



Carolina Family Engagement Center

Talking Points



CFEC's Vision:

All children have a parent or other caring adult who effectively supports their learning and development from cradle to career in partnership with their school and community such that:

- all student achievement rises, all schools improve, and the number of high-quality educational options available to all families increases throughout South Carolina;
- the opportunity gap closes for all children who face significant challenges in accessing a high-quality education in our state.

All parents have the knowledge, skills, and access to resources they need to help their children meet their educational goals.

All schools create a welcoming environment for all families and use evidence-based and culturally responsive strategies to successfully engage all families in their children's learning and development.

CFEC's Mission:

Promoting equity in opportunity and high academic achievement for all students through effective evidence/research-based family engagement.

CFEC's Big Goals:

- To provide all families, schools, and communities with high quality, culturally responsive opportunities to develop the capacities (knowledge, skills, and attitudes) they need to partner effectively on family engagement that leads to improved student achievement and development.
- To expand and improve access to existing community resources and services that support children's learning and development by strengthening and growing networks among CFEC community partners.

Who Does CFEC Serve?

- CFEC focuses primarily on serving families with low incomes, with English learners, with students with disabilities, with students in foster care, with migrant students, with students who are homeless, or families who come from traditionally marginalized communities.
- In the course of working with these families, CFEC makes its tools and trainings available to all stakeholders through its website and other avenues.

What Does CFEC Do?

1. Provide Capacity-Building Training and Technical Assistance

- Beginning fall 2019, CFEC's six regional liaisons will deliver training and technical assistance in family engagement directly to families, schools, districts, and local communities. The six regions these liaisons represent cover the entire state.
- UofSC CoE's Research Institute and members of the CoE faculty will work with CFEC's leadership team and regional liaisons to ensure that all CFEC trainings and technical assistance are culturally responsive and grounded in the most current research.

- CFEC liaisons will provide ongoing, intensive training and technical assistance in developing, implementing, and evaluating school-wide family engagement plans to at least 24 qualifying schools (4 in each of the six regions). Results will be compared with data from 24 similar schools that did not receive CFEC interventions in order to develop evidence of promising family engagement practices.
- Over the life of the grant, CFEC will provide up to 40 qualifying teachers with an opportunity to earn a \$1,000 stipend for developing, implementing, and evaluating a classroom-level family engagement plan with ongoing technical assistance from the CFEC liaison in their region.
- During grant years 3 and 4, CFEC will provide up to 30 qualifying parents with an opportunity to earn a \$1,000 stipend upon completing a CFEC parent leadership course and developing their own plans for forwarding leadership or school improvement goals in their communities.

2. Build Statewide Infrastructures to Support Family Engagement

- Horizontal networks: CFEC will serve as a hub that connects families and schools with CFEC community partners and friends who provide a broad range of services and resources to address children's academic and developmental needs.
- Vertical networks: CFEC will also assist schools and communities to engage families from cradle to career by facilitating the growth of new networks between early childhood and K- 12 systems.

Using Organizational Readiness and Getting To Outcomes® to Improve Results

- CFEC will utilize the implementation science framework Getting To Outcomes® to provide schools and families with a road map for planning, implementing, and evaluating their family engagement work. GTO® prompts users to assess needs; identify specific goals and outcomes; utilize evidence-based practices with consideration of fit and capacity; plan and implement with quality, engage in ongoing evaluation and continuous improvement, and take steps to sustain successful activities.
- In its work with the 24 qualifying schools, CFEC will also utilize an organizational readiness assessment tool developed by co-Project Director Dr. Abe Wandersman (Wandersman Center) to measure initial levels of schools' readiness to implement family engagement practices. The results of these assessments will be used to identify effective interventions to build readiness in areas where it is low.

Special Features of this Grant Project:

The project provides:

- maximum flexibility in choosing evidence and research-based family engagement programs and practices that best fit the needs, priorities, and cultural context of each school and community;
- time for CFEC to develop long-term relationships with families, schools, and communities and for family engagement strategies to produce results;
- ongoing technical assistance in addition to training to support quality implementation and evaluation of family engagement programs and practices;
- emphasis on the importance of culturally responsive family engagement and evaluation.

Why Invest in Family-School-Community Partnerships?

Over 40 years of research has found that increased levels of family engagement are associated with numerous desired student outcomes including improvements in student achievement, behavior, attendance, and graduation rates.

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