



Creating lasting change in schools and districts is only possible when students, families, and communities are deeply involved.

Over the last year districts have faced unprecedented challenges to provide high-quality, engaging learning experiences for students. Now, more than ever, parents are eager to work in partnership with schools¹. And when families form powerful partnerships with schools and districts, students directly benefit: Increased family engagement in education is linked to improved school readiness, higher grades, higher test scores, better attendance, fewer tardies, lower suspension and expulsion rates, and increased likelihood of high school graduation.². As districts engage students in remote and hybrid models of learning, intentional engagement is necessary in understanding the unique needs of families and students, identifying barriers to attending school virtually or in person, and collaboratively problem solving so that all students not only attend school, but deeply engage in instruction this school year.

At the Minnesota Department of Education, we believe strong collaboration between schools, families, and communities is an essential component for student academic success. In partnership with [TNTP, formerly known as The New Teacher Project](#), we're proud to offer a training series designed to support all Minnesota districts in strengthening their student engagement approach. This unique time requires leaders at all levels of the system to reimagine authentic student engagement. This training series will support districts in doing just that. This series is designed to support systems in creating and maintaining momentum around academic learning through authentic engagement that leads to positive student experiences, increased attendance, and ultimately stronger academic outcomes.

¹ <https://bealearninghero.org/research/>

² Xitao, Fan & Michael Chen. "Parental Involvement and Students' Academic Achievement: A Meta-Analysis." *Educational Psychology Review* 13.1 (2001): 1–22. Henderson, A. T., & Mapp, K. L. (2002). *A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family and Community Connections on Student Achievement*. Annual Synthesis. National Center for Family & Community Connections with Schools. Sheldon, S. B., & Epstein, J.L. (2002). Improving student behavior and school discipline with family & community involvement. *Education & Urban society*, 35(1), 4-26.

Sessions will draw on [TNTP's 4 Pillars for Community Engagement](#) and take place at 9:30-11:30 on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month, beginning November 18th. See dates and individual session objectives below.

[Register for this training opportunity.](#)

For additional questions, please contact Jacqueline Blagsvedt at jacqueline.blagsvedt@state.mn.us

If you need reasonable accommodations to register or participate in this opportunity, please contact liz.vanleer@tntp.org

Training Scope

Session Title/Date	Session Objectives
Building a Shared Vision for Diverse Stakeholder Engagement and Tier One Supports <i>November 18, 2020</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-assess district's current strengths and opportunities around family and community engagement. • Understand tier one system wide community and family engagement systems and strategies and identify what tier one systems are currently in place.
Tiered Systematic Engagement <i>December 2, 2020</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess district activities regarding gathering and sharing information with stakeholders. • Review tier one engagement systems and re-assess effectiveness based on feedback data, including attendance data. • Understand how tier 2 and tier 3 engagement systems and structures support engagement of all families. • Integrate tier 2 and tier 3 engagement strategies into current plan.
Comprehensive Engagement and Removing Barriers <i>December 16, 2020</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify barriers impacting student and family engagement. • Collaborate with the team to promote ongoing, systematic two-way communication, transparency, and create opportunities for students and families to share their perspectives.
Increasing Agency of Stakeholders and Integrating with the Academic Vision (Part I) <i>January 6, 2021</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand TNTP's The Opportunity Myth and make connections to authentic family engagement. • Communicate what success looks like for students at every grade-level to parents and students. • Identify challenges in communicating academic progress based on grading, attendance, and/or engagement policies or practices.

Session Title/Date	Session Objectives
<p>Increasing Agency of Stakeholders and Integrating with the Academic Vision (Part II)</p> <p><i>January 20, 2021</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decide what role families will play in accelerating learning in this school year and beyond. • Commit to ways to share data and stakeholder feedback out with staff, community members, parents, and students. • Identify opportunities for shared decision-making with families.
<p>Improving Communication Structures</p> <p><i>February 3, 2021</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore various ways of communicating with stakeholders, with a specific focus on selecting the right medium and ensuring two-way communication channels are in place. • Identify opportunities to share customized, student-centered information with parents with an eye toward creating stronger partnerships with families that result in improved student outcomes. • Reflect on past communication strategies and engage in a discussion around best practices for sharing fluid and/or difficult information with stakeholders (such as communicating quarantine notices).
<p>Intentional Culture and Diversity, Whose Voices are We Missing?</p> <p><i>February 17, 2021</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze data to identify who has been out of touch or is not participating. • Identify a focus area where increased engagement is needed. • Generate a plan of action for engagement and commit to a goal-statement that captures what success would look like.
<p>Authentic Collaboration, Leveraging and Supporting Staff</p> <p><i>March 3rd, 2021</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish authentic engagement as a priority throughout the district. • Position principals to be leaders in this work. • Determine how you will engage staff in the 360-feedback loop and what supports are needed for leaders.
<p>Long Term and Sustained Authentic Engagement – Planning Ahead</p> <p><i>April 7, 2021</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect on successes and challenges in family and community engagement from the 2020-2021 school year. • Codify a long-term vision for authentic engagement that is integrated into district priorities. • Generate a long-term engagement strategy.