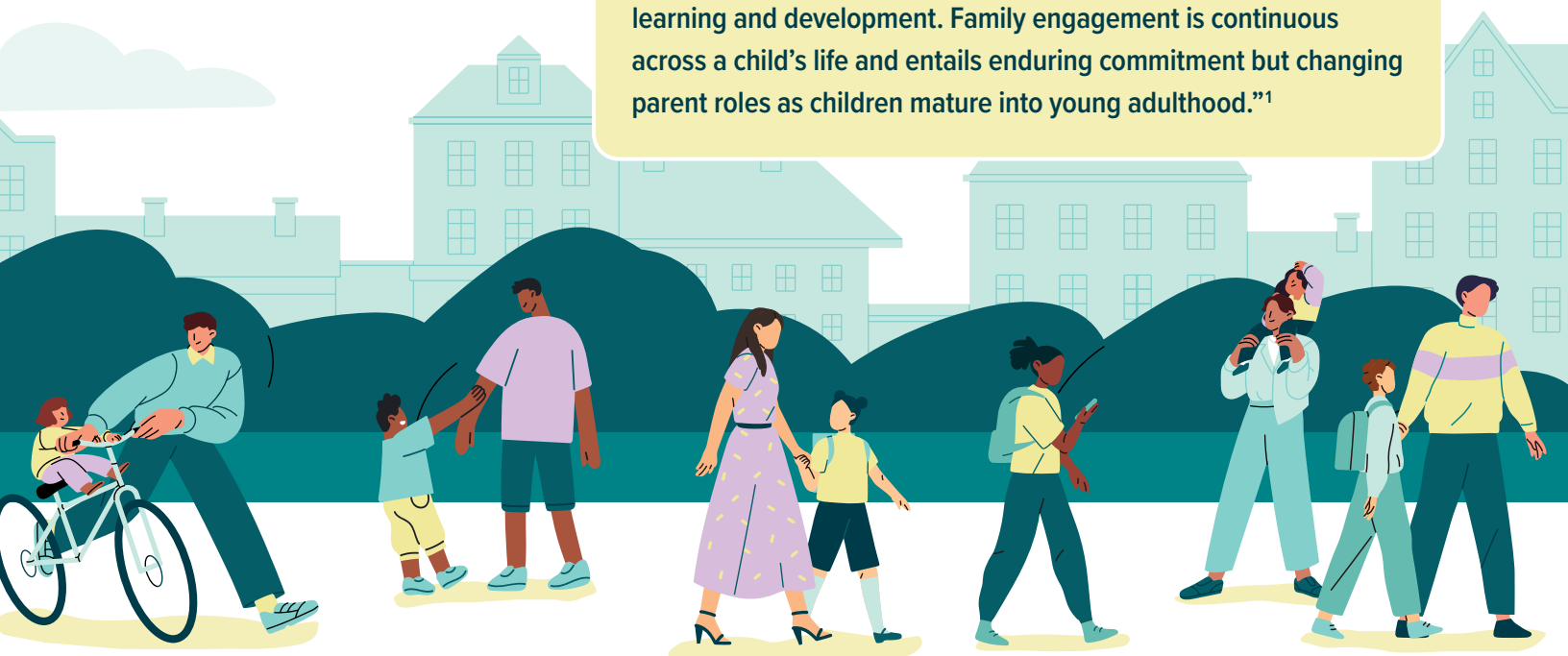


CONTINUOUS FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Two-Way Partnerships from Early Learning to High School and Beyond

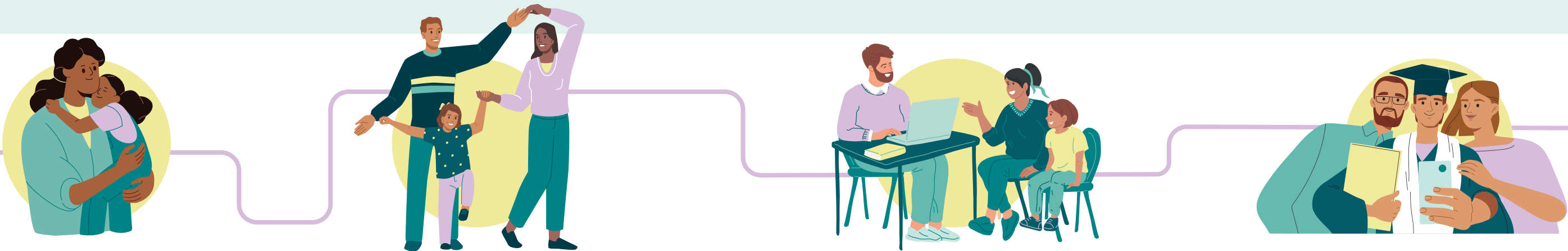
When many people hear “family engagement,” they picture early education. But families play an equally important role in later years, as students begin to take responsibility for their own learning. This resource shows what family engagement can look like across a student’s education, with examples of research-based strategies for families and educators (including teachers, administrators, and classified staff).

“Family engagement is a shared responsibility in which schools and other community agencies and organizations are committed to reaching out to engage families in meaningful ways and in which families are committed to actively supporting their children’s learning and development. Family engagement is continuous across a child’s life and entails enduring commitment but changing parent roles as children mature into young adulthood.”¹



How Families and Educators Can Support Learning Over Time

The strategies listed below touch on several important ways that families and educators support learning: academically, socially, emotionally, through relationships and connectedness, and through shared power and decision-making. For each stage, you will see strategies for both families and educators.



Early Childhood^{2,3,4}

In the early years, families lead and guide learning.

Elementary School⁵

Middle School^{6,7,8,9}

As students take more ownership, the role of the family shifts to creating systems and structures, communicating high expectations, and monitoring academic progress and milestones.

High School and Beyond^{10,11}

Students begin to lead decision-making with their family's support. It is critical to equip all families with information about available postsecondary pathways so they can help their students prepare for life after high school.

Families

- Talk, read, and play every day and establish routines that support positive learning habits
- Help children identify feelings and practice self-regulation
- Build relationships with educators by participating in school and community activities
- Partner with educators and participate in transition planning for kindergarten

- Ask how to support academic and social and emotional learning skills at home and reinforce positive attendance
- Encourage curiosity and confidence
- Ask questions and advocate for your student's needs
- Participate in school activities and decision-making opportunities

- Monitor academic progress and help set goals and stay organized
- Talk about friendships, well-being, and identity development
- Provide opportunities for students to explore their interests
- Engage students in planning for the transition to high school

- Monitor progress toward graduation requirements
- Discuss college and career plans
- Support decision-making and self-advocacy
- Engage school staff (e.g., educators, counselors) in postsecondary planning

Educators and District Leaders

- Share developmental milestones and at-home learning strategies
- Provide families with resources (e.g., handouts, workshops) to support social and emotional learning development at home
- Create welcoming environments and engage in two-way communication
- Partner with families in transition planning and goal setting

- Engage families in literacy, math, and attendance support through regular communication of activities they can do at home to support learning
- Share strategies families can use to reinforce social and emotional skills at home and encourage curiosity
- Maintain consistent two-way communication that builds trust and relationships
- Invite families into decision-making and partner with them to ensure learning is culturally responsive, builds on families' funds of knowledge, and meets access needs

- Share academic progress, attendance patterns, and early indicators so families can offer support early
- Support families in understanding adolescent development and social and emotional learning changes
- Create opportunities for meaningful family participation beyond traditional school events
- Encourage family-student goal setting, support planning, and transition planning for high school

- Provide families with timely and accessible information about graduation progress, coursework, and postsecondary readiness milestones
- Equip families with tools to support student self-advocacy, resilience, and decision-making
- Maintain communication that keeps families informed while respecting students' growing independence
- Facilitate student-family-advisor conversations about course selection, postsecondary planning, and support services

Strategies for Every Age¹²

Families

- Stay connected and communicate regularly via email, apps, attending events, and volunteering
- Support learning at home
- Ask questions and advocate for student needs

Educators

- Build and maintain trusting, culturally responsive relationships
- Engage in consistent two-way communication
- Invite families in as partners in decision-making

Benefits of Family Engagement^{13,14,15}



Improved attendance, academic achievement, and postsecondary success



Stronger communities, connected families, and more effective and equitable practices

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➤ **Learn more about family engagement, access helpful resources and tools, and connect with experts who can help you strengthen family engagement in your community.**

