

## Best Practices for Improving Homework: Presenter Notes

### Slide 2:

- Today we are going to focus on discussing the importance of family involvement
- We will be discussing specific strategies that if applied correctly can improve the school's approach to family friendly practices
- Finally we will discuss how these strategies impact our environment & how we can take steps towards improving partnerships with families in our schools.

---

---

---

---



**Where are we going today?**

- Let's talk about family involvement
- What are some strategies to improve how we get families involved?
- Feedback & Goal Setting

The slide features two map images: a modern digital map with a red car icon and a traditional parchment-style map with a compass rose.

### Slide 3:

- Review the definition of Indicator 8 of Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
- Focus on the importance of involving families in the education process and strengthening partnerships between families and schools.

Every state is responsible for taking positive steps to include families. The Department of Education monitors parents perception of how well schools reach out to families and how this improves services for their students.

---

---

---

---



**Indicator B-8**

- Percent of parents with a child receiving special education services who report that **schools facilitated parent involvement** as a means of **improving services and results** for children with disabilities

The slide includes the NCSEAM logo, which is a blue outline of the United States.

### Slide 4: The 4 A's

\* More information is contained in the PowerPoint presentation at the end of this document\*

- For flourishing family-school partnerships to occur, certain conditions should be met.
  - These include:
    - An *approach* that invites and expects family involvement
    - Positive *attitudes* educators hold regarding family involvement
    - A welcoming *atmosphere* created by educators.
    - Once these conditions are in place, effective family-school partnerships can take place (*actions*).

---

---

---

---



### Slide 5:

- Discuss how the approach, attitude and atmosphere must be appropriate **before** parent friendly “action” can be taken. Conduct a discussion with the audience of suggestions of how these areas can be improved within your school environment.
- This is a schematic to better understand how the 4 A's connect

---

---

---

---



**Slide 6:**

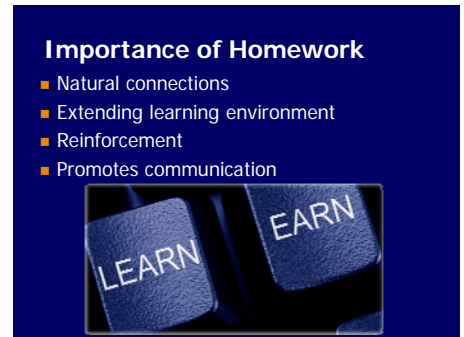
- Natural connections - provides a natural connection between home and school
- Extending learning environment – academic learning is not limited to the school day during class periods, rather it extends beyond into other parts of the day and child’s environment
- Reinforcement - reinforces academic learning from the school day at home
- Promotes communication – homework promotes the communication between the school environment and home
- Involving parents in homework is important for positive academic outcomes!

---

---

---

---



**Slide 7:**

- Point person – Select one person from each grade to be available for parents to contact regarding homework questions. This person could provide parents information concerning school homework policies, homework clubs, peer tutoring, or contact information for teachers
- Flexible planning – Schedule parent-teacher conferences with flexibility and consideration for parents’ availability
- Common planning periods – Coordinate a common planning period with other relevant teachers during the school day in order to plan homework together

---

---

---

---



**Slide 8:**

- Homework Hotlines – Establish systems for parents to gain access to assignments by telephone/voice mail (“homework hotlines”) or web-based sites
- Homework Planners- A homework planner kept by each student provides an opportunity to write down assignments and special instructions for work or projects. This is also a good way for parents to know what assignments their students are bringing home.
- Email; phone; voicemail - Telephone network hot lines (email; voicemail) should be established so that parents can call teachers or parents when questions or problems arise over homework assignments
- Mail - Mail important information about homework home

---

---

---

---



**Slide 9:**

- Explain that the following ideas are to help students with homework by providing them with an opportunity to ask questions from teachers and receive peer support with assignments. These suggestions are not intended to take the “home” out of home work but they provide an alternative to parents when they feel they are having difficulty assisting their student. These ideas also facilitate positive communication between school and home

**Schools Can Establish . . .**

- Study halls
- Community volunteers
- Homework club
- Peer-tutoring programs



- Study halls – Allow adequate study time during school hours for students to complete homework
- Community volunteers – Recruit community volunteers to assist students in completing homework
- Homework clubs – After school “homework” clubs may be offered that offer support for students who may need assistance in completing their homework and provides a clear time when homework is expected to be completed
- Peer tutoring programs – peer tutoring programs could be offered which would offer peer assistance for questions related to homework

---

---

---

---

**Slide 10:**

- List of major projects - Early in the school year, provide a list to parents describing the main projects and assignments for the year
- Homework planners – Consider using homework planners for communication purposes and to keep the students organized for homework tasks
- Frequency & consistency – a homework system should be used everyday with consistency. To be effective the student must know what is expected of them and be prepared for homework time with assignments & materials readily available

---



---

---

---

**Tips for Teachers**

- Communication routines
  - List of major projects
  - Homework planners
  - Frequency & consistency



**Slide 11:**

- Positive reinforcement system – Teachers should establish a positive reinforcement system for work completion – individual or class wide strategies (e.g., chart moves; sticker charts, etc)
- Review assignments – Teachers should review assignments during class and make sure the students are capable of the work
- Prompt feedback – Teachers should provide feedback about homework assignments (completion & accuracy) as soon as possible. This will promote positive results for the student regarding completion and prevent against practicing errors if the homework contained mistakes

---

---

---

---

**Tips for Teachers**

- Positive reinforcement system
- Review assignments
- Prompt feedback



**Slide 12:**

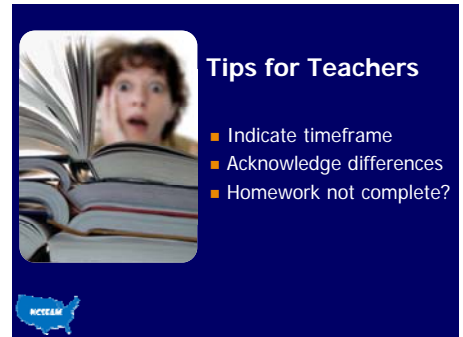
- Indicate timeframe – teachers should provide parents with an approximate amount of time students should work on homework, including a breakdown of how long each assignment is anticipated to take
- Acknowledge differences – given differing ability levels of students, teachers should acknowledge student differences, and needs. This should be communicated appropriately with parents & assignments should reflect these differences
- Homework not complete? Teachers should contact parents immediately if homework is not being completed. Teachers should also establish some system of consequences for not completing homework (e.g. all work must be completed the next night, not participating in fun activities during the school day in lieu of completing the unfinished work; special rewards for students who do complete all homework – similar to a perfect attendance award – for a specific period of time)

---

---

---

---



**Slide 13:**

- Scheduled daily activity – Parents should make homework a planned daily activity
- Establish a routine – Parents should establish a homework time and place to be followed everyday. Have the child complete homework assignments at a table while sitting in a chair, with enough room to work. It may be necessary to have the student in close proximity to the parents so that parents can be sure homework is being completed and distractions are reduced.
- Decrease distractions – Parents should decrease distractions such as noise, siblings, and television while child is completing assignments

---

---

---

---



**Slide 14: Refer to Handout 4**

- Review tasks – Parents should review work that needs to be completed with the student before the child begins the assignments
- Monitor time – Parents should monitor how much time their child is spending on homework each night
- Provide praise & feedback – Provide the child with praise and reinforcement for homework completion (see praise and reinforcement handout)

---

---

---

---



**Slide 15:**

- Promote independence – Parents should promote students’ independence in homework completion. One way to do this is to structure homework practices (e.g. the amount of time or number of problems that should be completed each night)
- Allow breaks – It may not be possible for the student to sit and attend to all homework at one time. Parents should provide periodic breaks from homework as necessary.
- Incorporate siblings – Parents should attempt to incorporate siblings into the homework routine whenever possible. For example, an older sibling may be able to “tutor” or review concepts with a younger student or oral reading practice or flash cards drills may be performed between siblings.

---

---

---

---

**Tips for Parents**

- Promote independence
- Allow breaks
- Incorporate siblings



**Slide 16: Refer to Handout 1, 2 & 3**

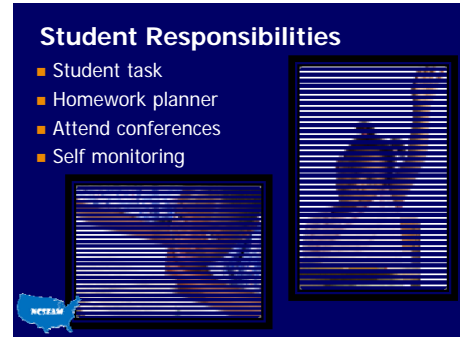
- Student task – Remember that homework is the student’s responsibility, not the parents or teachers!
- Homework planner – Students should keep a homework assignment planner, which lists assignments and is checked and signed by both parents and teachers daily (see homework planner handout)
- Attend conferences – Invite students to attend parent-teacher conferences, and allow them to provide input with some assistance
- Self monitoring – Teach students to self-monitor homework completion and accuracy (A self-monitoring handout is included in the packet. This handout includes an explanation of the procedures and provides as example of a completed self monitoring chart)

---

---

---

---



**Slide 18:**

- Discussion points for your school staff

---

---

---

---

