



# Kentucky Collaborative for Families and Schools

The Prichard Committee

## **Sample #4- Shows clear co-creation, certifies at GOLD Level**

*Please note: For the purposes of the samples, we did not create the evidence (flyers, agendas, etc) that we reference.*

### **Objective 1 – Relationship Building – Evidence – Show Evidence for Two Critical Attributes**

Name of Critical Attribute	Narrative and Google Drive Links
<b>Welcoming Environment</b>	<p>See (link) our welcoming school entry way with great signage English and Spanish. We worked with parents to redesign this 2 years ago. Our website (link) was also redesigned 2 years ago with families, students, and staff in mind. Before everyone said they couldn't find what they needed and now we get great feedback about it!</p> <p>We have a process that we review annually for welcoming new families. Families who went through the process last year are now asked to review the process with staff each year to offer opportunities for improvement. This is done through informal interviews and surveys (see attached). Families are surveyed after 1 month and again at the end of the school year.</p> <p>We know that front office staff are vital to a family and student's first impression of a school. Our front office staff have professional development time each year devoted to evaluating the front office space and their norms for supporting a welcoming environment. Last year, we were able to transform a conference room into a family center. We can still use it for conference meetings, but now it is more cozy and welcoming. We have family pictures (that families have given us permission to use) around the room. One wall, we have big piece of paper that says "what's your why?". At the start of the year, our principal encouraged us all to write our why on the board. Families see it when they come in and they are also invited to write their "why" on the board. It helps us know we are all working to the same end: supporting students!</p>



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## Built on Trust

All teachers participate in our annual district confidentiality training. Volunteers must also go through confidentiality training.

Teachers start each year with welcoming notes home as soon as they get their list of students. We print pre-addressed cards, so teachers just have to sign an encouraging note. This note lets families know that they will receive a call in the 2 week time frame before the back-to-school event. Most families come to our back-to-school event because they have had a postcard, had a phone call, and heard about the event online. Teachers keep a running list of families that they haven't seen or spoken to by the time of the back to school event. The beginning of the year packet includes a "hopes and dreams letter" for families to complete (see example).

During our first PLC of the year, in the 1st or 2nd week of school, we celebrate early relationship building wins and prioritize any student that we haven't been able to reach their family. Additionally, if there is information that last year's teacher can share that is relevant, they share that with their colleague.

Throughout the year, teachers also call home to each family, at least once a semester with a positive conversation. If they have to call home for a negative situation, they prioritize making a follow up call within the next few weeks with positive information.

Additionally, our administrators, FRYSC, and teachers prioritize contact with families of students who were chronically absent, had more than 2 behavior instances last year, were struggling academically, or are transfer students. They consider what they already know about the family and student from a strengths-based perspective and then have a strengths-based conversation with the family to create a more holistic success plan than what can be discussed during most family conferences.



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	<p>Our FRYSC spends at least two days a month in the community. She goes to the local housing authority, does home visits, and attends various sports events so she can see families where they are.</p> <p>Our teachers also attend performance and sport events, to cheer on students and connect with families in a relational way.</p>
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### Objective 2 – Communications – Evidence – Show Evidence for Two Critical Attributes

Name of Critical Attribute	Narrative and Google Drive Links
<b>Family and Student conferences</b>	<p>Our families love our conferences. 99% of families attend a virtual or in-person conference each year. Families, teachers, and students sign an agreement (see example attached) at the beginning of each year about what we will all contribute and meeting together as a team is at the top of the list. We have grade level meetings twice a year and follow-up after these with individualized conferences (see flyer and pictures). During the grade level meetings, we share data for the grade. We start all of these conversations with an emphasis that all of our students are more than numbers and this is just one way of thinking about how they are doing. We then ask families to write down 3 things that the data won't show them about their child. We pair the grade-level data with providing individual packets about where their child is and sharing at-home learning activities that families can do together to support the learning outcomes at that grade level. Most families attend the grade level meetings and the family conference.</p> <p>We ensure that family conferences work for any family schedule. We have a teacher PD day each semester that is also devoted to family conferences and we provide evening options. If a family cannot make it in-person, we provide virtual or phone options.</p>



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	<p>All teachers have received training on how to hold effective family conferences that focus on family strengths, have students talking about their own strengths, and include goal setting together. New teachers are mentored in this process from more experienced teachers.</p> <p>Students receive support prior to family conferences in speaking to their strengths through a strengths-finder activity (see link).</p> <p>Our MTSS procedure prioritizes conversations with families whose current needs are at a Tier 3. Teacher teams work to determine what additional supports are most needed. Sometimes this results in weekly contacts by a teacher or a regular contact from the FRYSC.</p>
<b>Linked to Learning</b>	<p>Our teachers did a book study about communication with families. Based on this, they formed teacher teams to review communication with families to ensure there is an action families can take that is related to supporting student learning. Teacher teams also work to remove any inaccessible language, keeping the reading level at 4 grade level or below.</p> <p>We have a communication team, which includes family partners. They preview and organize our schedule of communication. Any events that require special clothing are planned at the beginning of the year and families have a calendar with those dates.</p> <p>Families also get weekly messages from their teachers at the end of the week with information about the upcoming week, in the way that they indicated they would like to receive it (see example). This is a recent change we made based on family feedback and on the communication training and families have expressed appreciation for this change. We have an app that helps with sending these materials in families home language</p> <p>If something is vital and requires families to see</p>



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	<p>it immediately, then they will receive a one-call, an email, and a text.</p> <p>Please see the note in the section above about the grade level meetings and with personal student information shared.</p>
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### Objective 3 – Shared Responsibility – Evidence – Show Evidence for Two Critical Attributes

Name of Critical Attribute	Narrative and Google Drive Links
Linked to Learning	<p>Our school hosts an annual open house with all materials provided in English and Spanish (see attached flyer).</p> <p>Our principal hosts a monthly virtual coffee hour with families, with a different topic each month. (see attached flyer for topics this year). The coffee hour is at lunchtime and in the evening on alternating months so that all families have an opportunity to attend. The principal also records a summary of the content covered in the coffee hour and posts it to our social media/website. The principal has a few set topics, but she elicits feedback from families to try to determine other topics.</p> <p>Each grade level sends home information about learning goals with at home activities each month to all students (see attached example). Materials are available in home languages.</p> <p>This year, based on family feedback about their needs, we are excited to start after-school care through a partnership with our high school Family, Career Community Leaders of America (FCCLA). We are able to pay students and staff for their time. The activities are linked to learning and are fun for students. We have a limited number of children who can attend and we prioritize this based on family and student need.</p> <p>Our GEAR UP College and Career Navigator</p>



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	<p>sends home links to fun at-home learning activities three times a year (see attached example).</p> <p>Working with our intervention staff, parents of students who fall in Tier 2 or Tier 3 in our MTSS system receive a monthly call home each 9 weeks and they are offered extra supports for learning at home.</p> <p>Our family conference prioritizes supporting families in at-home learning. We have a quick checklist of some things families do to support learning (see attached). Families use it as a starting place for the conversation. Teachers ask families about how they support learning at home and they affirm the practices that families are using and provide some information to extend the learning they are already doing. We recognize that students are whole people and that learning takes place everywhere! Families say these conferences help to see all the things they are already doing to support their children.</p>
<b>Parents in Leadership and Decision Making roles</b>	<p>This year, our SBDM amended policies to require a parent representative on each school committee. The vice-principal also created a workflow for recruiting and welcoming new families into leadership roles (see attached document).</p> <p>Recruitment and training materials are available in English and Spanish, and our ELL teacher regularly makes phone calls home to seek individual input from parents.</p> <p>Our PTO has a family leadership committee that develops new leaders. Each homeroom teacher is charged with nominating a classroom parent/family member for leadership opportunities annually and with encouraging that parent/family member's participation. Family members also identify other family members as potential leaders and a family member can self-select. Once those family members have been identified, a</p>



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	<p>member of the parent leadership committee reaches out to them, letting them know they have been identified as a potential family leader. This conversation includes a description of the ways they can serve and a description of the different levels of commitment.</p> <p>Our PTO is working with our administration to host a “Design a great School session” next school year. Family, student teacher teams will have a design challenge of “designing the best school to support students”. Family leaders will lead the session, with support from the administration. We look forward to the great ideas that come from this event. We also see this event as a way to recruit new family leaders.</p> <p>We currently have all family positions filled on SBDM and committees. Committee chairs report that most parent leaders attend most meetings.</p>
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### Objective 4 – Advocacy – Evidence – Show Evidence for Two Critical Attributes

Name of Critical Attribute	Narrative and Google Drive Links
Equity	<p>We have identified a “go to” person or caring adult for each student. Homeroom teachers are responsible for making contact with that person twice a semester, and they log their contacts in a database.</p> <p>Our principal created this system after we realized that although we had identified “caring adults” in past years, we had not developed procedures for building relationships with those adults.</p> <p>One PLC per semester is devoted to allowing time for teachers to make contacts home.</p> <p>Homeroom teachers are responsible for making personal invitations to family conferences and school events. Our principal</p>



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	<p>prioritizes the message of homeroom teacher responsibility for parent contact at each faculty meeting and in a monthly email. (see attached example).</p> <p>We have a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) plan (see attached) for determining students who need more intensive contacts between school and home. Our family advocate completes this MTSS form for each new student throughout the year. Then a monthly team of interventionists, Social Emotional Learning staff, and our family advocate meet monthly to touch base about each student on the list.</p>
<b>Students and Families as Advocates</b>	<p>Family participation in our IEP, ISFP, 504 and PSP is regular and dynamic. We work to design these meetings where we can listen to the family's/ student's needs. We discuss what advocacy can look like during these meetings (we call use the phrase "speaking up and asking for support") and we talk about when this is easy and when it is hard.</p> <p>Our FRYSC, interventionist, family advocate, and PTO have created a Family Advocacy Academy. It is a three session meeting where families can learn about leadership, advocacy, and school policy. Sessions are also recorded on powerpoint slides for distribution at any time to interested parents. In 2022-23, 15 family members have completed the advocacy training as a group (n=4 grandparents as parents, 3 ELL parents, 5 families of students with disabilities, 3 PTA officers). The powerpoint slides have been accessed on our website over 100 times.</p> <p>Our school was proud that 2 of our parents completed Commonwealth Institute for Parent Leaders (CIPL) fellowships through the Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence. (see attached).</p> <p>Our director of exceptional children provides all families undergoing the ARC process with</p>





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an easy to read list of statewide and community services. (see attached)

## Objective 5 – Community Partnerships– Evidence – Show Evidence for Two Critical Attributes

Name of Critical Attribute	Narrative and Google Drive Links
<b>Effective partnerships supporting student and school improvement</b>	<p>We are very proud of our community partnerships. Each grade has at least 1 community partner (see attached list of partners). Depending on the partnership, we either visit the partner as part of a field trip or they come to visit our school. We incorporate this as part of our student's regular curriculum.</p> <p>We work with each community partner to make sure things run smoothly and to get their input about how we could improve the process moving forward.</p> <p>Families are notified about these visits/trips prior to the event and provided with follow-up questions they can ask their children about the experience.</p> <p>Additionally, twice a year we have meetings with all of our community partners, we share about what is going on at the school. We share about what is going great, how they help make us better, and we are honest about growing edges! Then we have some brainstorming time. This year, 2 of our community partners decided they would also offer their employees volunteer time (8 hours a month) to support our school!</p>
<b>Meaningful Community Integration</b>	<p>Our FRYSC Director works with families to help them connect with off-site resources, based on their need and interest.</p> <p>Our FRYSC knows that many of our families are nervous about making phone calls to other providers. She offers a warm hand-off</p>



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	<p>to resources by calling the provider with the family. When needed, she also is able to provide transportation to allow the family to connect in-person with the provider.</p> <p>Our grandparents who are raising their grandchildren are sometimes wary about putting their information into an online application for services or their computer skills are limited. If the service requires an online application, our FRYSC director supports the grandparent through this process.</p> <p>On-site we have a mental health provider, through a partnership with our local community mental health center, a school nurse, and our guidance counselor.</p> <p>We recently designed one area in our school to focus on STEM and the Arts. Students, families, and the community were part of this redesign. Teachers, community partners, teachers and students use this area.</p> <p>During our back to school event we also have a provider who can do physicals, a dentist, and a hair stylist.</p> <p>Families have been a dynamic process of helping us establish these norms. Recently, families indicated that they would like to have more community partnerships that focus on stress and supporting their child during stressful situations. We are working with family, our community mental health provider, and our FRYSC to determine how we can best provide these supports, as we don't want it to be a one-time family engagement event, but an ongoing support for families who need it.</p>
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**III. Pick 2 objectives (i.e, relationship building, advocacy, etc) in which your school has gotten feedback from families about how you can improve. Explain what you have done**



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and/or what you are in the process of doing to respond to and incorporate family feedback. Additionally, please highlight any changes you are making to family engagement efforts in order to be more inclusive and reach all families.

Name of Objective	Narrative and Google Drive Links
Community Partnerships	Our families and parents serving in leadership positions at our school identified gaps in our community partnership development. With school support, they plan on convening a group of school leaders, current community partners and potential community partners. The goal will be to identify needs in the school and community and how we can build partnerships that bridge these gaps.
Advocacy	Since we have long-standing family leaders and several who have been trained with the Commonwealth Institute of Parent Leaders (CIPL), families and school staff suggested that moving forward, we could create a system where family leaders train, recruit, and on-board new leaders. We are currently accessing funding streams so we can stipend the parent leaders who would be implementing the training, because it would be a significant amount of work and we would like some continuity in this work.

#### IV. ONLY FOR SCHOOLS SCORING 72+ POINTS AND APPLYING FOR GOLD STATUS:

Please explain in narrative form how your school engages families as equal partners in supporting student success. How do you work with parents as co-creators in the Family Friendly Schools process and in general as co-creators in your school community? This co-creation and partnership should be woven throughout the culture of your school. Please include information on how “working with families” instead of “doing for families” happens in classrooms and spaces across your school. Recommended minimum narrative word count: 250 words. Include links to documentation, such as statements or videos from a diverse pool of parents/caregivers who have been involved in your co-creation work, agendas and attendance numbers from decision-making groups that



**include families, flyers from events created based on family input and interest, and information about parent leadership development in your school.**

Our goal for the last two years has been to build true partnerships with families. We were tired of providing trainings that families didn't really want, and families were tired of us not listening to what they needed to support their students' success. As a result, our leadership has set a new norm that no new programs will be started without genuine family co-creation and input. Our PTO officers have all agreed to provide honest feedback on any new initiatives, and our FRYSC director has recruited previously unreached parents to provide feedback as well. Additionally, the vice principal has recruited a parent of a previously truant student into leadership roles. She serves on our Family Engagement Action Team and is now a co-leader of that team. Our principal has set the norm of "Don't send out a communication to a parent until you've asked yourself, how would I feel if I received this exact communication about my child? Is the tone kind, welcoming, and respectful?" Our family participation in school decision making has increased by over 25% this year. Please see attached agendas and family attendance numbers for monthly meetings where we request feedback from families. Also attached are two statements by two parents, describing their co-creation work with our school. We have asked a lot of our families this year, in terms of giving feedback to us and learning more about advocacy and supporting learning in the home. We wanted to show families that our teachers were also willing to "go the extra mile," and so 100% of our faculty have completed family communications training and a family engagement best practices training. At one PLC per month, the principal asks teachers for data around how many positive phone calls home they have made in the month and around one relationship they're building with a family whose student needs extra support. Our leadership has set the tone for partnering with parents, and the responsibility now lies with our teaching staff as well as our front-office staff and FRYSC director.