

Spotlight Webinar:

# Planning for Family Engagement in the Charter School Life Cycle

May 19, 2021

Please introduce yourself in the chat!  
Make sure your chat goes to all **panelists AND attendees.**

# Agenda

I. Welcome

## II. Introduction to the National Charter School Resource Center (NCSRC)

- Carter Clawson, Project Director, National Charter School Resource Center, Manhattan Strategy Group

## III. Planning for Family Engagement in the Charter School Life Cycle - Toolkit Overview

- Sally Wade, PhD, Senior Program Associate, Manhattan Strategy Group

## IV. Panel Discussion

- Tyrone Elliot, Director & High School Principal, The Bridge Academy
- John Taylor, Executive Director, Booker T. Washington Academy

V. Question & Answer

VI. Final Thoughts and Adjourn



Collaborative Action  
for  
Family Engagement

# National Charter School Resource Center (NCSRC)

Sign up for *The Charter Connection* newsletter:  
<https://bit.ly/3nPUmkG>

NCSRC Website:  
[charterschoolcenter.ed.gov/](https://charterschoolcenter.ed.gov/)

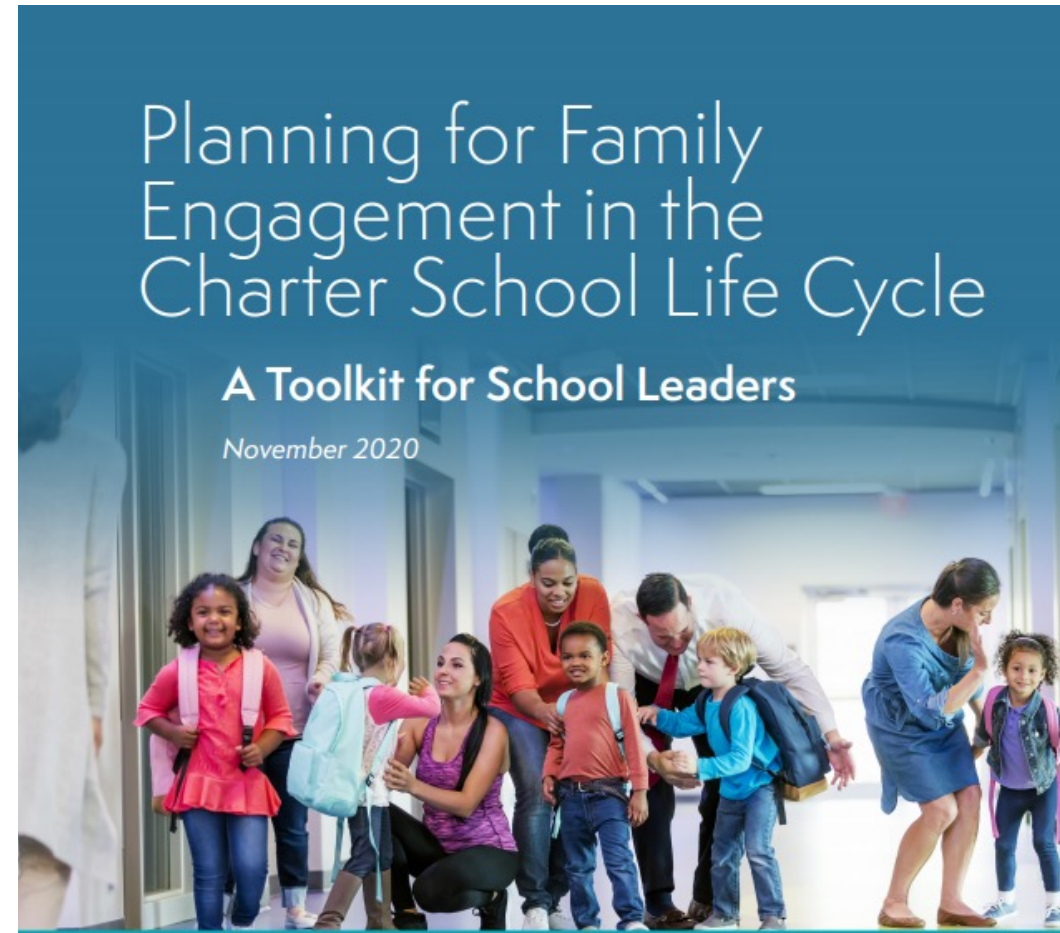
Help Desk:  
[contact-us@charterschoolcenter.org](mailto:contact-us@charterschoolcenter.org)

The screenshot shows the NCSRC website homepage. At the top is the NCSRC logo, a search bar, and a newsletter subscription button. Below this is a navigation bar with links for Focus Areas, Audience, Resources, Funding, FAQs, COVID-19, and a Login/Sease button. The main content area features three large tiles: 'What's New' with a 'PUBLICATION' tag and the title 'School Quality: Are you on the right path?'; 'What is a Charter School?' with a background of colorful student icons; and 'State Resources' with a background of a map of the United States. At the bottom, there is a 'MISSION' section with a background image of a school hallway and the text: 'What is the National Charter School Resource Center (NCSRC)? NCSRC is an initiative of the U.S. Department of Education's Charter School Programs (CSP) and is a source for high-quality charter school resources and CSP grantee technical assistance.'

Why did we  
create this  
toolkit?

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And is it only  
for charter  
schools?





# Key Toolkit Messages

- Families have funds of knowledge.
- The work of family engagement must connect to student learning.
- This is hard work!
- These are unprecedented times.



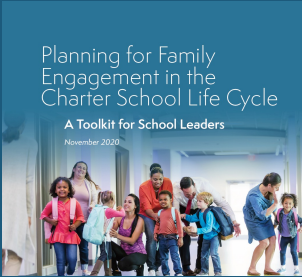
# Planning for Family Engagement in the Charter School Life Cycle

## A Toolkit for School Leaders

*November 2020*

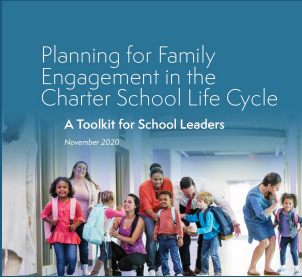


NATIONAL  
CHARTER SCHOOL  
RESOURCE CENTER



# Overview of the Toolkit

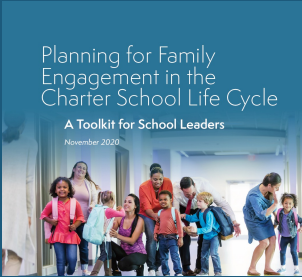
- Section 1: Framing the family-school connection
- Section 2: Building a plan for authentic, sustainable engagement
- Section 3: Engagement throughout the charter school life cycle
- Section 4: Appendices – Tools & Resources



## Section 1: Framing the Family School Connection

- Strengths-based family engagement
- The relationship between family engagement and school- and student-level outcomes
- Introduction to frameworks including the dual-capacity framework and the various roles played by families in children's education



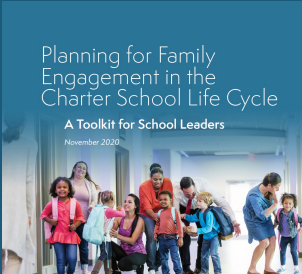


# Section 1: Framing the Family School Connection

## The North Star of Family Engagement:

High-impact family engagement requires the **continuous strengthening of trusting relationships between educators and families** and the **connection of family engagement activities and efforts to student learning.**





## Section 2: Building a plan for authentic, sustainable engagement

### Create a Planning Team

Who can contribute to developing core beliefs, a vision, key objectives, policies and practices, capacity development, strategies, and evaluation?

Whose voices are not currently represented in your family engagement work?

Educators

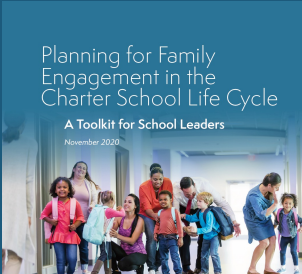
School Leaders

Board Members

Staff Members

Families

Community Partners



## Section 2: Building a plan for authentic, sustainable engagement



Articulate Your  
Overarching Family  
Engagement Goals



Build a Collaborative  
Culture to Drive  
Engagement and Build  
Educator Capacity to Form  
Partnerships with Families

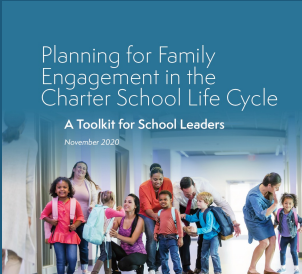


Select and Design  
Effective Family  
Engagement Strategies



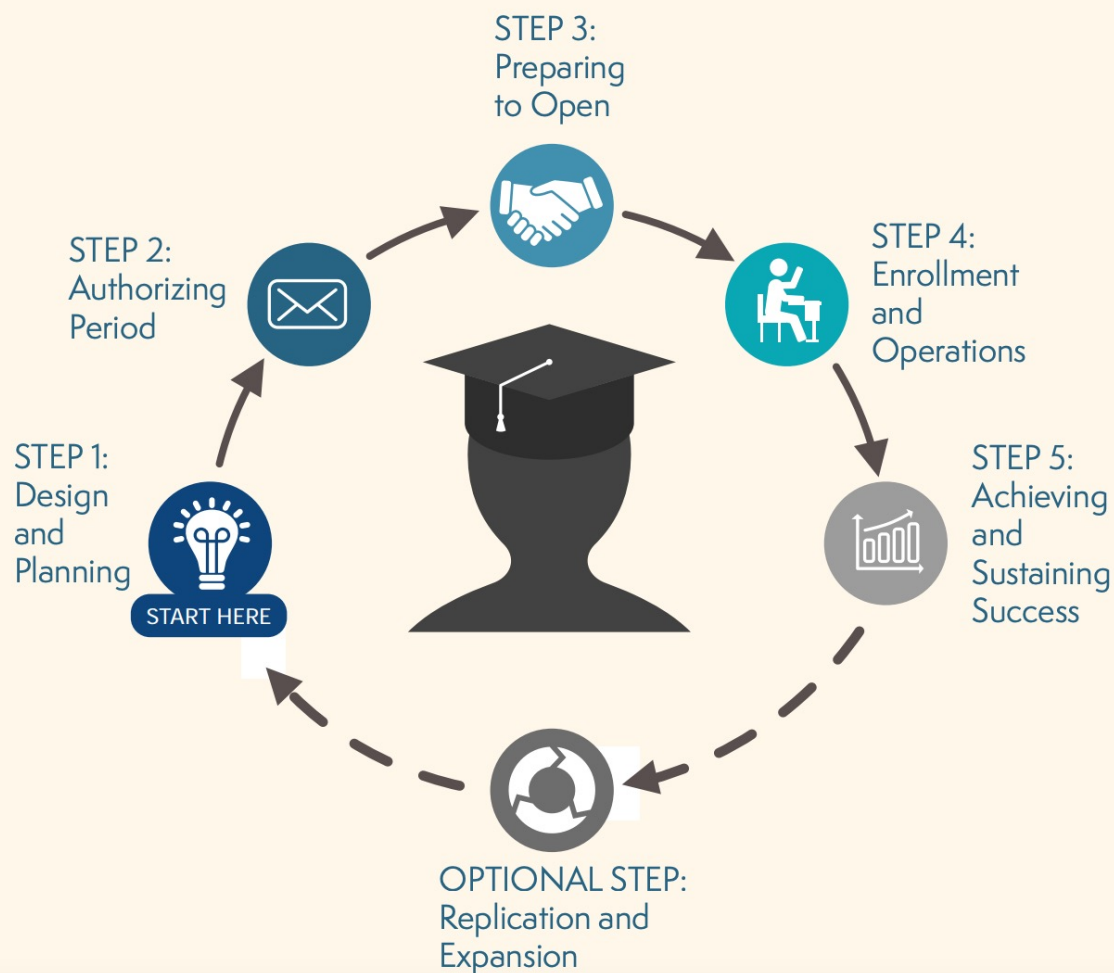
Strategy Implementation,  
Measurement and  
Continuous Improvement





# Section 3: Engagement throughout the charter school life cycle

Figure 3. The Charter School Life Cycle



**In the event of a sudden transition to virtual instruction, engage with all families on at least a weekly basis.**

#### Example Strategies

- Review the data from your spring 2020 family engagement to find out what worked well for families and what did not. If you were not able to implement a family outreach process in the spring, consider implementing multiple forms of touchpoints – online surveys, text messages, phone calls – and evaluate which methods work best for engaging different families.
- Review or develop your plan for documenting and sharing information on family engagement strategies. Will a new teacher be able to access information about their students' families? Will they know which families prefer text communication over email, or which families require interpreter services?
- Provide staff with mental health support services and time to reflect on the stories shared by families and the reactions and grief they may need to process in order to support families and students.



**In the event of a natural disaster, have a plan in place to identify and serve family and educators' needs.**

#### Example Strategies

- Identify resources that support best practices in emergency management planning for schools, such as [federal resource centers](#).
- Educate your leadership and staff on trauma-informed care and the resources that you may need to incorporate into your instruction and practices after a disaster.



**In the event of school closure, ensure a smooth transition for all families and students into their next school environment.**

#### Example Strategies

- Communicate proactively and honestly with families about a school's status. If the school is experiencing any challenges that could eventually lead to closure, such as decreasing enrollment or poor outcomes, be transparent about these challenges as well as how the school is facing them. Be honest about both your challenges and plans for mitigation to build trust.
- Engage with your authorizer and any resources they offer around supporting families transitioning out of your school in the event of closure.





## Section 4: Appendices – Tools & Resources

- Sample Q&A Template for Family Outreach
- Capacity Building for Different Groups of Educators
- Back to School Open House
- Reflection Questions
- Toolkit

### Appendix E: Toolkit

#### [Beginning of Year Relationship Building: A Strategy Guide for Educators](#)

*Flamboyant Foundation*

This toolkit provides resources for educators looking to engage with families in ways that promote trust, communication, and shared power; acknowledge and challenge educators' biases; promote racial equity; and focus on grades and social-emotional development. Resources include scripts for calling families, example prompts to include in student and family questionnaires, and strategies for hosting community-building events.

#### [Tools for Educators to Listen and Learn from Families During COVID-19 School Closures](#)

*NYU Steinhardt's Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools*

This Google doc is tailored to support educators as they connect with families during the COVID-19 pandemic. The document includes tips on preparing for outreach to families, sample scripts, guidance for follow-up conversations, and surveys that can be used to deepen family engagement and support during virtual instruction.

#### [Family-Friendly Partnership School Walk-Through](#)

*Georgia Department of Education's Georgia Family-Friendly Partnership Initiative*

This resource leads teams of educators and families through the process of planning and executing a family-friendly school walk-through. The goal of a family-friendly school walk-through is to provide information about whether families and others feel they are welcomed in the school's environment, and to guide the school toward new strategies for developing an increasingly inclusive and welcoming environment.

#### [Stay Home, Stay Connected: Maintaining Relationships in a Time of Social Distancing](#)

*Parent Teacher Home Visits*

This resource includes tools for virtual home visits, strategies for maintaining teacher-family ties during school closures, and tips on talking to students about COVID-19.

#### [Home Visit Toolbox for Educators](#)

*Parent Teacher Home Visits*

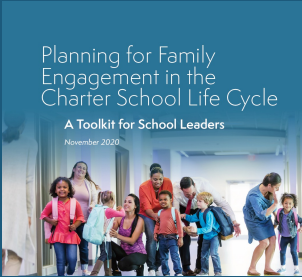
This webpage of resources provides examples of tools that can be customized for educators conducting home visits. The compiled tools include sample letters to families to communicate about the home visit, a frequently asked questions document, and a visit log and debrief guide.

#### [Identifying Community Assets and Resources](#)

*Community Tool Box*

This interactive resource provides a step-by-step guide to community asset mapping. The resource leads the reader through foundational information about community assets, how to identify community assets, and how to leverage identified assets, and provides additional resources throughout for further reading on a variety of related topics.





# Key Takeaways

- Focus on trusting relationships between families and educators.
- Connect family engagement activities and efforts to student learning.
- Build an inclusive team to design and integrate family engagement strategies into practice.
- Make a plan, with the North Star as guidance.
- Use continuous improvement to keep your plan alive.

# Panel Discussion

Tyrone Elliot  
Director & High School Principal  
The Bridge Academy

John Taylor  
Executive Director  
Booker T. Washington Academy

- Tell us a little bit about your school.
- Tell us about family engagement in your school.  
What are some of the challenges you've had in the past?
- How have you used the toolkit in your work?
- What are your key takeaways from the toolkit?
- Do you have any favorite tools or resources from the toolkit?

# Questions?

Please type them in the Q&A box



# Take our post-webinar survey



<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ZD83G8Y>