

Collaborate with families to support student learning and secure needed services

Effectively Collaborate with Families: Categories of Work

Promote Positive Interactions Between Educators & Families

- Communicate with families openly and honestly in a way that is comfortable for both parties.
- Demonstrate a high level of knowledge in the area they are working in, continue to learn and grow as professionals, and communicate high expectations for students and families.
- Treat families with dignity, honor cultural diversity, and affirm strengths.
- Are available, consistent, and go above and beyond minimum expectations.
- Recognize the strengths of every member of the team, share power with families, and focus on working together with families.
- Are reliable and act in the best interest of the student, sharing their vision and actions with families.

Use Effective Practices for Communicating with Families

- Communicate in a language and format accessible to the family.
- Use face-to-face interactions in planned, formal, and informal meetings (e.g., open house, community/school events, IEP meetings) to communicate with families.
- Use written and digital communication to share formal and informal information about school activities, parent and student rights and responsibilities, and student educational progress.
- Make phone calls to families as needed to build on students' strengths and discuss supports or resources.
- Share information and/or resources with families via course management systems, school websites, and classroom webpages/ blogs.

Suggestions for Faculty to Support Candidates' Learning and Enactment

Introduce – Show exemplar video of a teacher sharing power with family member; discuss effects

Prepare – Simulate meeting with parents in small group; provide positive and constructive feedback.

Enact – Observe or video record teacher candidate participating in and communicating during a meeting with parents; reflect with candidate.

Analyze – Read exemplar and non-exemplar transcripts of meetings with parents; analyze and note areas for improvement.

Introduce – Provide explicit instruction on the importance of effective communication with parent and families.

Prepare – Ask candidates to write example newsletters, invitations, and assignment descriptions for parents and families; provide feedback.

Enact – Assign candidates to attend a meeting, school event, etc., and engage with parents and families specifically to learn strengths; reflect on conversations.

Analyze - Share examples and non-examples of written communications with candidates; analyze in small groups and share out findings.

Questions to Prompt Discussion, Self-Reflection, and Observer Feedback

- What strategies can you use to ensure families feel respected and valued by the school team?
- How does HLP 1-3 connect to the IEP and IEP process?
- Why is communicating with families for a variety of purposes, and not just for formal reasons, important?

CEC Standards

CEC Initial Practice-Based Professional Preparation Standards for Special Educators (Initial K12)

Alignment of the CEC High Leverage Practices with CEC Initial Practice-Based Professional Preparation Standards for Special Educators (Initial K12).

Initial Practice-Based Professional Preparation Standards for Early Interventionists/Early Childhood Special Educators (EI/ECSE)

Alignment of the Division of Early Childhood Recommended Practices (birth- age 5) and CEC High Leverage Practices (age 5-8) with the Initial Practice-Based Professional Preparation Standards for Early Interventionists/Early Childhood Special Educators (EI/ECSE).

Books

Berlinghoff, D. & McLaughlin, V.L. (Eds.) (2022). Practice-Based Standards for the Preparation of Special Educators (The Purple Book). Council for Exceptional Children

McLeskey, J., Barringer, M-D., Billingsley, B., Brownell, M., Jackson, D., Kennedy, M., Lewis, T., Maheady, L., Rodriguez, J., Scheeler, M. C., Winn, J., & Ziegler, D. (2017, January). High-leverage practices in special education. Arlington, VA: Council for Exceptional Children & CEEDAR Center.

McLeskey, J., Maheady, L., Billingsley, B., Brownell, M. T., & Lewis, T. J. (Eds.). (2022). High leverage practices for inclusive classrooms. Routledge.

Pennington, R., Ault, M. J., Courtade, G., Jameson, J. M., & Ruppard, A. (Eds.). (2022). High leverage practices and students with extensive support needs. Taylor & Francis.

Journal Articles

Maheady, L. J., Patti, A. L., Rafferty, L. A., & del Prado Hill, P. (2019). School–university partnerships: One institution’s efforts to integrate and support teacher use of high-leverage practices. *Remedial and Special Education*, 40(6), 356-364.

Tucker, V. E., & Matson, L. J. (2022). Collaboration for School Mental Health Needs: A Case for High-Leverage Practices in a Culturally Responsive Framework. *TEACHING Exceptional Children*, 00400599221115623.

Wilkinson, C., & Potts, E. (2022). Role Play Activities in Small Programs: What, Why, Where, and How?. *Journal of Special Education Preparation*, 2(2), 6-17.