

Best Practices for Involving Parents in Higher Education

Standard 1 – Welcoming All Families into the School Community

Institutions of higher education should ...

- Invite the expertise of families by including them in recruitment, social and cultural activities, policy development, and decision making.
- Give parents access to information about assisting their child with academic success based on the unique population at the institution such as gender, racial and ethnic diversity, disability and other characteristics.
- Helping parents understand the academic environment such as faculty freedom and environment, the academic expectations for their child, advising policy, and institutional culture.
- Providing outreach to parents and family members such as including them in orientation, electronic communication, family weekends, sibling events, and convocation and graduation events.

Standard 2 – Communicating Effectively

Institutions of higher education should ...

- Give consistent messages about specific issues concerning the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, the Jeanne Clery Act, parental notification in event of emergency, housing and residence life, financial aid, counseling, student conduct, and academics.
- Use focused messages that provide opportunities for families to understand student development in college, as well as the institutional goals and philosophies related to family involvement.
- Provide a point of access where parents can direct their concerns or pose questions.

Standard 3 – Supporting Student Success

Institutions of higher education should ...

Provide information to families and students about available academic and social supports that promote educationally purposeful activities.

Strive to be welcoming, affirming, and responsive environments for diverse students and families, including first generation college students, students from diverse socioeconomic class, race and life-style choices.

Provide ongoing assessment of students that evaluates the ways that academic and social supports meet student's needs.

Develop campus policies from ongoing assessment that help transition first year students to college life.

Standard 4 – Speaking Up for Every Child

Provide families with information on ways to teach their children how to be a self-advocate before the beginning the freshman year.

Encourage students to participate in academic, political and social supports at the college.

Develop and maintain a mission-driven parent/family program that reflects the institution's culture and goals of student development.

Standard 5 – Sharing Power

Institutions of higher education should ...

- Involve families in current assessment of programs, services and family needs.
- Involve families in development of family involvement and associations in the institution.
- Involve families in development of crisis planning.
- Involve families in recruitment, support services for students, and serving as a parent member voice about policies and procedures in the institution.
- Recognizing that parents are stakeholders in their child's education.

Standard 6 – Collaborating with the Community

- Communicate resources that are available to students such as tutoring, employment, health and counseling services, ministries, recreation and other services that are accessible to their college student.
- Opportunities for students to organize groups that support specific causes that pertain to their needs.
- Inviting local businesses, policymakers, and other relevant community members to be a part of the campus community as opportunities for service-learning, field study, and internships as well as communicators to the opportunities for employment after graduation.

Standard 7-Providing Professional Development and Pre-Service Training in Partnering with Families for Administrators and Teachers

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