

School talk...teachers, families and the language of learning

Prepared and presented by Sharon Butler
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CEOM draft Charter for Promoting Outward Facing Schools

- *“...the constant aim of the school...should be contact and dialogue with pupil’s families...”*
- *“...acknowledge the essential role of families and community in enhancing wellbeing and learning outcomes for all children and young people...”*
- *“The Charter recognises that parents are the first educators of their children...”*

Life-long and life-wide learning

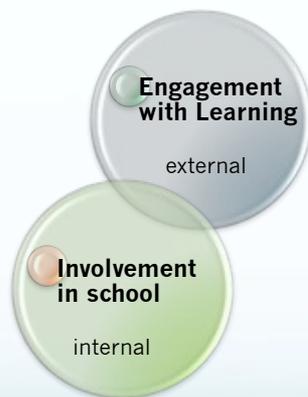


Source: Banks, J et al, 2007, Learning in & out of school in diverse environments

“...if educators make use of the informal learning that occurs in the homes and communities of students, the achievement gap between marginalized students and mainstream students can be reduced.”

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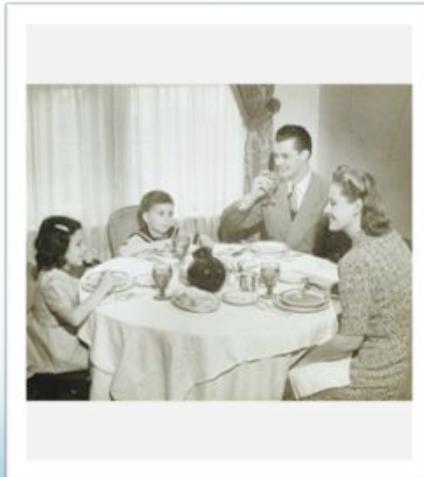
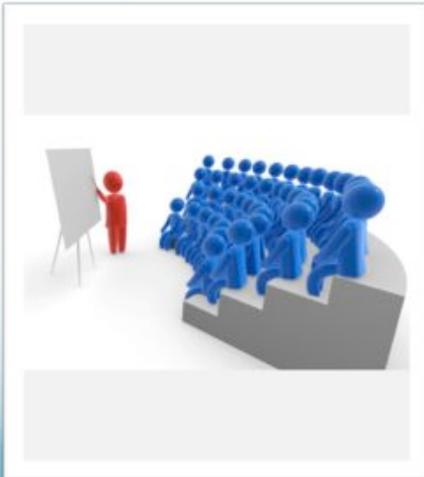
Involvement ? Engagement?



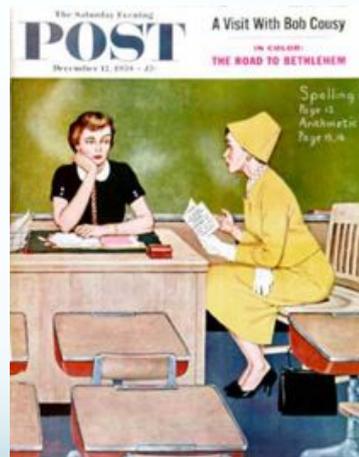
“...some parents know how to speak the language of schooling and thus provide an advantage for their children during the school years, and others do not know this language, which can be a major barrier to the home making a contribution to achievement.”

Prof John Hattie

Family effort & student achievement



Applying the research...

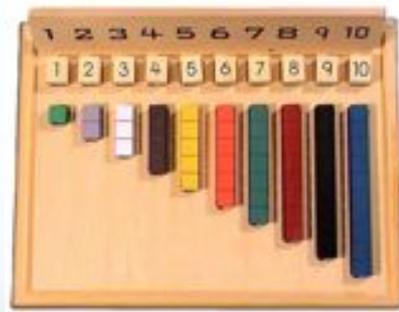


What do you understand about how you communicate with families?

- What communication methodologies do you use to communicate with your families?
- What is the purpose of the communication?
- What words do you use – verbally and written (eg letters home, newsletters, reports)
- What messages do you convey?
 - Content
 - Relationship

What does this mean?

- Your child is really good at one-to-one correspondence...



What do you understand about how families want to be communicated with?

- What do you know of your community's communication preferences?
- How do you know this?
- What don't you know that it would be useful to know?
- How will you find this out?



How and what do families communicate with the school?



Parent-teacher interviews



And so...

- What is one idea you can take away from today and implement?
- Share with at least one other person...



A final thought...

“Without doubt, parental engagement in children's learning makes a difference and remains one of the most powerful school improvement levers that we have. But effective parental engagement will not happen without concerted effort, time and commitment from both parents and schools. It will not happen unless parents know the difference they make and unless schools actively reinforce their active engagement in learning.”

