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USER GUIDE

Family-School Relationships Survey

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ABOUT THIS SURVEY

WHY DO FAMILY-SCHOOL RELATIONSHIPS MATTER?

Schools that effectively engage families find that their students earn higher grades, score higher on tests, develop better social skills, and are more likely to graduate. In her book *A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement,* Dr. Karen Mapp describes family involvement as key to improving students' academic and social outcomes.

According to Dr. Mapp,* family-school relationships are a two-way street. Schools and districts hoping to improve family engagement must focus on building the capacity of both families and staff around student learning and development. Only then can schools and districts cultivate deep partnerships with families that support student achievement and other key educational outcomes. An important first step in building these partnerships is measuring families' attitudes and perceptions about their ties to their children's schools.

HOW CAN SCHOOLS MEASURE FAMILY-SCHOOL RELATIONSHIPS?

By asking parents and guardians to provide feedback through surveys, schools and districts can gather actionable data and better understand how to build effective partnerships with families. The Family-School Relationships Survey, developed by Panorama Education in partnership with Dr. Mapp, provides schools and districts with a clear picture of family attitudes about an array of topics—including family engagement, barriers to engagement, school climate, and family efficacy.

The survey exists as a series of scales, or groups of survey questions, that work together to measure a single construct, or topic (e.g., Family Engagement or School Safety). Schools and districts can customize the survey by selecting the topics they value most. We recommend choosing between four and seven topics so families can complete a short, focused survey that delivers valuable information on their attitudes and perceptions toward school.

* U.S. Department of Education, "Partners in Education: A Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships," https:// www2.ed.gov/documents/family-community/partners-education.pdf

WHO SHOULD USE THE FAMILY-SCHOOL RELATIONSHIPS SURVEY?

The Family-School Relationships Survey is a resource for principals, district staff, school boards, state departments of education, and/or parent/teacher organizations. The questions are applicable to all types of K-12 school settings—including public, independent, and charter schools—and to communities serving students from a range of socioeconomic backgrounds.

SURVEY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Dr. Hunter Gehlbach, associate professor and associate dean at the UC Santa Barbara Gevirtz Graduate School of Education and director of research at Panorama Education, led the development of the Family-School Relationships Survey. Joining the research team were Co-Principal Investigators Dr. Karen Mapp and Dr. Richard Weissbourd, both from the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

The research team designed the Family-School Relationships Survey using a rigorous, six-step process that adheres to modern best practices in survey design. This process included an extensive literature review, focus groups, synthesis, expert review, and cognitive pre testing.

USING THE FAMILY-SCHOOL RELATIONSHIPS SURVEY

Schools and districts may use the survey for a variety of purposes. For example, educators may use it as a "needs assessment" to determine strengths and areas for improvement around family-school relationships. Many schools find it helpful to disaggregate the results by demographic traits to see how different groups of parents view the school.

Many schools also use the survey to measure change in families' attitudes over time. Administering the survey consistently in consecutive years allows educators to identify important trends in parent attitudes as their children transition from one school to the next. In addition, schools often use the survey to evaluate the effectiveness of specific programs or interventions—such as outreach efforts to new families.

In order to maximize survey response rates, it's important to communicate to families why their feedback matters and how the survey results will be used. We encourage educators to frame it as an opportunity for families to share how the school can create a more welcoming school environment, support student learning at home, and build lasting partnerships that contribute to student success.

At Panorama, we believe that all educators deserve access to the best tools available. We invite educators to use the Family-School Relationships Survey free of charge. We only ask that you identify the survey as the "Family-School Relationships Survey" created by Panorama Education so that others may find this resource as well. If you have any feedback, contact us at research@panoramaed.com.

ABOUT DR. HUNTER GEHLBACH

Dr. Hunter Gehlbach is the senior research advisor at Panorama Education at Panorama Education, as well as an associate professor of education and associate dean for academics and faculty development at UC Santa Barbara's Gevirtz Graduate School of Education. From 2006 to 2015, he was an assistant professor and associate professor of education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. He is an educational psychologist with an academic focus on helping social scientists and practitioners design better surveys and questionnaires.

Dr. Gelhbach is particularly interested in helping schools think about ways to use surveys to improve teacher and student outcomes, and teaches classes in each of these areas at UC Santa Barbara. After graduating with a B.A. from Swarthmore College in psychology and education, Dr. Gehlbach taught high school social studies before returning to school for a M.Ed. in school counseling from the University of Massachusetts-Amherst and a Ph.D. in educational psychology from Stanford.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT *P. 8*

The degree to which families become involved with and interact with their child's school.

Example Question: How often do you meet in person with teachers at your child's school?

SCHOOL FIT *P. 8*

Families' perceptions of how well a school matches their child's developmental needs.

Example Question: How well do you feel your child's school is preparing him/her for his/her next academic year?

FAMILY SUPPORT *P. 9*

Families' perceptions of the amount of academic and social support that they provide their child with outside of school.

Example Question: How often do you and your child talk when s/he is having a problem with others?

FAMILY EFFICACY *P. 9*

How confident families are with regard to key parenting skills.

Example Question: How confident are you in your ability to support your child's learning at home?

LEARNING BEHAVIORS *P. 10*

Families' perceptions of their child's learning-related behaviors.

Example Question: How much effort does your child put into school-related tasks?

SCHOOL CLIMATE *P. 11*

Perceptions of the overall social and learning climate of the school.

Example Question: To what extent do you think that children enjoy going to your child's school?

GRIT *P. 11*

Perceptions of how well students are able to persevere through setbacks to achieve important long-term goals.

Example Question: If your child fails to reach an important goal, how likely is she/he to try again?

BARRIERS TO ENGAGEMENT *P. 12*

Factors that can create challenges for families to interact with or become involved with their child's school.

Example Question: How big of a problem are the following issues for becoming involved with your child's current school?

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES *P. 13*

Perceptions of who should be primarily responsible for school success.

Example Question: Who is primarily responsible for ensuring good communication between home and school?

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Perceptions of student physical and psychological safety at school.

Example Question: How likely is it that someone from your child's school will bully him/her online?

FREE RESPONSES *P. 14*

Open-ended questions about a variety of topics that may be of interest to many schools.

Example Question: What can the school do to help your child engage in learning activities more productively at home?

BACKGROUND QUESTIONS *P. 15*

Demographic questions about survey takers that could be included in the survey and may be of interest to many schools.

Example Question: What is your race or ethnicity?

Family Engagement

The degree to which families become involved with and interact with their child's school.

Question	Response Options				
How often do you meet in person with teachers at your child's school?	Almost never	Once or twice per year	Every few months	Monthly	Weekly or more
How involved have you been with a parent group(s) at your child's school?	Not at all involved	Slightly involved	Somewhat involved	Quite involved	Extremely involved
In the past year, how often have you visited your child's school?	Almost never	Once or twice	Every few months	Monthly	Weekly or more
In the past year, how often have you discussed your child's school with other parents from the school?	Almost never	Once or twice	Every few months	Monthly	Weekly or more
How involved have you been in fundraising efforts at your child's school?	Not at all involved	Slightly involved	Somewhat involved	Quite involved	Extremely involved
In the past year, how often have you helped out at your child's school?	Almost never	Once or twice	Every few months	Monthly	Weekly or more

School Fit

Families' perceptions of how well a school matches their child's developmental needs.

Question	Response Options				
How well do you feel your child's school is preparing him/her for his/her next academic year?	Not well at all	Slightly well	Somewhat well	Quite well	Extremely well
How much of a sense of belonging does your child feel at his/her school?	No belonging at all	A little bit of belonging	Some belonging	Quite a bit of belonging	Tremendous belonging
At your child's school, how well does the overall approach to discipline work for your child?	Not well at all	Slightly well	Somewhat well	Quite well	Extremely well
Given your child's cultural background, how good a fit is his/her school?	Not good at all	Slightly good	Somewhat good	Quite good	Extremely good
How well do the activities offered at your child's school match his/her interests?	Not well at all	Slightly well	Somewhat well	Quite well	Extremely well
How comfortable is your child in asking for help from school adults?	Not comfortable at all	Slightly comfortable	Somewhat comfortable	Quite comfortable	Extremely comfortable
How well do the teaching styles of your child's teachers match your child's learning style?	Not well at all	Slightly well	Somewhat well	Quite well	Extremely well

Family Support

Families' perceptions of the amount of academic and social support that they provide their child with outside of school.

Question	Response Options				
How often do you have conversations with your child about what his/her class is learning at school?	Almost never	Once in a while	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost all the time
How much effort do you put into helping your child learn to do things for himself/herself?	Almost no effort	A little bit of effort	Some effort	Quite a bit of effort	A tremendous amount of effort
How often do you help your child engage in activities which are educational outside the home?	Almost never	Once in a while	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost all the time
To what extent do you know how your child is doing socially at school?	Not at all	A little bit	Somewhat	Quite a bit	A tremendous amount
How often do you help your child understand the content she/he is learning in school?	Almost never	Once in a while	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost all the time
How well do you know your child's close friends?	Not well at all	Slightly well	Somewhat well	Quite well	Extremely well
How often do you and your child talk when she/he is having a problem with others?	Almost never	Once in a while	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost all the time

Family Efficacy

How confident families are with regard to key parenting skills.

Question	Response Options				
How confident are you that you can motivate your child to try hard in school?	Not confident at all	Slightly confident	Somewhat confident	Quite confident	Extremely confident
How confident are you in your ability to connect with other parents?	Not confident at all	Slightly confident	Somewhat confident	Quite confident	Extremely confident
How confident are you in your ability to support your child's learning at home?	Not confident at all	Slightly confident	Somewhat confident	Quite confident	Extremely confident
How confident are you that you can help your child develop good friendships?	Not confident at all	Slightly confident	Somewhat confident	Quite confident	Extremely confident
How confident are you in your ability to make sure your child's school meets your child's learning needs?	Not confident at all	Slightly confident	Somewhat confident	Quite confident	Extremely confident
How confident are you in your ability to make choices about your child's schooling?	Not confident at all	Slightly confident	Somewhat confident	Quite confident	Extremely confident
How confident are you in your ability to help your child deal with his/her emotions appropriately?	Not confident at all	Slightly confident	Somewhat confident	Quite confident	Extremely confident

Learning Behaviors

Families' perceptions of their child's learning-related behaviors.

Question	Response Options				
Positive Learning Behaviors					
How often does your child read for fun?	Almost never	Once in a while	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost all the time
How much effort does your child put into school-related tasks?	Almost no effort	A little bit of effort	Some effort	Quite a bit of effort	A tremendous amount of effort
How motivated is your child to learn the topics covered in class?	Not at all motivated	Slightly motivated	Somewhat motivated	Quite motivated	Extremely motivated
On average, how well does your child work independently on learning activities at home?	Not well at all	Slightly well	Somewhat well	Quite well	Extremely well
In general, how well does your child learn from feedback about his/her work?	Not well at all	Slightly well	Somewhat well	Quite well	Extremely well
Negative Learning Behaviors					
How often does your child struggle to get organized for school?	Almost never	Once in a while	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost all the time
When working on school activities at home, how easily is your child distracted?	Not easily at all	Slightly easily	Somewhat easily	Quite easily	Extremely easily
How often does your child give up on learning activities that she/he finds hard?	Almost never	Once in a while	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost all the time

School Climate

Perceptions of the overall social and learning climate of the school.

Question	Response Options				
To what extent do you think that children enjoy going to your child's school?	Do not enjoy at all	Enjoy a little bit	Enjoy somewhat	Enjoy quite a bit	Enjoy a tremendous amount
How motivating are the classroom lessons at your child's school?	Not at all motivating	Slightly motivating	Somewhat motivating	Quite motivating	Extremely motivating
How fair or unfair is the school's system of evaluating children?	Very unfair / Somewhat unfair	Slightly unfair	Neither fair nor unfair	Slightly fair	Somewhat fair / Very fair
How much does the school value the diversity of children's backgrounds?	Not at all	A little bit	Some	Quite a bit	A tremendous amount
How well do administrators at your child's school create a school environment that helps children learn?	Not well at all	Slightly well	Somewhat well	Quite well	Extremely well
Overall, how much respect do you think the children at your child's school have for the staff?	Almost no respect	A little bit of respect	Some respect	Quite a bit of respect	A tremendous amount of respect
Overall, how much respect do you think the teachers at your child's school have for the children?	Almost no respect	A little bit of respect	Some respect	Quite a bit of respect	A tremendous amount of respect

Grit

Perceptions of how well students are able to persevere through setbacks to achieve important long-term goals.

Question	Response Options				
If your child has a problem while working towards an important goal, how well can she/he keep working?	Not well at all	Slightly well	Somewhat well	Quite well	Extremely well
How often does your child stay focused on the same goal for several months at a time?	Almost never	Once in a while	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost always
Some people pursue some of their goals for a long time, and others change their goals frequently. Over the next several years, how likely is your child to continue to pursue one of his/her current goals?	Not at all likely	Slightly likely	Somewhat likely	Quite likely	Extremely likely
When your child is working on a project that matters a lot to him/her, how focused can he/she stay when there are lots of distractions?	Not at all focused	Slightly focused	Somewhat focused	Quite focused	Extremely focused
If your child fails to reach an important goal, how likely is she/he to try again?	Not at all likely	Slightly likely	Somewhat likely	Quite likely	Extremely likely
How likely is it that your child can motivate himself/herself to do unpleasant tasks if it will help her/him accomplish his/her goals?	Not at all likely	Slightly likely	Somewhat likely	Quite likely	Extremely likely

Barriers to Engagement

Factors that can create challenges for families to interact with or become involved with their child's school.

Question	Response Options				
How big of a problem are the following issues for becoming involved with your child's current school?					
Childcare needs	Not a problem at all	Small problem	Medium problem	Large problem	Very large problem
Transportation-related challenges	Not a problem at all	Small problem	Medium problem	Large problem	Very large problem
Concerns about getting to the school safely	Not a problem at all	Small problem	Medium problem	Large problem	Very large problem
How busy your schedule is	Not a problem at all	Small problem	Medium problem	Large problem	Very large problem
School staff seem too busy	Not a problem at all	Small problem	Medium problem	Large problem	Very large problem
You feel unsure about how to communicate with the school	Not a problem at all	Small problem	Medium problem	Large problem	Very large problem
The school provides little information about involvement opportunities	Not a problem at all	Small problem	Medium problem	Large problem	Very large problem
The school is not welcoming to parents	Not a problem at all	Small problem	Medium problem	Large problem	Very large problem
The school does not communicate well with people from your culture	Not a problem at all	Small problem	Medium problem	Large problem	Very large problem
You do not feel a sense of belonging with your child's school community	Not a problem at all	Small problem	Medium problem	Large problem	Very large problem
Negative memories of your own school experience	Not a problem at all	Small problem	Medium problem	Large problem	Very large problem
Your child does not want you to contact the school	Not a problem at all	Small problem	Medium problem	Large problem	Very large problem
You worry that adults at the school will treat your child differently if you raise a concern	Not a problem at all	Small problem	Medium problem	Large problem	Very large problem

Roles and Responsibilities

Perceptions of who should be primarily responsible for school success.

Question	Response Options			
Many different factors play a role in school success. Each statement below represents something that may contribute to children's success in school. Please indicate who you think is primarily responsible for each factor by checking the appropriate box. If you do not think an item is important for school success, please check "N/A."				
Make sure that the children understand what is being taught at school	Primarily parents	Primarily schools	Primarily children	N/A
Ensure children have good relationships with their peers	Primarily parents	Primarily schools	Primarily children	N/A
Make time for doing fun activities that are unrelated to schoolwork	Primarily parents	Primarily schools	Primarily children	N/A
Make sure that the children have an adult to talk to at school	Primarily parents	Primarily schools	Primarily children	N/A
Identify what children are most interested in learning	Primarily parents	Primarily schools	Primarily children	N/A
Make sure that children have enough time set aside to do all of their school-related work	Primarily parents	Primarily schools	Primarily children	N/A
Help children deal with their emotions appropriately	Primarily parents	Primarily schools	Primarily children	N/A
Make sure the children's learning environment is safe	Primarily parents	Primarily schools	Primarily children	N/A
Ensure good communication between home and school	Primarily parents	Primarily schools	Primarily children	N/A
Call attention to decisions about learning that do not seem to be in the best interest of the children	Primarily parents	Primarily schools	Primarily children	N/A
Make sure children are supported to do their best in school	Primarily parents	Primarily schools	Primarily children	N/A

School Safety

Perceptions of student physical and psychological safety at school.

Question	Response Options				
How often do you worry about violence at your child's school?	Almost never	Once in a while	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost always
If a student is bullied at your child's school, how difficult is it for him/her to get help from an adult?	Not at all difficult	Slightly difficult	Somewhat difficult	Quite difficult	Extremely difficult
How likely is it that someone from your child's school will bully him/her online?	Not at all likely	Slightly likely	Somewhat likely	Quite likely	Extremely likely
Overall, how unsafe does your child feel at school?	Not at all unsafe	Slightly unsafe	Somewhat unsafe	Quite unsafe	Extremely unsafe
To what extent are drugs a problem at your child's school?	Not a problem at all	A little bit of a problem	A moderate problem	Quite a problem	A tremendous problem

Free Responses

Open-ended questions about a variety of topics that may be of interest to many schools.

SUGGESTED FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS*

What can the school do to help your child engage in learning activities more productively at home?

What 1-2 steps could your school take to improve the social climate of the school for students?

If you were in charge of the school, how would you try to engage more parents from your community?

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

What recommendation would you make to the school for how to improve communications with parents?

What is the best thing your school does to help parents become involved at the school?

SCHOOL FIT

If you could change one aspect of your child's school to help him/her learn more, what would you change? Why?

What changes could your school make to help your child feel like the school is a great fit for him/her?

What is the best thing that the school does to help your child feel like the school is a good fit for him/her?

FAMILY SUPPORT

In what ways might the school help you support your child more effectively?

In what ways might other parents from your school help you support your child?

What does the school do well in helping you support your child?

FAMILY EFFICACY

What sorts of things might help you feel more confident about your role as a parent?

LEARNING BEHAVIORS

If another parent asked your advice for getting their child to be a more motivated learner outside of school, what suggestions would you give him/her?

SCHOOL CLIMATE

What characteristic of your child's school is the most helpful for his/her learning?

What aspect of your child's school is the most beneficial for his/her social growth?

What do you think your school could do to improve the social feel of the school for students?

What are the most important things your child's school does to create a positive social climate for students?

* Please note that translations are currently available for the "Suggested Free-Response Questions" only.

BARRIERS TO ENGAGEMENT

What is the biggest obstacle that prevents you from getting more involved at your child's school?

Please list any ways that you can think of that the school might help you overcome this obstacle.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

What do you think parents' most important responsibilities are for ensuring that their child/children have a successful school experience?

What is the most important thing for a school to do to ensure that all children are successful in school?

OTHER

In an average day, how many hours of "screen time" (time in front of computers, television, texting, video games, etc.) does your child spend?

BACKGROUND QUESTIONS

What would be the best way for the school/district to stay in communication with you?

Of the following, which source do you use the most to get information about the school/district?

What is your gender?

What is your child's gender?

What is your race or ethnicity?

What grade is your child in?

What is your relationship to your child?

What is your child's race or ethnicity?

In which year were you born?

Please indicate the primary language spoken in your childhood home.

Please indicate the primary language you speak with your child currently.

Please select the highest level of education you have completed.

Please indicate your approximate average household income.

On average, what grades do you expect your child to earn in school?

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Panorama Education partners with K-12 schools and districts across the country to collect and analyze data about social-emotional learning, school climate, family engagement, and more. With research-backed surveys and a leading technology platform, Panorama helps educators act on data and improve student outcomes. Panorama supports more than 15 million students in 21,000 schools across 50 states, including those in the New York City Department of Education, Dallas Independent School District, Seattle Public Schools, and San Francisco Unified School District.

Learn more about Panorama:

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