

Family Engagement in Middle School and High School Student Career Development

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The Goal of Engaging Family in Student Career Development

Family involvement and input are critical components to any robust career development program. To get students to fully engage in their own career development activities, we need parents/family who are *informed, inspired, and know how to help their children*.

General Principles and Practices for Effective, Equitable Family Engagement

Adapted from sources developed by the California Department of Education and PPIC, below are a list of general family engagement principles and examples of some of these principles in practice in the career development context.

Provide the resources and opportunities necessary to appropriately engage families and create investment

1. Reformat school events to make them more focused on **engaged family learning**
 - 💡 *Rather than just taking families through a student's career assessment results, have them complete career assessments themselves*
2. Offer **capacity-building opportunities** for parents to help them help their children meet their educational goals
 - 💡 *Coach and prepare families to execute conversation guides with their students in age-appropriate ways*
3. Provide parents and families with **ongoing** interactive engagement opportunities
 - 💡 *Emphasize how planning in earlier grades doesn't lock students into a path, but creates a starting place for student career exploration*
4. Acknowledge the **contributions and current relationships** of parents and families and communicate understanding of their needs and expectations for their students.
 - 💡 *Have parents reflect on and share their own career development history in meetings*
5. Develop effective **partnerships with the greater school community** and effectively use community resources to support families' needs to enable parents to actively participate in the school
 - 💡 *Ask community partners to cosponsor or present at career-related events like job fairs*

Create a welcoming, accessible environment to make all families feel safe and involved

- Provide **translation**, especially simultaneous translation when possible, for parents and families with a primary language other than English and include opportunities for questions
- Ensure adequate resources for **parents and families with special needs** to understand the proceedings
- Schedule opportunities for parents and families to participate at **times and places conducive for full participation**.
- Provide supports, such as **transportation, food, and child care**, when possible, to enable parents and family members to participate in school and LEA activities
- Use linguistically **accessible communication methods**, accessible to and used by parents, including social media, e-mail, printed letters, telephone and face-to-face communication, and visual aids.
- Be **culturally responsive to diverse families** and use an assets-based approach to understanding families

Featured Strategies

1. College Tours
2. Career Assessment and Exploration Workshops
3. Informative Workshops
4. Invite-Parents-to-Class Days
5. Take-Your-Child-to-Work Days
6. Family-Student Career Fairs
7. Family Volunteer Mentor Program
8. Family Service-Learning Projects
9. Career Development Syllabi/Schedules
10. Family-Student Conversation Guide