Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)
Family, School, and Community Partnering (FSCP)
Implementation Guide
Supporting Every Student's Learning

FOLLOW-UP

Develop FSCP Learning and Support Systems

In order for stakeholder partnering to effectively and continuously improve student outcomes, there must be ongoing learning and support for adults in the school community. There must be continuity, shared understanding, and commitment to sustainability. There must be systems in place. The following are suggested system components from three education arenas.

- **Implementation Science** (Fixson, Naoom, Blasé, Friedman, & Wallace, 2005): Implementation cornerstones are (a) coordinated training, coaching, and formative assessment; (b) organizational infrastructure that can provide timely instruction, support, and outcome evaluation; and (c) full involvement of interested and invested constituent groups.

- **Dual Capacity-Building Framework** (U.S. Department of Education, 2013): Organizational conditions that support fidelity and sustainability are (a) *systemic* – seen as essential to student achievement and tied to core goals; (b) *integrated* – embedded into existing processes such as professional development and evaluation; and (c) *sustained* – supported with resources and leadership.

- **Adult Learning Principles** (Trivette, Dunst, Hamby, & O'Herin, 2009): Specific factors have been identified as contributing to effective adult learning are (a) pre-assessment of knowledge; (b) self-instruction; (c) demonstration; (d) practice and application: and (e) evaluation.

Below are possible structures for developing ongoing learning and support for family, school, and community partnering in a school community.

1. **Identified Leaders: Group Members, Facilitators, Liaisons, Consultants, Coordinators**

   Each education stakeholder has a responsibility to partner for student success. However, as systemic and ongoing family, school, and community partnering is new for many school communities, it can be helpful to have identified leaders who have specific tasks and roles in supporting the work. This role would be specifically defined by needs and resources, but would most likely require some knowledge of facilitation, partnering, and the school community. It would involve some assigned time, but could be a part of an existing responsibility or be supported creatively such as partnering with higher education or using flex time. Various existing groups might identify a member leader who has an interest in the topic. Administrative support of the assigned responsibilities is important. The expectation would be that these leaders would champion the cause throughout the system, individually

and within groups, by helping problem solve issues, sharing success stories, organizing training, and addressing hurdles. In addition, this role could serve to centralize data for others to access and use in their efforts – providing a "vortex" of information. These leaders could be educators, family members, community collaborators or a teaming combination.

2. **Identified Groups: Professional Learning Communities, Department Teams, Advisory Boards, Task Forces, Study Groups, Action Teams, Standing Committees**

    Many school communities (includes educators, families, collaborators) have existing groups, organizations or teams, which meet regularly with specific areas of focus. A simple, doable organizational solution to supporting effective partnering practices is to include the topic regularly on agendas. Activities or discussions can be around studying research or reviewing materials, accessing training, assessing what is in place and what is needed with data, problem solving, idea sharing, or action planning. Another option is to develop an ongoing standing committee, which addresses partnering actively and works with the entire organization in implementation. Also, study groups or task forces or action teams can be created to address an identified partnering topic or question with specific timelines and reporting process for their work.

3. **Communities of Practice**

    " A *Community of Practice (CoP)* is quite simply a group of people that agrees to interact regularly to solve a persistent problem or improve practice in an area that is important to them" (Idea Partnership, 2013). These groups can be face-to-face or virtual, formal or informal. They are often composed of diverse stakeholders, representing various perspectives. There are usually five critical factors: educating, supporting, cultivating, encouraging, and integrating. Specific information on initiating this practice can be found in *Communities of Practice: A New Approach to Solving Complex Educational Problems* (Cashman, Linehan, & Rosser, 2007) at http://www.ideapartnership.org/documents/CoPGuide.pdf.

4. **Professional Development**

    Accessing and/or creating professional development opportunities for families, educators, and community members can help develop shared understandings and a base for implementing effective partnering practices. The materials and resources in the *MTSS FSCP Implementation Guide* are intended to provide shareable information, which can be tailored to a specific community's adult learning needs. Learning about partnering can be embedded in other school community opportunities.

    Ongoing opportunities are offered by the Colorado Department of Education. These include the following, among others offered by specific offices or units:

    •   **Family Partnership Director**
        This position offers information, events, and trainings; connects with district liaisons; helps support legislated responsibilities.
        Hutchins_D@cde.state.co.us

Response to Intervention (RtI) is incorporated within a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

- **State Advisory Council for Parent Involvement In Education (SACPIE)**
  This legislated council works with the Colorado Department of Education to provide trainings and resources to Colorado education stakeholders.
  http://www.cde.state.co.us/sacpie

- **Online Courses**
  These online courses offer specific partnering topics for stakeholders in a several week format for licensing hours or graduate credit (for a fee) or auditing for no credit.
  http://www.cde.state.co.us/rti/family

- **Parents Encouraging Parents (PEP) Conferences**
  These gatherings provide the opportunity to develop partnerships between families and educators in supporting students with disabilities.
  http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/pep_aboutus

5. **Communication Networks and Newsletters**

It can be helpful to receive current information about family, school, and community partnering. The following list is a sample of organizations that send current electronic communication through email and social media (all are described in the *Guide)*. Examples of offerings include information on webinars, trainings, conferences, research, and resources. A suggestion might be for stakeholders to create list serves or other communication venues to share information within their school community about partnering.

- **Colorado Department of Education**
  o **Communications Division: THE Scoop (Family Partnership Section)**
    http://us5.campaign-archive1.com/home/?u=bee6c43ae6102530cf98cadf9&id=ab7e1e5d57

- **National and State**
  o **Flamboyan Foundation**
    http://flamboyanfoundation.org/

  o **Harvard Family Research Project**
    http://www.hfrp.org/

  o **U.S. Department of Education**
    http://www2.ed.gov/news/newsletters/engagingfamilies/index.html

  o **Special Education Process**
    - **Cadre**
      http://www.directionservice.org/cadre/index.cfm
    - **PEAK Parent Center**
      https://www.peakparent.org/

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