



The 5Ws (and 1H) of Family Engagement in After School Programs



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Participants Will:



- 1 learn about the WVFECC's SEAMless approach to rural family engagement
- 2 uncover **WHO** holds the information key to improving family engagement
- 3 realize **WHAT** family engagement is (and isn't)
- 4 determine **WHERE** and **WHEN** family engagement can occur
- 5 understand **WHY** after school programs have a unique advantage when engaging families
- 6 discover **HOW** STEM (and other strategies) can be used to engage ALL families



Jennifer Wotring

Senior Program Manager
Family Engagement Specialist



QUOTE TO NOTE “

“Family engagement is not an initiative, nor is it a race. Family engagement is a commitment to change school culture and, as such, is ongoing and never ending. Family engagement takes into consideration what we already do; it just requires us to act differently—no new time, no new energy, no new resources—just a remolding of what we already have.” ~ Dr. Steve Constantino

About EdVenture

Our Mission & Vision



OUR MISSION:

We are committed to creating customized solutions to educational challenges through innovation consulting, evidence-based educational programming, and tailored professional development that reimagines what education can be.

OUR VISION:

Through co-created conversations and thought partnership, The EdVenture Group helps empower schools, communities and the individuals they impact to build a more diverse, equitable, and just future for our youth.



The **West Virginia Family Engagement Center (WVFEC)** program is based on current, evidence-based practices that engage families, educators, and community members in the educational process to enhance student academic achievement.

This initiative offers families a variety of opportunities to participate in their child's learning both inside and outside of school.

We're partnering with families to...

S

SUPPORT
their children's
learning and
development.

E

ENCOURAGE
positive self-image
and a "can do"
spirit in their
children.

A

ADVOCATE
For improved
learning
opportunities for
children at their
school.

M

MODEL
Lifelong learning
and enthusiasm
for education.

SEAMless Family Engagement



**How is your program
currently engaging
families?**

The Landscape of Our State



After school programs help lessen many of these challenges.

- Rural communities
- Strong sense of family
- Families greatly impacted by the opioid crisis

- Consistently ranked lowest for academic performance, health and wellbeing, broadband access, etc.

- Limited resources and human capital create barriers to increasing family engagement

“

“Many studies found that students with involved parents, no matter what their income or background, were more likely to; earn higher grades and test scores, and enroll in higher-level programs, be promoted, pass their classes, and earn credits, attend school regularly, have better social skills, show improved behavior, and adapt well to school and graduate and go on to postsecondary education”. ~ Henderson and Mapp, 2002



WHO holds the information key to improving family engagement efforts?



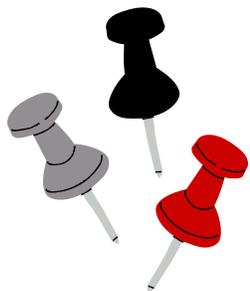
HIGHLIGHTS AND BEST PRACTICES

ELEVATING FAMILY VOICE

The WV|FEC program has created multiple opportunities that elevate family voice including the Rural Family Voices Listening Tour and Family Leader Focus Groups



Family representatives from each school are additionally selected for participation in the WV|FEC Advisory Council

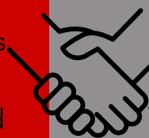


WELCOMING ENVIRONMENTS

WV|FEC schools have enhanced school environments to make families feel welcome, valued, and comfortable

FAMILY FUNDS OF KNOWLEDGE

WV|FEC schools host events and activities that support the knowledge, values, and culture of WV families



COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY

WV|FEC schools collaborate with community organizations to support needs of families

Elevating Stakeholder Voice



WHAT engagement is...and is not?

“The Seven Big Ideas of Family Engagement.”

Dr. Steve Constantino

1. Families are the first and most influential teachers of their children.
2. Most schools are adept at engaging the already engaged.
3. Family engagement is not about doing more, but doing what we already do, differently.
4. Family engagement is a process, not an event.
5. Relationships with families that are disengaged must lead to increased family efficacy.
6. There is a direct research correlation between underserved students and disengaged families.
7. Without a process to build staff capacity to engage and promote family efficacy, the process cannot be sustained over time.

<https://drsteveconstantino.com/the-seven-big-ideas-pandemic-edition/>





WHERE and WHEN can family engagement occur?

WHERE and WHEN

“Research shows that children spend only 20 percent of their waking time annually in formal classroom education, leaving 80 percent of their time to explore and enhance their learning interests in nonschool settings.” (Lopez and Caspe, 2014)

“Whether in conversation over dinner or on a swing at the playground, learning happens most readily within the context of supportive relationships with families, friends, and teachers.” (Lopez and Caspe, 2014)

High-Impact Family Engagement in After School Programs

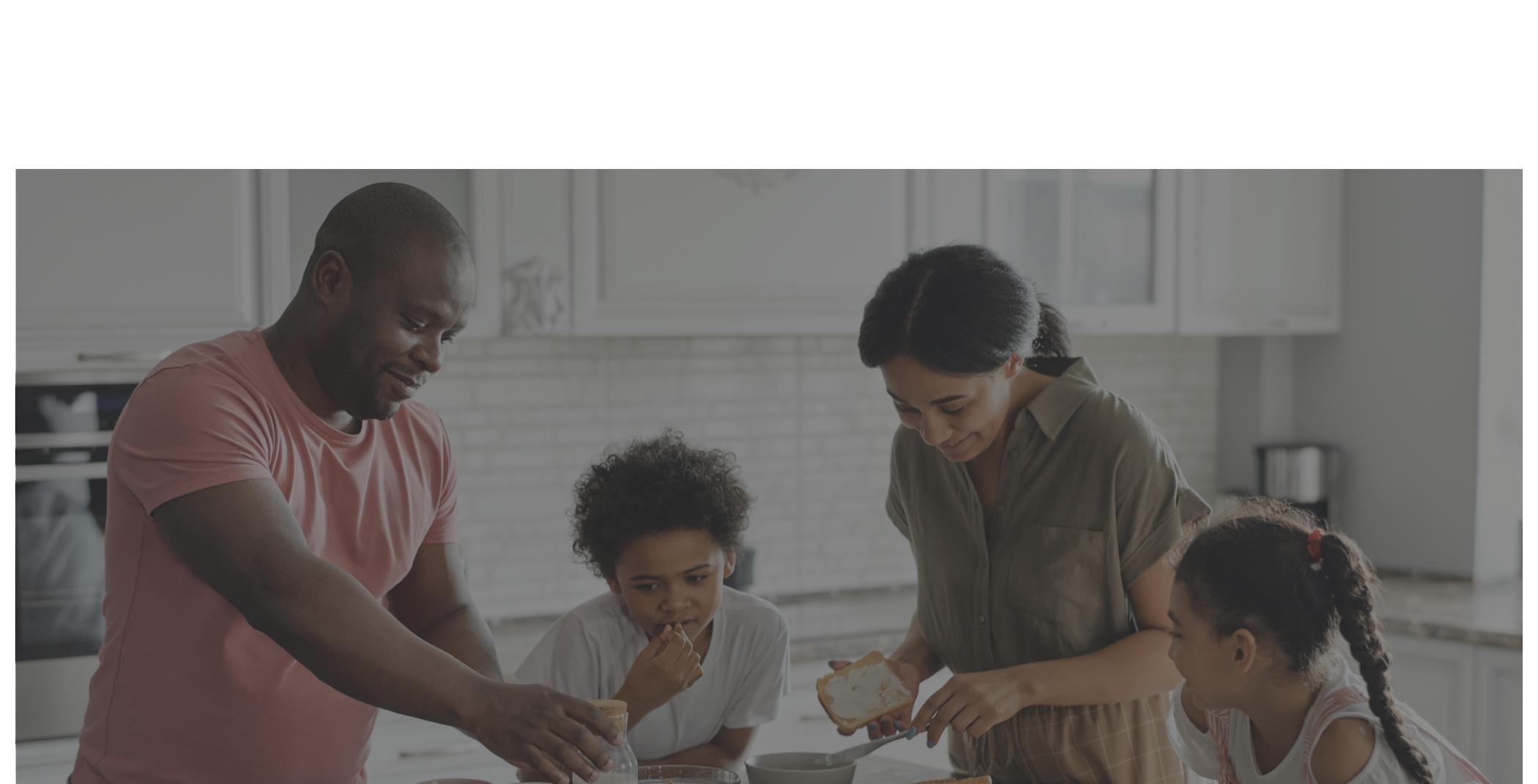


CHART 3
What Does High-Impact Family Engagement Look Like in After School Programs?

Higher Impact on student learning and development	Moderate Impact	Lower Impact
1. Afterschool classes are linked to school curriculum. Teachers and program staff collaborate to track students' growth targets and keep families up to date.	A teacher from the school shares data with tutoring staff on student skills.	Staff informs families that program offers tutoring on reading and math.
2. Frequent, informal gatherings for families, school staff, and community partners to foster collaboration and info-sharing.	Students perform and show their work at quarterly family nights.	Staff is available to talk with families on orientation day.
3. Staff and families co-develop intervention plans to address students' social and/or academic concerns.	Staff interview families regarding children's successes and challenges.	On orientation day, families fill out an information form.
4. Regular meetings with families to discuss student progress, share information, and confer on strategies to support learning.	Annual survey asks parents about students' experience with the program.	Tip sheets sent home on promoting student health and learning.
5. The after school program collaborates with other school-based and community programs to make the school a "hub" of activities for students, families and community members.	Program hosts information fairs about community resources and programs.	Community bulletin board posts notices about local happenings.
6. Family support groups and education classes promote family learning, develop job skills, and address health needs.	Staff refer families to GED and job training programs offered by community partners.	Families can sign up for the Volunteer Program.
7. "Community advocates" develop rapport with families of children at risk, provide advice and links to extra support, and help families navigate social services.	Program staff receive extra pay to serve as informal advisors and mentors to students.	Staff refers struggling children to outside counseling program.
8. Local partners co-sponsor community-building and cultural events at after school site, such as a Health Fair or Heritage Celebration, that attract hundreds of families and community members.	Families and staff plan special events to honor student success and celebrate the beginning and end of school year.	Program offers fall and spring celebrations for students and families.
9. In the Leadership institute, parents learn ways to foster their own and their children's education, support their families financially, develop social networks, and advocate for high quality schools.	Program staff invite public officials to attend events, meet families and answer questions about community issues.	Program office displays flyers and brochures about community resources and learning opportunities.



WHY do after school programs have a unique advantage when engaging families?



HOW can STEM (and other strategies) be used to engage ALL families?

HOW?

Elevate Family & Student Voice



Listen.

Be Creative



**Think beyond
the “bricks
and mortar.”**

Build Relationships



**Create
Welcoming
Environments**

SCAN ME



STEM Family Engagement: A Planning Tool

Image Credit: Toronto Public Library

A planning tool to support programs in uplifting and empowering all youth and families in STEM

ISRY Institute for the
Study of
Resilience in
Youth

 **McLean HOSPITAL**
HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL AFFILIATE

 **HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL**
TEACHING HOSPITAL

stemOnext
OPPORTUNITY FUND

family engagement
PROJECT 



Questions and Wrap-up



Contact: Jennifer Wotring

email: jwotring@edvgroup.org

To Learn More:

w: www.theedventuregroup.org

w: www.wvfec.org

t: @WVFEC

t: @EdVGroup

f: @TheEdVentureGroup



Henderson, A. T., & Mapp, K. L. (2002). *A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family and Community Connections on Student Achievement*. Austin, TX: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory.

Lopez, M.E. & Caspe, M. (2014). *Family engagement in anywhere, anytime learning*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Family Research Project. [www.hfrp.org/content/download/4573/121156/file/Family Engagement in Anywhere Anytime Learning_HarvardFamilyResProj.pdf](http://www.hfrp.org/content/download/4573/121156/file/Family_Engagement_in_Anywhere_Anytime_Learning_HarvardFamilyResProj.pdf)

What does high-impact family engagement look like in after school programs? CT.gov. (n.d.). Retrieved June 30, 2022, from <https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Publications/Full-Equal-and-Equitable-Partnerships-with-Families/Chart-3>



References