


FIGURE 1. Evolutionary Continuum of Family–School Connections

Involvement — Engagement — Partnerships — Equity-Focused, Transformative Collaborations



INVOLVEMENT

Purpose:

- Support more efficient schooling

Typical Practices:

- Families “volunteer”
- Families attend in-school events

Perspectives:

- Educators determine agenda
- Reflective of white, middle-class norms
- Often viewed as only something done at in-school events

ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS

Purpose:

- Support student learning and school improvement

Typical Practices:

- Greater level of family input
- Develop social capital in and among families
- Improve parents’ capacity to support their children

Perspectives:

- Some level of shared decision-making
- More reflective of diverse perspectives
- Often viewed as “nice to do when there is time”

EQUITY-FOCUSED, TRANSFORMATIVE COLLABORATIONS

Purpose:

- School and community transformation

Typical Practices:

- Focus on equity
- Problem-solving is done in solidarity with families and is asset-based
- Capacity-building for both educators and families

Perspectives:

- Relational trust is paramount
- Educators and families both have expertise to offer
- Integrated into all else the system does (not one more thing to do)