

Family Engagement Practices in CLC Schools

RUBRIC



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Instructions for CLC Teams

This rubric is designed to support CLC school teams in reflecting on and strengthening their family engagement practices across six key dimensions and their alignment with Dr. Joyce Epstein's six types of family involvement (link to source in bibliography).

- Family–School Communication (Communicating)
- Conditions for Learning and Well-Being (Parenting)
- Family Engagement in Student Learning (Learning at Home¹)
- Family Participation in School Life (Volunteering)
- Family Leadership in School Life (Decision-Making)
- Community Partnerships and Vitality (Collaborating with Community)

How to use this tool

1. Complete the rubric as a team (e.g., CDA/CLC Lead, administrator(s), school staff, and where relevant, partners). Engaging multiple perspectives will lead to a more accurate and meaningful assessment.
2. For each dimension, read all four levels together and discuss where your current practices best fit.
3. Agree on one level that reflects your *current reality*, based on evidence, not intentions or future plans.
4. Use the evidence and reflection questions to ground your discussion in concrete examples (e.g., specific activities, participation patterns, or changes made based on family input).
5. Identify which families are engaged and which may be missing, and consider any barriers they may be facing.
6. Select one or more next steps to move your practice forward. Focus on actions that will deepen engagement and invite families to progress from participation toward shared leadership

1 In this rubric we have expanded Dr. Joyce Epstein's "Learning at Home" to include family influence on learning in school.

Tips for meaningful use

- Prioritize honest discussion over "scoring high." The value of the tool lies in identifying areas for growth.
- When possible, choose at least one high-impact action that strengthens family voice, influence, or leadership.
- Revisit the rubric over time to track progress and adjust actions.

This process supports schools in moving from informing, to engaging families, and toward partnering with and sharing leadership alongside families, in alignment with the CLC approach.



Progression	1 Access	2 Consistency	3 Two-Way Exchange	4 Co-Construction
Family-School Communication “Communicating” (Epstein Type 2)	Communication is infrequent, one-way, or inaccessible to some families.	Communication is regular but mostly one-way and not always accessible (e.g., language, format).	Communication is two-way, accessible, and supports family understanding and participation.	Communication is ongoing, responsive, and co-constructed; families influence/ shape communication practices and content.

Reflection

- What specific examples or evidence show that this level accurately reflects our current practice?
- Is communication two-way and responsive, or primarily one-way?
- Is communication accessible to all families (language, format, timing)?
- How do families shape or influence communication practices?

Next Steps to Progress from Access → Consistency → Two-Way Exchange → Co-Construction

Moving from Level 1 → 2 | Increase Access & Consistency

- ☐ Establish regular communication channels (e.g., newsletters, emails, texts)
- ☐ Use multiple formats to reach families (digital, paper, verbal)
- ☐ Ensure communication is accessible (clear language, translation where needed)

Moving from Level 2 → 3 | Build Two-Way Communication

- ☐ Create structured opportunities for families to respond (surveys, meetings, check-ins)
- ☐ Actively seek feedback from a broad range of families (not just the most engaged)
- ☐ Follow up with families to clarify input and deepen understanding

Moving from Level 3 → 4 | Co-Construct Communication

- ☐ Add a visible feedback loop (“You said / We did”)
- ☐ Involve families in shaping communication methods (e.g., preferred formats, frequency)
- ☐ Co-design communication strategies with families (e.g., parent-led messaging, peer outreach)
- ☐ Adjust communication practices based on ongoing family input and needs

Progression	1 Awareness	2 Support	3 Responsive	4 Co-Develop
Conditions for Learning and Well-Being “Parenting” (Epstein Type 1)	The school provides little or no support to families in creating home environments that support children’s learning, health, and well-being.	The school shares general information (e.g., about healthy routines, development, well-being), but supports are not tailored or responsive to different family contexts.	The school provides accessible, practical, and relevant supports (tools, guidance, resources) that help families establish conditions for learning at home. The school demonstrates a growing understanding of family contexts and needs.	Families and school staff co-develop supports that reflect diverse family realities. Families share knowledge of their contexts, strengths, and needs, and the school adapts supports accordingly

Reflection

- What supports do we provide to help families create conditions for learning?
- How do we learn about and respond to the realities and needs of our families?
- Are supports accessible and relevant to diverse family contexts?
- How do families influence or shape the supports offered?

Next Steps to Progress from Awareness → Support → Responsive → Co-Develop

Moving from Level 1 → 2 | Build Awareness & Access

- ☐ Share simple, practical information with families on routines, development, and well-being
- ☐ Use multiple communication channels to reach families (e.g., newsletters, texts, online platforms)
- ☐ Ensure information is accessible (clear, simple language, translations where needed, timing)

Moving from Level 2 → 3 | Provide Targeted Support

- ☐ Gather information from families about their needs, strengths, and realities
- ☐ Tailor supports to different family contexts and needs
- ☐ Provide concrete tools to families (e.g., guides, checklists, take-home resources)
- ☐ Offer workshops or sessions at key transition points

Moving from Level 3 → 4 | Co-Develop Supports with Families

- ☐ Co-develop and design workshops, resources, or supports with families, not just for them
- ☐ Invite families to share strategies, experiences, or cultural practices
- ☐ Establish structures for family input (e.g., parent groups, advisory input) to adapt supports over time

Progression	1 School-Directed	2 Support at Home	3 Alignment and Contribution	4 Shape Learning Experiences
Family Engagement in Student Learning “Learning at Home” (Epstein Type 4)	Learning is school-directed with little connection to families and their cultural or community context.	Families support learning at home in basic ways (e.g., homework, routines) but are not asked to contribute personal knowledge, experiences or perspectives.	Families support learning at home using strategies aligned with learning goals. Families are occasionally invited to share skills, experiences, or cultural knowledge.	Families contribute knowledge, skills, experiences, or perspectives that enrich and shape learning in meaningful and ongoing ways.

Reflection

- What evidence shows that families are both supporting learning at home and contributing to or shaping learning experiences (e.g., examples, participation patterns, changes made based on family input)?
- How is family knowledge (culture, experience) reflected in learning?
- Do families understand what their child is learning and how to support it at home?
- What resources and support do we provide? How is family knowledge (culture, experience, skills) reflected in learning at school?
- Are learning experiences at school connected to real family and community contexts?

Next Steps to Progress from School-Directed → Support at home → Alignment and Contribution → Families Shape Learning

Moving from Level 1 → 2 | Basic Home Learning Support

- ☐ Share clear learning goals and expectations with families
- ☐ Provide simple strategies for supporting learning at home (e.g., reading routines, study habits)
- ☐ Offer take-home resources aligned with classroom learning

Moving from Level 2 → 3 | Strengthen Alignment

- ☐ Provide targeted strategies linked to the curriculum and assessments
- ☐ Design interactive homework that encourages family discussion and involvement
- ☐ Invite families to share skills, experiences, or cultural knowledge

Moving from Level 3 → 4 | Shape Learning Experiences

- ☐ Invite families to share skills, experiences, or cultural knowledge connected to learning
- ☐ Co-develop learning activities or projects with families
- ☐ Create sustained opportunities for families to contribute to curriculum or project design
- ☐ Establish ongoing partnerships where families act as co-educators or mentors (e.g. FSL Family Passport)

Progression	1 Attendance	2 Involvement	3 Contribution	4 Participation
Family Participation in School Life “Volunteering” (Epstein Type 3)	Families participate mainly as attendees. Participation is limited or uneven.	Families provide feedback but are not involved in planning.	Families contribute to planning or delivery. Participation includes a broader and more diverse group.	Family participation is representative, sustained, and shared across a wide range of families.

Reflection

- What specific examples or evidence show that this level accurately reflects our current practice?
- What does family participation in school life currently look like in your school?
- Which types of families are consistently participating in school life? Who is missing?
- What barriers might prevent some families from engaging?
- Are participation opportunities flexible and accessible (e.g., possibility to contribute even if they cannot attend in person)?
- How can families influence participation opportunities?

Next Steps to Progress from Attendance → Involvement → Contribution → Shared Participation

Moving from Level 1 → 2 | Increase Access & Awareness

- ☐ Offer events at varied times (day/evening/online)
- ☐ Improve communication and outreach to families

Moving from Level 2 → 3 | Broaden Participation

- ☐ Personally invite underrepresented families
- ☐ Provide childcare, transportation, or food
- ☐ Create low-commitment roles for families

Moving from Level 3 → 4 | Encourage Leadership

- ☐ Organize a parent-led activity
- ☐ Transition recurring roles to parents/guardians
- ☐ Create structures for sustained engagement (e.g., ongoing roles)

Progression	1 Informed	2 Consulted	3 Influence	4 Shared Leadership
Family Leadership in School Life “Decision- Making” (Epstein Type 5)	Families are informed of decisions but have no leadership role.	Families provide input when asked but are not involved in decision-making.	Families take on leadership roles in existing structures or activities (e.g., committees, events). Their input influences decisions.	Families share decision-making in formal structures and lead initiatives beyond them. Leadership is distributed and accessible: Clear pathways exist for diverse families to develop and take on leadership roles over time.

Reflection

- What specific examples or evidence show that families influence or share decision-making?
- Where do families influence decisions vs. simply provide input?
- Who currently holds leadership roles? How representative are they of the broader family community?
- What pathways exist for new or underrepresented families to take on leadership roles?
- Do families see the impact of their leadership? In what ways?

Next Steps to Progress from Informed → Consulted → Influence → Shared Leadership

Moving from Level 1 → 2 | Invite Family Voice

- ☐ Survey families and share results back
- ☐ Create regular opportunities for families to provide input (e.g., feedback forms, informal conversations)
- ☐ Ensure input opportunities are accessible (language, format, timing)

Moving from Level 2 → 3 | Increase Influence in Existing Structures

- ☐ Invite parents to participate in existing planning meetings or committees
- ☐ Clarify how family input informs decisions (feedback loop)

Moving from Level 3 → 4 | Co-Construct Communication

- ☐ Co-design one or more initiatives with families (shared responsibility from the start)
- ☐ Create multiple entry points into leadership beyond formal structures (e.g., project leads)
- ☐ Identify and invite underrepresented families into leadership roles
- ☐ Provide support or mentorship for new parent leaders
- ☐ Establish ongoing structures that sustain shared leadership (e.g., advisory groups, rotating roles)

Progression	1 Limited Connection	2 Awareness	3 Access and Participation	4 Contribution and Influence
Community Partnerships and Vitality Families accessing, contributing to, and strengthening the community “Collaborating with Community” (Epstein Type 6)	Families have limited awareness of or access to community resources, services, or opportunities. There is little connection to the cultural or linguistic contexts of families.	The school shares information about community resources and services, but access and engagement are limited or not well supported. Activities occur in English or include cultural or community elements, but do not meaningfully reflect family identities or strengthen belonging.	The school facilitates connections between families and community networks. Families are supported in accessing community resources, services, and opportunities and participate in community life.	Families are actively connected to and engaged in the community. The school represents families on community roundtables and shares data and insights on family needs with community partners and institutions. Majority institutions and organizations adapt their priorities and services to include the needs of families in our school.

Reflection

- How well are families connected to, supported by, and contributing to the community (sense of belonging)?
- Which families are connected to the community, and who may be disconnected?
- How do we support families in accessing community resources and services?
- In what ways are families contributing to community life beyond participating in school activities?
- How do these connections strengthen identity, belonging, and well-being?
- How are the needs of our families represented in community spaces (e.g., roundtables, partnerships)?

Next Steps to Progress from Limited Connection → Awareness → Access and Participation → Contribution and Influence

Moving from Level 1 → 2 | Increase Awareness

- ☐ Share information about local resources, services, and opportunities
- ☐ Highlight community opportunities in school communications
- ☐ Ensure the information is accessible (language, format, medium/platform)

Moving from Level 2 → 3 | Support Access & Participation

- ☐ Actively connect families to services (e.g., referrals, introductions)
- ☐ Reduce barriers to access (transportation, timing, guidance)
- ☐ Create opportunities for families to engage in community events or networks

Moving from Level 3 → 4 | Enable Contribution & Influence

- ☐ Represent family needs at community tables using data and insights
- ☐ Create opportunities for families to contribute to community service or initiatives
- ☐ Support family-led or family-driven community initiatives
- ☐ Encourage and support the representation of family needs and assets in community spaces



Sources

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Additional Tools and Resources

The Six Types of Family Involvement Infographic https://drive.google.com/file/d/1P30xjKN_T9FZoQwm-MSj3shyCevmmfEW/view?usp=sharing

All Family Engagement Resources available at LEARN <https://clc.learnquebec.ca/landing-priority-goals-and-outcome-areas/#family-engagement>

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