

Creating an Education Team with Schools and Families to Improve Student Achievement
Nevada Department of Education, Office of Family Engagement
Ensuring opportunity, facilitating learning and promoting excellence

Statement of Priorities: In accordance with Nevada Revised Statutes, the Office of Family Engagement reviews school district family engagement programs, identifies best practices, develops standards and guidelines for school district family engagement, and collaborates with the Advisory Council on Parental Involvement and Family Engagement to review accountability reports, school improvement plans, and other key education reports and policies.

Key Facts:

- The U.S. Department of Education released a draft family engagement framework reiterating the necessity for linking family engagement to student learning and schools creating welcoming cultures (December, 2012).
- Schools want to improve family engagement but need capacity building to do so (Joyce L. Epstein, 2009).
- With the Teachers and Leaders Council creating evaluations with 3% of the total score for family engagement, and with the Nevada School Performance Framework using family engagement in the “Other” category—in addition to federal program requirements for family engagement—the work of the Office and Advisory Council are mandatory.
- The Office maintains a website, www.nevadapife.com, that offers national best practices, grant opportunities, former Nevada PIRC (Parent Information Resource Center) resources, and Advisory Council information.
- The Office supports the Advisory Council, which, to date, has created a teacher evaluation rubric for the Teachers and Leaders Council, facilitated a two-year Council work plan, and began work on a Nevada Family Engagement Toolkit.
- The Office partners with the Advisory Council and Nevada PTA to plan a biennial Summit—most recently “Connecting the Dots: Nevada’s Fourth Family Engagement in Education Summit” at UNLV, in May, 2012.
- The Office collaborates with Nevada Higher Education Systems and Regional Professional Development Programs to create family engagement coursework in teacher education programs initiated by the Commission on Professional Standards in Education.
- The Office supports Lyon County School District’s piloting of Parent Advisory Councils that will be used as a model for other school districts.
- The Office assists the Nevada School Performance Framework Committee to forge communication with families and stakeholders concerning the NSPF.

Funding Facts:

- The Office is required to operate with an annual budget of \$3,000.
- The Office collaborates with the Advisory Council with an annual operating budget of \$10,000.
- The Office and Advisory Council have requested additional funding for the next biennium.

In “A New Wave of Evidence” (2002), authors Anne T. Henderson and Karen L. Mapp, noted: **“Programs and interventions that engage families in supporting their children’s learning at home are linked to higher student achievement”** (p. 25).

Shaver and Walls (as cited by Henderson and Mapp, 2002, p. 172) studied the positive impacts of Title I parent involvement on student achievement in math and reading.

Table 20. Effects of Title I Parent Involvement on Math and Reading Comprehension

NORMAL CURVE EQUIVALENT GAINS IN SKILL AREA	HIGH-PARENT INVOLVEMENT CHILDREN	LOW-PARENT INVOLVEMENT CHILDREN
Total math	18.3	10.6
Math application	12.9	9.3
Total reading	13.3	4.4
Reading comprehension	10.9	4.7

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