Unite, Inspire, Lead
Our Students, Our Union, Our Future

NYSUT Parent-Student Engagement and Empowerment Project (PSEEP)

Carolyn Williams, PSEEP Coordinator, Assistant in Research & Educational Services
cwilliam@nysutmail.org

Terry McSweeney, Assistant in Research & Educational Services
tmcsween@nysutmail.org

DRAFT 12/15/16
Overview

We will be discussing:

• NEA Strategic Goal
  o Goal 1: Strong Affiliates for Educator Voice and Empowerment
  o Goal 2: Empowered Educators for Successful Students

• NEA Organizational Priority
  o Early Career Educators
  o Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)
  o Institutional Racism/Racial Justice in Education
COMPETENCY: Leading Our Professions (LOP)

Level 1: Foundational
Level 2: Mobilizing & Power Building
Level 3: Agenda Driving
Leading our Profession

• Building capacity for continual improvement and learning.
• Shows educational leadership and understands the union’s role in student learning and leading our professions.
• Advocates for policies and strategies that positively impact our professions and student learning.
• Analyzes and applies research, policies and trends to determine potential impact on our professions and student learning.
Member Engagement

“I do think there is a more positive attitude about what the unions does. The conversations with union members and administration is more positive. It's also great to have conversations about families and students and be able to say in a subtle way that the union is helping to bring teachers and community together.”

Seth Cohen, Local President
Troy Teachers Association
PSEEP project build capacity for locals to understand, implement, support, scale-up, and sustain quality and high impact family, school, community, and member engagement.
Family Involvement and Student Learning

A New Wave of Evidence

• 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
• Graduate and go on to postsecondary education
Poverty Matters

• Lower socioeconomic status alone does not have an impact on students, it has a much greater negative effect on their schools and parents. Students from poverty suffer from the low expectations of the adults around them (The “He has so much working against them attitude”).

• Most families (98%) begin with positive aspirations when their children start school, but families aspirations are “doused” by the time they leave elementary schools. - "Many parents struggle to comprehend the language of learning and thus are disadvantaged in the methods they use to encourage their children to attain their expectations.”

Retrieved 10/21/16:  
http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/finding_common_ground/2016/10/poverty_matters_but_not_the_way_you_think.html
How Discrimination Shapes Parent-Teacher Communication

• Race and country of birth play a role in teacher’s likelihood of contacting parents or guardians.
• Perceptions of parents’ English proficiency, family socioeconomic status, and other variables, distinct racial and immigration patterns emerged.
• Teachers were less likely to contact immigrant Asian parents about academic and behavioral struggles due to teachers perceptions of them being the “model minority” students.
• Teachers were less likely to contact immigrant Latino and Asian parents with news of their children’s academic successes. “As a white teacher, [I] was subconsciously looking at my students as more likely to be troublemakers because they were Latino ... I didn't consciously check myself to think about how my actions created the conditions for those behaviors.”

Retrieved 11/21/16
Implications

- How we talk with parents.
- How we engage with parents.
- How schools and educators express expectations.
- How schools help/introduce the language learning.
- How schools assist (resources and supports) families to attend and engage in learning to support student achievement.
- How important it is to improve family-school relationships.
- The need to respect the contributions from home.
New evidence about family engagement and school improvement
Figure 2: The Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family–School Partnerships

**THE CHALLENGE**

- Lack of opportunities for School/Program Staff to build the capacity for partnerships

**OPPORTUNITY CONDITIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process Conditions</th>
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<tr>
<td>Linked to learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relational</td>
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<tr>
<td>Development vs. service orientation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collaborative</td>
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<td>Interactive</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Organizational Conditions</th>
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<tr>
<td>Systemic: across the organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>Integrated: embedded in all programs</td>
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<td>Sustained: with resources and infrastructure</td>
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**POLICY AND PROGRAM GOALS**

- To build and enhance the capacity of staff/families in the “4 C” areas:
  - **Capabilities** (skills and knowledge)
  - **Connections** (networks)
  - **Cognition** (beliefs, values)
  - **Confidence** (self-efficacy)

**FAMILY AND STAFF CAPACITY OUTCOMES**

- School and Program Staff who can:
  - Honor and recognize families’ funds of knowledge
  - Connect family engagement to student learning
  - Create welcoming, inviting cultures

- Families who can negotiate multiple roles:
  - Supporters
  - Encouragers
  - Monitors
  - Advocates
  - Decision Makers
  - Collaborators

**Effective Family–School Partnerships**

Supporting Student Achievement & School Improvement

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Usable Knowledge: Karen Mapp's Framework for Family and Community Engagement
Project goals

- To promote student-centered advocacy in NYS.
- Leverage labor-management collaboration as a vehicle for student centered advocacy in NYS.
- Create and implement family engagement practices designed to promote positive student outcomes and career and college readiness and success.
- Build capacity of educators (beliefs, understanding, skills, and confidence) to engage and partner with families in ways linked to student learning.
- Strengthen families’ beliefs about the role they play in their children’s education.
- Enhance parental-family knowledge about educational policies and programs.
- Increase families’ portfolios of tools and activities they can use to support their children’s learning.
Tools for Building Staff Capacity

- NYS Learning Standards
- NYS Teaching Standards
- NYS Professional Development Standards
- Teacher and Principal Rubrics /Evaluation
- DTSTE Inventory
- Classroom Family Engagement Rubric
- School-wide Family Engagement Rubric
- Engagement Needs Assessment
- School Climate Survey
- Student Survey
- Teaching and Learning Conditions Survey
- Professional Development
- Common Planning Time
- Professional Learning Communities
- Home Visits Methodology
- Teacher Leadership
Leveraging Home and School Time for Learning

- Family Home Time, 45%
- Instructional Time, 22%
- Asleep, 33%

**NYS Instructional Time:**
Average 5.0 hrs. for full-day kindergarten thru grade 6
6 hrs. for grades 7-12 for 180 days per year in NYS
**PEEPS Project Logic Model with Evaluation Questions**

**Funding:** NEA Grant

**Staff:** NYSUT R&ES School Staff/Educators

**Materials:** Research-based training

**Resources:** NYS Tools & Research

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### Inputs

- Funding: NEA Grant
- Staff: NYSUT R&ES School Staff/Educators
- Materials: Research-based training
- Resources: NYS Tools & Research

### Activities

- Center for School Improvement
- Capacity Building Training
- Labor/Mgt. Collaboration
- Family/Home Visit Training
- Family/Home Visits
- Parent/teacher teams
- Reflections/debrief

### Outputs

- Trained # of school staff
- # APTT
- # FSE visits

### Outcomes

- Short term: Conduct family visits, build trust & relationships, increase confidence, increase capabilities, increase attendance
- Mid Term: Develop new assumptions & practice, beliefs change, new info to improve teaching practice
- Long Term: Improve student outcomes, increase family-school capabilities, connections, cognition, confidence

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### PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- **$30,000 - NEA SCAG Grant**
  - 4 Locals participate
  - 200-School Staff trained
  - Troy TA - 60
  - Herkimer TA - 8
  - Rome TA - 75
  - Solvay TA - 60

- **# Family Visits Conducted:** Troy - 42 Elementary teachers & staff conducted 100+ Visits
  - Herkimer - 8 teachers conducted - 72 family visits

- **Troy 150% increase in families attending Open House**
  - Herkimer 50% increase in families attending Open House

- **Almost all teachers report change beliefs, assumptions about families**
  - Most report incorporating what they learned to inform instruction

- **All report increased confidence, capabilities, and cognition about families**
**PEEPS Project Logic Model with Evaluation Questions**

**EVALUATION QUESTIONS**

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<th>What amount of time and $ invested?</th>
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<td>- NYSUT staff capacity</td>
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<td>- Conceptualization and development</td>
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<td>- Training materials</td>
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<td>- Research materials</td>
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| To what extent did the “4Cs” (capacities) increase: |
| Capabilities - Skills & knowledge |
| Connections - Networks               |
| Cognition - Beliefs, Values, Confidence - Self-efficacy |
| Why?                                  |

| To what extent did behaviors change? Why? |

| Teachers: Due to modeling, practice, role playing and reflection teachers reported increases in their capability, cognition and confidence to establish rapport and trust with families. |
| Parents/Student: As evidenced by increased attendance at Open House and increased feelings of trust and connection to the school. Willingness to engage with teachers. |
| Local: Members recognizing needs of kids/parents/communities along with the desire to assist. |

| Teachers: Need to respond or address the expectations expressed by the family. Observed families receiving a home visit – send kids to school and on time. Factoring in students interests learned from home visits in lessons |
| Parents/Student: Families communicate more regularly and consistently with the school – comfort level increased. |
| Local: Increase in numerous committee members and turnover in chairpersons. New faces at voluntary (non-meeting) events. |

| SUNY will conduct an evaluation of the project and assess impacts which may include the following |

| Teachers: - build capacity to conduct successful home visits. - engage families with confidence. |
| Parents/student: - are students absent less frequently? - did students have fewer discipline problems & or suspensions? - more likely to re-enroll in their school the following year? - improvements in student academic success? |
| Local: Increase in an understanding of the union role in student learning and leading our profession? |
PSEEP Capacity Building Training Sessions

- Labor – Management Collaboration
- Family – School Capacity Building and Planning
- Family – School Engagement Visits
- Family – School Engagement Linked to Learning
- Positive Parent – Teacher Communication
- Academic Parent Teacher Teams
- Family – School Engagement for English Language Learners
Three Key Practices

Schools that succeed in engaging families from very diverse backgrounds adopt these three practices:

– Focus on building trusting, collaborative relationships among teachers, families, and community members.

– Recognize, respect, and address families' needs, as well as class and cultural differences.

– Embrace a philosophy of partnership where power and responsibility are shared.
The largest predictor of whether families are engaged at school and at home are the specific family and school engagement practices that encourage and guide families.

Source: Flamboyan Foundation
Despite the desire to work with families, particularly families from diverse backgrounds, cultures and socio-economic levels, many schools and educators struggle with how to cultivate and sustain positive relationships and build strong partnerships with families.
Promoting Student-Centered Advocacy in New York

January – *NYSUT United* article

April – NYSUT Representative Assembly 2016 – VP Catalina Fortino’s Report to Delegates

May – Long Island ED 18 Mtg. – 18 locals

July – NYSUT Local Action Project (LAP)– 20 locals at LAP

**August 10 & 11** – NYSUT New Local Presidents Conference – 74 locals attending

October – Presentation to NYS Board of Regents Professional Standards and Practice Board
NEA grants awarded for student-centered advocacy

Author: By Sylvia Saunders
Source: NYSUT United

Caption: Nick Faber, standing, vice president of the Saint Paul Federation of Teachers, talks to Rome TA members about best practices for parent-teacher home visits based on his union’s own experience. Rome teachers are embarking on their own union-led home visit program this spring. Photo by Michael Okoniewski.

- NYSUT and three local unions will use National Education Association grants to improve student success and strengthen ties with parents.
- NYSUT’s $30,000 grant for 2016 includes working with the Rome Teachers Association, led by Robert Wood, to develop a parent-engagement home visit program and with the Troy Teachers Association, led by Seth Cohen, to develop an afterschool initiative with an emphasis on character building and service learning.
- In January, the grant made it possible for Rome TA to bring in Saint Paul Federation of Teachers Vice President Nick Faber, who explained how his union’s home visit program works.
- NYSUT hopes to expand the Parent/Student Engagement and Empowerment Project on a pilot basis with other local unions that are interested in negotiating programs that will improve students’ well-being.
- The Greece Teachers Association has been awarded $25,000 to expand its Social Justice Committee’s community outreach. As the suburban Rochester district’s demographics have changed, Greece TA President Jason Cooney said the local has stepped up its community programs.
- The 1,100-member local last year collected thousands of pounds of food and worked with local firefighters and school support staff on a drive to provide winter coats, gloves and hats to needy children.
- Parents of the entire district saved thousands of dollars on school supplies last fall after teachers worked together to trim supply lists and buy materials in bulk, Cooney noted.
- With the NEA grant, the TA is planning to expand community efforts by bringing in visiting dental and health services, improving parent programs, and building a program that would cover the cost of Advanced Placement fees for all students.
- “We need to build our infrastructure so we can support the community even more,” Cooney said.
- The NEA, one of NYSUT’s two national affiliates, received nearly two dozen applications from all over the country requesting close to $800,000 for the $250,000 grant program.
- Grants can help create new programs or refine existing practices to improve learning conditions. For more information on the grant program and a toolkit on creative ways affiliates are fighting for students, go to www.nea.org/grants/63562.htm.

NYSUT’s $30,000 grant will be used for capacity building with families, communities and educators to partner in new ways that support student success. In January, the Rome TA brought in Saint Paul Federation of Teachers Vice President Nick Faber to prepare teachers to conduct home visits and build positive relationships with parents. The Troy TA is developing an after school program, and the Poughkeepsie and Solvay TAs are focusing on becoming collaborators with parents and the community on issues of school improvement and reform.
Project Locals

- Herkimer Faculty Association
- Troy Teachers Association
- Rome Teachers Association
- Solvay Teachers Association
- Albany Public School Teachers Association
- Poughkeepsie Public School Teachers Association
Rome’s Labor-Management Team
PTHV Training Day and
School Improvement Training

2017 NEA National Leadership Summit | February 24-26, 2017
**Troy School 2 - Family Visits**

September 2016 Issue
September 23, 2016

NYSUT's family visit initiative builds partnerships

Author: By Sylvia Saunders
Source: NYSUT United

Caption: Troy teacher Noelle Frederick, front center, and teaching assistant Marilyn Barton, back right, make a home visit with Joseph and Stephanie Williams and their four children. Educators at Troy School 2 met with more than 100 families before school began. Photo by El-Wise Noisette.

On a hot August day, speech pathologist Stacey Goverski's first home visit with a future kindergartner's family did not start out very promisingly.

The little boy's mom was seriously concerned about whether her son would even go to school. Pre-K had not gone well and she was very anxious about the transition to Troy's School 2. She hated the idea of wearing a school uniform and dreaded riding the bus.

Comfortable in his home environment, the little boy was eager to talk with his teachers and quick to show them his room and his toys. He didn't want them to leave.

After building a nice rapport, the three-teacher team assured him they'd be there for him at school — and suggested mom take a cell phone picture of them to show the boy and ease his apprehension. "We talked about pre-setting him and that's when we got the idea about taking the picture," Goverski said. "I think the home visit definitely helped make the transition a little easier for him."

Across the city, special education teacher Noelle Frederick and teaching assistant Marilyn Barton were warmly welcomed into the Williams' walk-up apartment. With four young kids running around, it was a little busy — but it helped that Frederick had taught big brother Joey two years ago.

While Frederick chatted down next to future first-grader Charlie and introduced herself, Barton talked with his mom, Stephanie, about his difficulties with potty training.

The 30-minute visit spoke volumes.

"It helps to see the family dynamic and lets you start the year off on a positive note," Frederick said. "It gives us a chance to let them know it's us together for your child."

Stephanie Williams said she greatly appreciated the visit. "It's hard for me to get a sitter for four kids and get over to school," she said. "I don't have time to go to open house night ... and this gives you more of a chance to talk to the teacher."

Other Troy family visits took place outside the home. Some parents were more comfortable meeting at the local library or a neighborhood church.

A team including third-grade teacher Lyndsey Lutz, special education teacher Kristie Marino and school counselor Jennifer White met with a family at an area homeless shelter and got an eye-opening look at exactly what their student was dealing with.

Those were the kind of experiences a group of about 50 Troy teachers reported as part of a new family engagement program offered by NYSUT. The family visit project is one of several parent-engagement programs the statewide union is promoting.

NYSUT is also working with Herkimer, Rome and Solvay local unions, with support from the American Federation of Teachers and National Education Association.

"As more and more schools are looking at the community school model, we know parent engagement is key," said NYSUT Vice President Catalina Fortino. "Study after study shows family engagement improves student learning and attendance. And these family visits can be highly successful in forging positive relationships."

Herkimer Faculty Association President Krista Stallman, whose rural district launched the program on a pilot basis, said the visits seemed to smooth out the typical opening day issues in her kindergarten class.

"Maybe it's a coincidence, but I had no crises and the children seemed more at ease and better prepared for the first day," she said. "And I feel like I had a more solid sense of who they are, where they're coming from, what their favorite activities are. Usually, I'm so nervous at kindergarten orientation day, but this year I didn't feel that way, maybe because I had visited with so many of them."

Stallman, who has taught kindergarten for 21 years, said Herkimer's pilot program was totally voluntary and focused on the early grades and transitioning seventh-graders moving from elementary school to the junior-high school.

"You tend to think of this as a program for early elementary, but our seventh-grade team felt the visits were equally beneficial," Stallman said. "We definitely would like to keep that secondary component."

While home visit models vary, Fortino said, it's crucial for programs to be voluntary and for educators to be well-trained and compensated for their time.

NYSUT's training program emphasizes building trust and avoiding assumptions about parents. "Become the listener, not the expert," NYSUT's Carolyn Williams suggested at a pre-visit training. "When you introduce yourself, don't give them a resume. You want it to be real. Trust is the connective tissue for meaningful family-school partnerships."

To set the right tone, home visit participants are advised not to bring any papers, clipboards or other items that will make parents feel like it's a formal visit from an agency. Educators practice making that first phone call and role-playing possible scenarios. For a team approach, educators work in pairs or trios, including support staff members and special area teachers.

It's vital to have administration support. In Troy, School 2 Principal Natalie Turner-Hassell sent a letter to parents encouraging them to participate and setting the stage for a friendly visit.

"This is NOT a meeting to tell you what to do or be a parent or to get you to sign up for anything," Turner-Hassell wrote. "This is a time to get to know you and your child away from school so that we can listen to what you say about your child's future."

"As nervous as we are about going, the parents are nervous, too," said Troy Parent Engagement and Family Advocate Stephanie Stanley. "Some of them have bad memories of school. Some of them are struggling to get by. But our parents have the same hopes and dreams as parents in the suburbs. They just want a better life for their kids."

NYSUT is looking for local unions interested in building family-engagement programs linked to learning. For information, contact project coordinator Carolyn Williams at cwilliam@nysutmail.org.
Troy School 2 - Open House
Academic Parent Teacher Team Meetings (APTT)
Solvay

- Sent labor-management team to CSI.
- Met with labor-management team to discuss next steps.
- PTHV training for Solvay Elementary in June.
- PTHV scheduled for August/September.
Herkimer

- **August 3** – Two-part training: Building Capacity in NYS for Family–School Engagement Linked to Learning and Family/School Home Visits
- Conduct Home Visits in August
- Spring training on Academic Parent/Teacher Teams
Sustainability

• Build in state capacity to support implementation of successful family-school engagement initiative linked to learning.
• Pilot new strategies i.e., home visits, academic parent-teacher teams and other high impact strategies linked to learning in locals.
• Develop a Family-School Home Visit approach to meet the needs of NYS.
• Evaluate effectiveness of family school engagement efforts in NYS.
• Create NYSUT webpage with information and resources.
• Demonstrate how family school engagement aligns with other school initiatives, requirements, systems, and structures.
• Promote family school engagement in regional meetings and forums around the state, showcase PSEEP locals.
Study Impact

The University will conduct an evaluation of the project and assess impacts which may include the following:

- The fidelity of the home visit methodology to build an educators’ capacity to conduct successful home visits. To engage families with confidence.
- The impact of whether students whose families received a home visit were absent less frequently.
- The impact of whether students whose families received a home visit had fewer discipline problems and or suspensions.
- Whether students whose families received a home visit are more likely to re-enroll in their school the following year.
- To what extent the trusting relationships established at the beginning of the school year, through home visiting, are associated generally with improvements in student academic success.
- The extent to which families/parents taking part in other “linked to learning” engagement practices and strategies influenced development of new roles – parents as learners, parents as advocates, parents as leaders, and parents as teachers.
Session Outcomes

• The content from this session can be used in the following ways in your current position/role:
  
  – Recognize, respect, and address families' needs, as well as class and cultural differences
  
  – Build understanding, implement, support, scale-up, and sustain quality and high impact family and community engagement
  
  – Recognize and utilize systems and structures in place in schools to support this work and the tools to build capacity around this work
• Please complete the evaluation for this breakout session!
• Please visit the Leadership Development Resources website at www.nea.org/leadershipdevelopment