

# **Family Engagement for School Age Classrooms**



**Georgia After School Program**

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# Objectives

# Family Engagement

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1. Understand the definition and importance of family engagement in school-age classrooms.
2. Identify effective communication strategies to foster positive relationships with families.
3. Explore various methods to involve families in classroom activities and decision-making processes.
4. Recognize common barriers to family engagement and develop solutions to overcome them.
5. Implement practical strategies for building strong partnerships with families.

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**IMPORTANT**

**Family  
Engagement**

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Stay until the end

Complete the survey

Participate in the chat

## What is Family Engagement?

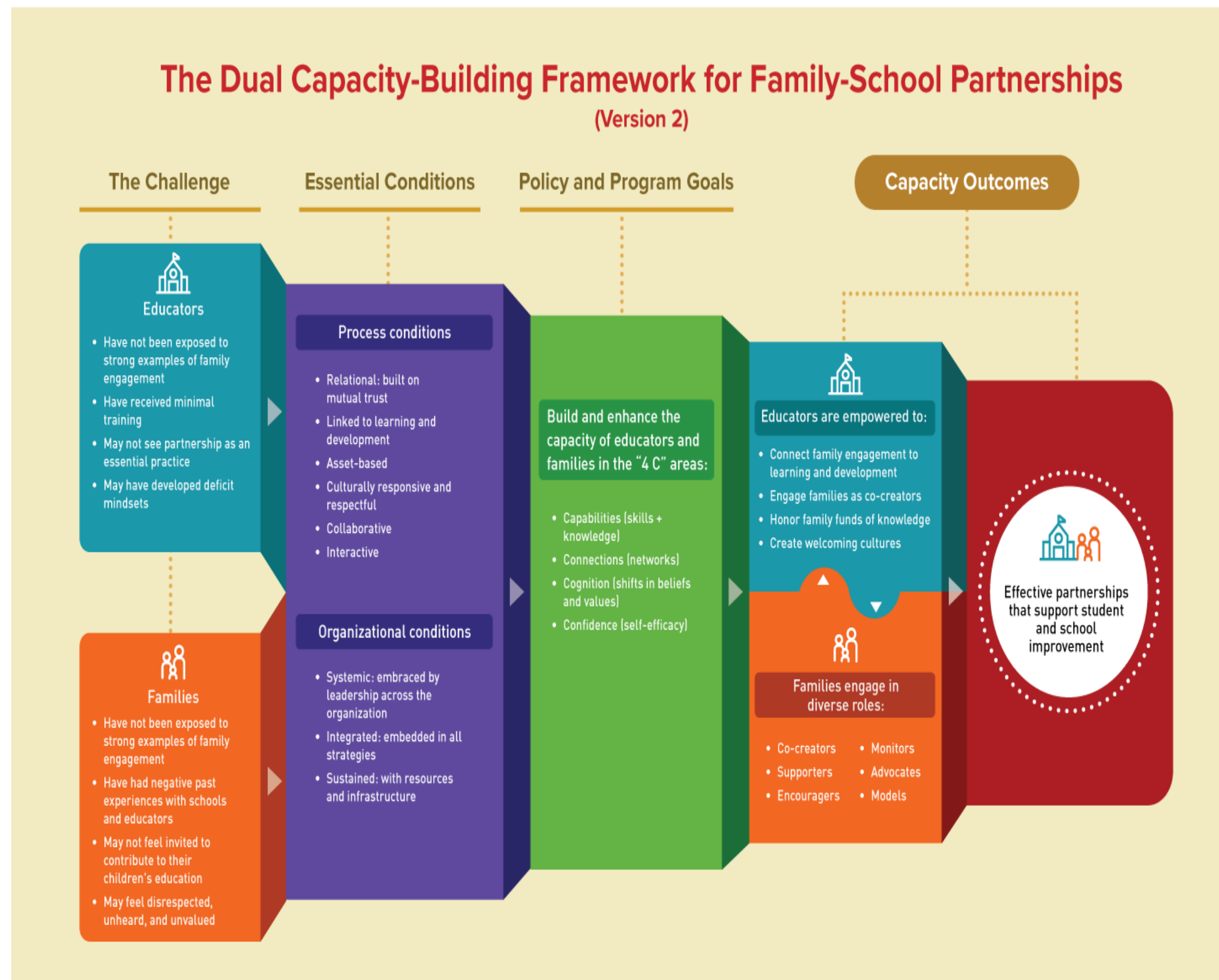
### Programs and procedures that:

- Engage families as co-creators.
- Honor family funds of knowledge.
- Create welcoming cultures.

### Benefits of Effective Family Engagement:

- Family engagement in schools contributes to positive student outcomes, including improved child and student achievement, decreased disciplinary issues, improved parent-teacher and teacher-student relationships, and improved school environment.
- Families from diverse socioeconomic, educational and racial/ethnic backgrounds were interested in their child's educational success and could effectively support their child's learning at home and school when provided with the information and guidance that they needed.
- Working collaboratively increases the likelihood of identifying a family's unique needs and developing relevant and culturally-appropriate service plans that address needs, build on family strengths, draw from community supports, and use resources more effectively.

***Family engagement encourages effective partnerships that support student and school improvement.***



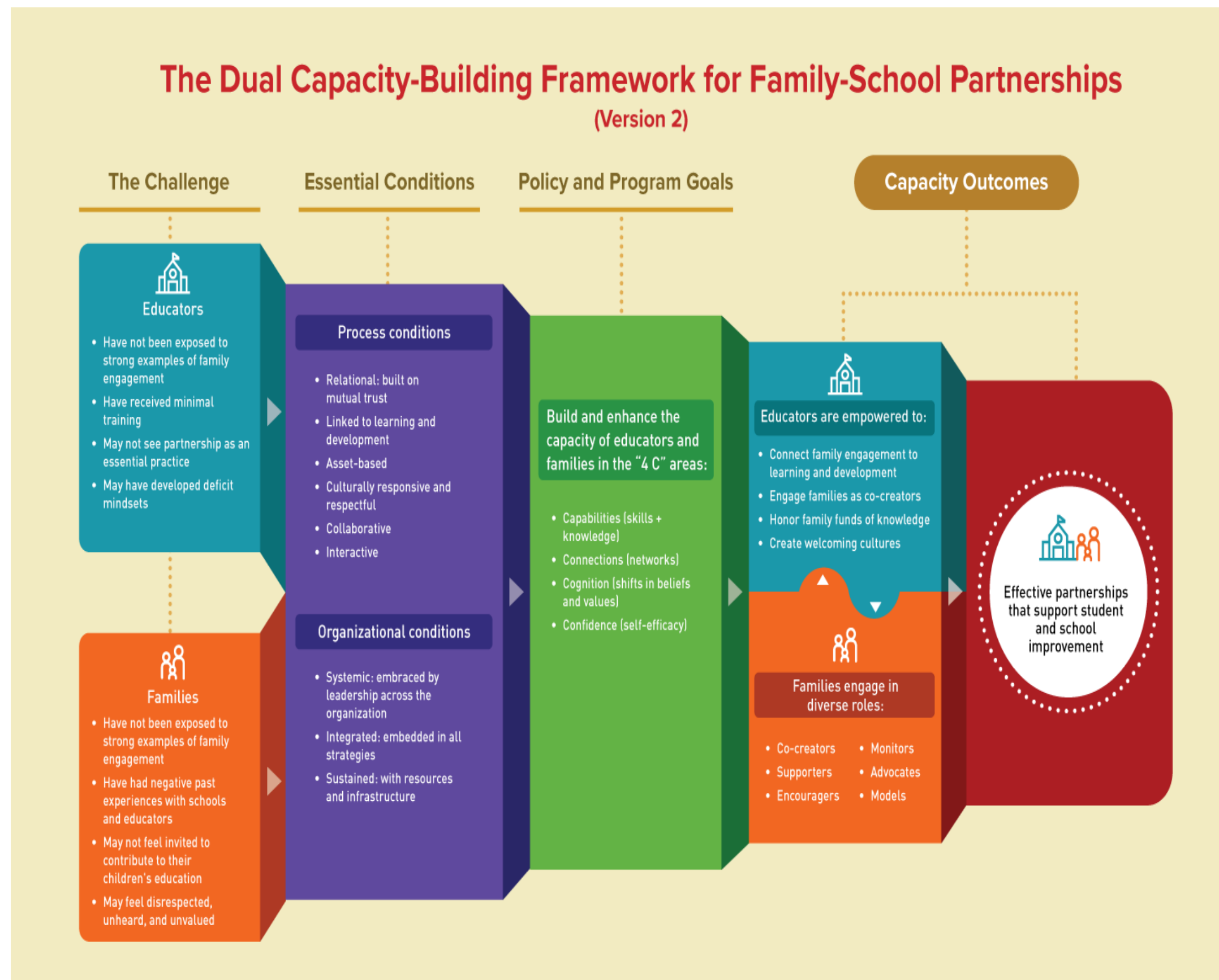
## What is Family Engagement?

### Full, equal, and equitable:

- Families, community partners and educators work together as allies to promote children's learning and development.
- Families and educators bring equally valuable knowledge to the table. Parents know their children, culture, and community. Educators know curriculum and child development. Those understandings are complementary and essential to ensure success for all children.
- Families are empowered to work with educators, public officials, and community partners to remove systemic and structural barriers that perpetuate inequities and injustice.

### Shared Experiences:

What's worked for you?





## Strategies for Promoting Family Engagement

### Communication

Some of the positive impacts of school and family partnerships can include fostering housing, neighborhood, and community safety by creating family linkages to other neighbors, resources, and organizations. For schools serving primarily Black, Latino, as well as other nondominant cultural groups, positive communication and meaningfully reciprocal relationships emerge when families share in decision-making and are treated with dignity and respect—this is especially the case in contexts where relationships across racial and cultural difference must be fostered. All the potential benefits that can be gained from parent involvement begin with successful communication between educators and families.

### Outcomes

- To create a community within the school that collaborates to arrive at shared goals.
- To promote the overall well-being of students and their families.
- Schools share decision-making responsibility with parents. Community perspective is taken into account for a range of concerns.
- The school's goals and strategies are decided upon collectively.
- Communication is two-way, with conversations that address a wide range of topics, including out-of-school needs and experiences, often initiated by parents.

### **Shared Experiences:**

What are methods of communication that work best for your families?

What tools do you use to make communication easier? (i.e. translation apps, social media.)





# **STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING FAMILY ENGAGEMENT**

Luisana Fernandez

## Involvement

### Encouraging family participation in classroom activities and events

- Joint activities that allow teachers and families to work together toward a shared goal as equal partners. Examples might include inviting parents to help set up a project for the children or plan a family event for the school.
- Parent Appreciation Events: schedule parent appreciation events throughout the year.





## Involvement

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## Family Engagement

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# Creating volunteer opportunities

- Design a Volunteer Program that matches better your set up.
- Discuss and distribute the information with parents.
- Create a sign up sheet and take at least a week to ask parents to take one spot for the volunteer program. (frequency can take place, depending on the activity selected)
- Share pictures with the ones that have not participated as a way to encourage them.



**Your program could fit just one activity per year/semester and that is okay.**

## Involvement

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### Survey:

**Gather ideas for family involvement activities.**



## Family Engagement

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# Family Engagement Partnerships.



# Partnerships

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## - Building strong, respectful relationships with families



- family-teacher check-ins to engage in open and collaborative conversations about topics such as family involvement, drop-off and pick-up routines, and community-building activities. These can be hosted at times that fit into your schedule, such as during lunchtime or before evening pick-up.
- brief conversations during drop-off and pick-up. These can be as simple as letting parents know what their child enjoyed doing or learning that day or the previous day.

# Family Engagement

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## - Collaborating on setting goals for children's development and learning



## - Involving/Communicating with families in decision-making processes



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# Group Discussion

Topic: How would you have a conversation with a parent about setting behavior goals for their child?



**Family  
Engagement**

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# Family Engagement

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## Overcoming Challenges

Common Barriers:

- Time constraints, language barriers, cultural differences, etc.



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**Target  
Audience**

Share Parent surveys and questionnaires that invite families to share information about their culture and home practices, such as foods they enjoy or music they listen to.



**Knowing  
them**

**will help you  
overcome the  
challenges**

# Family Engagement

## Question

## Tips

- What are some of your child's favorite activities at home?
- What does your family's daily routine look like?
- Is there anything we can do to help ease your child's transition into our community?
- Are there any skills you are particularly hoping to see your child develop while he/she is in our care?
- What kind of updates would you like about your child?
- Are you interested in being involved in activities in the classroom?







# Overcoming challenges

Solutions & Tips





What are some challenges you've faced?

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## Solutions and tips

### Flexible meeting times

- Parent connection. Create days or times for parents to be able to check in and ask questions.
- Communicate through apps, calls or text messages.
- Use morning time to reach out to any parents that have concerns.
- Monthly meetings for parents to host
- Q &A session.

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# Monthly meetings

## Monthly meeting with parents.

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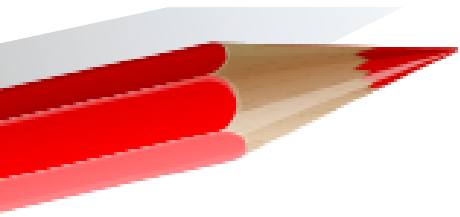

	Time	location	
Aug 2024	5:30pm	cafeteria	
Sep 2024	5:30pm	cafeteria	
Oct 2024	5:30pm	cafeteria	
Nov 2024	5:30pm	cafeteria	
Dec 2024	5:30pm	cafeteria	





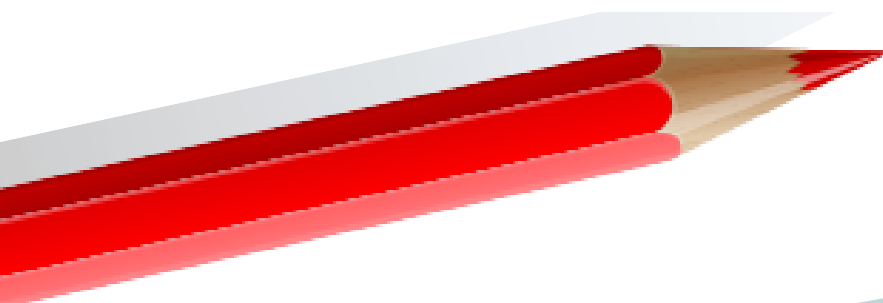
## Language barriers

- Identifying translation issues.
- Having flyers or information in different languages.
- Staff that is bilingual.

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- Affordability
  - A Desire to hangout with friends.
    - Transportation
    - Poor quality program
      - Work
  - Family factors and responsibilities



**Overcoming Barriers in Afterschool Programs- getting youth in the door**



Questions?

Group Discussion





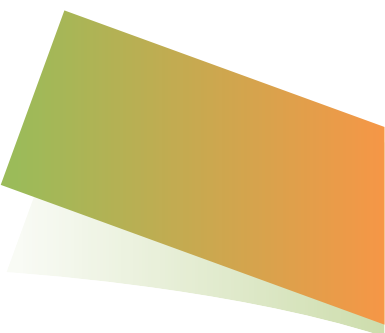
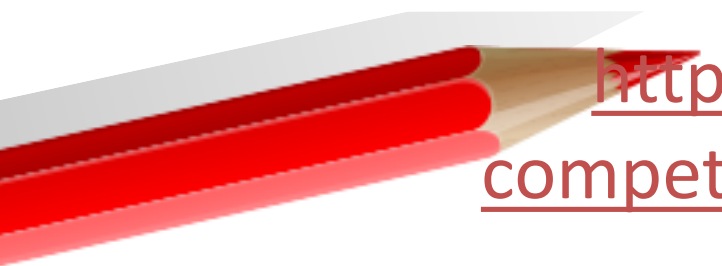
# Resources



<http://massafterschoolcomm.org/downloads/Access%20-%20Final%20-%20Little%20Fall%202007.pdf>

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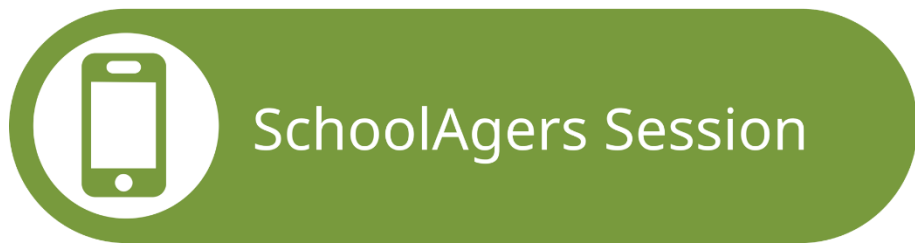
<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/evaluation-and-support/professional-learning---cultural-competence#:~:text=Seeking%20opportunities%20to%20integrate%20relevant,and%20class%20discussions%2C%20integrating%20family>



# Sources

- **Everyone Wins!: The Evidence for Family-School Partnerships and Implications for Practice** ( [Karen L. Mapp](#) (Author), [Anne Henderson](#) (Author), [Stephany Cuevas](#) (Author), [Martha Franco](#) (Author))
- Impact of Family Engagement (<https://youth.gov/youth-topics/impact-family-engagement>)
- [Improving School-Family Communication and Engagement](#)  
<https://consortium.uchicago.edu/sites/default/files/2022-04/Improving%20School-Family%20Communication-Apr%202022-Consortium.pdf>

# THANK YOU



<https://qrco.de/bfNo6i>

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Future training topics?  
Please put in chat.