

### III. CPLAN School Standards

Before reading the CPLAN School Standards, families and schools must understand the importance of *family communication* and *cultural responsiveness*, two practices which are so important to the CPLAN School Standards that they are entwined in all standards, rather than existing as their own standards.

*Family communication*, as distinct from family engagement, refers to including parents and families in sharing information related to the standards listed below. Family engagement refers the deeper practice of treating families as partners and working with them throughout problem-solving processes, and lives here as its own standard.

*Cultural responsiveness* lives within all CPLAN School Standards because schools will not be able to succeed with any of those practices if they are not using culturally responsive practices in their education, communication, and culture. Separating cultural responsiveness as its own standard implies that it can be done in addition to these practices, when really it is an integral part of the other standards.

CPLAN's parents advocate for their children's schools to develop and model School Standards with accompanying indicators in the following areas:

- 1. Schools meet the academic needs of all students.**
  - a. Students, including English Learners and students with disabilities, demonstrate academic success and are on path to grade-level proficiency.
  - b. Students receive instruction from effective, highly-qualified educators.
  - c. Students are on a path for college and career readiness.
  - d. School staff communicate with families about students' academic progress.
  - e. Schools deliver a culturally responsive curriculum.
- 2. Schools meet the non-academic needs of all students.**
  - a. Schools deliver trauma-informed education and services.
  - b. Students demonstrate social-emotional growth.
  - c. Schools foster connections to community partners.
  - d. Students are being prepared to graduate from college, if that is the path they choose.
  - e. School staff communicate with families about students' non-academic needs.
  - f. Schools are culturally responsive in anticipating and meeting the non-academic needs of students.
- 3. Schools maintain a culture of intentional family and community engagement.**
  - a. Schools have active and functional School Site Parent Councils.
  - b. Schools solicit family feedback before implementing policy changes.
  - c. Schools partner with families to develop new policies and practices.
  - d. Schools partner with community stakeholders to improve school programming.
  - e. Schools are culturally responsive in engaging with families and community partners.
- 4. Schools maintain a student-centered school climate.**
  - a. School discipline is appropriate and focused on student needs.
  - b. Schools have measures in place to address chronic absenteeism.
  - c. School curricula meet the needs of the whole child, including arts and physical education.
  - d. Schools keep students and best outcomes for students at the center of family communication.
  - e. Schools maintain a culturally responsive school climate.

### IV. Next Steps

As CPLAN continues development of the CPLAN School Standards, it will prioritize identifying sources of data that families will be able to access, analyze, and use to inform rubric scores. CPLAN will gather family input on this iteration of the standards at a July 30 workshop.

## I. Background

The Collaborative Parent Leadership Action Network (CPLAN) engages a diverse network of parents, communities, and school leaders in capacity-building opportunities that build skills and hold all systems accountable to ensure that all children have access to high-quality, culturally responsive educational experiences.

CPLAN's current priority objectives are for parents to influence more culturally responsive school climates in which students with diverse backgrounds, learning abilities, and experiences are supported to thrive, resulting in increased access to high-quality educational experiences and outcomes for students of color. Research demonstrates that low-income parents must overcome barriers to school involvement and they cannot access school and community resources that benefit children<sup>1</sup>. To equip parents to hold schools accountable for effective practices, CPLAN is developing a School Standards rubric to support families as they evaluate, analyze, and work to improve their students' educations.

The CPLAN School Standards will provide parents with a common rubric, backed by school scores, that they can use to understand how their child's school is or is not meeting its students' needs. Having this information in the hands of parents and families serves two major purposes. First, it empowers parents to make informed choices about their child's school enrollment. Second, it fosters a culture of thoughtful feedback and improvement, providing a consistent unit of measurement which families can use in partnership with district and school staff to create a stronger, more effective learning environment for all children.

## II. Development Process

Through its work with parents and families, CPLAN identified key focus areas that families would like to see included in the rubric. Families identified the following areas as being strong indicators of quality education:

- a. Schools demonstrate cultural responsiveness through staff diversity, staff practices, and curriculum.
- b. Schools build an intentional culture of family engagement, including fully functional School Site Parent Councils as formal voices for parents.
- c. Schools provide trauma-informed care.
- d. Schools reflect a student-centered school climate.
- e. Schools have the funds to implement equity practices.
- f. Schools are working to reduce chronic absenteeism.
- g. Schools focus on educating the whole child, including art and physical education, as well as addressing the diverse needs of learners who have disabilities or who are English Learners.
- h. Schools promote their students gaining social/emotional learning.
- i. Schools ensure that all children are on a path to grade-level proficiency in core academic areas.

CPLAN identified overlap between many of these identified focus areas and has drafted the CPLAN School Standards explained in the next section as a result.

---

<sup>1</sup> Bolivar, Jose and Chrispeels, Janet (2011). Enhancing parent leadership through building social and intellectual capital. *American Educational Research Journal*, 48(1), February 2011, 4-38.

The CPLAN School Standards will provide families with a rubric they can use to understand how their child's school is or is not meeting its students' needs. This gives families a tool to make informed choices about their child's school enrollment and fosters a culture of thoughtful feedback and improvement.

### CPLAN School Standards

Schools meet the academic needs of all students.

- Students, including English Learners and students with disabilities, demonstrate academic success and are on path to grade-level proficiency.
- Students receive instruction from effective, highly-qualified educators.
- Students are on a path toward their chosen individual postsecondary opportunity.
- School staff communicate with families about students' academic progress.
- Schools deliver a culturally responsive curriculum.

Schools meet the non-academic needs of all students.

- Schools deliver trauma-informed education and services.
- Students demonstrate social-emotional growth.
- Schools foster connections to community partners.
- Students are being prepared to graduate from college, if that is the path they choose.
- School staff communicate with families about students' non-academic needs.
- Schools are culturally responsive in anticipating and meeting the non-academic needs of students.

Schools maintain a culture of intentional family and community engagement

- Schools have active and functional School Site Parent Councils.
- Schools solicit family feedback before implementing policy changes.
- Schools partner with families to develop new policies and practices.
- Schools partner with community stakeholders to improve school programming.
- Schools are culturally responsive in engaging with families and community partners.

Schools maintain a student-centered school climate.

- School discipline is appropriate and focused on student needs.
- Schools have measures in place to address chronic absenteeism.
- School curricula meet the needs of the whole child, including arts and physical education.
- Schools keep students and best outcomes for students at the center of family communication.
- Schools maintain a culturally responsive school climate.

