

# Engaging Families in the Pathway to College

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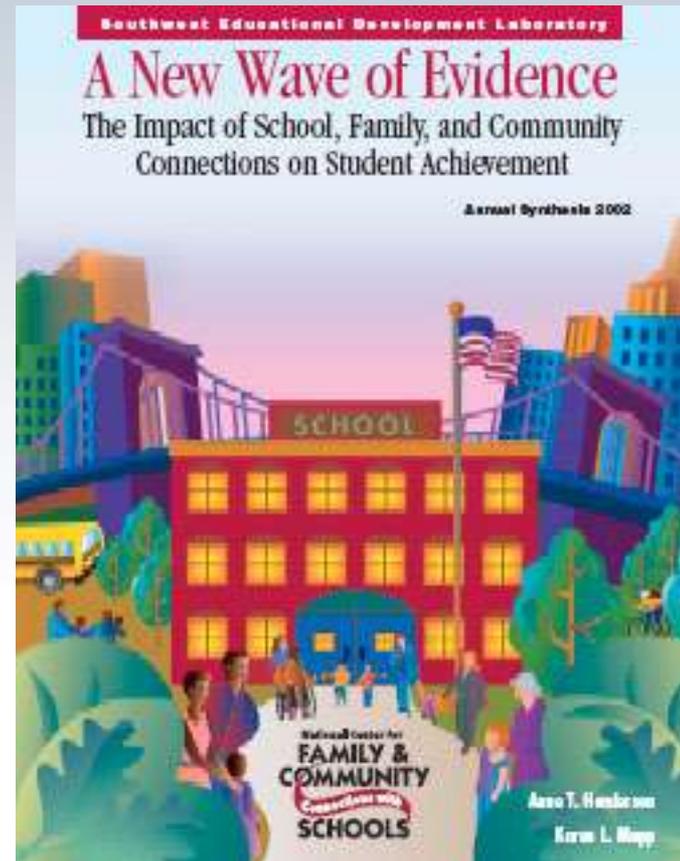


**Solutions**  
*to the Dropout Crisis*

# Part One: Why is this important?

School, family and community connections have a powerful impact on student achievement

[www.sedl.org/connections](http://www.sedl.org/connections)



# Overall Finding:

When families are involved at home and at school —  
Children do better in school, and the schools get better.



# If parents are involved, students from all backgrounds tend to:

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- Earn higher grades and test scores
- Enroll in higher-level programs
- Be promoted and earn credits
- Adapt well to school and attend regularly
- Have better social skills and behavior
- Graduate and go on to higher education

*A New Wave of Evidence*, 2002. [www.sedl.org/connections](http://www.sedl.org/connections)



# Out-of-School Time Counts

- Students spent 70% of their waking hours OUTSIDE school.
- How they spend that time — and with whom — has a big impact on how they do IN school
- Out of school time is directed by parents

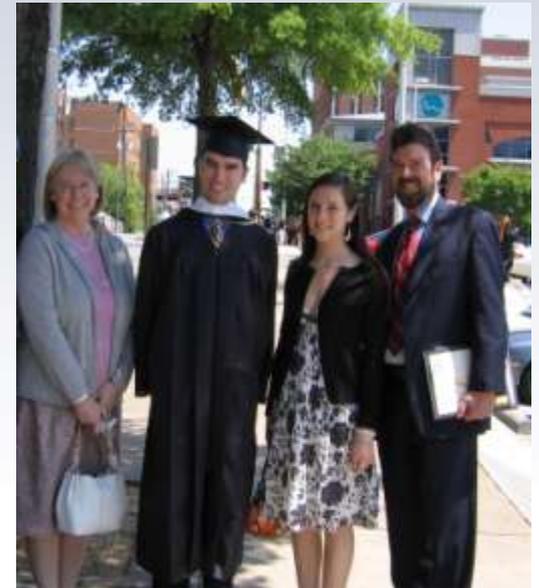
Reginald Clark, 2002



# Parent Impact: Middle-High School

## Greatest effect:

- High expectations for success
- Discussing plans for future
- Getting help if needed
- Helping students prepare for college
- Monitoring progress
- Knowledge of courses and classes



(Catsambis, 1998; Ho and Willms, 1996; Ascher and Maguire, 2007)



# Beyond the Bake Sale

## The Essential Guide to Family- School Partnerships

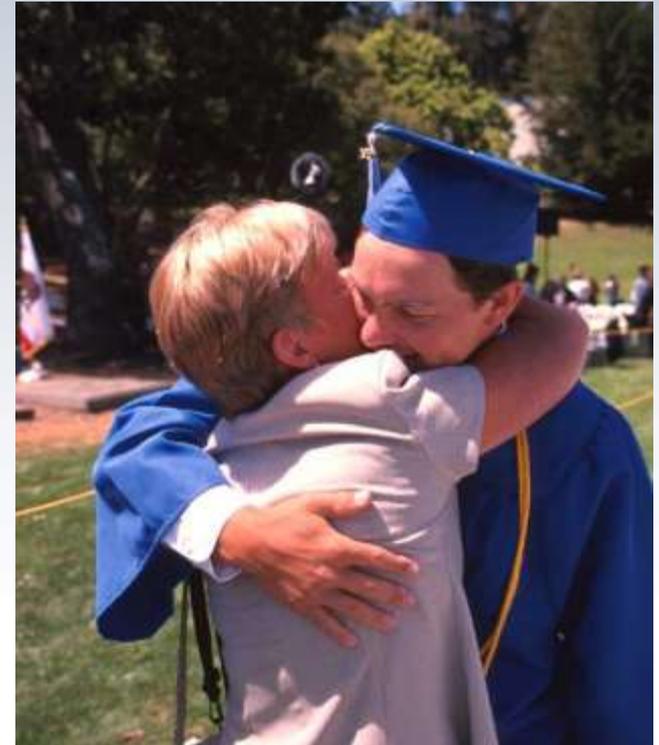
Anne T. Henderson,  
Karen L. Mapp,  
Vivian R. Johnson and  
Don Davies



The New Press, 2007

# Advocacy Is Protective

The more families can be advocates for children and support their progress, the better their children do, and the longer they stay, in school.



*A New Wave of Evidence, 2002*

# What Are Advocates?

1. Know how system works
2. Work with school staff to plan for children's future
3. Guide children through the system
4. Know where to get help
5. Speak out for other parents



# Parents are more likely to become involved when they:

- Understand that they **SHOULD** be involved
- Know they are **CAPABLE** of making a contribution
- Feel **INVITED** by the school and their children

(Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler, 2004)



# School Practices Are KEY

The strongest, most consistent predictors of parent involvement at home and school are the specific school programs and teacher practices that encourage and guide parent involvement.

Dr. Joyce Epstein, Johns Hopkins University



## Part Two: What and How

What does an effective family-school partnership look like?

How can we build effective partnerships with families to improve student achievement and promote success through life?



# *Beating the Odds Study*

- 13 low-income NYC high schools with above average graduation and college attendance rates
- Four key areas of practice related to success
- Most had strategies for engaging families in promoting college/post-secondary education

Carol Ascher and Cindy Maguire

[www.annenberginstitute.org/CIP/publications/2007/beating-the-odds.pdf](http://www.annenberginstitute.org/CIP/publications/2007/beating-the-odds.pdf)



# Four Key Areas of Practice

1. Academic Rigor for All Students
2. A Network of Timely Supports
3. A Culture of College Access
4. Effective Use of Data



# Network of Timely Supports

- An adult mentor available to every student, is key contact for families
- Advisories inform students and families how to reach academic and career goals
- Academic and technical courses coordinated with higher education requirements
- Timely, short-term interventions allow students to catch up quickly
- Strategies improve students' test-taking skills



# Culture of College Access

- All students/families exposed to college
- Parents involved in planning and supporting goal of attending college
- Information on required tests/courses, aid, admissions, and colleges given in 9th grade
- Community members, graduates, and college reps show students/families value of college
- “College office” gives information, application help, and college counseling



# BTO Parents: Key Partners

- 9<sup>th</sup> grade summer bridge program welcomes whole family, sets goal of 4-year college
- Advisory system/adult mentor main contact for families to monitor progress
- Data shown on what's needed for college
- Exhibits of student work, window on classroom
- Parent nights, workshops, and assistance with financial aid applications
- College fairs and trips to colleges



# BTO Community: Key Partners

- Community colleges offer classes for students
- Community groups provide mentors to students
- Local employers offer internships and advice
- Colleges host visits, send reps to college fair
- Local professionals interviewed by students
- Alumni return to speak with and coach students
- Local organizations provide service-learning
- Community members tutor and volunteer



# BTO College Pathways Tools

- Framework of good practice
- Rubric describing three levels of implementation
- Examples of practices and programs
- Blank rubric
- Resource directory

Next: Student survey and family focus group

[www.annenberginstitute.org/pdf/CollegePathwaysRubric.pdf](http://www.annenberginstitute.org/pdf/CollegePathwaysRubric.pdf)



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