

# **SFUSD Parent Engagement & Partnership Plan**

**Board of Education Resolution #94-28A2**

**June 2010**

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We have worked together across the community and district to gather parent, staff and community input into this Plan and draft a district vision for parent engagement for SFUSD.

Initial district departments and initiatives involved in the planning included:

- Child Development Program
- Family & Community Engagement Team
- New Day for Learning
- Office of School/Family Partnership
- Parent Advisory Council

Initial community-based partners included:

- Chinese for Affirmative Action
- Coleman Advocates
- Parents for Public Schools
- SF Family Support Network
- SF PTA
- Zellerbach Family Foundation

The planning team developed outcomes it hoped to attain from the planning process, including that the Plan includes strategies for ongoing communications and accountability; the Plan creates training on parent engagement and outreach to under-represented parents; and that the Plan improves alignment and coordination of the district’s strategies with community structures.

For more information, contact:  
SFUSD Office of School/Family Partnership  
Deena Zacharin, Director

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<sup>1</sup> SFUSD acknowledges that there are many different family configurations represented in our diverse school district. The term “parent” as used herein means any caregiver who supports a child’s education, including, but not limited to, grandparent, guardian, and/or older sibling.

## A. Introduction

SFUSD is committed to changing the power dynamic between teachers and parents and the relationship between the educational system and the communities we serve. We must acknowledge how this power dynamic has historically disempowered parents in our most marginalized communities from advocating for higher expectations and better outcomes for their children. As we intensify our interaction between parents and schools it will lead to greater levels of understanding, mutual learning, and shared leadership. Partnerships evolve. As we hold each other accountable for raising expectations for all students, we expect to see the culture of change and social justice we seek to create in our schools.

While San Francisco has the highest average student performance of the large urban districts in California, it also has the widest gap between the district average and the lowest performing students. The deep disparities in the academic experiences of our students and families in SFUSD mirror a pattern that has developed in the United States in the last 50 years.<sup>2</sup> We must explicitly address the persistently low-performing schools and relentlessly reach out to the parents of the students in these schools, who are disproportionately African American, Latino, English Learners, and Pacific Islander and/or in high poverty, in addition to our parents of students in Special Education.

As a district, we are committed to working with, and listening to, our partners to reach deeper and systemic levels of engagement. We know that “listening to families is more than a favor to parents; it is essential to children thriving as learners.”<sup>3</sup> Our families have consistently maintained that they want to be a partner in their children’s education, and to share governance of our schools. Moreover, years of research, and our district’s best practices, provide documentation that when parents are effective partners in their children’s education, students are more likely to earn high grades and test scores, enroll in higher-level programs, pass their classes, earn credits, be promoted, attend school regularly, graduate, and go on to postsecondary education.<sup>4</sup> Recognizing the voice of our families, as well as the research, SFUSD is committed to honestly and effectively partnering with every parent to educate every child well.

We also recognize that most barriers to parent involvement are found within school and district practices, not within parents.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, research has shown that schools can take deliberate actions which enhance parent engagement. The actions shown to have most impact on achievement are “(1) school efforts to reach out to parents, to engage them directly in the processes of strengthening student learning; (2) teacher efforts to become knowledgeable about student culture and the local community and

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<sup>2</sup> Beyond the Talk, *SFUSD Strategic Plan 2008-2012*

<sup>3</sup> Meier, Deborah, *In Schools We Trust*, 2002.

<sup>4</sup> Henderson, Anne. T. and Mapp, Karen L., *A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement*, 2002.

<sup>5</sup> National Community Education Association, 1996.

to draw on this awareness in their lessons; and (3) strengthening the network among community organizations, to expand services for students and their families.”<sup>6</sup>

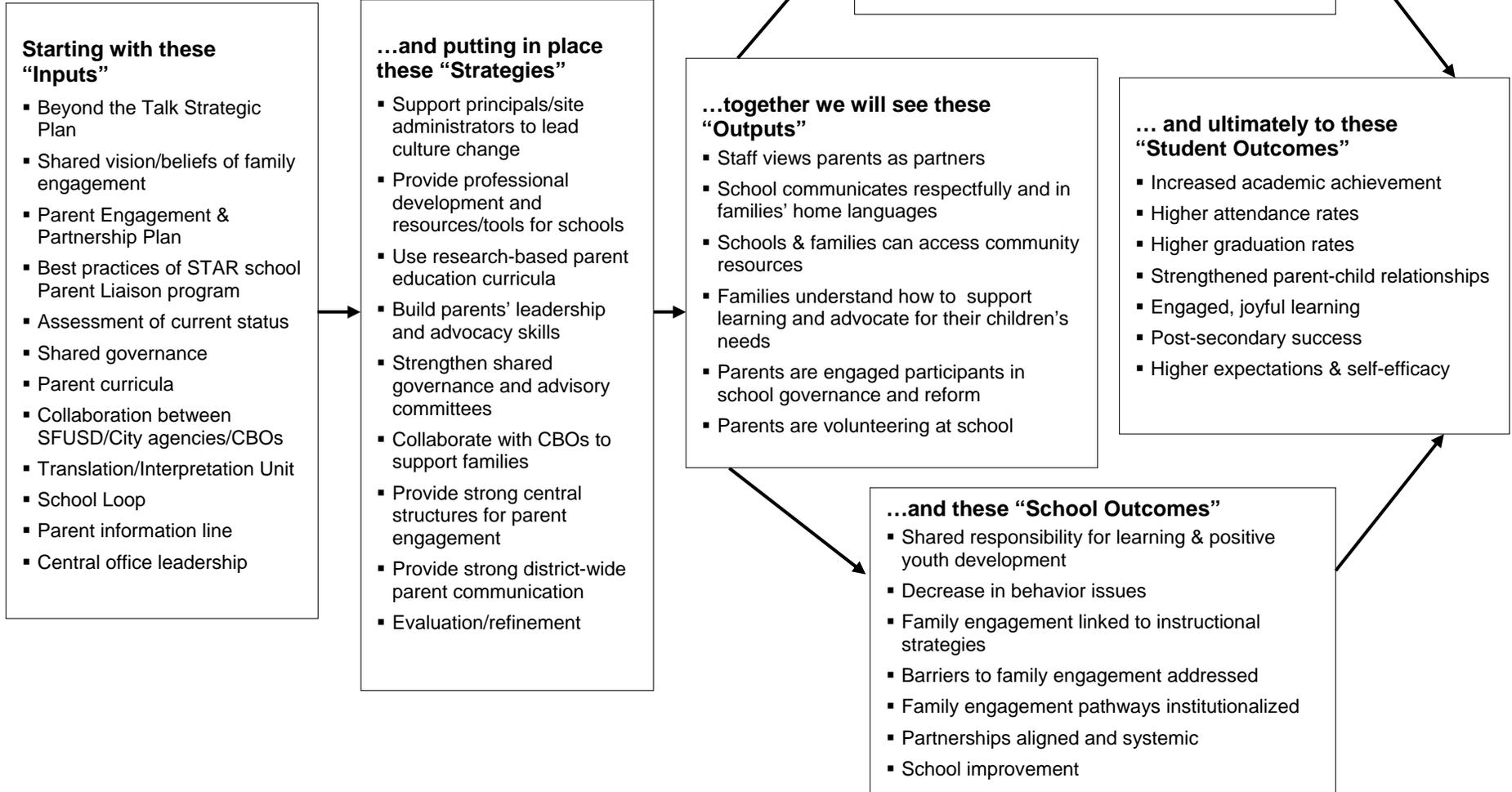
In SFUSD, we have worked to put in place the structures necessary to create access for families to partner with the district in their children’s education. Today, we endeavor to move further, and make a commitment as a community to re-examine our beliefs and values about the relationship between schools and parents. To further this effort, the Board of Education approved a resolution in May 2009 to create this “Parent Engagement and Partnership Plan.” We know of no other districts that have implemented such an aggressive plan for family engagement. We know we will learn from the actions we take under this plan, and we will continue to improve our efforts as we learn together.

Our Parent Engagement and Partnership Plan defines the District’s vision for and commitment to engaging parents. Building upon a clear expression of SFUSD’s Purpose and Beliefs (Appendix 3), and a Theory of Action (Section B), we have developed an Action Plan (Section C). A Timeline and Measurements will be determined to implement in our schools and central offices in order to bring our beliefs to life. We have also formulated our vision for Parent-Engaging/Parent-Partnering Schools (Appendix 1), describing the best practice strategies that school sites will implement on this path.

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<sup>6</sup> Bryk, Anthony S., *Organizing Schools for Improvement: Lessons from Chicago*, (2010)

## B. A Research-Based Theory of Change for Family Engagement



## C. Action Plan

### Goal 1

#### Assist schools in deepening a culture of partnership with parents

Balanced Score Card Goal 2: Achievement

#### Activity 1a

##### Professional Development and Support for Site Administrators (PreK-12)

SFUSD will prepare site administrators to continue the culture-shift among teachers and staff, change perceptions about parent engagement, and facilitate challenging conversations with staff, students, parents, and community partners about how to change the power dynamic between schools and families that has served to disempower historically marginalized families in their children's education. SFUSD will:

- Provide support to site administrators via structures such as new quarterly professional development specific to parent engagement, and ongoing structures such as summer administrators' institutes and monthly principal meetings. Infuse parent engagement research into relevant Professional Learning Communities and/or initiate new PLCs. Initiate on-site coaching/support for administrators, e.g., via parent liaisons, regional support, central staff. Provide site administrators with parent engagement strategies and communication techniques to bring back to teachers and staff, including training on shared school governance and holding committee elections.
- Help site administrators integrate and align parent engagement with the school's existing community-building programs, governance structures, and academic curricula, including strategies to ensure family involvement in Balanced Scorecard planning and monitoring.
- Initiate more intensive training and support to groups of school sites identified as having highest needs for parent engagement and partnership.

#### Activity 1b

##### Professional development and support for teachers and school staff

Knowing the students' home cultures and community well "is essential to the effective design of classroom lessons that advance academic learning for all."<sup>7</sup> Teachers and staff will receive support from site administrators, colleagues, parent liaisons, parent leaders, and district staff as they build their skills in working with parents using an asset-based and culturally responsive framework.

Opportunities will include:

- Site-based faculty meetings and other professional development offerings, where teachers and staff will receive research-based information on the relationship between staff and parents and the equity issues related to engaging marginalized families, opportunities to build relationships with parents, and current data on the impact of parent engagement.
- Professional learning communities/workshops for regional clusters or clusters of like schools, on relevant topics, including, but not limited to, shared governance, cultural competencies, challenges and needs of

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<sup>7</sup> Bryk, 58

English Learner and high poverty communities, strategies for using classroom volunteers, customer service skills, project management skills to lead successful parent engagement initiatives, restorative approaches, School Loop, and home visits.

- Building capacity through coaching staff in planning and implementation of parent outreach and engagement activities to increase the percentage of teachers who report increased knowledge of parent engagement strategies.
- Training for afterschool staff to align their parent engagement efforts with the school day.
- School Loop training and technical support for staff to increase usage of the technology to communicate with parents.

### **Activity 1c**

#### **Resources and Tools for Schools to Support Parent Engagement**

Multiple resources will be provided to schools to assist them in planning, implementing, and assessing their capacities for parent engagement and partnership. District staff (central/regional staff, parent liaisons) will be available to support schools in their implementation. These tools will be offered in multiple languages, and include:

- *Self-Assessment Scale*: For site administrators, School Site Councils, staff, and parent leaders to review their school's current parent engagement capacities, reflect on outcomes, and set priorities for improvement, as aligned with our district's framework for essential supports. (See Appendix below.)
- *Toolkit*: Clear guidance on how to access district resources for key parent engagement tasks: translation/interpretation, SSC/ELAC/SAC trainings, and more.
- *Translation and Interpretation*: Guidance to assist schools in utilizing the district's Translation & Interpretation Unit (TIU), including a flowchart of processes and procedures, self-assessment scale to help schools develop their infrastructure, guides to using trained interpreters, and online database of common translated documents. Continue training in partnership with SF EdFund for volunteers/staff that provide translation and interpretation. Information about trained volunteers available through the TIU.
- *Data*: On current levels of parent engagement and satisfaction, disaggregated by school site, level and ethnicities, and connected to achievement, behavior and attendance.
- *Best Practices*: Examples of emerging, promising, and exemplary practices in District schools, including multiple communication strategies with parents (e.g., School Loop, newsletter, planner, weekly envelope, website, back-to-school nights, PTA/PTO meetings, SSC/ELAC/SAC meetings, etc.); linkages with administrators and/or staff at these schools for modeling and networking.
- *Parent Workshop Models*: Sample curricula, agendas, speaker notes, handouts, and outreach flyers to assist schools with key topics such as understanding the school system, college access, A-G requirements and financial aid, School Loop, parents' rights, children's rights, home activities to support school success and issues facing youth in our community (such as gangs and other high risk behaviors).
- *Balanced Scorecards*: Toolkit of parent engagement & partnership strategies to support schools in achieving their BSC objectives.
- Home visits: Support and resources for teachers to make home visits.

### **Activity 1d**

#### **Training and Curricula to Support Parent Partnership**

Opportunities will be provided both at the school-level and district-level to empower parents as advocates for their children, and take shared responsibility for learning. "The most powerful effects

are likely to accrue as teachers seek to involve parents more directly in their children's learning."<sup>8</sup> District staff will highlight these strong, evidence-based resources and foster implementation by principals and school staff. Increasingly, staff will be trained to present parent programs in *multiple languages*. Wherever possible, we will blend training for parents and staff to cross-train wherever possible. Opportunities will include:

- Training and support for parents to be advocates for change, including effective practices (and legal requirements) for School Site Councils, School Advisory Committees, English Learner Advisory Committees, site-level advisory committees for Special Education, and district-level advisory committees (including but not limited to the District English Learner Advisory Committee, the District Advisory Committee, the Parent Advisory Council, the Community Advisory Committee for Special Education and others), to increase the percentage of African American, Latino, English Learner and Pacific Islander parents and parents of students in Special Education who feel empowered to take leadership roles in their schools and at the district level.
- School-wide pro-social/community-building curricula that have parent engagement components (e.g. *Caring School Communities, Tribes*) to increase positive behavior and attendance.
- Parent education curricula including *I'm Here and Ready to Learn, Project Inspire, PREPS: Parent Resources & Education for Post-Secondary Success, Parent Services Project Parent Leadership Institute* and *Stronger Together* and *Positive Solutions* (child development centers) to increase the number of parents who understand how to keep their child on track for college and career.
- Parent/Teacher conferences to share information about student performance, including receiving at-home strategies to support classroom learning to increase the number of parents who feel empowered in their shared role in their child's education.
- Support for parents of children with special needs by trained peer mentors at each site, in partnership with the community-based organization *Support for Families with Children with Disabilities*.
- Computer training on using School Loop for parents at each schools at least twice yearly to increase the number of parents using School Loop to communicate with their child and teacher about staying on track for school success.

## Goal 2 Strengthen Community Partnerships to Facilitate Strong Family Engagement

### Balanced Score Card Goal 1: Access and Equity

Engaging our most marginalized parents starts with relentless outreach. Schools will partner with community-based organizations (CBOs) and parent organizations, using a community-schools approach. Recognizing that effective change comes from "outside in" as well as internally, the district's partnerships with community-based organizations will be critical to community organizing that empowers parents as advocates for their child and school. Moreover, "a school's capacity to partner with community services has a direct impact on the effectiveness of the supplemental resources available to support learning."<sup>9</sup> Priorities for enhanced collaboration include:

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<sup>8</sup> Bryk, 57

<sup>9</sup> Bryk, 59

**Activity 2a****Partner with community-based organizations for outreach, organizing, and leadership development**

- Collaborate with and support community partners to offer new and/or expanded advocacy-oriented leadership training that values and draws upon the community's languages, cultures, and knowledge to inform teaching and learning for each student.
- Link schools with CBOs whose mission includes parent/family organizing. Assist these CBOs in bringing information into the community to increase the number of families and the percentage of historically marginalized families with the tools and information to support student success.
- Sustain monthly meetings with the Parent Involvement Coalition (a group of organizations representing parents, see Appendix), for collaborative work on district initiatives, to provide parent and/or staff trainings, and to co-sponsor citywide parent engagement events.
- Ensure each school has an active and growing PTA/PTO that holds regular meetings throughout the school year, to increase the number of historically marginalized parents with opportunities to connect with other families at school and build leadership skills.
- Identify ways to give access to School Loop to CBO staff to ensure team working with student has information necessary to provide targeted services.

**Activity 2b****Collaborate with community agencies to provide resources to families**

- Facilitate partnerships between schools (or clusters of schools) and the city's Family Resource Centers (FRCs) and other family support agencies. Increase coordination and alignment so that these partners can help ensure that all families have access to basic resources, school readiness, adult education, ESL courses and neighborhood resources. Train district staff to understand the family support standards and practices used by FRCs. Adopt family support standards to align with citywide family support expectations.
- Provide schools with a matrix of diverse CBO resources available in their neighborhood and the broader community. Continue to outreach to CBOs and FRCs, to provide them with orientation on the school system.
- Continue outreach and collaborations with institutions of higher education and organizations whose mission is to develop a college-going culture to increase the number of parents who receive the information and skills they need to support college access.
- Identify and link with community partners to support English Learner families by providing culturally and linguistically appropriate information and services.

### **Goal 3**

## **Expand SFUSD's organizational and accountability structures for family engagement**

### **Balanced Score Card Goal 3: Accountability**

Through central, site and regional support, SFUSD will improve its capacity for family partnership and responsiveness to parent voices. Structures will be strengthened to facilitate both implementation and evaluation, including:

#### **Activity 3a**

### **Strengthen the district's central structures for parent engagement.**

- Provide coordinated planning, oversight and evaluation of parent engagement initiatives through the Office of School/Family Partnership (OSFP), to ensure parent engagement is infused and nurtured in all district practices. The OSFP will be a central point of access for parents.
- Integrate parent engagement into the work of all appropriate central office divisions, rather than being considered "stand alone" or a short-term initiative.
- Create a coherent budget to equitably prioritize the plan's actions.
- Form a diverse team of parents, staff and administrators to analyze the current status of parent engagement strategies at sites and central office, create detailed implementation plans (including timelines/measurements/responsible parties), monitor implementation of, and communication about, this Plan. Include regular updates on implementation in the Superintendent's Cabinet Meeting agendas and a semi-annual update to Board of Education.
- Assess capacity of schools and support implementation of this Plan through area teams and Parent Liaisons.
- Create linguistically and culturally diverse area teams to support all the schools in a region. The district will work towards ensuring each school includes bilingual staff in appropriate languages.
- Create welcoming parent resource center in central office.

#### **Activity 3b**

### **Strengthen the district's central structures for communication with families**

- Strengthen process for input, feedback, and shared decision-making to ensure parent voice is considered in major district initiatives in a timely, inclusive manner.
- Strengthen the district website, parent-student handbook, and other avenues of communication, to better inform parents of opportunities for leadership in district committees, including applications for district-level advisory committees and task forces. Use these communication methods to inform families and staff about this Plan.
- Ensure parents have access to all information relevant to the learning goals and progress of their children, including at regular parent meetings at school sites (in parent friendly versions, in all needed languages, and in multiple formats). Investigate online systems that enable parents to track progress in real-time.

- Create a path of communication from parents to district and schools to log complaints, ask questions, and have voices heard.
- Provide training, support and tools to administrators, school staff, and parents to support communication efforts and to jointly develop customer service and communication protocols.
- Develop plan for increasing back-to-school events to each semester in secondary schools to enable parents to communicate with their students' teachers in spring semester.

### **Activity 3c**

#### **Incorporate parent engagement and partnership in district accountability and staff evaluations**

- Refine the district's annual parent and staff surveys to include the relevant measures included in this plan (see Appendix: Evidence of Success).
- Develop a system of using data from parent concerns and contacts to proactively address issues of concern.
- Develop instrument to measure the effectiveness of parent engagement efforts including Parent Liaisons.
- Strengthen structures for including parents in the hiring and evaluation process for teachers and administrators.
- Incorporate the implementation of this Plan in evaluation of appropriate administrators.

## D. Appendix

### Appendix 1: School-Site Best Practices What does a Parent-Engaging/Parent-Partnering School Look Like?

	<b>Emerging</b> <i>School is beginning to implement Parent Engagement &amp; Partnership</i>	<b>Promising</b> <i>School meets basic standards for Parent Engagement &amp; Partnership</i>	<b>Exemplary</b> <i>School is an example of best practice standards in Parent Engagement &amp; Partnership</i>
<b>Desired Outcomes and Activities:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents/caregivers feel welcome in the school. School staff fosters an inclusive atmosphere.</li> <li>• Parents/caregivers report that school staff communicates respectfully, in families’ home languages.</li> <li>• Parents/caregivers are increasingly participating in PTA/PTO and/or volunteering at school.</li> <li>• The school provides many forums to help parents with at-home family learning activities.</li> <li>• Parents are engaged participants in school governance via an active SSC and advisory committees.</li> <li>• The school is a hub for information and services to families.</li> </ul>		
<b>1. Welcoming Environment</b> BSC 3.2	Welcoming <b>signage and a bulletin board</b> in appropriate languages are hung in the school lobby. The <b>front office staff</b> welcomes parents. The Principal budgets for food and childcare at parent activities. Meetings are held at times and locations convenient to parents.	Parents are <b>welcomed personally</b> by front office staff <b>in appropriate languages</b> . The school has designated a <b>“Parent Resource Center”</b> room in addition to signage and bulletin boards. The Principal budgets for food and childcare at parent activities.	<b>Teachers</b> call targeted parents to <b>welcome</b> them to school. New parents are introduced to a <b>“buddy,”</b> such as a PTA leader.
<b>2. School-to-Home and Home-to-School Communications</b> BSC 3.2	The school distributes a <b>monthly</b> translated newsletter, a weekly planner or communications folder, and uses the AutoDialer; all are <b>translated</b> into home languages. <b>Home/school compacts</b> are collected. <b>Parent/teacher conferences</b> are held semi-annually in ES/MS.	Communication strategies include a <b>variety</b> of methods. <b>Cultural and linguistic needs</b> are taken into account in communications, including interpretation at meetings. Parents know how to reach <b>teachers</b> and have a monthly Principal chat. Teachers use School Loop to update parents on assignments, grades, and attendance.	Teachers and parents are in <b>routine communication</b> . Meetings are held in <b>multiple locations</b> to facilitate attendance. The school actively helps parents access <b>School Loop</b> . Principal holds regular parent meetings and posted office hours.
<b>3. Parenting Education</b> BSC 1.1	School provides parenting information through <b>newsletter and bulletin board</b> . Parents are <b>informed</b> when children do not adhere to expectations and when they are doing well.	<b>Monthly and/or weekly</b> parent education is implemented based on parent surveys. Parents are taking <b>leadership roles</b> in the parent education programs. School provides information on <b>resources</b> of the Student Support Services Department.	The school provides <b>comprehensive training for parents</b> on improving academics and positive behavior. <b>Parents</b> design, implement, and evaluate the parenting education programs. Discussion topics include academics, academic socialization, and <b>college &amp; career planning</b> .

<p><b>4. Teacher/ Parent Partnership</b> BSC 2.3</p>	<p>Schools hold Back to School Night in September. Parents receive <b>report cards and CST test data</b>. <b>Parent/student/teacher conferences</b> are held semi-annually in ES/MS. The school provides parents with <b>written information</b> about approaches for home learning and expectations for student behavior.</p>	<p>Parents receive progress reports and school-based assessment results. Teachers communicate with parents when students appear to be at risk of receiving grades of D or F. High schools hold a second Back to School Night in January. <b>Staff receives training</b> on working with parents. The school provides <b>workshops and parent-teacher conferences</b> with strategies for learning at home. Staff offers 1-to-1 outreach.</p>	<p>Teachers give <b>home activities to support learning</b>. Schools utilize <b>student-led parent conferences to share progress and goal-setting</b>. <b>School Loop</b> links parents to resources. Surveys indicate that <b>parents feel supported and listened to by staff</b>, and had their questions answered.</p>
<p><b>5. Volunteer Recruitment, Training, Scheduling</b> BSC 1.3</p>	<p>School staff is familiar with <b>SFUSD and SF School Volunteers (SFSV) procedures</b>. Volunteers are recruited on an <b>event</b> basis.</p>	<p><b>Parent volunteers</b> are visible at all school events and in the classroom. Volunteers are <b>thanked personally and publically</b>. The school keeps a <b>central list</b> of volunteers and <b>opportunities</b>. Parents are <b>active participants</b> in the PTA/PTO.</p>	<p>Volunteer <b>training schedule</b> is posted. The school keeps a <b>database</b> of parent and CBO volunteers. The school names a <b>“volunteer of the month”</b> and “volunteer of the year.” <b>Parents of special needs students</b> are trained as mentors for other parents.</p>
<p><b>6. Decision-Making</b> BSC 1.2</p>	<p>Parents are well informed via <b>flyers, newsletter and meetings</b> about the possibilities of engagement on governing committees such as SSC, ELAC/ DELAC, and SAC/DAC. Timely, authentic elections are held.</p>	<p>Parents are <b>active and equal participants</b> in the SSC and advisory committees. The school has a clear <b>School/Family Partnership Plan</b>. Staff and parents create Action Team for Partnership (ATP).</p>	<p>Parents are <b>confident</b> in asking "hard questions" to those who are making school decisions. ATP <b>aligns activities</b> with the school's Balanced Scorecard.</p>
<p><b>7. Community Resources for Families</b> BSC 3.2</p>	<p>The school conducts a <b>parent survey</b> about needs for family and community services.</p>	<p>Families view the school as a <b>hub for information and resources</b>. The school provides <b>shared space</b> for some CBO services. Families receive <b>SAP referrals</b> to CBOs.</p>	<p>The school has a <b>close working relationship</b> with the neighborhood's Family <b>Resource Center</b> to link families with needed resources.</p>

## Appendix 2: Evidence of Success

We will track both quantitative and qualitative data of our district's success in parent partnership. Our measures are grounded in national standards developed by Joyce Epstein of the National Network of Partnership Schools, and are inclusive of diverse aspects of parent engagement.

### **Welcoming Schools: Parents/caregivers feel welcome in the school.**

#### *Evidence of Success:*

- Quantitative Evidence: Parent Survey, conducted annually.
- Qualitative Evidence: Are parents/visitors welcomed personally by front office staff? Is the bulletin board multilingual? Do teachers phone parents?

### **Learning Communities: Parents attend many learning forums at school.**

#### *Evidence of Success:*

- Quantitative Evidence: Parent Survey. Frequency of parent workshops.
- Qualitative Evidence: Does the school survey parents on family needs? Do parents design, implement, and/or evaluate programs at the school?

### **Two-way Communication: School staff communicates respectfully with parents.**

#### *Evidence of Success:*

- Quantitative Evidence: Percentage of parent letters and meetings that are translated. Frequency of newsletters, other written communications, principal chats, parent/teacher conferences.
- Qualitative Evidence: Can parents contact teachers by phone, email, and in person? Do parents feel supported and listened to by staff?

### **Teacher/Parent Partnership: Family participation is integral to students' education.**

#### *Evidence of Success:*

- Quantitative Evidence: Frequency of distribution of at-home strategies for learning.
- Qualitative Evidence: Do parents understand the learning expectations? Do parents report having questions answered? Are parents accessing School Loop?

### **Volunteerism: Parents/caregivers are volunteering at school events and in the classroom.**

#### *Evidence of Success:*

- Quantitative Evidence: Number and diversity of PTA/PTO members and other parent volunteers.
- Qualitative Evidence: Are parent volunteers visible in all classrooms and school events?

### **Leadership and Advocacy: Parents are engaged participants in school governance.**

#### *Evidence of Success:*

- Quantitative Evidence: Satisfaction survey of SSC, ELAC, and SAC parent members.
- Qualitative Evidence: Are parents asking questions about and informing school policy? Are African American, Latino, Pacific Islander parents and parents of EL and students and Special Education students taking leadership positions in the school and district?

### **Connecting with Community Resources: The school is a hub for family resources.**

#### *Evidence of Success:*

- Quantitative Evidence: Number of CBOs that provide services to families on-site.
- Qualitative Evidence: Does the school have a Family Room? Are CBOs welcomed?

### **Appendix 3: Our Purpose & Beliefs**

Across SFUSD, we have heard from parents, staff, partners, and community members who feel a *shared responsibility* to educate the youth of our city. A common theme in our schools' experience as well as in current research is that engaged *families support student achievement*. Yet too often our district systems and school cultures do not reflect this shared responsibility.

To overcome these systemic and cultural barriers, SFUSD has defined the fundamental values that are guiding our Parent Engagement & Partnership Plan. These closely held beliefs provide the framework for the challenging and groundbreaking path that lies ahead. As our schools and families strive to forge a higher standard for parent-engaging/parent-partnering schools, we will count on these core values to guide our choices of actions and strategies.

Above all, SFUSD's responsibility is to make social justice a reality by diminishing the historic power of demographics as it relates to student achievement. We also have a responsibility to keep our promises to students and families. Our core beliefs are listed below.

#### **SFUSD believes that parents are our partners in education. Parents are the primary leaders and advocates for their student's success.**

Parents are a child's most important teacher. At schools, our job is to treat parents as equal participants in education and recognize parents as children's first and most important teacher. Schools will support families to participate in their shared responsibility for learning, which includes talking to their children about school, keeping them focused on learning and homework, raising expectations, and helping their children plan for college and career. Parents should be able to expect our schools to honor their contributions.

#### **SFUSD knows that parents count on their school for information about their student's progress and the learning goals that should be met.**

At schools, our job is to provide parents with the information they want and need to further their children's academic progress. When a student has success, parents should hear the good news right away. Parents should also hear right away when their child is having trouble in school – when a student is late, absent, failing, missing homework, or having any other challenges. Parents rely on their child's teacher to keep them up-to-date.

#### **SFUSD knows there are many valuable ways that parents engage in their school.**

At schools, our job is to value and support each parent's chosen forms of engagement. Parents express their shared responsibility for their children's education in different ways: by helping their child to learn at home, providing feedback to their child's teacher and principal, attending their children's school performances, assisting in the classroom, and getting involved on committees. Schools should honor these diverse forms of engagement.

#### **SFUSD believes that organized and empowered parents help our schools improve.**

Parents want to have a say in their children's education. At schools, our job is to set up governance systems that validate parents' voice in school decision-making and budgeting. Schools need parents' input, experience, and guidance. All parents should be collaborators in the development of goals and new programs such as restorative justice, community building,

and academic curricula. Parents should be able to find important information about their school in their home language.

### **SFUSD will engage historically marginalized parents in school leadership and partnership opportunities.**

Historically marginalized parents want to be respected and included in their school community. At schools, our job is to ensure that historically marginalized parents are connected to their child's teachers, are recruited and trained for school governance committees, and help define the school's strategies for ending disparities. Parents should also be able to find important information about the school in their home language. Engaged parents will help SFUSD achieve its goal to diminish the historic power of demographics as it relates to student achievement.

### **SFUSD wants parents to freely voice their feedback.**

Parents should feel confident that when they ask the "hard questions" to those who are making school decisions, they will receive honest answers. At schools, our job is to listen to and respect parents' input. Parents should have many opportunities at their school to provide feedback, both at group meetings and individually. At the district level, parents should know how to report concerns, ask questions, and find straightforward answers.

### **SFUSD welcomes parents to volunteer at our schools.**

Students benefit when caring parents are visibly involved in the school. At schools, our job is to create many opportunities for parent volunteerism in student learning: in classrooms, at school events, and at home. Parents should be welcomed by school staff and thanked for their efforts.

### **SFUSD believes parents want to find family resources and parent education at their school.**

Parents are lifelong learners, and they are positive role models for their children. At schools, our job is to provide a welcoming space for parents to learn, develop skills, organize, and find resources their family needs. Schools should create a culture of service and support that includes parent education and partnerships with community-based organizations.

### **SFUSD will support teachers, staff, and administrators to work collaboratively with parents.**

Parents want their school to be prepared to engage their partnership. Our district will support teachers, staff, and administrators in developing their capacity to work collaboratively with all parents. Staff will receive preparation in how to honor parents' contributions, connect classroom learning to parents' strengths, develop their cultural competency, and embrace true shared responsibility for school success. These skills are essential to improving our schools. We understand that some teachers and administrators may need professional development, coaching, or technical assistance to achieve this goal. Our district will provide models that highlight success, create infrastructures that build capacity, and hold ourselves accountable for engaging in a school-family partnership.

## Appendix 4: Parent Involvement Coalition Members

The Parent Involvement Coalition (PIC) is an informal group of parent organizations that meet monthly to collaborate on district parent engagement initiatives, including this plan. The organizations below participate in the PIC and provide leadership training and advocacy for SFUSD families.

### **Chinese for Affirmative Action**

**[caasf.org](http://caasf.org)**

CAA organizes public school parents and provides leadership development to improve parental involvement of English Learners in San Francisco Unified School District. Through the Visitacion Valley Parents Association, an education and advocacy group for limited-English proficient (LEP) parents, CAA supports parent-run advocacy trainings, educational workshops, and civic engagement opportunities.

### **Coleman Advocates for Children & Youth**

**[colemanadvocates.org](http://colemanadvocates.org)**

A local community organization that works to transform San Francisco's services and policies for children, youth and their families in order to create a more family-friendly community.

### **Community Advisory Committee for Special Education**

**[sfcacsped.org](http://sfcacsped.org)**

The CAC advocates for effective Special Education programs and services, and advises the Board of Education on policies, priorities, programs, and parent education. Joining the CAC gives parents an opportunity to make a difference in the way Special Education is conducted in the schools.

### **Our Family Coalition**

**[ourfamily.org](http://ourfamily.org)**

Our Family Coalition promotes the civil rights and well-being of Bay Area lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) families with children and prospective parents through education, advocacy, social networking and grassroots community organizing.

### **Parent Advisory Council**

**[pacsf.org](http://pacsf.org)**

The Parent Advisory Council (PAC) was created by the San Francisco Board of Education as a formal way for parent perspectives to be included in the district's decision-making process. PAC members actively reach out to engage families in district policy discussions and to represent parent concerns to district leaders. The PAC also supports parents to participate in school-site and district-level governance.

### **Parents for Public Schools**

**[ppssf.org](http://ppssf.org)**

A network of parents working together to build quality schools for all San Francisco children by providing parents with information, news and parent-to-parent networking and by developing parent leaders at the school and district level.

**San Francisco Education Fund****[sfedfund.org](https://sfedfund.org)**

By acting as a bridge between the community and the classroom, the Education Fund increases the availability and impact of resources for students and teachers throughout San Francisco public schools.

**SF PTA****[sfpta.org](https://sfpta.org)**

The PTA works to positively impact the lives of all children and families by representing its members and empowering and supporting them with skills in advocacy, leadership, and communication.

**San Francisco Family Support Network****[sffsn.org](https://sffsn.org)**

SFFSN supports and enhances the Family Support system of care throughout San Francisco by providing a collective voice for Family Support; promoting the Family Support Principles and educating about best and promising practice; and advocating for policies and programs that will help to meet the health, educational, safety, and environmental needs of all families.

**Support for Families of Children with Disabilities****[supportforfamilies.org](https://supportforfamilies.org)**

Support for Families is a parent-run San Francisco-based nonprofit organization founded in 1982. It supports families of children with any kind of disability or special health care need as they face challenges.