

MEDU207 Engaging Families and the Community within Schools

ECTS Value: 3 ECTS
Self-Study Hours: 45

Contact Hours: 15
Assessment Hours: 15

Overall Objectives and Outcomes

This module equips learners with knowledge, skills and competences to create effective school-family-community links. Educators and school management teams have to respect the social and emotional needs of students when engaging with communities and families within the educational structure. These three components (school, family, community) are critical in the shaping and influence of the students' education journey. As professionals, educators need to acknowledge that parents, as well as other members of the community, have knowledge and experiences that can help and equip the child with further resources.

Engaging families and communities helps schools understand and learn about what students are exposed to and what they are learning at home, as families very often provide the first educational space a child encounters and this needs to be acknowledged. When a school includes families in its day-to-day activities and practices, it is helping to develop the skills of the parents, extending the school community to the wider community as well as breaking down the barriers which may hinder the educational journey of the student. This module will help learners to plan for effective collaboration, share the vision with the students' families and engage communities within the school's day-to-day running.

By the end of this module, the learner will be able to:

Competences:

- a. demonstrate understanding that families and communities are the first and continuing educators of the students;
- b. propose class-based and school-based activities which strengthen school-family-community links.

Knowledge:

- a. determine key aspects of engaging the family and the community within schools as well as the need for continuous parental involvement;
- b. comprehend the diversity of families and use this as a resource to build stronger partnerships;
- c. appreciate school-family-community partnerships which are based on mutual responsibility, respect and trust.

Skills:

- a. initiate effective school-family-community communication;
- b. manage projects which involve school-family-community engagement and recognise the role of every member in building the school's as well as the students' identity;
- c. assess communication channels with families-community as well as ways in which the school interacts with families-community and address any gaps.

Assessment Methods

This module will be assessed through: Reflection(s) and Project Proposal

Suggested Readings

Core Reading List:

1. School Learning Support Program (2010), *Positively engaging parents* accessed 28th December http://teachingmattersamy.weebly.com/uploads/1/3/9/9/13999466/positively_engaging_parents.pdf
2. Hanover Research (2014), *Effective Family and Community Engagement Strategies Prepared* (2014) accessed on 27th December <http://www.ctschoolchange.org/wp-content/uploads/Hanover-Effective-Family-and-Community-Engagement-Strategies-LEAD-Connecticut.pdf>
3. Advancing Partnerships – *Parent and Community Engagement Framework* (undated) accessed 28th December <http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/parent-community-engagement-framework/resources/pdf/parent-community-engagement-framework.pdf>

Supplementary Reading List:

1. Epstein, J. (2016). *School, family, and community partnerships*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
2. De Carvalho, M. (2001). *Rethinking Family-School Relations: A Critique of Parental Involvement in Schooling. Sociocultural, Political, and Historical Studies in Education*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
3. Hornby, G. (2011). *Parental involvement in childhood education*. New York: Springer.