

Encouraging Parental Involvement Through Collaborative Educational Policy and Leadership

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Abstract

The purpose of this presentation is to analyze how collaborative educational policy and leadership practices can enhance parental involvement in children's learning, particularly within culturally and socioeconomically diverse school settings. As schools increasingly recognize that families are essential partners in student success, understanding the impact of policy frameworks and leadership actions becomes crucial. This study aims to examine the conditions, strategies, and leadership approaches that promote collaboration between parents and schools. Using a mixed-methods research design, the study combines policy analysis, semi-structured interviews with district and school leaders, focus groups with parents and teachers, and observations of family engagement initiatives across three K–12 districts. Policy analysis was utilized to determine formal expectations and resource allocations related to parental involvement, and qualitative data showed how these policies were interpreted and implemented in reality. Crosscase thematic analysis revealed that collaborative leadership, characterized by shared decisionmaking, plays a critical role in transforming policy directives into parent-centered engagement practices. Results identify three key elements that strengthen meaningful parental involvement: equitable, coherent policy expectations; trust-building, culturally responsive leadership; and structured opportunities for parents to support learning at home and participate in school decision-making. The study also points to persistent obstacles, including limited time, insufficient training, and inconsistent implementation, and offers practical strategies to address these challenges and enhance family-school collaboration. The presentation provides researchbased recommendations for policymakers, practitioners, and scholars who aim to strengthen family-school partnerships through coordinated policy and leadership efforts.

Keywords: parental involvement, collaborative leadership, educational policy, family-school partnership