

# Strong Beginnings

## QuickStart Guide Section 7: Parent Involvement and Family Partnership Process

The Family Partnership section is not part of GSRP and is only a requirement for Strong Beginnings. It is recommended that this section be read in full in the Strong Beginnings Pilot Implementation Manual to develop a better understanding of requirements.

### Parent involvement philosophy and policies are mostly the same.

- Teachers and/or Family Liaisons may support parent involvement at group or parent meetings.

### The structure of local advisory committees, GSC Parent Coalition representation and the ISD wide School Readiness Advisory Committee is mostly the same.

- Local advisory committees may be separate for Strong Beginnings or combined with representation from each program. Representation on the Parent Coalition and School Readiness Advisory Committee should be proportional to the number of children enrolled in each program.
- Family Liaisons should be represented on each of the committees.

### Family Contact policies are mostly the same.

- Family Liaisons and teachers can work together with either taking the lead for referrals for children suspected of having special needs.
- Family Liaisons should take the lead on making referrals for needed family services, communicating as appropriate with teaching staff.

### Home Visit guidelines are mostly the same.

- One member of the teaching staff and the Family Liaison should, if possible complete the home visit together.
- The role of the Family Liaison should be discussed at the initial home visit and the date of the first meeting should be agreed upon if possible.

### Parent teacher conference guidelines are mostly the same.

- Family Liaisons should participate in the conferences as appropriate whether just to say hello or be included in a discussion about needed child supports.

## **There is no Family Liaison in GSRP.**

- The partnership between the advocate and family is relationship based and focused on the advocate supporting the goals that are set by and important to the family.
- Families receive differing levels of support based on their needs and interest in receiving support.
- Family Liaisons facilitate connections to community resources that help families meet goals in areas of interest to them such as health, housing, parent education, employment and financial stability as well as supporting their children's development and learning.
- Each ISD must develop a Strong Beginnings Family Partnership Process Plan that details the advocacy process and includes the development of a family partnership agreement that includes family goals and strategies to reach them.
- The plan must also detail the process of assessing family need and indicate how necessary activities such as referrals and direct service will be accomplished.
- While some families will need and receive more support than others, each family should generally receive three visits per year to develop, review and adjust goals.
- At a minimum, programs should offer all parents the opportunity 1) to participate in a group research-based parenting program and 2) to meet in a group session with representatives of local agencies that support families in improving their well-being.
- Awardees are required to use one family partnership process throughout the region although sub-recipients such as Head Start may be exempted from using the ISD selected model if they already utilized a family advocacy process that includes goal setting.
- Family Liaisons will implement the Family Partnership Process that is developed and carry out/assist with other duties detailed in the Strong Beginnings Pilot Implementation Manual.
- Family Liaisons must have a B.A. or B.S. degree in social work, family studies or a similar field that requires a practicum experience with families.
- Each Family Liaison supports a maximum of 3 classrooms or 42 families.
- All Family Liaisons utilizing the ISD selected process are hired, supervised and provided with reflective supervision and professional learning by one agency that has been selected in the region.
- The agency supporting Family Liaisons must maintain a proportionate ratio of at least one full time Family Liaison Supervisor for every 15 Family Liaisons. Qualifications for the Family Liaison Supervisor are in the Strong Beginnings Pilot Implementation Manual and include a MSW or strongly related master's degree and appropriate experience.

- The Family Liaison Supervisor is responsible for overseeing all aspects of the work of the Family Liaisons as detailed in the Strong Beginnings Pilot Implementation Manual.
- There should be mindful planning for strong coordination between other family support programs parents might be involved in and support from the Strong Beginnings Family Partnership Process.