Family engagement is a shared effort of families, schools, educators, and community leaders to advance programs, practices, and policies that empower families in every facet of the education and development of children from birth to adulthood. Family engagement takes many forms including parents as first educators, as decision makers about children’s education, health, and well-being, as well as advocates for children’s success. It is recognized that parents, guardians, and families are the primary influence in children’s lives.

According to the Global Family Research Project, when families and educators work together to support children’s learning and development, children are more likely to succeed in school, graduate and stay on their path to college or career.

Transformative Family Engagement (2)
PTA believes that it is time to reimagine family engagement practices and policies for greater equity and effectiveness. The four guiding principles are:

- Inclusive family engagement embraces and values diverse perspectives
- Individualized family engagement meets the unique needs of every family and child
- Integrated family engagement connects and align with the educational system
- Impactful family engagement empowers families to support their child’s success.

PTA National Standards for Family-School Partnership (3)
PTA developed the National Standards for Family-School Partnerships to empower PTA leaders, parents, educators, community members, and students to work together for the educational success of all children and youth. An implementation Guide is available to support local and state PTAs.

Standard 1 - Welcoming All Families into the School Community
Families are active participants in the life of the school, and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to school staff, and to what students are learning and doing in class.

Standard 2 - Communicating Effectively
Families and school staff engage in regular two-way meaningful communication about students learning

Standard 3 - Supporting Student Success
Families and school staff continuously collaborate to support students’ learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and they have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.

Standard 4 - Speaking Up for Every Child
Families are empowered to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.

Standard 5 - Sharing Power
Families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.
Standard 6-Collaborating with Community

Families and school staff collaborate with community members to connect students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

PTA recognizes the research which demonstrates when families are engaged, students achieve more, regardless of socio-economic status, ethnic/racial background, or the parents'/guardians’ education level. The most accurate predictor of a student’s achievement in school is not income or social status. Family engagement is essential for the positive emotional and social development, cultural growth, and academic achievement of every child.

The task of connecting families and schools is both formidable and attainable. Affirming the significance of family engagement has been a priority of National PTA since its founding in 1897. PTA must function as an independent, non-partisan, child advocacy that reflects the community’s collaborative aspirations for all children, to protect the educational, health and well-being of all children.

Adopted: by the 1991 Board of Directors
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