



School Connections

A quarterly publication from the New York State Parental Information and Resource Centers

The New York State Parental Information and Resource Centers (PIRCs) are funded by the U.S. Department of Education and sponsored by Cornell Cooperative Extension Jefferson County, Watertown, NY in partnership with Jefferson/Lewis BOCES and EPIC-Every Person Influences Children, Buffalo, NY. PIRCs provide technical assistance to schools related to family engagement. Visit our website at www.nyspirc.org.



Future of Family Engagement In New York State with the Elimination of the PIRCs

Over the past five years the New York State Parental Information and Resource Centers have offered a variety of strategies to schools and parents to close the achievement gap and improve educational achievement for all students. Research from over 30 years proves that parental involvement improves student achievement. NYSPIRCs provided schools and districts with tools to effectively partner with parents. The NYSPIRCs empowered parents to advocate for their children and school reform. They provided training and professional development on effective family engagement to school districts. They collaborated with the New York State PTA to engage all public school parents in their children's education. Several best practices were instituted in many school districts such as the use of Family Liaisons, establishment of parent groups/parent leadership academies, and parent resource rooms.

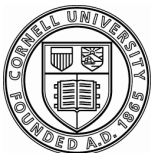
FORMATION OF A STATEWIDE FAMILY ENGAGEMENT COALITION is in the planning stages through the leadership of representatives from EPIC, NYSPTA and Cornell Cooperative Extension of Jefferson County. The role of the proposed coalition is below:

- Advocate for family engagement policies and their implementation in New York State.
- Access and disseminate the latest research and best practices on family engagement.
- Act in an advisory capacity to state government, including executive and legislative branches, NYS Education Department, and statewide agencies, as it relates to policy development.

Future announcements regarding participation and membership in the NYS Family Engagement Coalition will be announced on the NYSPIRC website, through mailings to school personnel, and press releases.

*SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Recently, the United States Department of Education announced PIRC funding will end this year due to budgetary constraints. The New York State PIRC-CCE office will offer reduced services until November 30, 2011 and the PIRC-EPIC office until December 30, 2011. The NYSPIRC website (www.nyspirc.org) will continue serving as a location for technical assistance guides and other resources for educators and parents.



Cornell University
Cooperative Extension
Jefferson County



[Families and Communities Together with Schools](#) (FACTS), sponsored by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Jefferson County, provides services throughout Upstate New York.

[EPIC \(Every Person Influences Children\)](#) operates PIRC centers in Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse Fallsburg/Monticello, Yonkers, Bronx, and Queens

School Connections

Issue 16 Fall 2011

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT TOOL KIT -A Guide for Title I Schools

A new collection of Family Engagement resources has been assembled in a "tool kit" format for school personnel. Family engagement is focused on the child and his/her success in school. The tool kit contains research, strategies, and information about how to reach out to families and build partnerships based on two-way communication and respect. This is not a simple or quick process, but many schools throughout the United States have succeeded in establishing strong relationships with families resulting in improved academic achievement.

Parent or family engagement is a key requirement for all Title I schools. Title I funding can be used for parent activities, establishing family resource centers, hiring family liaison positions, and other best practices described in this tool kit. The CCE-PIRC will distribute the tool kit to schools designated as "Schools In Need of Improvement (SINI)." Other school districts interested in a copy can email: info@nyspir.org.

The tool kit is divided into the following sections:

- I. Value of Family Engagement
- II. Best Practices for Family Engagement
- III. Title I Regulations: Parental Involvement
- IV. Technical Assistance for School Personnel
- V. Fact Sheets for Families
- VI. Resources



ON THE SAME PAGE SUMMIT PROGRESS

NYSPIRCs, NYSPTA, NYS Education Department, and others collaborated for the past four years to hold an annual statewide Family Engagement Summit entitled "On The Same Page". School administrators and community leaders who shared a passion for engaging parents in the educational process were invited. They were charged with creating systemic change throughout NYS by focusing on producing outcomes in support of the NYSED Implementation Plan for the Regents Policy Statement on Improving Student Achievement and School Performance through Parent and Family Partnerships.

Based on the work of the Action Teams efforts over the years, the following recommendations were put forth to the New York State Board of Regents, notification of their decision, should be in the near future:

1. Adoption of the National Standards for Family-School Partnerships and the National Standards for Family-School Partnerships Assessment Guide.
2. Adoption of professional development and higher education guidelines that focus on the engagement of a culturally diverse population of families in the education of their children, including families of students with special needs for pre and in-service teachers.

This publication was produced in whole or in part with funds from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Innovation and Improvement, Parental Information and Resource Center program, under grant #84.310.A. The content herein does not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Education, any other agency of the U.S. government, or any other source.

Cornell Cooperative Extension provides equal program and employment opportunities. Please contact the Cornell Cooperative Extension Association of Jefferson County office if you have special needs or are unable to pay.