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# Family-School-Community Partnerships: A Compilation of Professional Standards of Practice

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Harvard Family Research Project

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## Introduction

Over the next 10 years, an estimated 2.2 million new educators are expected to enter the teaching force. In the current climate of high standards and accountability, these teachers bear the responsibility for the success of all students. Research clearly shows that teacher qualifications are related to student achievement.<sup>1</sup> A crucial process to ensure quality teaching is the creation of national standards for the profession. Creating external teaching benchmarks and codifying standards for high quality programs establishes the level of professional performance that is both possible and necessary.

Standards for the teaching profession have integrated family and community relations as areas where teachers need to demonstrate competency. Families and local communities are crucial partners to improve student achievement, and teachers are expected in new professional and state standards to engage them to a much greater extent. Standards in family involvement identify the qualities and body of knowledge teachers need to connect home and school. For example, newer standards issued by professional or certifying organizations expect teachers to:

- Work with and through parents and families to support children's learning and development. (NBPTS)
- Know the importance of establishing and maintaining a positive collaborative relationship with families to promote academic, social, and emotional growth of children. (NCATE)
- Propagate communication between home and school that is regular, two-way, and meaningful. (National PTA)
- Foster relationships with school colleagues, parents, and agencies in the larger community to support student's learning and well-being. (INTASC)
- Communicate about mathematics goals to help families and other caregivers. (NCTM)
- Maintain an open, friendly, and cooperative relationship with each child's family, encourage their involvement in the program, and support the child's relationship with his or her family. (CDA)

Professional organizations differ in the depth and format of standards they create. To make this information more accessible, this document compiles professional standards of practice in family involvement. This document offers a way to explore the range of standards across organizations and to access the underlying principles of standards in family involvement in one easy location. It can be used by teacher education institutions as a framework and guide for developing programs, curricula, and courses about family and community involvement. It also serves as a reference for community and parenting groups that take an active role in strengthening teacher preparation by participating in the development, implementation, and evaluation of these standards.

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<sup>1</sup> Darling-Hammond, L. (2000). Teacher quality and student achievement: A review of state policy evidence. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 8(1), 1–51. Available at [epaa.asu.edu/epaa/v8n1](http://epaa.asu.edu/epaa/v8n1). Haycock, K. (1998). Good teaching matters: How well-qualified teachers can close the gap. *Thinking K–16*, 3(2), 1–16. Available at [www2.edtrust.org/edtrust/product+catalog/reports+and+publications.htm](http://www2.edtrust.org/edtrust/product+catalog/reports+and+publications.htm).

**Organization**

Association of Teacher Educators (ATE) – [www.ate1.org](http://www.ate1.org)

**Overview of the Organization**

The Association of Teacher Educators is devoted to the improvement of teacher education for both school and campus-based teacher educators. Membership affiliation includes colleges, universities, major school systems, and state departments of education. ATE has created a list of the standards for teacher educators, indicators of each standard, and evidence and potential sources of evidence that support proficiency.

**Standards intended for:**

Teacher educators

**Family Involvement Standards**

“Master teacher educators collaborate regularly and in significant ways with representatives of schools, universities, state education agencies, professional associations, and communities to improve teaching, learning, and teacher education.” (Standard 5)

**Underlying Principles for the Standards**

“Master teacher educators are actively involved and promote collaborative projects among schools, community groups, businesses, social service professionals, and intra-university constituencies. They initiate and sustain meaningful contributions to schools and other institutions concerned with schooling and teacher education and within the university community. They work closely with schools/colleges of education, teacher education professional organizations, and other agencies or groups interested in promoting teacher education. Also, teacher educators promote education through community forums.”

## **Organization**

Council for Professional Recognition (The Council) – [www.cdacouncil.org](http://www.cdacouncil.org)

### **Overview of the Organization**

The Council for Professional Recognition is a nonprofit organization with a mission to increase the status and recognition of early care and education professionals who care for children from birth through 5 years of age. A Child Development Associate (CDA) is an individual who has successfully completed a CDA assessment.

The Council has created CDA Competency Standards for three settings, including center-based care, family childcare, and home visitors. Although family is infused throughout most of the Competency Goals, Competency Goal IV is devoted specifically to the establishment of positive and productive relationships with families.

### **Standards intended for:**

Early childhood professionals

### **Family Involvement Standards**

“Candidates establish positive and productive relationships with families. Candidate maintains an open, friendly, and cooperative relationship with each child’s family, encourages their involvement in the program and supports the child’s relationship with his or her family.” (Competency Goal IV; Functional Area 11 for Center-Based and Family Child Care CDAs)

“Candidates establish positive and productive partnerships with families. They maintain an open, friendly, and cooperative partnership with each family, encourage parents to take leadership in personal and family education, support family empowerment, involvement in program, and positive family relationships.” (Competency Goal IV; Functional Area 11 for Home Visitors)

### **Underlying Principles for the Standards**

“Today’s families take many different forms. Each family has primary responsibility for its own children, and parents may share this responsibility for their children with others. The parents and the caregiver become partners who communicate respectfully and openly for the mutual benefit of the children, the family, and the caregiver. Caregivers also recognize that parenthood, too, is a developmental process and that they can support parents in their role.”

“For example, the CDA provides opportunities for parents and other family members to share their skills and talents in the program. The candidate respects each family’s cultural background, religious belief, and childrearing practices and observes strict confidentiality regarding children and families and makes parents aware of this policy. Also, the CDA is able to discuss problem behavior with parents in a constructive, supportive manner. In addition, the CDA with a bilingual specialization helps parents understand the program goals for bilingual development.” (For Center-Based and Family Child Care)

“Parenthood is a lifetime developmental process that is supported by many people within and beyond the family, including home visitors. Family members are

primarily responsible for raising their own children, so home visitors assist adults in recognizing their family strengths, and setting and reaching their family goals. A home visitor's genuine respect for and clear communication with families enables parents to develop skills and confidence in carrying out their responsibilities to each other and to society."

"For example, the competent candidate recognizes that children's primary caregivers may be both parents, single mothers or fathers, stepparents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, sisters, brothers, foster parents, or guardians. He or she recognizes and respects the culture, social background, religious beliefs, and childrearing practices of each family. The candidate supports parents in meeting their own needs as growing and learning individuals and builds the parent's self-esteem by identifying and raising effective parenting behavior and efforts towards personal development." (For Home Visitors)

## **Organization**

Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) –  
[www.ccsso.org/projects/Interstate\\_New\\_Teacher\\_Assessment\\_and\\_Support\\_Consortium](http://www.ccsso.org/projects/Interstate_New_Teacher_Assessment_and_Support_Consortium)

## **Overview of the Organization**

The Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium promotes standards-based reform through the development of model standards and assessments for beginning teachers. A program of the Council of Chief State School Officers, INTASC has crafted model standards for licensing new teachers.

Through its standards INTASC seeks to create a coherent approach to educating and licensing teachers based on shared views among states and within the profession. INTASC standards were developed to be compatible with the advanced certification standards of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. They address the knowledge, dispositions, and performances deemed essential for all teachers regardless of their specialty area.

## **Standards intended for:**

Teachers

## **Family Involvement Standards**

“The teacher understands how students differ in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners.” (Principle #3)

### *Knowledge*

“The teacher understands ... how students’ learning is influenced by individual experiences, talents, and prior learning, as well as language, culture, family, and community values. The teacher has a well-grounded framework for understanding cultural and community diversity and knows how to learn about and incorporate students’ experiences, cultures, and community resources into instruction.”

### *Dispositions*

“The teacher respects students as individuals with differing personal and family backgrounds and various skills, talents, and interests. The teacher is sensitive to community and cultural norms.”

### *Performances*

“The teacher seeks ... to understand students’ families, cultures, and communities, and uses this information as a basis for connecting instruction to students’ experiences (e.g., drawing explicit connections between subject matter and community matters, making assignments that can be related to students’ experiences and cultures). The teacher brings multiple perspectives to the discussion of subject matter, including attention to students’ personal, family, and community experiences and cultural norms.”

“The teacher fosters relationships with school colleagues, parents, and agencies in the larger community to support students’ learning and well-being.” (Principle #10)

### *Knowledge*

“The teacher understands schools as organizations within the larger community context and understands the operations of the relevant aspects of the system(s) within which s/he works. The teacher understands how factors in the students’ environment outside of school (e.g., family circumstances, community environments, health and economic conditions) may influence students’ life and learning. The teacher understands and implements laws related to students’ rights and teacher responsibilities (e.g., for equal education, appropriate education for handicapped students, confidentiality, privacy, appropriate treatment of students, reporting in situations related to possible child abuse).”

### *Dispositions*

“The teacher values and appreciates the importance of all aspects of a child’s experience. The teacher is concerned about all aspects of a child’s well-being (cognitive, emotional, social, and physical), and is alert to signs of difficulties. The teacher is willing to consult with other adults regarding the education and well-being of his/her students. The teacher respects the privacy of students and confidentiality of information. The teacher is willing to work with other professionals to improve the overall learning environment for students.”

### *Performances*

“The teacher participates in collegial activities designed to make the entire school a productive learning environment. The teacher makes links with the learners’ other environments on behalf of students, by consulting with parents, counselors, teachers of other classes and activities within the schools, and professionals in other community agencies. The teacher can identify and use community resources to foster student learning. The teacher establishes respectful and productive relationships with parents and guardians from diverse home and community situations, and seeks to develop cooperative partnerships in support of student learning and well-being. The teacher talks with and listens to the student, is sensitive and responsive to clues of distress, investigates situations, and seeks outside help as needed and appropriate to remedy problems.”



## **Organization**

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) –  
[www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org)

## **Overview of the Organization**

The National Association for the Education of Young Children improves the quality of services for children from birth through age eight. Primary attention is devoted to assuring the provision of high quality early childhood programs for young children. NAEYC's Guidelines for the Preparation of Early Childhood Professionals are used by higher education institutions and closely aligned with NCATE standards to provide specific guidance about the preparation of early childhood professionals. Family and community relationships are elevated and infused throughout the document.

## **Standards intended for:**

Early childhood professionals and programs

## **Family Involvement Standards**

### *Standard 1: Promoting Child Development and Learning*

"Candidates use their understanding of young children's characteristics and needs and of multiple interacting influences on children's development and learning to create environments that are healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging for all children."

### *Standard 2: Building Family and Community Relationships*

"Candidates know about, understand, and value the importance and complex characteristics of children's families and communities. They use this understanding to create respectful, reciprocal relationships that support and empower families, and to involve all families in their children's development and learning."

### *Standard 3: Observing, Documenting, and Assessing to Support Young Children and Families*

"Candidates know about and understand the goals, benefits, and uses of assessment. They know about and use systematic observations, documentation, and other effective assessment strategies in a responsible way, in partnership with families and other professionals, to support children's developmental and learning."

### *Standard 4: Teaching and Learning*

"Candidates integrate their understanding of and relationships with children and families; their understanding of developmentally effective approaches to teaching and learning; and their knowledge of academic disciplines, to design, implement, and evaluate experiences that promote positive development and learning for all young children."

### *Standard 4A: Connecting With Children and Families*

"Candidates know, understand, and use positive relationships and supportive interactions as the foundation for their work with young children."

## **Underlying Principles for the Standards**

### *Supporting Explanation for Standard 1: Promoting Child Development and Learning*

The learning environments created by early childhood teacher candidates “reflect respect for each child as a feeling, thinking individual and then for each child’s culture, home language, individual abilities or disabilities, family context, and community.”

### *Supporting Explanation for Standard 2: Building Family and Community*

*Relationships* “Because young children’s lives are so embedded in their families and communities; and because research indicates that successful early childhood education depends upon partnerships with families and communities, early childhood professionals need thorough understanding and application of knowledge in this area.”

“First, well prepared candidates require knowledge and understanding of family and community characteristics, and about the many influences on family and communities. Family theory and research provide a knowledge base. Socioeconomic conditions; family structures, relationships, stresses, and supports (including the impact of having a child with special needs); home language; cultural values; ethnicity; community resources, cohesiveness, and organization—knowledge of these and other factors creates a deeper understanding of young children’s lives. This knowledge is critical to candidates’ ability to help children learn and develop well.”

“Next, candidates develop the knowledge and skills needed to support and empower families through respectful, reciprocal relationships. Candidates understand how to build positive relationships, taking families’ preferences and goals into account, and incorporating knowledge of families’ language and cultures. Candidates demonstrate respect for variations across cultures in family strengths, expectations, values, and childrearing practices. Candidates consider family members to be resources for insight into their children as well as for curriculum and program development. Candidates know about and demonstrate a variety of communication skills to foster these relationships, emphasizing informal conversations while also including such approaches as email discussions and posting information and children’s work on the Web with print copies sent home for families without Web access.”

“In their work, early childhood teachers support and empower diverse families, including those whose children have special characteristics, learning needs, and disabilities; families who are facing multiple challenges in their lives; and families whose languages and cultures may differ from those of the early childhood professional. Candidates also understand that their relationships with families include assisting families in finding needed resources, such as mental health services, health care, adult education, English language instruction, and economic assistance, that may contribute directly or indirectly to their children’s positive development and learning. Well prepared early childhood candidates are able to identify such resources and know how to connect families with services, including help with planning transitions from one educational or service system to another.”

“Finally, well prepared candidates possess essential skills to involve families and communities in many aspects of children’s development and learning. They understand and value the role of parents and other important family members as

children's primary teachers. Candidates understand how to go beyond parent conferences to engage families in curriculum planning, assessment of children's learning and planning for children's transitions to new programs. When their approaches to family involvement are not effective, candidates evaluate and modify these approaches rather than assuming that families are just not interested."

*Supporting Explanation for Standard 3: Observing, Documenting, and Assessing to Support Young Children and Families*

"At its best, assessment is a positive tool that supports children's development and learning, and that improves outcomes for young children and families. Positive assessment identifies the strengths of families and children; through appropriate screening and referral, assessment may also result in identifying children who may benefit from special services. Candidates are able to explain these positive uses of assessment and exemplify them in their own work, while also showing awareness of the potentially negative uses of assessment in early childhood programs and policies."

"Early childhood assessment includes observation and documentation, and other appropriate assessment strategies. Effective teaching of young children begins with thoughtful, appreciative, systematic observation and documentation of each child's unique qualities, strengths, and needs. Observing young children in classrooms, homes, and communities helps candidates develop a broad sense of who children are—as individuals, as group members, as family members, as members of cultural and linguistic communities."

"Many aspects of effective assessment require collaboration with families and with other professionals. Such assessment partnership, when undertaken with sensitivity and sound knowledge, contribute positively to understanding children's development and learning. Both family members and, as appropriate, members of interprofessional teams, may be involved in assessing children's development, strengths, and needs. Although candidates many have had limited opportunities to experience these partnerships, they demonstrate essential knowledge and core skills in team building and in communication with families and colleagues from other disciplines."

*Supporting Explanation for Standard 4A: Connecting With Children and Families*

"Throughout the years that children spend in educational settings, their successful learning is dependent not just on 'instruction,' but on personal connections with important adults who support and facilitate their learning. It is through these connections that children develop not only academic skills but also positive learning dispositions and confidence in themselves as learners."

"Infants learn about the world through their relationships with their primary caregivers. Responsiveness in caregiving creates the conditions within which very young children can explore and learn about their world. Candidates who plan to work with children of any age have skill in creating responsive relationships, though the nature of those relationships differs as children develop. The close attachments children develop with their teachers/caregivers, the expectations and beliefs that adults have about children's capacities, and the warmth and responsiveness of adult-child interactions are powerful influences on positive developmental and educational outcomes."

“Early childhood candidates demonstrate that they understand the theories and research that support the importance of relationships and high quality interactions in early education. In their practice, they display warm, nurturing interactions with individual children and their families, communicating genuine liking for and interest in young children’s activities and characteristics.”

“Candidates demonstrate the essential dispositions and skills to develop positive, respectful relationships with children whose cultures and languages may differ from their own, as well as with children who may have developmental delays, disabilities, or other learning challenges. In making the transition from family to a group context, very young children rely on continuity between the caregiving practices of family members and those used by professionals in the early childhood setting. Their feelings of safety and confidence depend on this continuity. Candidates know the cultural practices and contexts of the young children they teach and they adapt practices to be culturally sensitive. With older children, candidates continue to emphasize cultural sensitivity while also developing culturally relevant knowledge and skills in important academic domains.”

## **Organization**

National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) – [www.nasponline.org](http://www.nasponline.org)

### **Overview of the Organization**

The National Association of School Psychologists works to promote “educationally and psychologically healthy environments for all children and youth by implementing research-based, effective programs that prevent problems, enhance independence, and promote optimal learning.” NASP promotes high standards for credentialing and training in the field of school psychology.

The NASP standards for training and field placement programs in school psychology guide the design of graduate education by providing a basis for program evaluation and a foundation for the recognition of programs that meet national quality standards. Standard II relates to “domains of school psychology training and practice.” The standards call for school psychologists to demonstrate competency of both knowledge and skills. One of the domains relates directly to family involvement.

### **Standards intended for:**

School psychologists

### **Family Involvement Standards**

“School psychologists have knowledge of family systems, including family strengths and influences on student development, learning, and behavior and of methods to involve families in education and service delivery. School psychologists work effectively with families, educators, and others in the community to promote and provide comprehensive services to children and families.” (Standard 2.8: Home/School/Community Collaboration)

### **Underlying Principles for the Standards**

“School psychologists have a current knowledge base about (a) family systems and their influences on students’ cognitive, motivational, and social characteristics that affect their development and/or academic performance; (b) family involvement in education; (c) methods to promote collaboration and partnerships between parents and educators that improve outcomes for students; (d) cultural issues that impact home-school collaboration; and (e) other family, home, and community factors that work to support learning and achievement in school. School psychologists apply this knowledge to design, implement, and evaluate programs that promote school family and/or community partnerships and enhance academic and behavioral goals for students. For example, school psychologists provide or collaborate with others in the development of educational and support programs that assist parents in efforts to enhance the academic and social/behavioral successes of their children.”

“School psychologists provide support and assistance for parents when participating in school functions or activities and help them become comfortable, active, effective participants. For example, they provide support for parents when participating on special education and IEP teams, they encourage parent involvement in school wide committees and improvement teams, and they facilitate home-school communication and collaboration when problems arise. School psychologists have knowledge of and apply methods to facilitate collaboration between schools and parents in designing school curriculum and interventions for students.”

“School psychologists educate schools and communities regarding the influence of family involvement on children’s development and achievement and advocate for parent involvement in school governance whenever feasible. They are knowledgeable about school and community resources; help create links between schools, families, and community agencies; and help coordinate services when programming for children, including multiple agencies. School psychologists work within the local system of care to provide for the health and mental health needs of children.”

## **Organization**

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) – [www.nbpts.org](http://www.nbpts.org)

### **Overview of the Organization**

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards seeks to identify and certify master teachers in different areas of educational specialization. NBPTS promotes high standards for what accomplished teachers should know and do and operates a national, voluntary certification system to assess and certify teachers who meet these standards.

NBPTS identifies teachers who demonstrate a high level of knowledge in the following five core propositions: teachers are committed to students and their learning, teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students, teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning, teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience, and teachers are members of learning communities.

Proposition 5 directly addresses the need for teachers to work collaboratively with families. NBPTS promotes the idea that a master teacher is one who can foster collaborative relationships between school and family. Family involvement is incorporated in the standards for various certificates within the five core propositions as well as elevated to its own standard.

### **Standards intended for:**

Teachers

### **Family Involvement Standards**

“Teachers work with and through parents and families to support children’s learning and development.” (Early Childhood/Generalist Standard VII: Family Partnerships)

“Accomplished teachers’ work to create positive relationships with families as they participate in the education of their children.” (Middle Childhood/Generalist Standard IX: Family Involvement)

“Accomplished generalists work with families to achieve common goals for the education of their children.” (Early Adolescence/Generalist Standard X: Family Partnerships)

“Accomplished mathematics teachers work to involve families in their children’s education, help the community understand the role of mathematics and mathematics instruction in today’s world, and to the extent possible, involve the community in support of instruction.” (Middle Childhood Through Early Adolescence/Mathematics Standard X: Family Partnerships)

### **Underlying Principles for the Standards**

“Teachers share with parents the education of the young. They communicate regularly with parents and guardians, listening to their concerns and respecting their perspective, enlisting their support in fostering learning and good habits, informing them of their child’s accomplishments and successes, and educating them about school programs. Kindergarten teachers, for example, can help parents understand

that reading stories to their children is more important to literacy development than completing worksheets on letters.”

“In the best of all worlds, teachers and parents are mutually reinforcing partners in the education of young people. But three circumstances complicate this partnership. First, the interests of parents and schools sometimes diverge, requiring teachers to make difficult judgments about how best to fulfill their joint obligations to their students and to parents. Second, students vary in the degree and kind of support they receive at home for their schoolwork. The effects of culture, language and parental education, income, and aspirations influence each learner. Teachers are alert to these effects and tailor their practice accordingly to enhance student achievement. However, when faced with an unavoidable conflict, the teacher must hold the interest of the student and the purposes of schooling paramount. There, the behavior and mindset of schools and families can be adversarial. Some parents are distrustful of the school’s values, and the schools sometimes underestimate the family’s potential to contribute to their children’s intellectual growth. Students get caught in the middle, their allegiance to and affection for each party challenged by the other. Accomplished teachers develop skills and understandings to avoid these traditional pitfalls and work to foster collaborative relationships between school and family.”

“The changing family structure in our society creates new challenges as well, for there are now more youth with single parents, working parents, and parents with inadequate income. Thus, creating home-school partnerships has become more difficult for teachers and parent in many communities. In attempting to work creatively and energetically with families in the interest of student’s development, able teachers acquire knowledge and understanding of individual students’ lives outside school. A teacher’s foremost responsibility is to the intellectual development of our youth, but they are mindful of the broad range of children’s needs, including the need for guidance and the strong presence of caring and nurturing adults. This is a difficult set of obligations to fulfill. On the one hand, teachers are prepared neither by training nor by role to serve as parent surrogates or social workers. The distinctive mission of teaching is to promote learning, a complex undertaking in itself. On the other hand, education’s broad and humane purposes do not admit any narrow specialization. Students physical, emotional, and social well-being cannot be separated from their intellectual growth.” (Proposition #5: Teachers are Members of Learning Communities)



## **Organization**

National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) – [www.ncate.org](http://www.ncate.org)

### **Overview of the Organization**

The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education is a coalition of 33 professional associations of teachers, teacher educators, content specialists, and local and state policymakers. Its mission is to help establish high quality teacher education through professional accreditation of schools and colleges and departments of education.

The NCATE standards are divided into two sections; two standards focused on learning outcomes and candidate performance and four sections on unit capacity. Each of the six standards is divided into three components: the language of the standard, the rubric that delineates the elements of each standard, and an explanation of the standard. Both Standard 1 and Standard 4 address the need for “collaboration among educators, learners, and families.” Along with producing its own standards, NCATE reviews and approves standards developed by other organizations.

### **Standards intended for:**

Preservice teachers and teacher education programs

### **Family Involvement Standards**

“Candidates preparing to work in schools as teachers or other professional school personnel know and demonstrate the content, pedagogical and professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to help all students’ learn.” (Standard 1: Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions)

“[Candidates] consider school, family, and community contexts in connecting concepts to students’ prior experience, and applying the ideas to real-world problems.” (Standard 1: Target for Professional and Pedagogical Knowledge and Skills)

“Candidates work with students, families, and communities reflects the dispositions expected of professional educators.” (Standard 1: Target Dispositions for All Candidates)

“The unit designs, implements, and evaluates curriculum and experiences for candidates to acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to help all students learn. These experiences include working with diverse higher education and school faculty, diverse candidates, and diverse students in P–12 schools.” (Standard 4: Diversity)

### **Underlying Principles for the Standards**

“NCATE’s Standard I reinforces the importance that teacher candidates know their content or subject matter, can teach effectively, and can help all students learn.... Teacher candidates must be able to foster relationships with school colleagues, parents and families, and agencies in the larger community to support students’ learning and well-being. Candidates preparing to work in schools as teachers or other school personnel need a sound professional knowledge base to understand learning and the context of schools, families, and communities.... They understand language

acquisition; cultural influences on learning; exceptionalities; diversity of student populations, families, and communities; and inclusion and equity in classrooms and schools.”

“Standard 4 acknowledges that America’s classrooms are becoming increasingly diverse. More than one-third of the students in P–12 classrooms are from minority groups. The families of an increasing number of students are immigrants, many with native languages other than English and from diverse religious backgrounds.... Teacher candidates need to develop proficiencies for working with students from diverse backgrounds and with exceptionalities to ensure that all students have the opportunity to learn.... Field experiences and clinical practice support the development of educators who can apply their knowledge of diversity, including exceptionalities, to work in schools with all students. They provide opportunities for candidates to reflect on their observations and practices in schools and communities with students and families from diverse ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic groups.”

## **Organization**

National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) – [www.standards.nctm.org](http://www.standards.nctm.org)

### **Overview of the Organization**

The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics is dedicated to improving mathematics teaching and learning. *Principles and Standards for School Mathematics* serves as a resource and guide for all who make decisions that affect the mathematics education of students in pre-kindergarten through grade 12.

In Chapter 8 “Working Together to Achieve the Vision” NCTM describes the need for family involvement in mathematics education and the need for teachers to have the skills not only to impart knowledge to students but to foster relationships with the families as well. Although standards are not for teachers specifically, the NCTM views family and community involvement as a crucial part of its implementation.

### **Standards intended for:**

Students of mathematics and their teachers

### **Underlying Principles for the Standards**

“Mathematics teachers can foster reinforcement of their efforts by families and other community members by maintaining dialogue aimed at the improvement of mathematics education. Communicating about mathematics goals, students’ learning, teaching, and programs helps families and other caregivers understand the kind of mathematics learning in which children are engaged. Giving them opportunities to ask questions, express concerns, and experience classroom activities can be very useful in shaping improvements. Many groups of teachers organize Math Nights at least once a year. At such events, usually held during the evening for the convenience of parents, students and their parents work together on engaging mathematics activities. Newsletters, homework assignments that involve family collaboration, and other means can help maintain communication between home and school. To do all of this well, teachers need to understand their mathematical goals and their perspectives on mathematics education and be able to articulate them in compelling ways.”

“Teachers and administrators should invite families, other caregivers, and community members to participate in examining and improving mathematics education. All partners in this enterprise need to understand the changing goals and priorities of school mathematics, as expressed in the Principles in Chapter 2. Families need to know what options are available for their children and why an extensive and rigorous mathematics education schools’ mathematics program, they can be invaluable in convincing their daughters and sons of the need to learn mathematics and to take schooling seriously. Families become advocates for education standards when they understand the importance of a high quality mathematics education for their children.”

“Families can establish learning environments at home that enhance the work initiated at school. Respect shown to and for teachers is often carried over from parent to child. By providing a quiet place for a child to read and attend to homework and by monitoring students’ work, families can signal that they believe mathematics is important. Such attention and appreciation of mathematics is not lost on students.

If families and other members of the public do not understand the intent of, and rationale for, improvements in mathematics education, they can halt even the most carefully planned initiatives. Principles and Standards were written with the hope that the conversations it engenders will ultimately generate a widespread commitment to improving mathematics education. As part of this effort, it is the responsibility of the education community to inform the general public and its elected representatives about the goals and priorities in mathematics education, thereby empowering them to participate knowledgeably in its improvement.”

## **Organization**

National Parent Teacher Association (National PTA) – [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org)

## **Overview of the Organization**

National PTA is an association of parents, educators, students, and other citizens active in their schools and community. The organization has raised awareness about the positive lasting benefits of parent involvement in children's education.

The National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement were written to help educators and program administrators effectively include parents in their child's learning process. National PTA in cooperation with education and parent involvement professionals developed the standards for teachers in family involvement. These standards and quality indicators were created for use in conjunction with other national standards and reform initiatives in support of children's learning and success.

## **Standards intended for:**

Teachers and program administrators

## **Family Involvement Standards**

"Communication between home and school is regular, two-way, and meaningful."  
(Standard I: Communicating)

"Parenting skills are promoted and supported." (Standard II: Parenting)

"Parents play an integral role in assisting student learning." (Standard III: Student Learning)

"Parents are welcome in the school, and their support and assistance are sought."  
(Standard IV: Volunteering)

"Parents are full partners in the decisions that affect children and families." (Standard V: School Decision Making and Advocacy)

"Community resources are used to strengthen schools, families, and student learning." (Standard VI: Collaborating With Community)

## **Underlying Principles for the Standards**

"Even with the preponderance of research establishing the connection between effective parent involvement and student achievement, few teachers receive substantive preparation in how to partner with parents. Recent surveys of current practice are revealing: Most parent involvement preparation occurs in early childhood or special education courses. No state requires a separate course in parent involvement for teacher licensure. Only a handful of states require parent involvement preparation as part of a course. A minority of the states include parent involvement in their competency standards for teachers/administrators or in their standards for teacher/administrator training programs. No state requires parent involvement coursework for recertification or renewal of a license. Still, there are promising signs. Both of the national associations that either accredit or set standards for teacher preparation programs, NCATE (National Council for Accreditation of

Teacher Education) and NASDTEC (National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification), have recently added or strengthened indicators aimed at parent involvement. The National Board for Professional Teacher Standards has included parent involvement competencies in its standards.”

“Several states are discussing ways to strengthen parent involvement requirements. While each of these efforts could be strengthened, they are a step forward and should begin to alter current practice. In the meantime, providing teachers with parent and family involvement in-service and other professional development opportunities becomes critical. The National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs provide a good basis for this preparation, indicating what practices lead to quality. Teachers should also be familiar with the research base and focus on communication and interpersonal skills— particularly those that help parents feel comfortable and respected.”

“The use of mentoring, peer coaching, mini-presentations with follow-up, and other collaborative methods for professional development suit this topic very well. Rather than waiting for educators to take special courses or providing a ‘one-shot’ in-service presentation, schools and programs should look for ways to present knowledge of good practice with ample interaction among the faculty and staff and frequent opportunities for checking back and evaluating progress.”

“Aside from the benefits of increased student performance, effective parent and family involvement provides educators with a much needed support system. Research indicates that schools that work well with families have improved teacher/staff morale and have higher ratings of teachers by parents.”

## **Organization**

National Staff Development Council (NSDC) – [www.nsd.org](http://www.nsd.org)

### **Overview of the Organization**

The National Staff Development Council is a nonprofit professional association committed to ensuring success for all students through staff development and school improvement. NSDC views high quality staff development programs as essential to creating schools in which all students and staff members are learners who continually improve their performance.

Staff development standards provide direction for designing a professional development experience that ensures educators acquire the necessary knowledge and skills. Family involvement is identified as a standard.

### **Standards intended for:**

School and district staff developers

### **Family Involvement Standards**

“Staff development that improves the learning of all students provides educators with knowledge and skills to involve families and other stakeholders appropriately.”  
(Family Involvement)

### **Underlying Principles for the Standards**

“At its best, the education of young people is a partnership between the school, the home, and the community. Effective partnerships, however, require leadership, a compelling purpose for their work, and a set of mutually agreed-upon goals. Educators who wish to strengthen the bonds among those individuals and organizations who contribute to the education and welfare of a community’s youth must be knowledgeable about various ways in which families and community members can be involved meaningfully in the affairs of the school for the benefit of students.”

“Different types of partnerships require different sets of knowledge and skills. School and district-level administrators are responsible for forging a consensus on mission and goals and the underlying values and beliefs that support their work. They also must be able to engage the community in a way that sustains this collaborative work over a sufficient period of time to realize the intended improvements. Leaders who are successful at these tasks see consensus building with the broader school community as an important part of their work, are skillful in communicating in clear, direct language (both orally and in writing), and are effective in conducting meetings that balance task achievement and relationships. These leaders are both clear about their own values and beliefs and respectful of the values and beliefs of others. Such work requires a capacity to convey authentic interest in the perspectives of others, to listen deeply and honor others’ points of view, and to identify areas of common interest.”

“Teachers who establish partnerships with the families or other caregivers of their students must understand the cultural backgrounds of their students and the unique challenges those families may be experiencing. Teachers must be able to

communicate clearly and respectfully with family members and demonstrate a genuine interest in the welfare of the child and family. They must be skillful in conducting meetings with caregivers that create a sense of teamwork between the home and school as well as delineate appropriate and manageable ways for providing support for a student's learning at home. In addition, teachers must demonstrate sensitivity to ways in which caregivers may be most appropriately involved in schools as classroom volunteers or committee members."

"Technology provides teachers and administrators with important tools for this work. While not applicable in all communities or with all families, some schools have strengthened their connections with families and the community by posting school news and homework assignments on school or district websites and by easing communication with teachers by providing email or voice mail access to families. Other schools are increasing the availability of computers to all students by working with community organizations such as libraries and churches. While Internet-based communication may seem like a pipe dream in schools where teachers still do not have ready access to telephones or copy machines, the availability of such technology is growing at an increasing rate and should be available to virtually all schools."  
(Family Involvement)