

# Shared Decision-Making with Parents and Families Activity

## Introduction

Committees considering changes to school board policies that impact parents and families should include representatives from those stakeholder groups who have students in a variety of schools or at different grade levels. Other stakeholders represented can include teachers or other full-time school staff, school and district administrators, school board member, and community member from an agency or government partner.

## Materials Needed

Prior to focusing on a specific school board policy or process, the group can become familiar with trauma-informed resilience-oriented principles by viewing and discussing the following documents:

- Trauma-Informed, Resilience-Oriented Schools Guiding Questions: Parents and Families
- Adjusting Educator Mindset toward Parents and Families
- National PTA National Standards for Family-School Partnerships (found at: <https://www.pta.org/home/run-your-pta/National-Standards-for-Family-School-Partnerships>)

## Directions for Discussing and Altering a Specific Policy

### Materials

- School Policies, Protocols, Procedures, & Documents Review Tool: Examination of Parent and Family Engagement
- Several key school/district policies

### Steps

1. Ensure that all participants understand how to use the review tool and have the specific policy to be discussed. The other documents can be used as resources when participants have questions about specific trauma-informed resilience-oriented principles.
2. Break into smaller groups to facilitate discussion and share suggestions with the larger group prior to the end of the meeting.
3. In the small groups, use the Review Tool to discuss specific policies
  - Present the school or district policy that you want reviewed, and allow each participant to reflect on the policy for a moment.
  - Ask: Does this policy support and enhance a trauma-informed, resilience-oriented culture in our school/district? What evidence supports these initial reactions to the implementation of this policy?

Adapted from Black, P. (2021). Shared Decision-making Directions. Trauma-Sensitive Education, LLC.

### Funding Disclaimer

This project was supported by Cooperative Agreement No. 2019-YS-BX-K001 awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The Bureau of Justice Assistance is a component of the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Office for Victims of Crime, and the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

- Following discussion, allow each participant to quietly go through the questions listed on the review tool for each principle and determine whether they are reflected in the policy.
  - Bring the small group back together to discuss what they have learned and come to consensus, if possible, on their thoughts.
  - When the whole group rejoins, have a representative from each group share their group's discussion points.
    - What did the groups agree on and where did they differ?
    - What should be kept in the policy?
    - What should change because it works against a trauma-informed, resilience-oriented lens?
4. Assign the work of rewriting the policy to reflect the discussion to a subcommittee.
  5. Send the revised policy to the group for review before beginning the district process of approval.