

4I- Building Better Connections: Co-Developing a Family Engagement Measure With a School District

Presenters:

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Learning Objectives

- Discuss benefits for partnering with students and families.
- Share real-world examples of a student and family engagement tool for classroom teachers.
- Understand how to leverage PBIS/MTSS to strengthen partnerships.

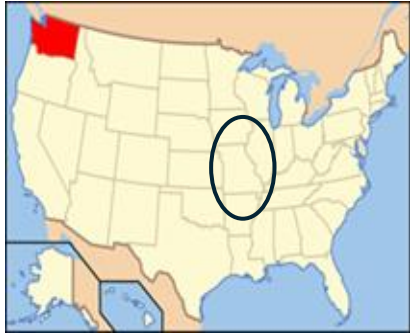


Who is here?



- I work in a pre-school or elementary school
- I work in a middle school or high school.
- I grew up in another state...
- I always wanted to be a teacher...
- I am usually early for meetings...
- I can remember my Kindergarten teacher by name...
- I graduated from a University in Missouri...
- I have fun summer plans...
- I am on Facebook, X, Instagram...
- We have a district/school plan for engaging students and families ...
- **What brings you to this session today?**

Introduction ... About me in 60 seconds or less



UMSL



Think to yourself... Talk with a Friend



Which family and student engagement challenges are currently the highest priority for you to solve within your school or classroom?



TFI 3.0

EQUITY



Classroom



Mental Health



Crisis Response



Voice

[Link](#)



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TIERED FIDELITY INVENTORY (TFI) MANUAL

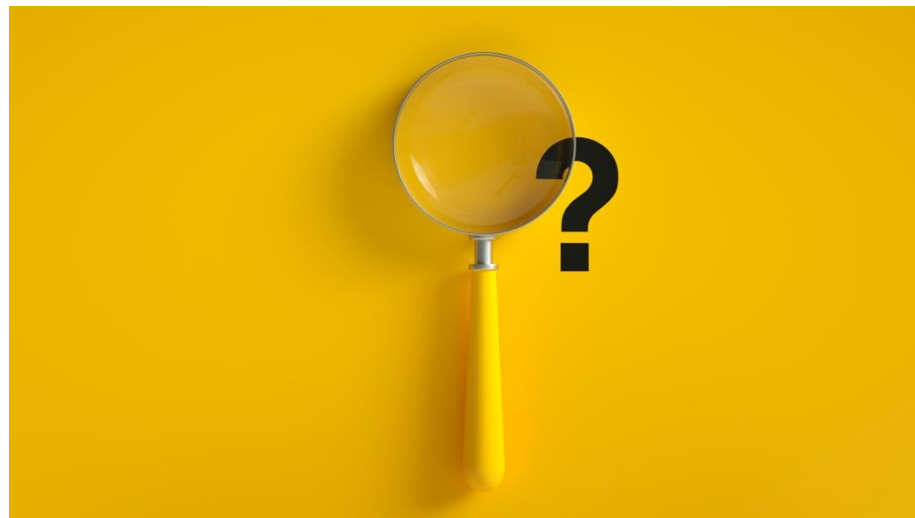
Version 3 | February 2025

This Conversation Supports...

TFI 3.0 Feature Number	Description
1.16 Family and Community Engagement	Tier 1 leadership teams purposefully and regularly engage families and community members that are representative of (a) the schools' demographics and (b) any marginalized groups in co-designing and actively revising the content and the implementation of foundational Tier 1 practices (items 1.3-1.10) based on the regular review of schoolwide and community data.
2.11 Family and Community Engagement	Tier 2 leadership team purposefully and regularly engages families and community members that are representative of the school's demographics and (b) any marginalized groups in the regular review of schoolwide and community data in order to identify systemic barriers that may contribute to over or under representation of student groups in Tier 2 supports, and co-design and actively revise the selection and adaptation of Tier 2 interventions and the implementation of Tier 2 foundational practices (items 2.3-2.9).
3.11 Family and Community Engagement	Tier 3 leadership team purposefully and regularly engages families and community members that are representative of the school's demographics and any marginalized groups in the regular review of schoolwide and community data in order to identify systemic barriers that may contribute to over or under representation of student groups in Tier 3 supports and co-design and actively revise the selection and adaptation of interventions and the implementation of Tier 3 foundational practices (items 3.3-3.6).

**Benefits for partnering with
students and families.**

Students have opportunities to provide input ... student input must be used to inform adjustments



What do you currently have in place to promote student voice?



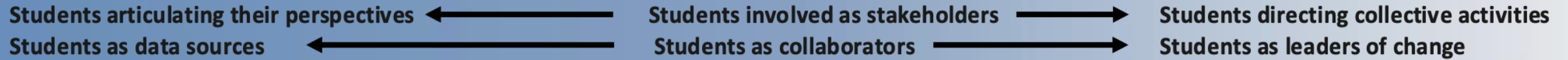
Student Voice is Associated with Positive Outcomes in Schools

- Student Wellness
- Safer Schools
- Stronger Relationships
- Improved Attendance and Engagement
- Family Engagement

RPS Educational Impact 2026



What do we mean by student voice?



Expression	Consultation	Participation	Partnership	Activism	Leadership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteering opinions • Creating art • Celebrating • Complaining • Praising • Objecting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being asked for their opinion • Providing feedback • Serving in a focus group • Completing a survey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending meetings or events in which decisions are made • Frequent inclusion when issues are framed and actions planned. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formalized role in decision-making • Standard operations require student involvement • Adults are trained in how to work collaboratively with youth partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying problems • Generating solutions • Organizing responses • Agitating and/or educating for change both in and outside of school contexts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-planning, making decisions, and accepting significant responsibility for outcomes, • Co-guiding group processes, • Co-conducting activities.

Who is family?

Family – This term is not limited in definition but rather applied to the concept of the network of individuals responsible for, or possessing a significant role in the life of a student outside of school.

Family School Partnerships Improve Outcomes

Students

Students with Disabilities

Parents

Teachers

Guiding Quote for this Work:

“We believe that students and families know best what they need, and when schools take time to listen, they can create stronger, more connected learning environments.”

Campbell & Powers, 2025 (Pragmatic Measures Manuscript)



What are Family-School Partnerships?

We don't wait to interact with families until students are in need of Tier 3 supports.

The simple answer is ...the interactions between schools and families.

Our focus...How can we promote positive interactions?



The Proposed Characteristics of Family-School Partnerships

Parents are viewed as empowered partners.

Interactions among partners are collaborative and bi-directional.

Relationships are cooperative, interdependent, and balanced.

Maintenance of a positive relationship is a priority.

Services provided are flexible, responsive, and proactive.

Differences in perspectives are seen as strengths.

There is a commitment to cultural competence.

There is an emphasis on outcomes and goal attainment.

(Sheridan, 2004)

Think Pair Share

Individually: Think of one student you successfully partnered with or one family you built a great relationship with. What was the single biggest benefit you noticed for that student, that family, or yourself?

Partner: Turn to a neighbor and take 90 seconds each to share your story and the specific benefit you identified.

Group Conversation: Three to four share a benefit discussed.

Real-world examples of a student and family engagement tool for classroom teachers.

Practical Solutions for Teachers - Classroom Level

PBIS INFRASTRUCTURE: Classroom Routines | Behavior Expectations | Feedback Systems | Informal Data Use

Expression	Consultation	Participation	Partnership	Activism	Leadership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student reflections • Exit tickets on: feelings about class norms, engagement, belonging, and clarity of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student input on expectations & routines • Structured feedback cycles on teaching practices and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students co-create norms • Engage in class problem-solving discussions about 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students collaborate with teachers to analyze classroom data • Co-design classroom routines or 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students identify inequities in participation or discipline • Advocate for changes to classroom policies or 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students facilitate class meetings or restorative circles • Lead reteaching of expectations • Take roles in

Classrooms move from “student voice in routines” → **students shaping the environment**

How do your schools currently gather family perspectives?

What methods or tools are used (surveys, focus groups, informal conversations)?

Whose voices are represented and whose might be missing?

How could a pragmatic, co-developed tool make those voices more visible?

Definition: What Is a “Pragmatic

A pragmatic measure is a tool that is both scientifically sound and practically useful in everyday school settings —concise, culturally relevant, and easy to administer and interpret.

Core features

Feasible: Fits within teachers’ daily routines without extra burden.

Culturally Responsive: Honors diverse student and family voices and languages.

Usable: Generates clear, actionable information for classroom and PBIS decision making.

Three Tools in the VIBE Suite

Tool	Purpose & Audience	How It Supports Connection
1. Parent Collaboration Survey	Gathers family insights on children’s routines, emotions, and cultural preferences for support.	Builds shared understanding between families and teachers for goal setting and classroom strategies.
2. Elementary Student Readiness Surveys (PreK–2, 3–5)	Captures student voice on belonging, readiness, and self-regulation through developmentally appropriate items (pictures for young learners, simple text for upper grades).	Empowers students to reflect on emotions and relationships, guiding early interventions.
3. Decision Tree Framework	Provides a structured guide for teachers to interpret survey data and select next steps for behavior or SEL support.	Translates data into tiered actions — from classroom adjustments to individualized plans.

EXAMPLE OF STUDENT SURVEY K-3

Elementary Student Readiness Survey

Instructions for Students:

Please answer the questions below to help us understand how ready you feel for this school year (or specific activity/transition). There are no right or wrong answers. Your voice matters. Just be honest!

Student Name: _____

Teacher Name: _____

Grade: _____

Parent Name: _____

1. How do you feel about starting a new activity/school year?

- 😄 Excited
 😊 Okay
 😟 Nervous

2. Do you feel you have the supplies and/or tools you need to get started?

- Yes, I have everything.
 I have some things, but not all.
 No, I still need a lot of things.

3. How comfortable do you feel asking your teacher for help if you need it?

- Very Comfortable
 A little Comfortable
 Not Comfortable at all

4. How do you feel about making new friends or meeting new classmates?

- 😄 Excited
 😊 Okay
 😟 Nervous

5. Do you feel ready to learn new things?

- Yes, I'm ready to learn!
 I'm a little unsure.
 No, I don't feel ready.

6. How do you feel about following the rules/expectations in the classroom?

- I know the rules and feel ready to follow them
 I know some rules, but I need help with others.
 I'm not sure about the rules.
 My classroom doesn't have rules or expectations

7. How do you feel about working in a group with other students?

- 😄 Excited
 😊 Okay
 😟 Not happy

8. How do you feel about listening to and following directions?

- I'm very good at it.
 I'm ok at it.
 I find it hard sometimes.

9. How do you feel when you have to try something new or challenging?

- 😄 Excited
 😊 unsure
 😟 Worried

10. Do you know the schoolwide expectations?

- I know the expectations and feel ready to follow them
 I know some, but I need help with others.
 I'm not sure about expectations.

11. Name the schoolwide expectations you know below:

10. Does you have a trusted adult(s) within the school building? (Select all that apply)

- Admin
 Home Room Teacher
 Subject Teacher
 Specials Teacher
 Counselor
 Office Staff
 Custodian
 Other: _____

11. Provide the name of your trusted adult or adult(s) below:

12. Is there anything else you want to share about how you feel or what you need to be ready? If you need more room, draw or write on the back.

1. How do you feel about school?
2. How do you feel when you try something new?
3. How do you feel about making friends?
4. How do you learn best?
5. How do you like to work?
6. Can you ask your teacher for help?
7. Do you have what you need to learn?
8. Do you know your **classroom expectations**?
9. Do you know your **schoolwide expectations**?
Yes — I can name them: _____
10. Do you have a trusted adult at school?
Yes — name: _____
11. Is there anything else you want to share or draw about school?
(*Open-ended at end*)

When & How to Administer?

Phase	Timing	Who Completes	Purpose & Rationale
1 Parent Collaboration Survey	Weeks 1–2 of school year (or included in start-of-year packet)	Parents / guardians	Gathers background on routines, emotional triggers, preferred supports, and family hopes. • Introduces the tool as part of the school’s partnership commitment. • Sets a welcoming, collaborative tone before any behavioral concerns arise.
2 Student Readiness Survey	Weeks 4–6 after students settle in	Students (PreK–5) during morning meeting or advisory	Captures student perceptions once relationships have formed. • Avoids first-week bias and allows students to respond with trust. • Provides data for Tier 1 and Tier 2 planning in October PBIS meetings.
3 Review & Debrief	Within 1 week of survey completion	Teachers (+ optional PBIS team member)	Review data for patterns of strengths and needs. • Hold brief student check-ins to clarify responses. • Share key takeaways with families via conference or newsletter.

Teachers Voices...

1. Valuable and Practical

“This survey is something we actually use. It helps us know students faster and talk with families more meaningfully.”

Reported strong buy-in and plan to re-administer next year.

Recommended the survey to grade-level colleagues and PBIS team leads.

2. Clear Structure & Student-Friendly Language

“My second graders could answer on their own — the pictures really helped!”

Teachers praised readability and developmental design for PreK–5.

Found visual supports especially effective for multilingual learners.

3. Need for Routine & Family Scripts

“We’d love a set time each year — and maybe a short script for talking about results with families.”

Requested inclusion of sample talking points and guidance for sharing results with caregivers.

Suggested adding survey administration windows to the annual PBIS calendar.

Teacher Voices ...

4. Content Suggestions

“Could we add a question about self-control or self-management? That’s a big focus for us.”

Proposed item: “I feel confident using calming or restorative strategies when I’m upset.”

Reflected desire for tighter connection between SEL instruction and family engagement.

5. Connecting Student & Parent Data

“It’d be great to line up what parents say with what kids say — that’s powerful for our team meetings.”

Teachers saw value in cross-referencing responses to identify classroom or grade-level trends.

Requested simple alignment chart or dashboard within the Decision Tree tool.

6. Emerging Themes

Teachers view the VIBE tools as actionable and sustainable, not “one-more-thing.”

Desire for routine integration, family dialogue supports and linked data visualization.

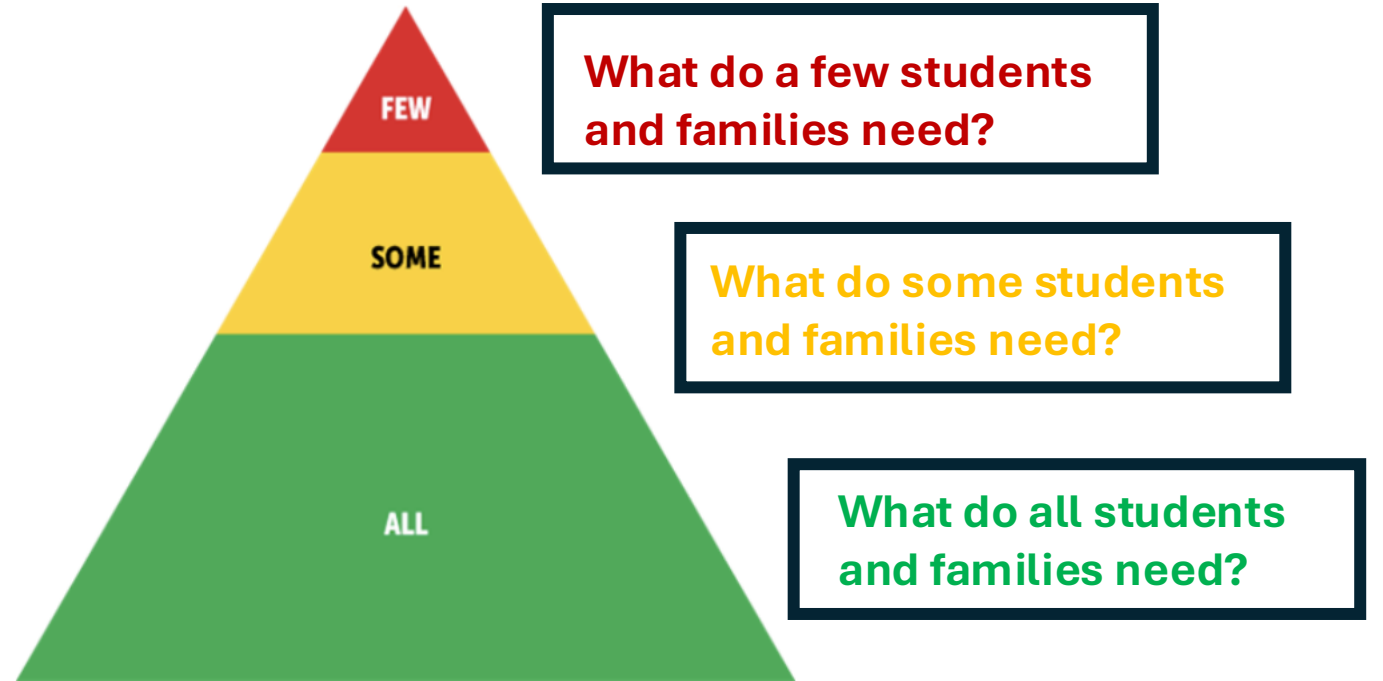
Feedback directly informed refinements in the 2025–2026 version of the suite.

1 VIBE Surveys – collect perceptions from students and families.

2 Decision Tree – guides teachers to interpret data and choose responses.

3 PBIS Team – reviews patterns across tiers to ensure supports match need.

4 Family Partnership – families informed and involved at each tier.



How do we figure out what students and families need?

Key Implementation Tips



- **Provide a Clear Rationale**
- **Support Student Comprehension**
- **Schedule Protected Time**
- **Plan for Follow-Up**

Turn and Talk

First Individually...

- What part of this process feels easiest or most natural for you to try first?
- What part of this process requires a bit more planning or caution before you roll it out?
- What is a potential roadblock or barrier in this process we need to watch out for?

Share in a small group

**Understand how to leverage
PBIS/MTSS to strengthen
partnerships**

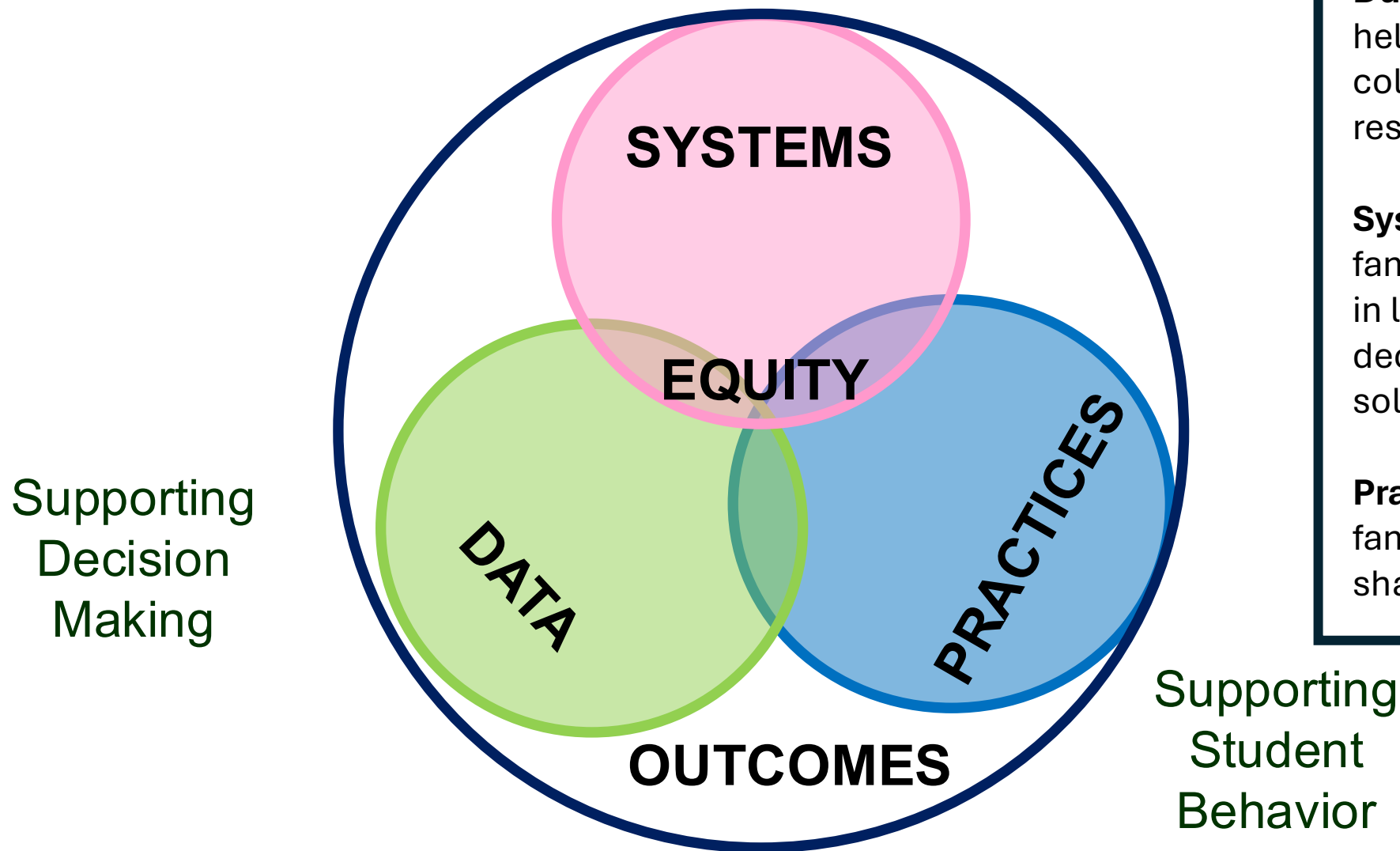
How can Family Partnerships and Student Voice be Organized within Systems Work?

Integration is Key



Essential elements

Supporting Staff
Behavior



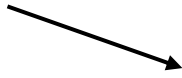
Partnerships shows up in...

Data: Students and families help define questions, collect data and interpret results.

Systems: Students and families have a seat at the table in leadership, decision-making and problem solving.

Practices: Students and families co-create, lead, and shape the practices.

What might we put in place to make it happen and promote sustainability



SYSTEMS

Building family and student partnerships is a regular agenda item at Tier 1 FBIS meetings.

OUTCOME

What do we want to achieve?



Purposely and regularly engage students and families

DATA

Measure partnerships of student and family partnerships – School Climate Survey and our use of effective practices. Build a system to monitor engagement

How will we monitor our use of effective FE practices; measuring perceptions, need, and impact



EQUITY

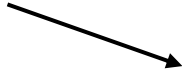
What things will we do To increase family engagement and strengthen partnership



PRACTICES

Identify practices to engage all families, some and a few families

What might we put in place to make it happen and promote sustainability



SYSTEMS

OUTCOME

What do we want to achieve?



DATA

How will we monitor our use of effective FE practices; measuring perceptions, need, and impact

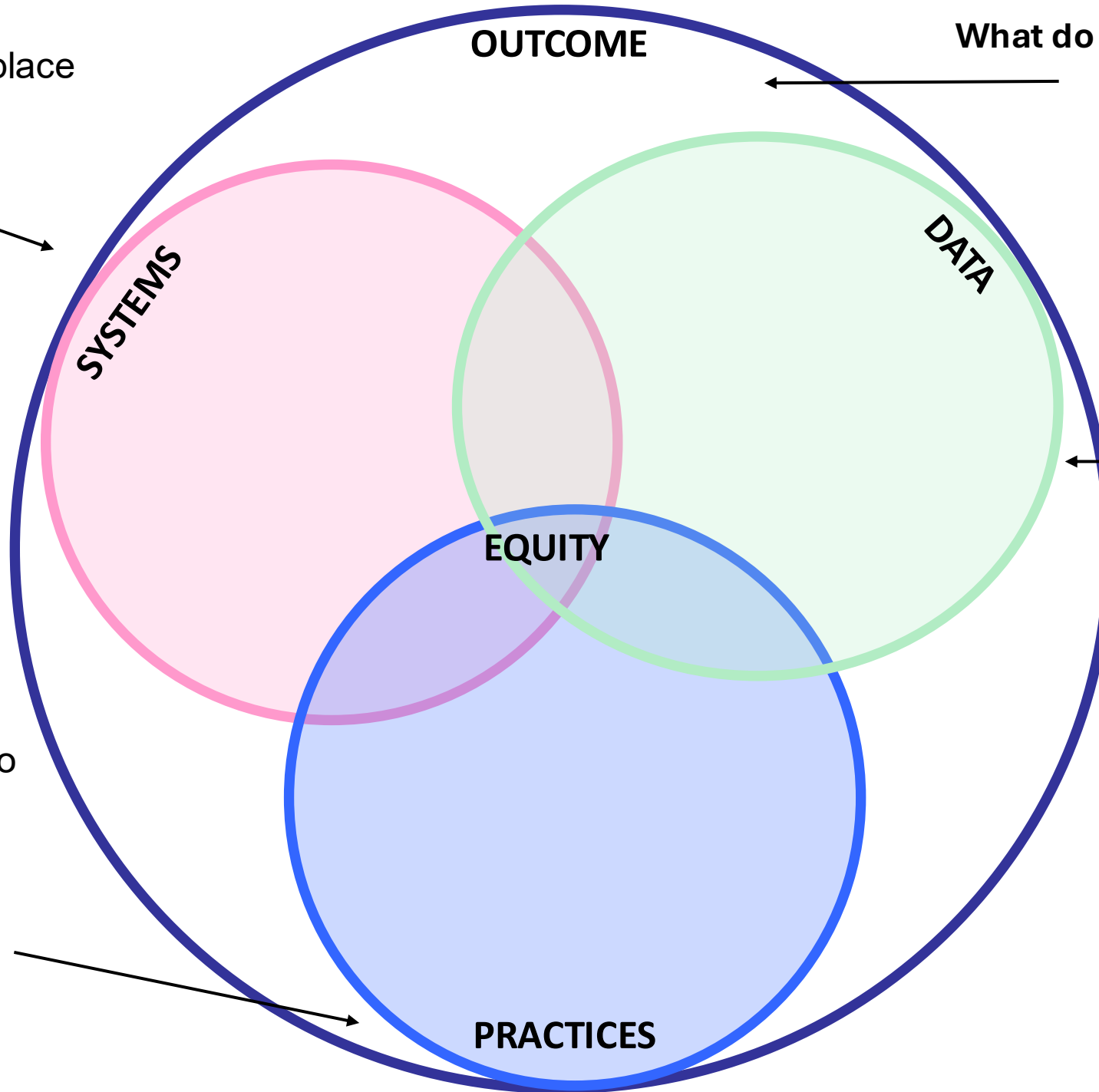


EQUITY

What things will we do to increase family engagement and strengthen partnership



PRACTICES



We often use PBIS and MTSS to improve school culture and climate. Let's shift and utilize the framework to build student and family partnership.

Consider your current PBIS or MTSS systems identify a priority, categorize them into three quick buckets regarding family partnership:

- **Keep:** What are we already doing in our MTSS/PBIS system that successfully builds student and family partnerships.
- **Tweak:** What current system do we have that *could* strengthen a partnership if we just made a small adjustment?
- **Add:** What is one simple gap we need to bridge to make families feel like actual partners in this system?

Possible Next Steps

- Identify when and with whom you might share the benefits of building student and family partnerships.
- Consider implementing one strategy in your classroom to strengthen student and family partnerships.
- As a PBIS team, ask the question how Tier 1 practices currently integrating strategies to build family and student partnerships.
- Have the best school year ever!





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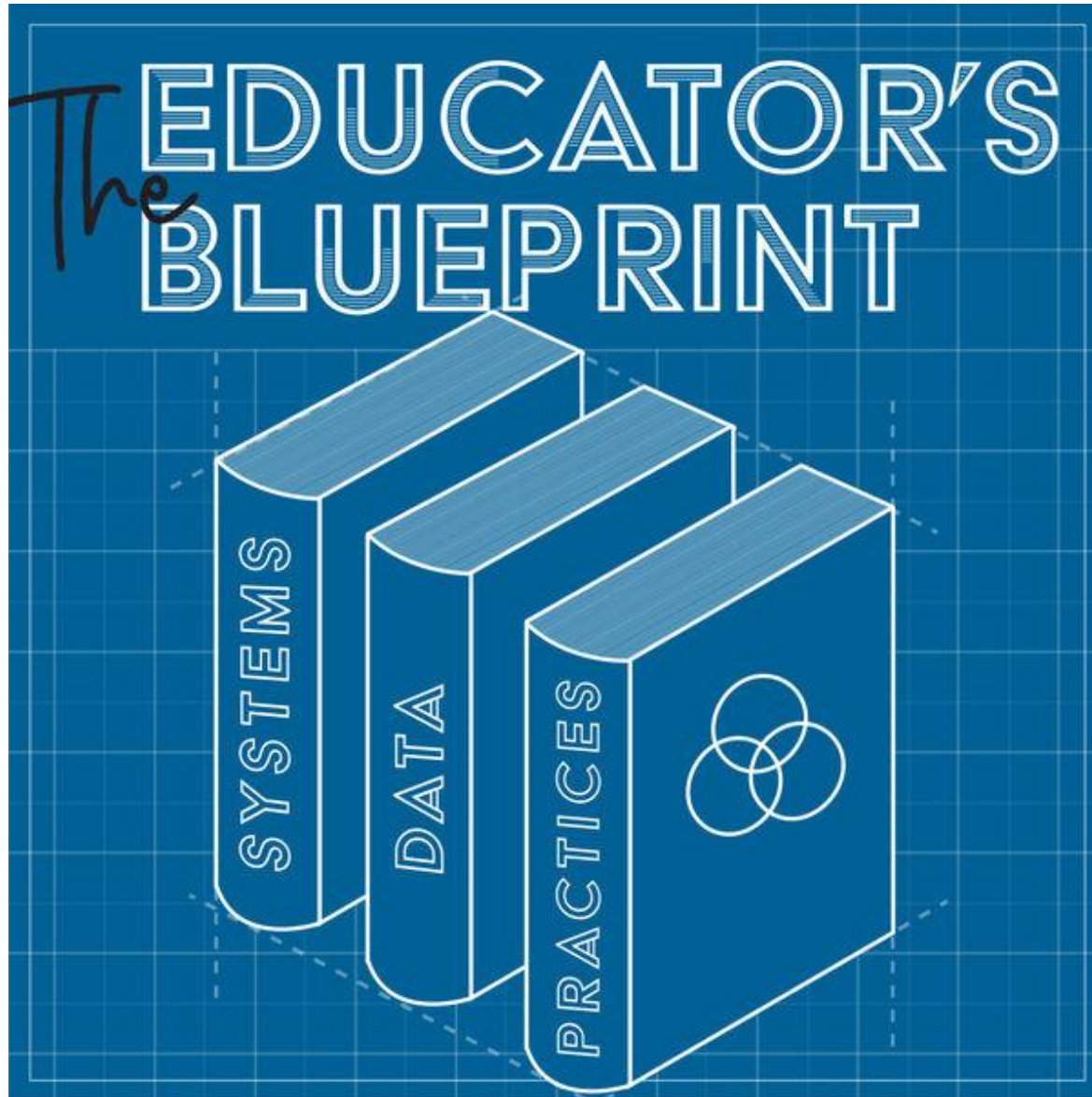
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- Episode 9: Wellness in relation to Opinions, Climate and Culture
- Episode 59: Dr. Aaron Campbell on Equity
- Episode 67: Implications for MH in the Peri-Covid Era with Mark Weist and Andy Garbacz
- Episode 76 Dr. Nikole Hollins-Sims on Equity and Belonging

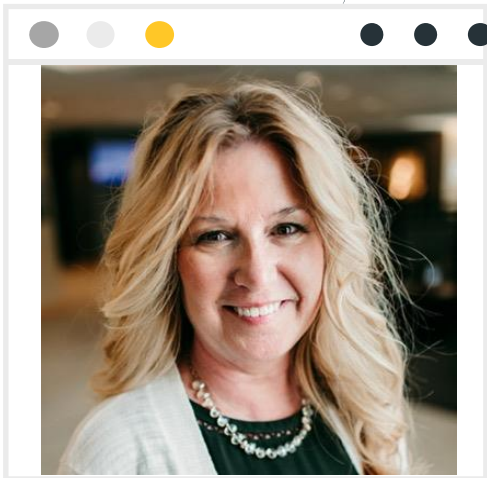
[The Educator's Bluepring Podcast Link](#)


A special thanks to ... *Emily Bolton, Nicole Peterson, & Karen Robbie*, for the research and development of sections of this presentation.

Additional Family Engagement Resources

- [*An Opportunity for Partnership: Collaboration with Local Parent Centers*](#)
- [*Leveraging the PBIS Framework to Promote Equitable Family Engagement*](#)
- [*Using the Tiered Fidelity Inventory 3.0 to Enhance Connections and Collaboration with Families*](#)

Thank you and Resources



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If you would like to receive the resources discussed please contact us 😊