

# Parent and Family Engagement

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## Engaging Families In The Educational Process

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## HUDSON VALLEY SPECIAL EDUCATION PARENT CENTER



HUDSON VALLEY  
Special Education  
Parent Center

WESTCHESTER INSTITUTE FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

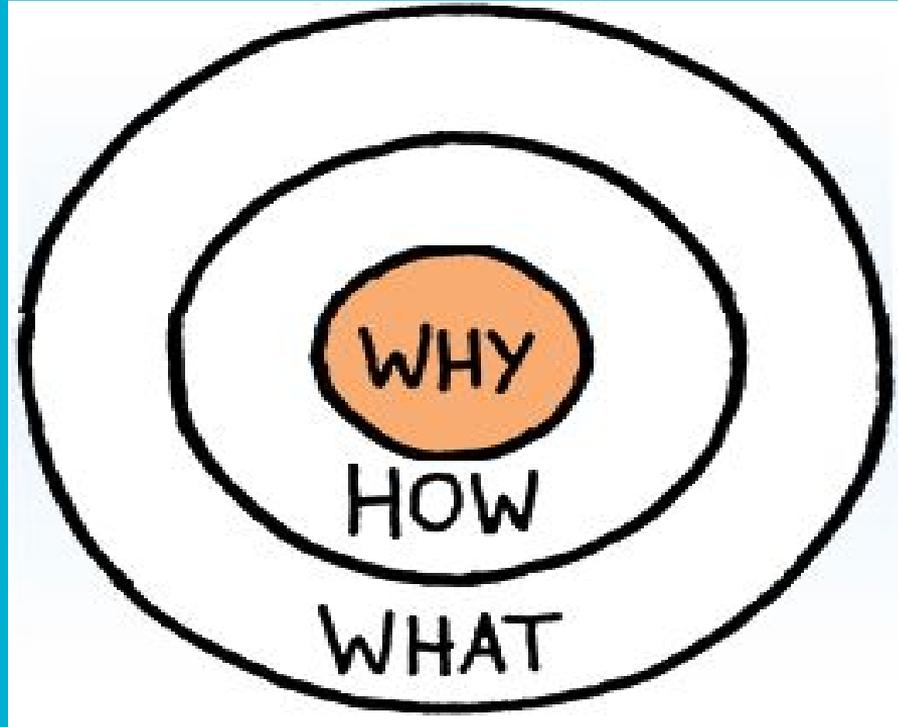
The Hudson Valley Special Education Parent Center (HVSEPC) at Westchester Institute for Human Development (WIHD) provides resources and strategies to parents and guardians of students with disabilities in order to promote meaningful involvement in their children's education programs. It is critical that parents understand the special education process and engage effectively as collaborative members of their children's decision-making teams. Services are provided to families within the Hudson Valley region including Westchester, Rockland, Putnam, Dutchess, Ulster, Sullivan and Orange Counties.

## HUDSON VALLEY REGIONAL BILINGUAL EDUCATION RESOURCE NETWORK

Under the direction of the NYS Education Department Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages (NYSED OBE-WL), the HV RBERN provides support and technical assistance to English language learner (ELL) educators in 144 public school districts across the lower- and mid-Hudson region.



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New York State  
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Knowledge > Skill > Opportunity

- The Next Generation Learning Standards is a result of a collaborative process that involved educators, parents and stakeholders from across New York.
- This learning initiative is part of a system-wide approach to provide equal access to all New York State learners.



# Family Engagement

- Family engagement is a family-centered and strengths-based approach to making decisions, setting goals, and achieving desired outcomes for children and families.
- Family engagement encourages and empowers families to be their own champions, working toward case goals that they have helped to develop based on their specific family strengths, resources, and needs.



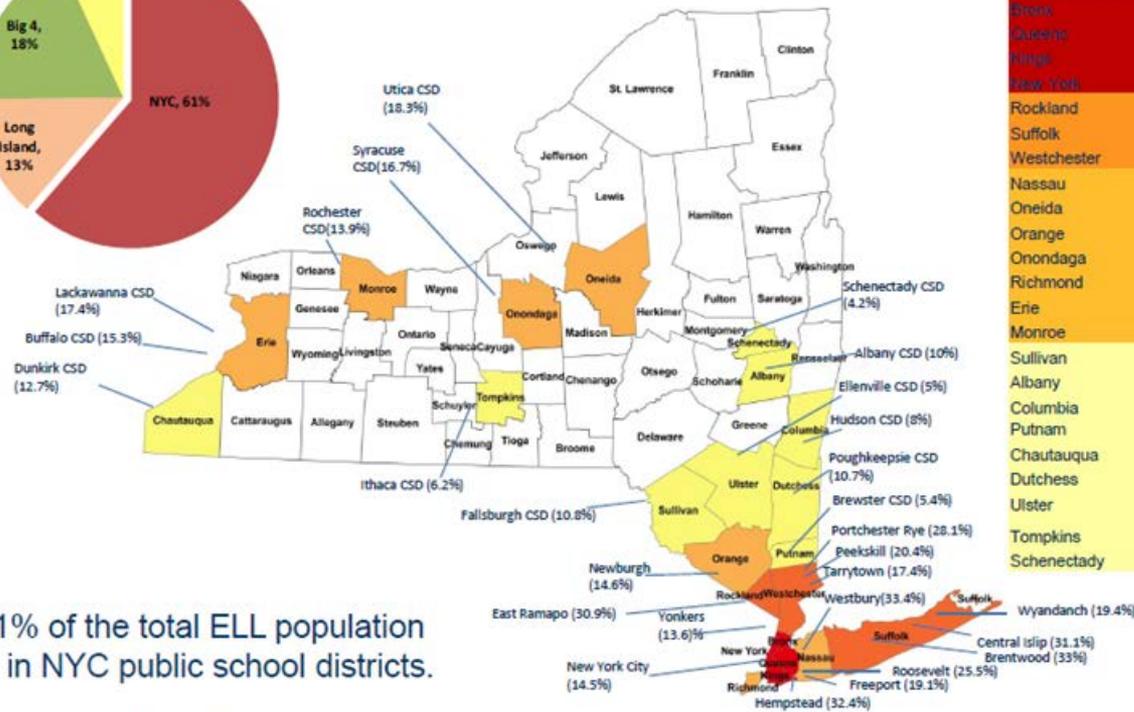
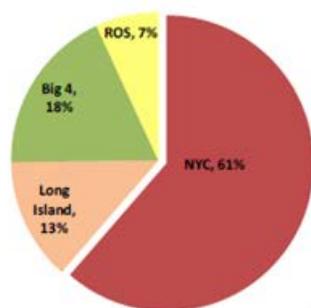
# Who are ELL students?

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- ELL students have traditionally been defined as children whose English has not yet developed to the point where they can take full advantage of instruction in English (Coleman & Goldenberg, 2009).
- While not all ELL children are from immigrant families (i.e., their parents are born outside the U.S.), there tends to be high overlap between these populations.

## Percentage of ELLs/MLLs as a share of Total Student Population by County and District 2015-2016

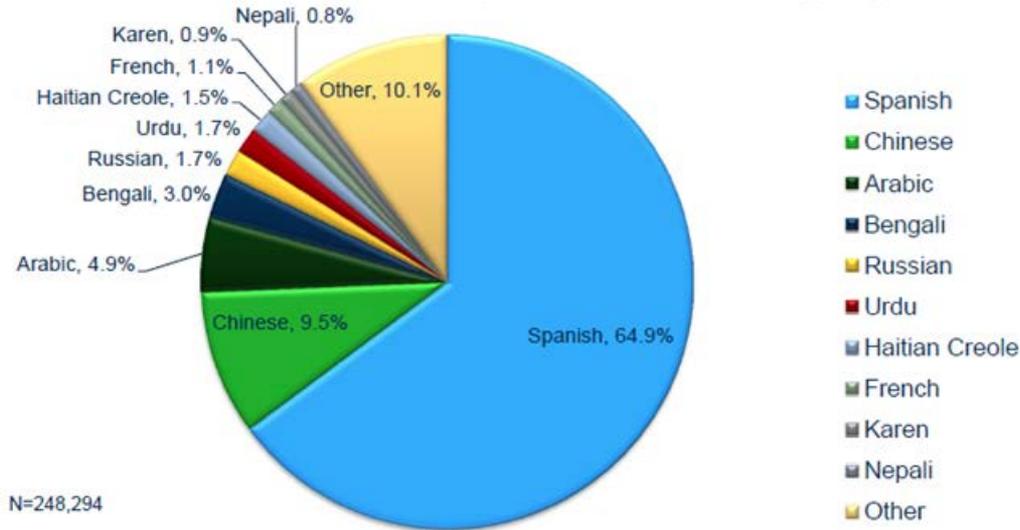


61% of the total ELL population is in NYC public school districts.

Source: NYS SIRS 2015-2016

# Linguistic and Cultural Diversity

Top 10 ELL Home Languages 2015-16 SY:



N=248,294

Source: NYS SIRS 2015-2016

**Linguistically diverse state  
with over 200 languages spoken by our students.**

## Parental involvement provisions required under Title I, Part A

- Parental involvement always has been a centerpiece of Title I.
- Parental involvement is the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities.



# Blueprint For Improved Results For Students With Disabilities

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- Students engage in self-advocacy and are involved in determining their own educational goals and plan.*
  - Parents, and other family members, are engaged as meaningful partners in the special education process and the education of their child.*
  - Teachers design, provide, and assess the effectiveness of specially-designed instruction to provide students with disabilities with access to participate and progress in the general education curriculum.*
  - Teachers provide research-based instructional teaching and learning strategies and supports for students with disabilities.*
  - Schools provide multi-tiered systems of behavioral and academic support.*
  - Schools provide high-quality inclusive programs and activities.*
  - Schools provide appropriate instruction for students with disabilities in career development and opportunities to participate in work-based learning.*

# Parents' Bill Of Rights For New York States's English Language Learners

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The right to meet with school staff at least once a year, in addition to other generally required meetings, to discuss your children's overall learning and language development progress.

[https://steinhardt.nyu.edu/scmsAdmin/media/users/nbm3/parents\\_rights\\_english.pdf](https://steinhardt.nyu.edu/scmsAdmin/media/users/nbm3/parents_rights_english.pdf)



# Research shows...

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- The importance of addressing the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students and their families is key to student success.
  - Unfortunately, the cultural underpinning of schools in the United States is largely congruent with middle-class, European values (Boykin, 1994), leading many schools to ignore or downplay the strengths of diverse students and their families.



# What Barriers Can You Suggest that May Interfere with Home/Professional Collaboration?

- Language
- Lack of understanding
- Training
- Availability
- Cultural differences
- Low level of literacy
- Parent Motivation
- Fears of...



# Culture plays a major role....

It is important to address the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students and their families.

## What can happen when we do not understand cultural differences?

<b>Between Individuals</b>		<b>How this can affect self-advocacy groups</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Misunderstandings</li><li>▪ Arguments</li><li>▪ Hurt feelings</li><li>▪ Stereotyping</li><li>▪ Hurtful biases</li><li>▪ Unable to advocate with and for another person</li><li>▪ Self-advocates feeling like they don't belong or that their culture is not being respected</li><li>▪ Trouble making new friends from other cultural groups</li></ul>	 <p>The central column contains three illustrations. The top illustration shows two silhouetted figures in a red background; one is pointing an accusatory finger at the other, with a lightning bolt symbol between them, representing conflict or argument. The middle illustration shows two silhouetted figures in a blue background; one is speaking and the other is listening, with a thought bubble above the listener, representing communication or misunderstanding. The bottom illustration shows two silhouetted figures in a yellow background; they are shaking hands, representing friendship or agreement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Poor communication</li><li>▪ Unable to work well with self-advocates from culturally and linguistically diverse groups</li><li>▪ Low membership and participation of culturally and linguistically diverse groups</li><li>▪ Difficulty meeting the self-advocacy interests and needs of underserved people with disabilities</li><li>▪ Difficult to meet the goals and objectives of the new Self-Advocacy Resource Center</li></ul>



# How do children benefit from family/caregiver engagement in their education?

- Earn higher grades and test scores, and enroll in higher-level programs
- Higher rates of promotion, pass their classes, and earn credits
- Attend school regularly
- Have better social skills, show improved behavior, and adapt well to school
- Graduate rates increase and go on to postsecondary education

Research Spotlight on Parental Involvement in Education

NEA Reviews of the Research on Best Practices in Education



# Family Engagement Self Assessment

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- What is in place to make all families feel welcome?
- Which families are you not reaching?
- How do you know?
- How can you make a connection to them?
- Have you considered family visitation? What does that look like?
- What are their needs in particular to come to meetings/workshops? Child care, transportation, daytime or evening meetings, translation



# Sound Familiar?



# How can schools & community organizations best work with families to increase engagement?

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Dr. Joyce Epstein of John Hopkins University has developed a framework School-Family-Community Partnership Model which is an influential model in parent involvement research.

Research says....

- Just about all families care about their children, want them to succeed, and are eager to obtain better information from schools and communities so as to remain good partners in their children's education.
- Just about all teachers and administrators would like to involve families, but many do not know how to go about building positive and productive programs and are consequently fearful about trying.



# THE KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL-FAMILY-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

## EPSTEIN'S SIX TYPES OF INVOLVEMENT



**PARENTING:** Assist families in understanding child and adolescent development, and in setting home conditions that support children as students at each age and grade level. Assist schools in understanding families.



**COMMUNICATING:** Communicate with families about school programs and student progress through effective school-to-home and home-to-school communications.



**VOLUNTEERING:** Improve recruitment, training, work, and schedules to involve families as volunteers and audiences at school or in other locations to support students and school programs.



**LEARNING AT HOME:** Involve families with their children in learning activities at home, including homework, other curriculum-related activities, and individual course and program decisions.



**DECISION MAKING:** Include families as participants in school decisions, governance, and advocacy through PTA/PTO, school councils, committees, action teams, and other parent organizations.

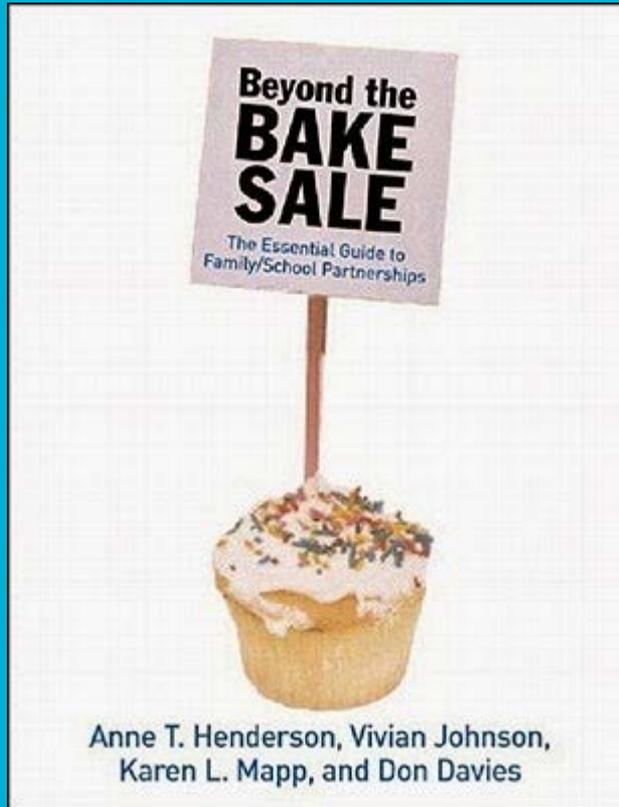


**COLLABORATING WITH COMMUNITY:** Coordinate resources and services for students, families, and the school with businesses, agencies, and other groups, and provide services to the community.



# A Good Read on Family Engagement

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## WELCOMING, HONORING, CONNECTING

Adapted from Henderson, Mapp, Davies and Johnson, *Beyond the Bake Sale: The Essential Guide to Family-School Partnership* (New York: The New Press, 2007)

INSTEAD OF THIS	TRY THIS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ “Who are you? What do you want?”</li><li>▪ “No Trespassing” signs</li><li>▪ Parent meetings dominated by the principal, school staff or a few PTA/PTO officers</li><li>▪ Calling home only when a child acts out or is in danger of failing</li><li>▪ Complaining about parents who don’t help their kids with homework</li><li>▪ Leaving parent involvement to the Assistant Principal or Teacher’s Aide</li><li>▪ Meeting only during school hours or only on one set time and day</li><li>▪ Announcing a new reading program</li><li>▪ Planning events, then publicizing them to parents</li><li>▪ Talking at and about parents</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ “Hello! Welcome to our school. How may I help you?”</li><li>▪ “Welcome” signs</li><li>▪ Parent meetings broken into small discussion groups where everyone participates, each group picking a leader.</li><li>▪ Staying in personal touch with each family at least once a month</li><li>▪ Sending home learning kits and interactive homework assignments and/or developing programs to show parents how to help with homework</li><li>▪ Meeting and greeting parents before and after school, and going to community events</li><li>▪ Rotating parent meetings before school, evenings, and weekends and at different times</li><li>▪ Involving families in selecting a new reading program</li><li>▪ Surveying parents to get their ideas and opinions for family activities</li><li>▪ Listening to and with parents</li></ul>



# Resources

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- ELL/MLL Parent Events List: <http://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed/parents/english-language-learnermultilingual-learner-parent-events>
- ELL/MLL Parent Guide (translated into 26 languages): <http://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed/parents/guide-parents-english-language-learnersmultilingual-learners-new-york-state>
- ELL Parents' Bill of Rights (translated into 9 languages) and link to Hotline: <http://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed/parents/parents-bill-rights-new-york-states-english-language-learnersmultilingual>

# Resources

- New York State Special Education Parent Centers

<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/techassist/parentcenters.htm>



- Hudson Valley Special Education Parent Center (HV SEPC) <http://hvsepc.org/>

- Lower Hudson Early Childhood Direction Center (ECDC) <http://www.wihd.org/programs-services/community-support-network/early-childhood/>

- Center for Parent Information & Resources <http://www.parentcenterhub.org/>



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- Early Learning Inclusion Recommendations and Resources for Families

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/earlylearning/inclusion/resources-for-families.html>

# Resources

- NYCDOE “40 minutes of Parent Engagement” - ideas and strategies to create a welcoming culture and invite families into your school.

[http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/EAE229AD-6C0D-4EE7-9B9F-B01D6CA65210/0/ParentEngatemen2015\\_FINAL.pdf](http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/EAE229AD-6C0D-4EE7-9B9F-B01D6CA65210/0/ParentEngatemen2015_FINAL.pdf)



- Resources designed to assist local educational agencies, schools, and parents in meeting the requirements of parental provision as required under Title I, Part A.

<https://www2.ed.gov/admins/comm/parents/pntinv.html>  
<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/pg2.html#sec1118>



- U. S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION’S Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships

<https://www2.ed.gov/documents/family-community/frameworks-resources.pdf>



Portions of this presentation were developed using  
the following resources...

<http://www.tolerance.org/>

<https://www.splcenter.org/teaching-tolerance>

<http://www.tolerance.org/lesson/race-and-poverty>

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