Multi-Tiered Family, School & Community Partnering: "On the Team and at the Table"

Sample Activities

(http://www.cde.state.co.us/rti/FamilyCommunityToolkit.htm)

Multi-Tiered (RtI) Mini-Grant Summit: FSCP Toolkit Training June 28, 2012

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (RtI) Mini-Grant Summit FCSP Toolkit Training Highlights

DEFINITION: *Family, School and Community Partnering* is the collaboration of families, schools, and communities as equal partners in improving learner, classroom, school, and district outcomes. In effective partnering, each stakeholder shares responsibility for learners' success by: (a) establishing and sustaining trusting relationships, (b) understanding and integrating family and school culture, (c) maintaining two-way communication, (d) engaging in collaborative problem-solving, (e) coordinating learning at home, school and in the community, and (f) acknowledging and celebrating progress.

Anchors and Guiding Questions	Emerging*: Establishing Consensus	Developing: Building Infrastructure	Operationalizing: Gaining Consistency	Optimizing: Innovating and Sustaining
Structures: 1. *How is family, school, and community partnering created and established?* 2. *How is ongoing support for and commitment to partnering ensured?*	Staff, families, and community members review current partnering practices. Strengths and challenges associated are identified. Staff identifies and understands the need for improved partnering practices. School leadership reviews current: • school policies & procedures • committee composition • forms & job description • communication, etc for inclusive partnering language, practices, and representation. School leadership examines current roles of staff to identify ways to include staff liaison position(s).	Staff, families, and community members gather relevant family information and develop/revise current partnering structures. All partnering roles & responsibilities are explicitly articulated. School leadership, with input from staff and families, revises current: • school policies & procedures • committee composition • forms & job description • communication, etc to include family partnering. School leadership identifies a staff person to support family-school-community partnering.	Staff, families, and community members implement agreed-upon partnering consistently. The staff engages in a shared definition, understanding of rationale, and common expectations for partnering as an embedded practice. Staff, families, and community members implement the revised changes, build consistency with the new changes, and ensure they are appropriate and useful for the school. Collaborative liaison(s) and community support are offered as needed to staff and family members, with feedback as to effectiveness.	The entire school has an embedded commitment to partnering. Staff reflects on practice, and refinement takes place as needed. Systemic, school-wide partnering is infused within: • organizational infrastructure • role descriptions • policies & procedures • documents • communication Collaborative liaison(s) ensures ongoing support for all staff, students, families, and community members throughout the tiers. School leadership use data to examine effectiveness and quality of partnering.
3. *How will the staff know their partnerships are effective?*	School leadership examines current data and data-collection methods to identify current usefulness of them for evaluating partnering practices.	Staff, families, and community members develop ways to measure the success of their partnering, such as: • participation data • family satisfaction surveys • feedback questionnaires • students' perception • etc	Staff, families, and community members collect data on the success of their partnering. The collected data is examined and adjustments to partnering are made accordingly.	School leadership collects ongoing feedback and data from staff and families as an embedded practice. The school regularly evaluates their partnering structures and makes adjustments based on collected data.

*Each phase of implementation includes and extends the prior phase

Anchors and Guiding Questions	Emerging*: Establishing Consensus	Developing: Building Infrastructure	Operationalizing: Gaining Consistency	Optimizing: Innovating and Sustaining
Processes & Procedures: *4. How is partnering used to benefit each student during universal, targeted, and intensive support?*	Staff, families, and community members discuss and understand how collaborating together benefits learners and families. Knowledge of partnering and why it is effective is understood.	Staff, families, and community members create a tiered partnering framework as part of the tiers *(see "Problem-Solving" rubric)*. Guidelines for partnering with families and community members throughout the tiered framework are outlined.	Families are actively involved in the problem-solving process as equal partners throughout the tiers. Partnering with parents increases as a student's needs increase.	All staff follow partnering process. Families and staff pervasively and mutually share learner data and work together to problem-solve. Adjustments to practices are made accordingly.
	Staff, families, and community members understand partnering as best practice and are committed to partnering.	Staff, families, and community members work collaboratively to develop effective solutions for previously identified challenges.	School put in place solutions, and there is acceptance of the ongoing need to identify concerns and work towards positive outcomes.	Staff, families, and community members collect data and work collaboratively to problem solve any challenges.
	Staff, families, and community members understand the law for identification of students with disabilities.	Staff, families, and community members have a mutual understanding of the law as it relates to problem-solving and the tiers. School leadership outlines clear guidelines for when a disability is suspected.	Staff consistently follows the guidelines for when a disability is suspected and collaborates with families when making decisions related to identification of disabilities.	Data is collected on clarity of and adherence to disability procedures. Adjustments are made accordingly as part of a continuous improvement cycle.
Professional Development *5. How does the staff build their partnering skills and knowledge?*	Staff examines and understands the research behind partnering practices and their beliefs about school and home partnering.	Staff & families identify and receive PD related to partnering practices, including ways to build awareness with their unique student populations.	Staff, families, and community members implement the skills they are learning and receive ongoing PD.	School-wide systems are well-established. Staff regularly examines their PD, using needs-based assessments and data to identify areas for further development.
6. How are families provided with learning opportunities related to partnering and student learning?	Staff, families, and community members examine and collect information on the needs of their families and students related to PD opportunities.	Staff, families, and community members identify activities and events to promote learning opportunities for families and community members.	The identified activities are implemented with consistency, and data is collected to examine the impact of their use.	Family learning opportunities are an embedded practice. Needs-based assessments and data are used to make adjustments to better serve the community.

*Each phase of implementation includes and extends the prior phase

Activity #1

- What is your definition of partnering?

Partnering is _____.

Please share with your team.

DATA/RUBRIC TIP: Ask stakeholders to complete the sentence. Tabulate words and use as feedback; compare with rubric definition.

DATA/RUBRIC TIP: This activity can be used to individually assess educator, family, and community challenges and solutions. Results can be tabulated and disaggregated to guide actions. Periodic use can serve as a monitoring tool.

ACTIVITY #5 and #6
Challenges and Solutions

Name (Optional):
Role with Students (Family Member, Educator, Community):
Affiliation:

Please identify what you see as the three biggest challenges in family-school-community partnering for you (or your team, organization etc.) at this point in time. Do for both educators and families. Then please generate some possible, potential solutions to your identified challenges (a suggestion is two solutions per challenge.)

	Challenges	Solutions
Educators		
Families		

ACTIVITY #7 Multi-Tiered Family & Community Partnering Checklist
DATA/RUBRIC TIP: Ask for individual completion, tabulate for specific roles, use to guide actions.

Intensive Tier - A FEW Families/Staff

___Individualize family-school partnering plans when needed. (Examples: home visits, daily communication)

___Provide school, family, and community wraparound when needed.

___Provide conflict resolution support and process when needed.

Targeted Tier - SOME Families/Staff

___Designate people and process to reach out individually to encourage families and staff who may be hesitant or uncomfortable.

___Include families as equal partners throughout the RtI Problem-Solving Process; provide support and information.

___Support teachers and families in mutually developing and implementing individual student plans; coordinate interventions between home and family. (Examples: ALP, IEP, BIP, ILP)

___Provide support/education groups and targeted resources for families and/or teachers.

___Link with community resources.

Universal Tier - ALL Families/Staff

SCHOOL

___Communicate beliefs: *1. Education is a shared responsibility between home and school; (2) Families are equal partners; (3) Students achieve more when families and schools work together; (4) Community participation supports school success.*

___Share RtI process with all staff, family, and community resources.

___Create caring, culturally responsive climate for all families; provide culture and language liaisons. (Example: family volunteers)

___Provide parenting education, "learning at home", and volunteer opportunities; contact families personally whenever possible. (Example: family to family)

___Make school and classroom visiting available.

___Involve families in school decision-making.

CLASSROOM

___Contact every family to create ongoing, two-way communication. (Example: Ask families best way to share information)

___Ensure each family, including students, understands school/class rules and homework expectations.

___Ensure each family knows how everyone will partner when a student struggles.

___Tell students that school and home are working together to support their success.

(adapted from CDE, 2008b; Epstein et al, 2002)

ACTIVITY #9

Define Family-School Partnering Roles and Responsibilities: Choose One and Name a "Job"

DATA/RUBRIC TIP: Review current staff job descriptions for partnering; develop family, student, community, SAC, PTA/PTO roles.

SCHOOL	HOME
Principal	Family
Teacher	Student
Specialist/School Mental Health	Community Members
"Front Line Staff" (Clerical, other, etc.)	PTA/PTO
School Accountability Committee (SAC)	School Accountability Committee (SAC)

(CDE, 2009)

ACTIVITY # 9
Sample Multi-Tiered Partnering Job Descriptions

Principal
- ✓ Communicate RtI tiered partnering philosophy and processes to staff and families
- ✓ Provide permission to shift staff practices, responsibilities and time
- ✓ Support teacher and family needs for training and encouragement
- ✓ Supervise RtI partnering
- ✓ Include partnering "on the agenda"
- ✓ Include partnering in all policies and publications
- ✓ Invite community resources to partner

Classroom Teachers
- ✓ Engage in two-way communication and relationship building with all families
- ✓ Work together with families to mutually support a struggling student in the universal tier
- ✓ Team in the RtI problem-solving process when a student is struggling
- ✓ Tell students that home and school are partners
- ✓ Share class rules and homework expectations with students and families
- ✓ Encourage learning at home and school every day

Educational Specialists
(Gifted Educators, Special Educators, Interventionists)
- ✓ Same as for classroom teachers
- ✓ Explain specific role and expertise to families and community team members
- ✓ Apply specific skills to teaming process

School Mental Health Professionals
(School Psychologists, Social Workers, Counselors)
- ✓ Serve as collaborative consultant/liaison for partnering in RtI problem-solving process
- ✓ Support school-wide universal, targeted and intensive partnering processes
- ✓ Link families with community resources
- ✓ Provide conflict resolution skills when needed
- ✓ Team with language and cultural liaisons
- ✓ Apply specific skills to teaming process

"Front Line" Staff (Clerical, Custodial, and Cafeteria)

✓ "Meet and greet" all families when in building
✓ Welcome family volunteers
✓ Provide expertise in ensuring all families have access to needed services

Families

✓ Share in ongoing two-way home-school communication and relationships
✓ Work together with teachers to support a struggling student
✓ Team in RtI with school and community when a student is struggling; do this by sharing information and helping plan, implement, and monitor coordinated interventions
✓ Tell student that home and school are partnering
✓ Support learning at home by (1) communicating about school with frequent and systematic discussions about school, encouragement regarding schoolwork, and providing resources) and (2) supervising homework, TV viewing, and after school activities and (3) implementing or monitoring any planned specific interventions
✓ Ask school for help and support when needed

Students

✓ Know the school values home-school partnering
✓ Share with home about school and school about home, including completing home and class learning assignments
✓ Know and advocate for own learning needs at home and school
✓ Participate on own planning team if appropriate

Parent-Teacher Organization

✓ Reach out to all families
✓ Support tiered partnering practices
✓ Provide family expertise and "parent-to-parent" support
✓ Provide family education opportunities
✓ Create a "family center" in the school

Community Resources

✓ Know about RtI and partnering components in the school
✓ Support schools and families in communicating and collaborating
✓ Help plan implement, and monitor specific student interventions when appropriate
✓ Support school success as a research-based resiliency factor