

## WHAT YOUR COLLEAGUES ARE SAYING . . .

*“Case Studies to Engage Every Family is a valuable tool for all educators! The case studies allow us to apply theory to our own experiences so we can begin to be problem solvers. Constantino’s systematic approach helps educators to fully understand that only when we change our thoughts and beliefs about what real engagement means, will we begin to see results.”*

**—Shannon Lang, Coordinator**

Title I, Part A Parent and Family Engagement Statewide Initiative  
Region 16 Educational Service Center  
Amarillo, TX

*“Steven M. and Margaret E. Constantino have a finger on the pulse of today’s challenging educational landscape. These case studies challenge our thinking for how we can more effectively engage families. Each case study provides a unique true-to-life scenario with thought-provoking questions to help foster educator–family relationships.”*

**—Paula Huffman, Principal**

Enon Elementary  
Chesterfield, VA

*“Strong family-school-community partnerships are more important than ever. However, most educators are not sure how to do it well or where to begin. This is the perfect guide, offering practical examples of how to bring the Five Simple Principles to life. These case studies resonate because they reflect common challenges. I encourage you to read it again and again.”*

**—S. Kwesi Rollins, Senior Vice President  
for Leadership & Engagement**

Institute for Educational Leadership  
Washington, DC

*“The book offers a variety of examples that allow educators to make connections to their own practice.”*

**—Heath Peine, Executive Director**

Student Support Services  
Wichita, KS

“These case studies are detailed, thoughtful, realistic, and nuanced enough to allow for the types of rich discussions and thoughtful reflection that can change the climate and culture of a school and the nature of school-family partnerships. The step-by-step process makes it easy to analyze the scenarios and apply the principles to real-life interactions with families.”

—**Patricia Weinzapfel, Nationally Recognized School-Home Communication Expert and Author**

Former Family Engagement School District Leader  
Evansville, IN

“A companion piece to *Engage Every Family*, this book provides the what and the how of engaging families in the educational process. In every case study, I recognized a scenario I have experienced in my ten years as a family engagement specialist. Reading this work built my capacity to strengthen authentic family engagement for EVERY family.”

—**Megan Roedl, Family Engagement Specialist**

Lawrenceville, GA

“This is an extraordinary inclusion of scenarios relevant to diverse school communities.”

—**Cathern Wildey, Adjunct Professor of Education**

Southeastern University  
Holiday, FL

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## Case Studies to Engage Every Family

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*For our son, Matthew,  
who teaches us about love, laughter, and what it means to be a family.*

# Case Studies to Engage Every Family

Implementing the  
Five Simple Principles

Steven M. Constantino

Margaret E. Constantino

Foreword by Darla Edwards

 CORWIN

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# Foreword

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Over my twenty years in education, I have been tremendously inspired by Dr. Steve Constantino's expertise and knowledge in family engagement. As a former Title I school principal, I saw the results of Dr. Constantino's work firsthand as we implemented his strategies to dramatically impact family and school partnerships. As a guide and mentor, he has shown me the critical role that leaders play in setting the vision and direction for increasing equitable family engagement. His work demonstrates that when families are valued as equal partners in their child's education, students are more successful in school.

As an educational consultant and co-founder of Successful Innovations, I have devoted over a decade to developing resources and professional learning opportunities to strengthen family and school partnerships. One of the most impactful professional learning opportunities that we co-host is the National Family Engagement Summit. Each October, we bring hundreds of family-facing professionals and administrators together for a multi-day learning experience focused exclusively on creating stronger, more equitable and beneficial connections between families and schools.

Starting with our first summit, we have been honored to collaborate with Dr. Constantino. He is a highly sought-after expert researcher and practitioner in the field, and our attendees look forward to gaining new knowledge, skills, and strategies from his informative presentations. Through his powerful keynote and breakout sessions, he has encouraged summit participants to reflect on their current practices. He has equipped them with strategies and novel ideas to profoundly impact their school cultures by providing the conditions necessary for nurturing and sustaining continuous family engagement. Dr. Constantino's value is reflected in the year-over-year growth of the National Family Engagement Summit, with attendees from all over the nation and the world making the trek to hear him speak.

I am more excited than ever that Dr. Margaret Constantino is co-authoring this book. She is a renowned practitioner and researcher who I highly respect and admire. Her expertise on supporting families of students with disabilities is extremely valuable to the field and fills a void that family-facing professionals will appreciate. She is emerging as a force to be reckoned with in the family engagement field. I am beyond grateful that our summit participants will now have the opportunity to learn from her and gain actionable strategies to support them in their work.

I am so excited about this book because the authors provide case studies that delve deeper into how five key principles can prepare readers with

### Case Studies to Engage Every Family

the knowledge and confidence needed to optimally engage families. This is such a powerful resource for schools, districts, and teacher preparation programs. Reading this book, I feel like the authors have cracked the code of the family engagement puzzle, putting the pieces of a coherent strategy firmly into place. There is no other resource that provides such a detailed and practical approach to prepare readers to navigate the often unpredictable and turbulent situations they may encounter when dealing with families.

The book you hold in your hands is a true game changer for the field of family engagement. I am grateful to Dr. Steve Constantino and Dr. Margaret Constantino for giving us such a valuable resource that will inspire every educator with the realization that it is indeed truly possible to engage every family.

—Darla Edwards

President/Co-founder, Successful Innovations  
Co-host, National Family Engagement Summit  
Social Justice & Diversity Research Fellow/Holmes Scholar, William & Mary

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# Preface

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Engagement is joy. Engagement is inspiration. Engagement is life.

Think about the word *engagement* and what it means to you on a personal level. Maybe it's a marriage proposal or sharing your life with your soulmate. It can also be as simple as talking to family members on FaceTime each day or sharing dinner with good friends, or even a night on the town. Walking the beach or a mountain trail with someone you care for, listening to a friend in need, being there for someone else: In all these situations, you are engaged in important relationships that mean something to you. These types of relationships—relationships that feed the soul—and the ensuing engagements are important to all of us and must exist for us to live a full and rewarding life.

We all crave engagement and relationships. We tend to be at our worst when we do not experience the joy and inspiration that real engagement brings. Isolation is not natural. Isolation can lead to stress and fear. If conflict dominates our relationships, those relationships become toxic and sooner or later dissolve or, worse, continue in an antagonistic fashion. We are at our worst when we are cut off from those important relationships in which we desire to engage. And if all we know is conflict, then we do not know the joy and inspiration of engaging with others. While we by no means are human behavior specialists, we do know this: Engagement is life. Isolation is a death knell. Education is a people business, and engaging relationships are at the heart of schooling.

Now, we challenge you to take these thoughts and consider the engagement between you and the families of the students you serve. Do the same positive feelings emerge as when you thought about the relationships that are important to you? Do you covet engagement with the families of the children you serve? Maybe yes. Maybe no. Too often, relationships with families are defined by tension, or conflict and complaint. Misunderstandings spring up and fill space with doubt and concerns.

Worse yet, there are some families with which we have no relationship at all—families that do not participate or respond in any way, regardless of your repeated attempts. In frustration, you might give up. You may tell yourself that these families do not wish to be engaged and therefore your continued efforts will be in vain. However, discontinuing the effort feeds the cycle of disengagement, which at its base harbors doubt, mistrust, and fear. In other words, giving up makes things worse.

Teachers are often wary to contact families with bad academic or behavioral news. Consider for a moment the positive engagement and relationships

you do have with many families. What is the common thread between those relationships? Why do they seem to “work” while others do not? What are your desires when it comes to relationships and the engagement of every family? These reflections will go a long way to aid your success in engaging families.

## AUTHENTICITY

What’s the secret to authenticity? Genuineness. Confidence. Realness. Caring. Purpose. It’s a simple recipe. Authenticity emerges from both intrapersonal and interpersonal processes, meaning it stems from our self-knowledge and self-concept as well as the response we get from our interactions with others. The beauty of it is that authenticity is not just a quality that only a few of us display, but rather these attributes can be acquired over time. What we have come to know is that the heart of authenticity begins with a strong desire to connect with people, to build trusting relationships, and to then, with new friendships and connections, embrace and enjoy the world around us. We find this idea very inspiring and quite applicable to our sphere of education, student learning, and engaging with every family.

The importance of authentic family engagement should be obvious. We need to be genuine in our desire to engage. We need to be real in our efforts to bridge the divide between us and those who feel disengaged, disenfranchised, or marginalized. We need to be sincere in our care and compassion for students and our empathy for families who, amidst obstacles, try to do right by their children. We must believe that every family shares the desire to have their children exceed them in their quality of life. But most importantly, we must present ourselves authentically.

## WHY A COMPANION BOOK?

This book is designed as an accompaniment to *Engage Every Family: Five Simple Principles* (Constantino, 2021), although it can stand on its own as a teaching tool to further your efforts in family engagement. References to information in the original book can be helpful to you in studying the cases but, more importantly, can provide you tools, materials, and ideas to begin to address the challenges you face in your school or district.

This companion book provides an opportunity to use the information to delve into the everyday challenges that educators might face in engaging families, especially those who are disengaged or disenfranchised in some way. The case studies provide an excellent way to understand a problem and apply the necessary treatment to improve engagement.

The idea and premise of this book is simple: Create case studies that mirror everyday challenges for educators; design opportunities to discuss and reflect on the current conditions and circumstances in the context of your school or district; identify strengths and areas for improvement; and then use the best practice ideas to begin to change your current conditions.

## FEATURES AND BENEFITS

The case studies are constructed to match the Five Simple Principles: (1) Create a Culture That Engages Every Family, (2) Communicate Effectively and Develop Relationships, (3) Build Family Efficacy, (4) Engage Every Family in Decision Making, and (5) Engage the Greater Community.

Each of the Five Simple Principles is illustrated by four rich case studies (twenty case studies in all). The case studies are designed to mirror challenges at the classroom, school, and district levels. The diversity of the studies, and the challenges they present, will assist you in applying processes and strategies in your own situation. We expect you will recognize some of the actions and behaviors in the vignettes as similar situations are likely occurring every day in your schools. During and after each case study, the individual reader or educator team will find key features that will guide them in thinking critically about the themes raised in the story as well as how to apply the principles to their own school settings. These features are as follows.

**Stop and Reflect:** Readers are encouraged to pause during the reading to consider key elements of the case. It is important to consider any ideas you have at the beginning of a case study and then determine if your ideas or thoughts have changed by the end of the case study.

**Problem Identification:** Readers are prompted to clearly identify the root cause of a problem(s). Understanding the root cause of an issue increases the likelihood of permanently resolving the issue rather than merely treating the symptoms.

**Advanced Thinking:** Questions are posed to encourage reflection and consideration of specific actions, behaviors, and nuances in the case. We encourage you to reflect on or discuss these questions with your colleagues.

**Points to Ponder:** Elements of best practice are shared to promote deeper thinking about the application of the principles in practice. Points to Ponder are short, bulleted ideas that will assist you in determining a pathway toward success.

**Application of Ideas: Your Turn:** Readers examine the principles and aspects of each case through the lens of their own context.

## Case Studies to Engage Every Family

Applying processes and strategies to your situation will further enhance your learning and understanding of family engagement.

Many of the cases incorporate more than one of the Five Simple Principles. Questions about the problem presented in each case will allow an opportunity to consider more than one principle.

## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Educators generally agree that the success of any professional development program abandons the traditional lecture-based process for a more in-depth, embedded, and ongoing experience that supports learning and implementation at a pace suitable to specific situations and moving to a deeper level of understanding and application of concepts presented. Case studies are both a popular and proven method of study that affords educators (and university students) the opportunity to not only understand the theories presented, but also apply those theories to the specifically designed case studies and then compare those case studies to their own experiences. This process allows for a far deeper understanding of the origins of family disengagement and provides real-world examples for discussion and strategy implementation.

While we recognize that there will be countless ways in which this book is used, we include one example here to help you and your team get started with authentic family engagement in your school.

### Principle 2: Communicate Effectively and Develop Relationships

**Step 1.** Read the description and clarifying statements together as a team.

#### Principle Description

*There is consistent evidence that effective communication and relationship development creates environments in the school that are welcoming, respectful, and conducive to family engagement. The school places an emphasis on effective two-way communication with every family and stakeholder within the learning community and seeks to develop relationships based on mutual trust.*

#### Clarifying Statements

*2.1 The school creates and maintains a welcoming and respectful environment that is inviting, supportive, and encouraging to every family.*

2.2 The school employs strategies that extend opportunities to develop relationships beyond the school walls so that every family can substantially contribute to the education of their children.

2.3 The school ensures that healthy, two-way communication is consistently maintained. A sense of caring to truly collaborate with every family exists as evidenced by numerous mechanisms to allow families to communicate easily and directly with the school.

**Step 2.** Read the case study and jot down your thoughts based on the prompts.

### Case Study Excerpt

*Jessica, a fifth grader, slapped another student in the face while waiting in the lunch line. Jessica was swiftly escorted to Principal [Casey] Hiller.*

*"We don't touch, hit, or hurt other students at this school . . . for any reason," Casey said sternly. Though she tried to explain what happened, Jessica was cut off.*

*When Jessica's father arrived, Casey explained that his daughter was being suspended for the rest of the school day and all the next day.*

*"We cannot tolerate this type of behavior regardless of what was said." Casey's tone was firm.*

*Jessica's father found the punishment to be harsh and asked if the full day of suspension the next day could be negotiated. Casey cited school board policy and the district discipline policy. "I'm sorry," she said to Jessica's father, "but that is the policy." Fearing the effect this suspension would have on his daughter and feeling Casey was unwilling to listen to the source of the problem, he made his way to the superintendent's office.*

### Stop and Reflect

- *What do you think about the situation and conversation between Casey and Jessica's father? Consider what you might say or do differently.*

It is at this point that you can either make a few notes or take a moment to reflect. This reflection adds dimension to your understanding of family engagement, disengagement, and the practices that are presently in place.

**Step 3.** Engage in a discussion with your team using the Advanced Thinking questions.

For example, here is one of the questions for this case study.

- I. When was it easy for Jessica's father to communicate? When was it difficult? What could be changed to create a culture of two-way communication?

Whether you use the Stop and Reflect areas or wait and work through the questions at the end of each case study is completely up to your personal preference and learning style. We find, however, that the more we reflect on these types of everyday occurrences, the more likely we are to see different pathways toward a goal of authentic family engagement.

**Step 4.** Go back and review the description of the principle and clarifying statements; discuss the clarifying statement that seems appropriate.

At whatever juncture you choose, go back and look at the description and clarifying statements of the principle. Do you see anything that supports what you have read?

For this example, clarifying statement 2.3 seems an appropriate one to discuss. Was there a sense of caring to truly collaborate? Was the ability of the parent to freely and comfortably communicate evident in the story? And most importantly, if you don't think this conversation supports the idea presented in the clarifying statement, how could the conversation be changed or altered to support Principle 2: Communicate Effectively and Build Relationships? In other words, how could you rewrite the story to better reflect an outcome supported by the principle?

**Step 5.** Apply the principle to your own setting.

The last step is to apply what you have discovered to your own school or your own situation. We are sure that while the exact case study you read may not have occurred in your school, chances are you've experienced something like it. The application of knowledge and learning to your own situation is the last and most important step in getting to authentic family engagement. To assist with the application of knowledge, each case study includes Points to Ponder designed to give you insights into the issues and solutions within the case study.

## WHY A CASE STUDY APPROACH?

The use of a case study approach to organizational improvement is well documented in both business and education. "A case study is an in-depth study of one person, group, or event" (Cherry, 2022). The ideas, challenges, and situations presented in a case study can be generalized and used as solutions to similar issues facing real-world educators as readers develop a better understanding of the issues and challenges at hand. Case studies are



designed to portray a range of different perspectives on an issue rather than just a single view of an individual; they are an insight into human behavior and can extend an experience or add to existing knowledge (EssayMin, 2018). Case study analysis provides insight into human behaviors that a survey, focus group, or other means of collecting data cannot.

The case studies used in this book are fictional. The theory, idea, or action proposed in the description of the principle is the nucleus on which the case study is constructed. The case studies presented will also be explanatory in nature, which will allow you as the reader to look for factors that allow for certain issues to surface in the case study and determine how you might achieve better or different processes and outcomes than those shared in the case study. The case studies are designed to reflect your own similar experiences so that you can then move to determining solutions and ideas using the information garnered in the description of the Five Simple Principles as well as the ideas and best practices that will accompany each of the chapters. Because the chapters and case studies follow the Five Principles Model, those who are familiar with the model are just that much further along in creating specific and measurable plans to engage every family.

The Five Simple Principles descriptions, clarifying statements, and case studies make for a powerful process to explore the present conditions in your school or district and create an action plan for improvement.

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# About the Authors

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For more than twenty-five years, **Dr. Steven M. Constantino** has captivated thousands of teachers, administrators, school board members, and businesspeople from the United States and around the world. His keynote presentations and workshops have been featured in local, state, regional, national, and international conferences. Working as a high school principal in 1995, he stumbled across research about the effects of family engagement on student learning and was immediately convinced that this was the missing ingredient in helping all children learn.

Steve's work quickly gained national prominence, and soon he began traveling the United States, speaking, and working with all types of educators, school board members, and businesses to promote sound practices in family engagement that result in increased academic achievement for all students. His natural gifts as a motivating orator, coupled with his knowledge and practical experience, make him one of the most sought-after speakers in the field of family engagement.

Steve began his career as an instrumental music teacher and later became an assistant principal, principal, deputy superintendent, and district superintendent. Steve is the former chief academic officer and acting superintendent of public instruction for the Commonwealth of Virginia. Today, Steve is an executive professor at the William & Mary School of Education where he teaches in the Educational Policy, Planning & Leadership Department and continues to travel the globe helping schools, districts, and organizations to engage every family.



**Dr. Margaret E. Constantino** is an executive associate professor in the Educational Policy, Planning & Leadership Department and director of the Executive Ed.D. programs at the William & Mary School of Education. Her thirty-year career in education includes classroom experience as a special education teacher in elementary, middle, and high school settings. As a school-level leader, she led the development and implementation of one of the largest International Baccalaureate programs in North

America. She has served as a principal at the elementary and high school levels in both suburban and urban school systems. She also served as director of special education in Cobb County, Georgia, the twenty-fourth-largest school system in the United States. Margaret's teaching and project work crosses doctoral and principal preparation programs, with expertise in innovative leadership, design thinking, action research, special education, equity, and social justice.

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# Introduction

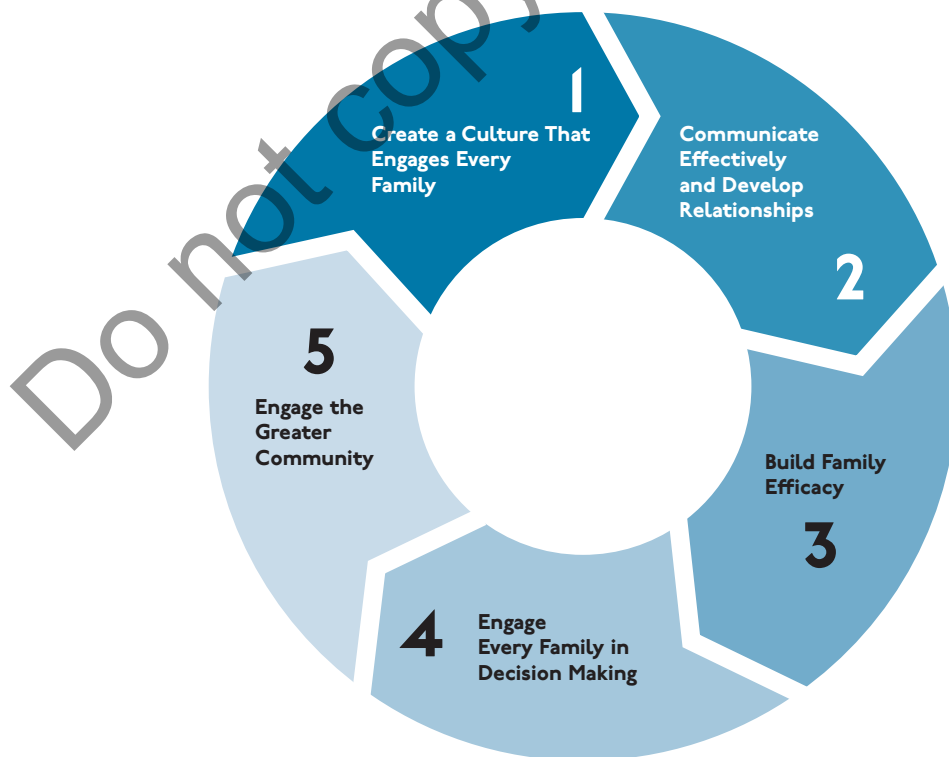
## A Quick Review of the Five Simple Principles

This introduction begins with a quick review of the Five Simple Principles. To refresh your memory more thoroughly, we highly recommend that you reread Chapter 5 of *Engage Every Family: Five Simple Principles* (Constantino, 2021).

The research-based Five Simple Principles are meant to help educators expand their capacity to formulate necessary partnerships with every family to promote improved student learning. The principles are a systemic process that can be overlaid onto schools or school districts so that measurable and tangible results can be recorded and celebrated.

### THE LOGIC MODEL

The logic model is designed to place into a hierarchal order the principles by which true family engagement and the ultimate development and nurturing of family efficacy can be implemented, measured, and, most importantly, sustained.



## PRINCIPLE 1: CREATE A CULTURE THAT ENGAGES EVERY FAMILY

Creating a culture and climate for family engagement is the first and most important step in a process to bring about systemic reform in family engagement. If the collective beliefs, values, assumptions, actions, attitudes, and rituals within an organization are not supportive of engaging every family, then there is little hope that the subsequent strategies will have any lasting effect.

Often, desired change in an organization that is temporary, sporadic, or fleeting has at its root the idea that the change never permeates and alters the culture of the organization. Therefore, the notion of culture as the leading standard is essential for long-term success and growth.

## PRINCIPLE 2: COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY AND DEVELOP RELATIONSHIPS

When an accepting culture is established and fosters the engagement of every family, the next step is to develop deeper relationships with families. Developing relationships with every family, especially those that are disengaged, is essential in supporting improved student learning. Within the framework of relationships and the trust that ensues lies the important notion of communication. Research supports clear and consistent two-way communication as an important pillar in family engagement practice (Henderson et al., 2007).

Relationships and trust are rooted in distinct, meaningful, and thoughtful systems of two-way communication that relate a value in reaching out and connecting with every family, which implies the importance of listening and feedback. Communication, for purposes of this principle, also includes the important concept of welcoming environments in schools.

## PRINCIPLE 3: BUILD FAMILY EFFICACY

Building family efficacy encourages and improves learning outside of school. In simple terms, efficacy is the power of one (or some) to produce an effect. In the Five Simple Principles logic model, the principle of efficacy takes family engagement to a new level and begins to allow a school or district a tangible and concrete approach to implementing processes and collecting data that links family engagement to student achievement.



Establishing instructional and curricular processes that are inclusive of families begins to allow families to become immersed in school learning and to enhance and support learning at home. If the culture of the district is not accepting of the idea to engage every family and the communication is poor, thus eroding trusting relationships between families and the school, the results will likely produce little in the way of family efficacy.

#### **PRINCIPLE 4: ENGAGE EVERY FAMILY IN DECISION MAKING**

Improvement plans, strategic plans, comprehensive plans, and the idea of school improvement planning has changed over the years and certainly since the advent of the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015. For many years, schools have sought to include families in decision making at the local school level. Common in many school districts are school board–appointed ad hoc committees or task forces of families and citizens charged with reviewing issues and making sound recommendations to the board. Inherent in all of this is the concept of engaging every family in school-related decision making. On the surface, this can seem to be a daunting and impossible task.

Every family needs a voice in certain school decisions, and school leaders must put into place mechanisms that ensure every voice will be heard. Returning to the logic model, after a culture of engagement is established and a foundation of relationships and efficacy has been built, creating mechanisms for family engagement in decision making enhances and ensures that policies, procedures, and practices have at their core a support mechanism for engaging every family.

#### **PRINCIPLE 5: ENGAGE THE GREATER COMMUNITY**

Many family engagement models include the involvement and engagement of the greater community as a conduit to improving schools. The key to effective community engagement is to first conceptualize what that engagement should look like with a clear delineation of desired outcomes. There are rich and deep resources in most communities; however, many schools and districts struggle in leveraging those resources.

Without the sequential building of family engagement, the engagement of the greater community makes little sense. Business, civic, and community leaders who cannot determine a specific role for their engagement simply will not become involved in or immerse themselves in the school or

district. Setting the stage with the first four principles is an essential pathway to creating strong and meaningful community engagement.

## GETTING TO THE HEART OF THE PRINCIPLES: DESCRIPTIONS AND CLARIFYING STATEMENTS

The key to the Five Simple Principles is the ability to remember them in the correct order and, to the degree possible, implement and evaluate your efforts and success with the same logic model that is prescribed. *Culture, Relationships, Efficacy, Decision Making, and Community*—five simple ideas to which all educators and families can relate and that all can remember.

As cultural underpinnings of your school, these five principles can bring about lasting and effective change in the ability to engage every family. Of course, there is some danger in trying to oversimplify the principles. That could lead to understanding the concept without the ability to truly drill down to the salient points, thus rendering the principles ineffective. As a quick reference, we list here all the principles and their clarifying statements in one place.

### Principle 1: Create a Culture That Engages Every Family

The collective beliefs, attitudes, norms, values, actions, and assumptions of the school organization explicitly embrace and are committed to ensuring the notion of families as a foundational core component to improvement and greater student learning and performance. The culture is reflected in artifacts and organizational practices.

1.1 The school has created and sustained a culture that is conducive to family engagement through explicit beliefs, actions, norms, values, and assumptions made about the value of families being engaged with their children's school experiences.

1.2 A culture of family engagement exists within the school such that policies, programs, practices, and procedures specifically connect families with student learning to support increased achievement and enhance student learning and performance.

1.3 A culture of family engagement exists within the school and community that directly and positively impacts the social and emotional growth of all students.

## Principle 2: Communicate Effectively and Develop Relationships

There is consistent evidence that effective communication and relationship development creates environments in the school that are welcoming, respectful, and conducive to family engagement. The school places an emphasis on effective two-way communication with every family and stakeholder within the learning community and seeks to develop relationships based on mutual trust.

- 2.1 The school creates and maintains a welcoming and respectful environment that is inviting, supportive, and encouraging to every family.
- 2.2 The school employs strategies that extend opportunities to develop relationships beyond the school walls so that every family can substantially contribute to the education of their children.
- 2.3 The school ensures that healthy, two-way communication is consistently maintained. A sense of caring to truly collaborate with every family exists as evidenced by numerous mechanisms to allow families to communicate easily and directly with the school.

## Principle 3: 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.

- 3.1 The school makes a conscious effort to educate families to play a proactive role in the learning life of their child throughout their school career.
- 3.2 The school is committed to the academic socialization of families and, to that end, develops and deploys strategies that encourage and support family engagement with specific learning in all classrooms.
- 3.3 Families participate in the development of the student's learning plan, help monitor and assess progress, and provide support for their child's learning.
- 3.4 Teachers suggest learning strategies and experiential possibilities for families and use their local knowledge, personal skills, assets, and networks in ways that support the school's program.

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### **Principle 4: Engage Every Family in Decision Making**

The school recognizes the entitlement of families to be consulted and participate in decisions concerning their own children. The school is genuinely inclusive in its approach to decision making. It recognizes that this type of process creates a sense of shared responsibility among families, students, community members, and educators.

4.1 The school creates opportunities for families to lead and participate in school learning, consultative, planning, and social and community events.

4.2 The school ensures that families and students have representation on the school's governing body and relevant decision-making groups.

### **Principle 5: Engage the Greater Community**

The school places a strong focus on building and creating partnerships external to the school. The school recognizes the strengths and talents that exist in the communities that influence student learning and development and seeks to use these to strengthen and support the school, students, and their families.

The principle also recognizes that the school can be a focal point for communities to come together and engage in capacity building and renewal. The school views itself as an important community asset and has community representatives on the school's governing body. There is a clear recognition from the school that the greater community plays an integral role in the educational success of the school.

5.1 Partnerships are made with individuals and organizations in work and community places to take on mentoring roles within student internship and work placement programs. The partnerships also have a role to play within other activities, such as community-based learning projects, guest speaker programs, job shadows, apprenticeship opportunities, and tutors.

5.2 Partnerships are made with other learning institutions—schools, technical colleges, universities, and training providers—in order for students to pursue learning opportunities, build their skills, and achieve learning credentials.

5.3 Opportunities evolve from the school for creating and implementing adult learning and community development courses to be run within the school building.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

Each of the case studies presented will provide you the opportunity to reflect on similar challenges that you may have experienced or witnessed in your organization. As you create a new process to improve outcomes in family engagement, there are tools and materials available to you that can be used to further your efforts to engage every family. Chapters 6–10 in *Engage Every Family: Five Simple Principles* (Constantino, 2021) include a deeper discussion of Principles 1–5, along with tools and materials that can be used to strengthen a particular principle in your organization. Refer to these chapters to get more ideas and more information about the Five Simple Principles and how they can be implemented and measured in your school.

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