

A top-down photograph of a diverse group of people's hands stacked together in a circle, symbolizing unity and support. The hands are of various skin tones and are wearing different colored sleeves (brown, red, orange, yellow, grey). The background is a light, neutral color. The photo is framed by a white border.

# Advocacy with Heart

1702 Stone Street, Suite A  
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# Collaboration with Families

## High Leverage Practices for Inclusive Classrooms

**What Families Need to Know.**

A presentation by The Center for Exceptional Families





# Purpose

The Center for Exceptional Families (TCFEF) in partnership with the Department of Education, Division of Elementary & Secondary Education (DESE) planned a project to gather information regarding the High Leverage Practice (HLP) of Collaboration with Families in order to support student learning and secure needed services for children with disabilities in Arkansas.



# TCFEF will partner with the SSIP to:

- Increase the awareness of families of High Leverage Practices (HLPs) for Inclusive Classrooms by embedding HLPs into 5 statewide training opportunities associated with RTI Arkansas.
- TCFEF will create a set of DESE-approved video vignettes capturing parent perspectives specific to HLP #3: Collaborating with Families to Support Student Learning and Secure Needed Services.
- Obtain consent for the created videos to be used by others for state trainings.
- Align the work outlined in this contract with DESE's Family and Community Engagement Framework and Toolkit
- Embed the principles that promote positive interactions with educators and families into videos vignettes and ongoing statewide family trainings



# TCFEF roles cont.

- Highlight and apply Family-School Partnership Principles Applied to Communications with Families from Diverse Backgrounds in TCFEF training and promotion materials.
- Add survey data to be collected from workshop participants.



# High Leverage Practices

HLP are a set of “practices that are necessary to effective teaching and fundamental to supporting student learning.”

HLP are

- Supported by research
- Necessary to develop, support and structure student learning,
- To be implemented with all students.



# High Leverage Practices

- Are implemented within the school settings to promote growth in student development and learning.
  - Teachers are provided professional development in HLP.
- Are utilized by districts when forming positive relationships with families & community stakeholders.
  - Provides the very foundation for student growth.





**had the resources to do it, or whether  
or not they made an effort to do it.**



# Process

- **Develop interview questions**
- **Select Families**
- **Conduct video interviews**



# The Family Interview

- **Communication**
  - Between families and school professionals?
- **Professional Competence**
  - Did school professionals demonstrate a high level of knowledge?
- **Respect**
  - Were all family members treated with respect by school professionals?
- **Commitment**
  - Did families feel school professionals were committed to their student's success?
- **Equality**
  - Were all families and family members treated as valuable members of the team?
- **Advocacy**
  - Was the focus on the best interests of the student?
- **Trust**
  - Was confidentiality maintained?
  - Could families rely on support from school professionals?



# What did we learn from our Interviews?

The majority of our families reported positive EC transitions regarding,

- Communication- which flowed openly
- Professionalism-where the educators were eager to learn more about their child.
- Respect- for their knowledge and role as parent and family
- Commitment- to the student, family and academic goals
- Equality- of student and families
- Advocacy- for the student, student and family rights
- Trust- between the student, family and school



# What we Learned cont.

Most of our parents reported that as their students progressed in age and grade that they experienced a decrease in the following areas:

- Communication- less frequent
- School participation in extracurricular activities
- Less involvement and interest in getting to know more about their student individually
- Less likely to show motivation in gaining more professional knowledge regarding their student and their disability





# Truths and Takeaways

One truth that all families shared was a concern for a lack of post secondary opportunities for their students. A fear of the future for their student. Most asked “why” our educational system works so hard K-12 to “abandon” their children.



# Next Steps:

The interviews have been conducted and our next task is to develop and implement the trainings based on the knowledge we have gained from our family interviews.

We are TCFEF, so we are training families. You are the professionals who can take this information back to your schools.

**Thank you so much for all you do everyday. You do make a difference, a big one.**

