: Education policies have been developed to bolster parent engagement at school in response to research proving its value; however, schools face some challenges to fully engage parents as active stewards in their child's education. Afterschool programs are an ideal partner to help schools break down the barriers often present between parents and schools. This article, part of the Afterschool Alert Issue Brief series, examines challenges to parent engagement in detail and describes the “broker” role afterschool programs can play in communications between parents and schools. The article also highlights successful parent engagement efforts undertaken by afterschool programs in New York, Washington DC, and California. It stresses the point that together, schools and afterschool programs can help increase parent engagement, paving the road for students to achieve academic success, become more self-confident and enhance their overall wellbeing.

Where to Find It:

Go to the [OSTRC Document Library](#), then click on the “Engaging Families, Schools, and Communities” tab on the left. Find the report under the “Parents, Parenting, and Families” section.

“Beyond Random Acts: Family, School and Community Engagement as an Integral part of Education Reform”

by Heather B. Weiss, Elena Lopez, and Heidi Rosenberg

Overview: Presented at the National Policy Forum for Family, School, and Community Engagement, this article provides a research-based framing of family engagement; examines the policy levers that can drive change in promoting systemic family, school, and community engagement; and focuses on data systems as a powerful tool to engage families for twenty-first century student learning. The report discusses the importance of intentionality and systemic partnership, leading to authentic and lasting ties among partners to work for the ultimate benefit to students.

Where to Find It:

Go to the [OSTRC Document Library](#), then click on the “Engaging Families, Schools, and Communities” tab on the left. Find the report under the “Community Partnerships” section.

Featured Information:

“Partnerships for Learning: Community Support for Youth Success”

Summary:

This report dives deep into key strategies for successful partnerships between schools, community organizations, afterschool programs, and families to advance student learning. Using the community school model as a backdrop, it explores the following characteristics of effective collaboration:

- Shared vision for learning
- Shared leadership and governance
- Complementary partnerships
- Effective communication
- Regular and consistent information sharing about youth progress
- Collaborative staffing models

As this article notes, the role of afterschool staff is critical to student learning and can be leveraged in powerful ways with other partners to advance student success.

Where to find the full article:

Go to the [OSTRC Document Library](#), then click on the “Engaging Families, Schools, and Communities” tab on the left. Find the report under the “Community Partnerships” section.