Agency Name: _____

Staff Name: _____ **Date**:_____

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT SYSTEM SELF-EVALUATION

Strong family engagement emerges from an intentionally developed system that engages families in meaningful ways. While a system may include activities, experiences and programs, effective family engagement is broader and more inclusive than models that view family engagement as an event.

This tool is designed to assist professionals as they develop and facilitate family engagement systems and strive to reflect research-based practice. This tool can be used to communicate these practices to others who may not be familiar with the research on family engagement.

The process of self- evaluation starts by asking the user to read the principles and strategies listed in column II and evaluate the current level of performance using the rankings provided below. Then, from the list of selected principles and strategies, users select a target for improvement and complete the *Action Plan* on page 8.

Those interested in learning more about effective family engagement systems should visit the Family Engagement Collaborative of the Miami Valley at www.familyengagementcollaborative.com.

NOTES:

1. For the purposes in this document, "culture" is broadly defined and refers to family characteristics related to ethnicity, heritage or history, race, religion, socio economic status, education level, sexual orientation, region of origin, language and communication style, family configuration, and other factors that comprise aspects of the family's identity.

2. **SOA** refers to School, Organization, or Agency

Program Current Level Rankings: **N** = not yet addressed, **E** = emerging, **P** = proficient

I. Program current level	II. Principles and Strategies	III. Examples of Practice that Support the Principles and Strategies	Specific Program Examples	Prioritize
PILLAR 1: Effective family engagement programs build relationships between the school/organization/agency (SOA) and families.				
	1. **Establish and maintain partnerships** between the family, teachers and SOAs that reflect the belief that families, teachers, administrators and community members jointly share responsibility for school readiness and success. *Ready Communities + Ready Families + Ready Schools = Ready Children*	◆ Programs are generally interactive with opportunities for all parties to contribute to the agenda and participate in programming. ◆ Information is communicated respectfully in a manner that shows regard for the contributions of both families and SOAs to support children as they learn and develop.		
	2. **Establish a family engagement team** that includes families and representative members of SOAs to design, implement, and monitor the family engagement plan.	◆ SOAs include families from the very beginning of the design process. ◆ SOAs include families in the design, implementation and evaluation of the family engagement plan in meaningful ways.		
	3. **Conduct a family survey** to learn about how the family engagement system can meet the needs of families.	◆ SOAs get family input in the design of the survey. ◆ The survey utilizes family friendly language. ◆ The survey garners valuable information without being intrusive.		

	4. **Use data about families to plan**, implement and reevaluate a comprehensive family engagement program.	◆ The program reflects the data collected from families through the survey ◆ Data is collected from families and re-evaluated on an ongoing basis.	
	5. **Incorporate many roles** for the SOAs including but not limited to that of facilitator, co-trainer, learner, advisor, host, cook, convener, advocate, business broker, cultural interpreter, instructional leader and others as appropriate.	◆ SOAs are not limited by the traditional view of professional roles ◆ SOAs acquire new knowledge, develop new skills and expand their roles to meet the needs of families	

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B. Effective family engagement programs appropriately meet the needs of families and children.			
	1. **Empower families by focusing on strengths** and avoiding a deficit model	◆ SOAs demonstrate a broad understanding of the complexities of family life and seek out and support areas of strength. ◆ SOAs avoid assigning blame and seek out strategies to support families toward success. ◆ SOAs avoid expert-novice roles assignments in which the role of the SOA is that of expert while families are uninformed novices. Instead, use information sharing models that value strengths	
	2. **Address children and families' basic needs** before higher learning skills.	◆ Programs attend to physical needs such as food and comfort. ◆ Efforts are made to make children and families feel welcome and safe.	

	3. **Recognize that many factors act together** to influence the development of a child.	◆ Programs balance the needs of SOAs to communicate information, policies and procedures with the needs of families to be engaged in meaningful ways. ◆ Programs are both relationship and task oriented.		
	4. **Provide information about community resources** available to support families and educators.	◆ Community resources are shared through a variety of mediums (print, web-based, verbally). ◆ Where and how to find resources is communicated effectively overtime ◆ The resources provided are up-to-date with working links and accurate contact information.		
	5. **Incorporate the Six Protective Factors** associated with Strengthening Families as described by the Child Welfare Information Gateway (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services) https://www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/preventionmo nth/factors.cfm	◆ The program fosters and addresses the importance of the following factors: 1. Nurturing and Attachment 2. Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development 3. Parental Resilience 4. Social Connections 5. Concrete Supports for Parents 6. Social and Emotional Competence of Children		

	C. Effective family engagement programs establish a comprehensive system of communication.			
	1. **Work with families to create a clear mission statement** for family engagement systems in order to establish, communicate and accomplish goals.	◆ Families are actively engaged in creating a clear mission statement. ◆ The goals for the family engagement program are clearly stated and regularly communicated.		
	2. **Include a two-way home and SOA's communication system** consisting of multiple opportunities for families to receive and provide information orally, in writing, and/or through the use of technology.	◆ Information is communicated multiple times using a variety of communication vehicles both formal and informal ◆ Vehicles for communication and utilize new media (Facebook, Pinterest, Tumblr) when appropriate and reflect how families access information.		

	3. **Include both formal and informal meetings and/or home visits** with families in which both SOA's and families can contribute to the agenda.	◆ SOAs plan opportunities for informal interaction with families ◆ SOAs schedule formal meetings or conferences during which families can participate and contribute to the agenda.		

D. Effective family engagement programs embrace and respect the cultural background of all families.	

	1. **Include activities that have a clear cultural connection** to the community and the participants	◆ Family engagement activities respect and, when appropriate, celebrate the traditions and culture of families.		
	2. **Involve SOA facilitators who are familiar with the culture** of the school and community.	◆ In addition to obvious cultural traditions, the family engagement system reflects an understanding of subtle cultural tendencies. ◆ SOA facilitators make use of culture guides who interpret and provide access to culture understandings of the families.		

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Family Engagement System Continuous Improvement
ACTION PLAN

Select a strategy or strategies from column II as a target goal or goals for improvement. Develop a plan of action including the activities, timeline and the person/s responsible for completing all aspects of the plan. Activities should be observable and measureable and evaluated regularly.

Target/s for Improvement State in observable, measurable terms	Activities Observable and measureable tasks that relate directly to target goals	Timeline Start and end dates	Person/s Responsible	Check when complete
Principle/Strategy: *Goal/s:*				
Principle/Strategy: *Goal/s:*				

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