

2020-21 Family Engagement Community of Practice

The Family Engagement Community of Practice is a collaborative effort between MDE, PACER, and UM-Extension. It is designed to be an informal, unstructured time and space for family professionals to meet together virtually to:

- Learn from each other
- Share ideas, strategies, resources, etc.
- Develop personally/professionally, and advance the practice of family engagement
- Network and share experiences
- Provide collegial support and guidance

Dates and Times

There are five days scheduled for the 2020-21 school year. In order to build community and momentum, it is ideal if practitioners are able to participate in all five, but please know that this is not required.

1. Friday, Oct. 2, from 1:00 to 2:30
2. Friday, November 13, from 1:00 to 2:30
3. Friday, January 8, from 1:00 to 2:30
4. Friday, February 26, from 1:00 to 2:30
5. Friday, April 23, from 1:00 to 2:30

Connect via Zoom

Link to join: <https://z.umn.edu/FamilyEngagementCOP>

Participants

Those who work with families in an educational setting or provide education (formal or informal) to parents/families. Participants may hold a variety of titles, like parenting educator, family life educator, family service worker, family support specialist, family liaison, and so on. Participants may come from a variety of organizations and programs, like school districts (early childhood programs and K-12), Head Start, child care, community-based organizations, etc.

Connected Educators

In their book, *What Connected Educators Do Differently*, Whitaker, Zoul, and Casas (2015) state that connected educators develop a mindset characterized by some of these examples (p. xxiii):

- Educators become connected “educators” by first becoming connected and constant “learners,” ones who reach out to learn, share, and collaborate with a network of fellow learners interested in education.
- Educators can and should establish networks to share practices, access experts, and solve problems.
- Educators must live not just as readers or viewers, but as active participants in ongoing discussions, planning, and problem solving.
- Educators can have access to a large collective brain trust consisting of diverse ideas and perspectives.

Community of Practice

The FE Community of Practice is an informal group comprised of those interested in the practice of family engagement. The focus is on making connections between educators, advancing our knowledge and practice, and building and advancing family engagement work. We rely on participants to determine topics with the goal of having resources and/or specialists/experts available to help us dive deeper into the work.

For questions, email Mike Brown at mike.p.brown@state.mn.us