



# Family Engagement

*Have you done your homework?*



**Safe Schools** Healthy Students



Barb Flis, Founder  
Parent Action for Healthy Kids



Family Engagement Specialist  
**Safe Schools Healthy Students**  
and Project Aware



**Safe Schools** Healthy Students



# Michigan Department of Education Project Coordinators

---

- Shawn Cannarile, Safe Schools Healthy Students
- Sarah Williams, Project Aware



**Leaders with heart create a masterpiece wherever they go.**

# Michigan's Family Engagement History

---



- Michigan Department of Education
- Michigan Department of Healthy & Human Services
- Parent Action for Healthy Kids



# Department of Education Safe & Supportive Schools (S3) Grant

---

## Family Engagement Outcomes across 22 High Schools

- **Mandatory** Parent Engagement Professional Development (PD)
- **86%** participated in parent engagement offerings beyond the initial required PD
- **73%** reported parent engagement strategies were being implemented or likely to be implemented
- **14%** showed statistically significant progress

# Window of Opportunity

---



putting Michigan on the map as a premier education state

*“We have a tremendous opportunity, working together as a state, to lift student achievement using these goals and strategies. This requires open minds and the will from all involved to make it work.”*

***State Superintendent Brian Whiston***





putting Michigan on the map as a premier education state



Ensure that parents/guardians are engaged and supported partners in their child's education

# The million dollar question!

---





# Problems are familiar! Solutions are not!

---



A decorative wreath made of warm white string lights is centered on a dark background. The word "Dream." is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font across the middle of the wreath. The lights are glowing, creating a soft, warm atmosphere. The background is a dark, solid color, possibly black or dark grey. On the right side of the image, there is a vertical decorative border consisting of blue diagonal lines. On the left side, there is a thin green horizontal line.

**Dream.**

# The Perfect Parent

---





**About Families?**

One step at a time - a success is a success, no matter how small!

---





# Re-frame

How do we get Families to be a part of our work!



How do we **let** Families be a part of our work!

# Are we ready to engage families?

---

- What are our attitudes and beliefs about engaging families?



- Can we agree on a philosophical statement, that is a set of organizational values around engaging families?



# Family Engagement Perception Instrument (FEPI)

---

- Six question instrument
- Validity and reliability testing
- Assess providers who serve children and families in any setting
- Users Guide
- Self scoring instructions with action steps

*I learned in this process the importance of stepping back to evaluate our assumption that providers' are functioning with positive beliefs and attitudes about families. Liz Newell*



# Family Engagement Perception Instrument (FEPI)

## FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PERCEPTION INSTRUMENT DESCRIPTION:

The purpose of this tool is to assess your perceptions of creating and maintaining partnerships with families. Please tell us about yourself:

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_ No. of years in field: \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions:** Please indicate the degree to which you agree with each statement. Please circle your choice.

The term "provider" refers to any person and/or organization at the state, regional or local level that provides direct or indirect services to children and their families and/ or has decision making authority that affects children and families.

1. Families desire to be involved in their child's care and education.

1 Strongly Disagree      2 Disagree      3 Neutral      4 Agree      5 Strongly Agree

2. Creating a partnership between the provider and family has a positive impact on the child.

1 Strongly Disagree      2 Disagree      3 Neutral      4 Agree      5 Strongly Agree

3. It is the responsibility of the provider to ensure that the environment is welcoming to families.

1 Strongly Disagree      2 Disagree      3 Neutral      4 Agree      5 Strongly Agree

4. The provider has a responsibility to address system barriers that prevent families from receiving services that support the well-being of their children.

1 Strongly Disagree      2 Disagree      3 Neutral      4 Agree      5 Strongly Agree

5. Providers would benefit from professional development on family engagement.

1 Strongly Disagree      2 Disagree      3 Neutral      4 Agree      5 Strongly Agree

6. The benefits of developing partnerships with families are not worth the time and effort.

1 Strongly Disagree      2 Disagree      3 Neutral      4 Agree      5 Strongly Agree

This work is supported by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) through its cooperative agreement with Safe Schools Healthy Students and Project AWARE grants from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The contents are solely the responsibility of MDE, and do not necessarily reflect the official views of SAMHSA, or MDHHS.



- Saginaw Public Schools (SS/HS)
- Pathways to Potential Coaches - Validity Testing
- Grand Rapids Public Schools (Project Aware) – Reliability Testing
- Jackson Intermediate School District (Project Aware)



# Family Engagement

- Intentional
- Receives equal time and effort in the grant
- Build connections with state level departments doing family engagement work
- Forming the Michigan Health and Education Partnership (MHEP)



**Problems are familiar!  
Solutions are not!**

# Developing a Philosophical Belief Statement



RESPECT



- Focus groups and meetings with parents and parent leaders
- On-going training and resources in and across all state agencies
- Engage with state family leaders to learn of effective engagement practices

# Family Engagement Heart work and Hard Work

---



If you build it, they will come, but you have to build it!

# 5

## Critical Components Family Engagement

---

1. **Commitment** to full partnerships with families
2. **Transparent Relationship** – Be willing and able to speak and hear the truth
3. **Share responsibility for student success** – Operate without blame or criticism
4. **Embrace individuality** – An absence of focusing on fixing or changing
5. **Appreciation** - Genuine and demonstrable .

# Engaging Families Compassionately

---



***The shift in mindset is key!***

*Shawn Cannarile, SS/HS State Coordinator*

# Barb Flis, Founder

## Parent Action for Healthy Kids

[barb@parentactionforhealthykids.org](mailto:barb@parentactionforhealthykids.org)



Follow Parent Action for Healthy Kids on:

facebook

