

Building Trusting Partnerships with Your IEP Team

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Policy Foundation of Trusting Partnerships

- **Original Goal of IDEA (1975)**

- To ensure a free **appropriate** education in meeting child's individual needs

- **New Goal of IDEA (2017)**

- *Endrew F.* Supreme Court Case
 - ✓ Diagnosed with autism at 2
 - ✓ Progress stalled in early elementary school
 - ✓ Mother called to pick him up
 - ✓ Enrolled in private school in 5th grade
 - ✓ Has now graduated from high school



Path to Supreme Court

- Due process hearing—lost, 2012
- State review—lost, 2012
- Federal district court—lost, 2014
- Federal court of appeals—lost, 2015
 - Court's interpretation—"educational benefit that is merely more than *de minimis*"
- Supreme Court—won, 2017, with unanimous decision

New Goal of IDEA

- Movement from a free appropriate education to a free **appropriately ambitious** education
 - Every student should have the chance to meet **challenging objectives**.
 - **Progress** is the measure of an appropriately ambitious education.
- Free **appropriately ambitious** public education is goal of IDEA.

Role of Families in Achieving an Appropriately Ambitious Education

- A significant way to operationalize a free appropriately ambitious public education is through **shared decision-making of professionals and families**.
- Policy expectation for shared decision-making
 - “The IEP meeting serves as a **communication vehicle** between parents and school personnel and enables them as **equal participants to jointly decide** what the child’s needs are, what services will be provided to meet those needs, and what the anticipated outcomes will be.”
(Federal Register, 1981, p. 5462)
- The primary means to achieve shared decision-making is the **individualized education program (IEP)**-- development, implementation, and monitoring.

What Does Research Say about Shared Decision-Making?

- Research
 - 16-year review: “The federal intention of parents and guardians being equal partners in collaborating with schools to develop IEPs is not being realized (Blackwell & Rosetti, 2014, p. 11).”

The background features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of blue, ranging from light sky blue to deep navy blue. These shapes are primarily located on the right side of the slide, creating a modern, dynamic feel.

What Are Trusting Partnerships and Can They Realistically Be Developed?

Key Concepts

- **Partnerships**: Alliances in which individuals enact joint rights and responsibilities in a cooperative manner
- **Trust**: Relationships in which individuals have confidence in someone's reliability, judgment, and word to act wisely in their best interest
- **Trusting partnerships**—Alliances in which families & professionals confidently rely on each other's judgment and word to act wisely in enacting joint rights and responsibilities to increase benefits for students, themselves, and each other.



- Welcome to WISH Charter
- Our Mission
- Campus Tour

Photos of WISH



Photos of the WISH Campus



Welcome to WISH Charter

WISH Charter School is a freepublic independent charter school authorized by the Los Angeles Unified School District.

Mission and Philosophy

The WISH mission is to maximize every scholar's learning potential within an atmosphere of caring and belonging. The WISH instructional philosophy rests upon the concepts of hands on learning, meaningful instructional activities, systematic instruction, and a collaborative group of professionals working together to make the learning environment exciting for students. Evidence-based teaching strategies will be tailored to meet individual development.

WISH is modeled after the award-winning CHIME Charter Elementary School in Woodland Hills, which received the distinction of "Charter School of the Year" by the US Department of Education in 2005. In April of this year, WISH was named a SWIFT Knowledge Development Site by the University of Kansas due to exemplary work implementing our core tenets - one of only 6 schools in the US selected for this auspicious designation. WISH has also been asked to host "Promising Practices" seminars for district schools by the LAUSD.

Core tenets of the WISH model

- Optimal Class Size: All Kindergarten through 3rd grade classrooms have approximately 20 students. Grades 4 through 8 have approximately 25 students.
- Collaboration and Co-teaching: Highly qualified, credentialed educators are partners in planning, teaching, and assessing each child. In addition to classroom teachers, teaching specialists support each grade level and move between classrooms to enrich learning

Reference Links

- Calendar of Events »
- Downloadable PDFs »
- Latest Newsletter (PDF) »
- Employment Application »
- SARC & LCFF Details »
- Common Core Parent Info »
- Dress Code »
- 2016-17 School Calendar »
- 2017-18 School Calendar »

Upcoming Events

- OCT 02** 9th Grade Parents Meeting
Location: WISH High
Time: 8:30am
- OCT 05** 8th Grade High Schooler for a Day
Location: HS
- OCT 05** 8th Grade HS Informational Meeting
Location: HS
Time: 6pm
- OCT 09** 6th Grade Parents Meeting
Location: WISH Middle
Time: 6pm
- OCT 10** 5th Grade MS Informational Night
Location: WISH Middle
Time: 6pm

[View Calendar »](#)

WIN for Parents

- **Before attending WISH**
 - “Going to fight”
 - “Super, super battle”
 - “Always a struggle”
- **After attending WISH**
 - “They explained everything thoroughly”
 - “It was such a collaborative process”
 - “Exceeding expectations”
 - “Difference between night and day from previous school”

WIN for Students

- **Father's perspective**

- “There’s this really, real community that we feel, and I think when the parents are here, it sends a message to the kids about how much they are loved and how much they are cared for, and I think it helps them to develop that same sense of community with other students.”

WIN for Teachers

- **Support for teachers**
 - “Gosh last year, my kid was in Miss Casey’s class, and so they had an email out ‘Oh, we need this for birthdays of the month.’ And I swear that if it took more than 10 minutes to get back online, you were not gonna get on the list of stuff to contribute. It’s crazy. But as far as community goes...I’ve never been to a school like this.”

WIN for Teachers

- **WISH teacher's perspective**
 - “Parent partnerships gave me a window into the present and future needs of my students. Parents not only share their desires for their kids, but also valuable information about what supports have worked in the past that may be beneficial in the current school year. Having a close positive relationship with parents also made it easier to have difficult conversations about specific struggles in school. Ultimately, I think partnerships with parents made it easier for me to design supports and feel supported in my teaching.”

GOES AROUND... AROUND
WHAT COMES BACK AROUND



I just want to do God's will. And he's allowed me to go to the mountain. And I've looked over, and I've seen the promised land! I may not get there with you, but I want you to know tonight that we as a people will get to the promised land.

What Does Research Say about Trusting Partnerships?

- **Students**

- Increase in academic achievement
- Improvement in behavioral outcomes
- Less likely to be suspended
- Improved standardized test scores

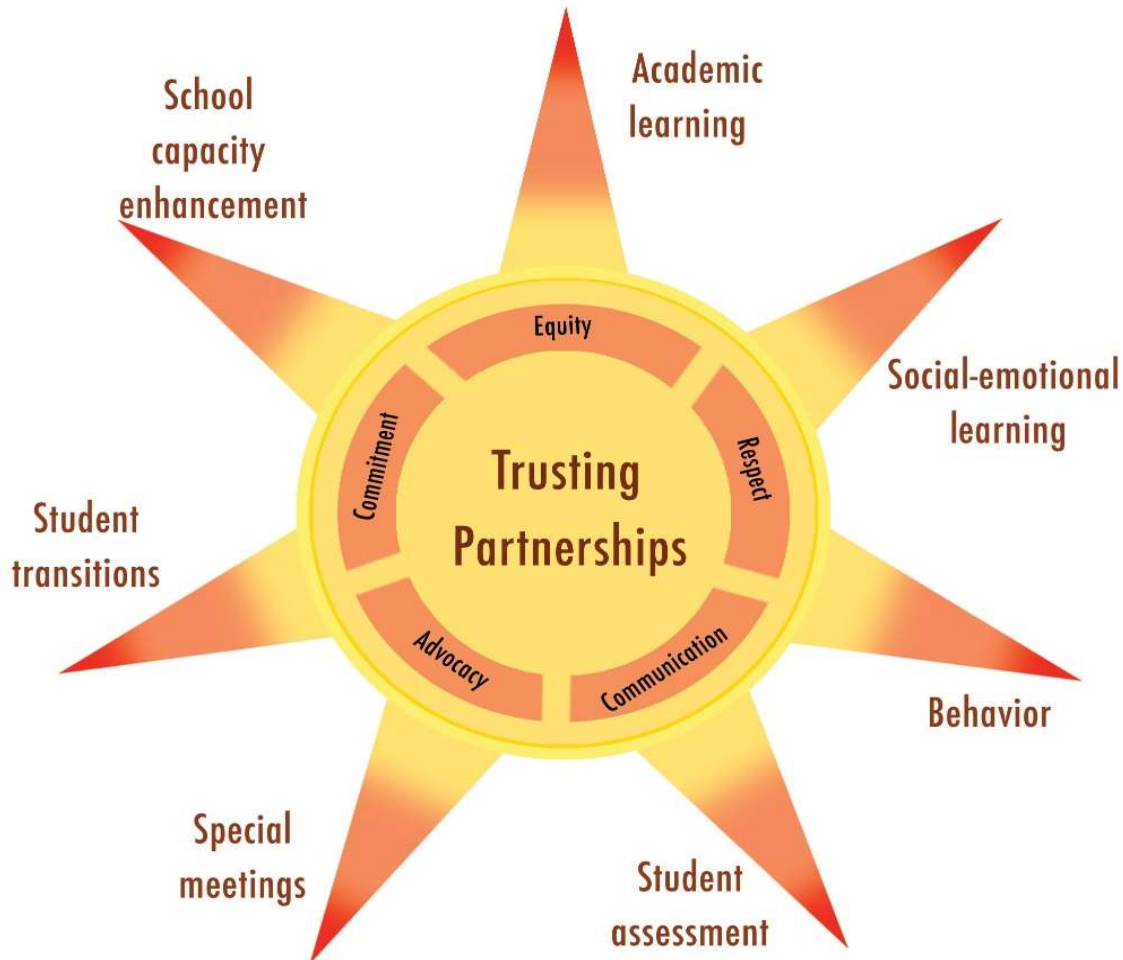
- **Families**

- Less family stress
- Higher family quality of life

- **Teachers**

- Greater job satisfaction
- More assistance with student progress

Sunshine Model of Trusting Partnerships



Five Dimensions of Trusting Partnerships

- Equity
- Respect
- Communication
- Advocacy
- Commitment

Five Dimensions of Trusting Partnerships

Equity: Adding supports and resources enabling everyone to have opportunities for equal outcomes

- Parent who can't get off from work to attend IEP meeting
- Teacher who has a chronic illness and can't be available for evening school activities

Respect: Conveying a sense of admiration for good or valuable qualities; also having genuine concern for others' needs and feelings

- Parents who are embarrassed that they can't help with homework due to their lack of education
- Teacher who is getting backlash from school community for being gay.

Communication: Engaging in culturally responsive and positive interactions that are reciprocal, frequent, and regular

- Parent who doesn't have computer access to receive texts
- Teacher from Ukraine who is not a confident English speaker and does not have any proficiency in Spanish

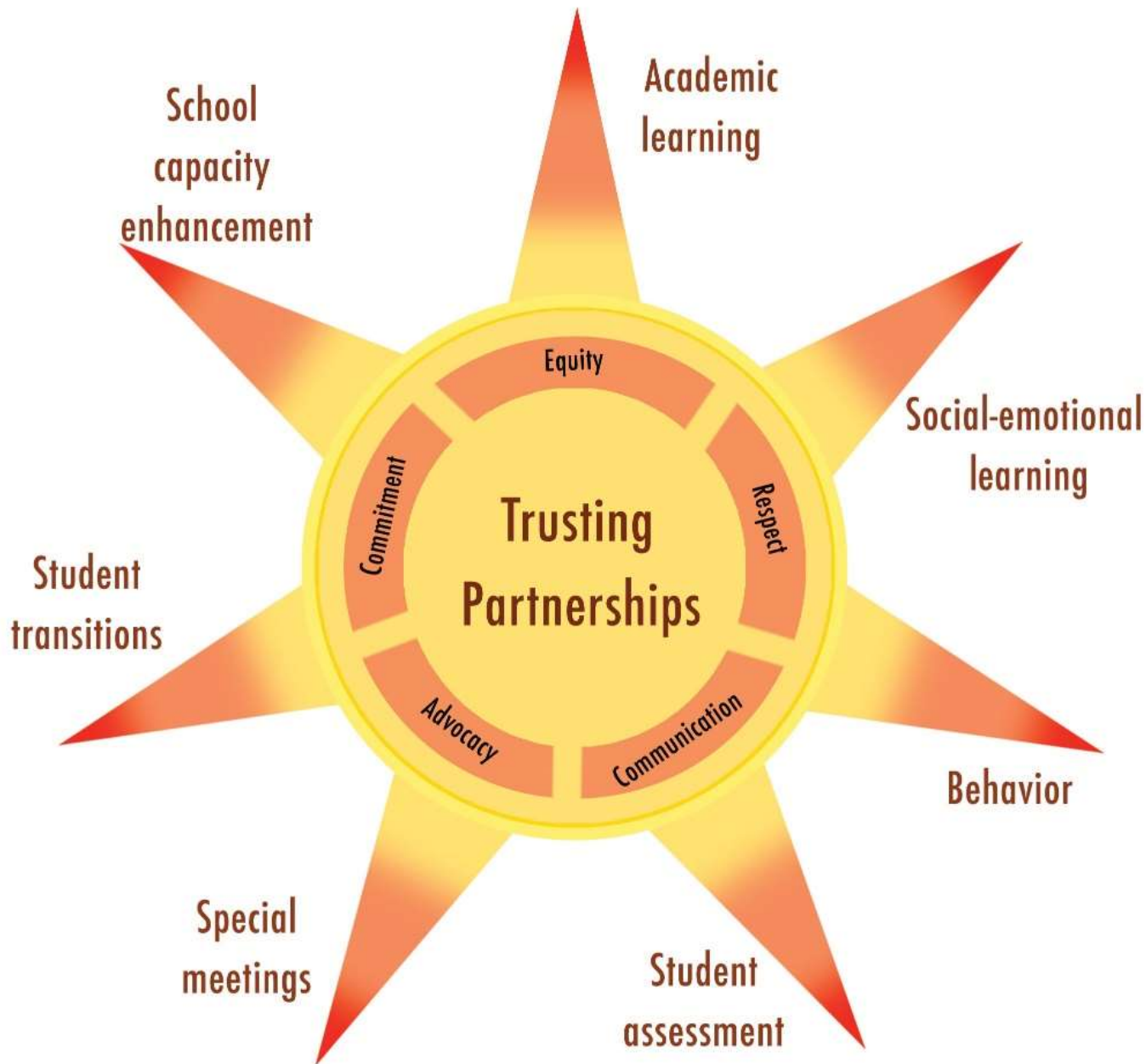
Five Dimensions of Trusting Partnerships

Advocacy: Taking action to solve problems or remove barriers in order to accomplish valued outcomes

- Student who needs medication for ADHD that parents cannot afford
- Teacher who has an overload of classes and limited time for parent communication

Commitment: Making deliberate choices to prioritize and value partnerships, as well as to assume responsibility for partnership outcomes

- Parent who has been disrespected by teachers in the past who does not believe trusting partnerships are possible
- Teacher who believes that parents should always agree with her because she is in charge of her classes



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Building Trusting Partnerships in IEP Meetings

Parent Perspectives

- Positive
 - “Everybody had positive things to say about Luis. It was like a dream come true to have everyone working together to help him learn.”
- Negative
 - “I had to leave my job to go to the IEP meeting. All the comments were complaints about my son’s behavior. Do you know how many educators came in and had me sign something and walked out? It’s like you’re just being brushed through an assembly line. Or they were like scanning you through the grocery line. And then, they leave.”

Professional Perspectives

- Positive
 - Ms. Gonzales wants to hear our opinions, and she follows through with what we suggest. She tells us what is working at home. Her commitment to helping Claudia with homework strengthens my commitment. I leave the IEP meeting wanting to do my best for Claudia too.
- Negative
 - Why does she even come to the meeting if she is not going to speak up? She just sits there. She even was looking at her phone. Does she even care?

Seven Components of IEP meetings

1. Prepare in advance
2. Welcome and introduction
3. Review formal evaluation and determine current levels of performance
4. Share future visions and high expectations
5. Develop appropriately ambitious goals
6. Determine supports, services, and placement
7. Conclude meeting

1. Prepare in advance

- Professionals' Tasks

- Hold a pre-meeting to provide families with advanced information that will enable them to feel more confident and participate more actively at the IEP meeting.
- Provide written information on IDEA rights and responsibilities if not shared previously.
- If the team has developed a draft IEP, share a copy with families in advance.
- Arrange for an interpreter, if needed.
- Arrange a convenient time and location for the meeting, considering preferences.

Equity Respect Communication Advocacy Commitment

1. Prepare in advance

- Families' Tasks
 - Attend the pre-meeting and seek to learn as much as possible.
 - Attend workshops and read to learn IDEA rights and responsibilities.
 - If draft IEP is available, review it; make notes of questions & comments.
 - Arrange for logistics (childcare, time off from work, transportation); reschedule if necessary.
 - Invite family members, friend, or advocate to attend with you.
- Either Professionals' or Families' Tasks
 - Consider having the student attend and prepare appropriately regarding contributions and length.
 - Bring snacks.

Equity Respect Communication Advocacy Commitment

2. Welcome and introduction

- Professionals' Tasks
 - Use name tents or a list with everyone's name and role.
 - Make introductions.
 - If a professional team member needs to leave early, let the family know and be sure that person's contributions are included before departure. Apologize for early departure.
 - Share a recent experience about the student that is especially positive and compliment the student.
 - Inquire about how things are going for the family.
 - Highlight something the family has done that has educational benefits and express appreciation.

Equity Respect Communication Advocacy Commitment

2. Welcome and introduction

- Families' Tasks
 - Ask for introductions if they are not made.
 - If you need to leave early, let the team know and apologize.
 - Ask that another meeting can be scheduled if more time is needed.
 - Compliment the team on something they have done that has educational benefits and express appreciation.
 - Welcome the student and explain that everyone there is committed to his or her success.

Equity Respect Communication Advocacy Commitment

3. Share future visions

- Professionals' Tasks
 - Invite student to share future visions for life after high school, current strengths, and interests.
 - Invite family to share same.
 - Express enthusiasm for what student and family share.
 - State commitment to partner to meet goals.
- Families' Tasks
 - If professionals do not provide invitation for this sharing, tell them you would like to share visions, strengths, and interests.

Equity Respect Communication Advocacy Commitment

4. Review formal evaluation and determine levels of performance

- Professionals' Tasks
 - Hold a separate evaluation meeting for the initial evaluation and 3-year re-evaluation. Share a copy of the evaluation report with the family in advance of the meeting.
 - Avoid evaluation jargon.
 - Review the student's current levels of performance related to each IEP goal, including progress on previous IEP goals.
 - Highlight the student's strengths as well as needs.
 - Invite family, students, and other meeting participants to agree or disagree with evaluation results and ask for rationale.

Equity Respect Communication Advocacy Commitment

4. Review formal evaluation and determine levels of performance

- Families' Tasks
 - Request a separate evaluation meeting for the initial evaluation and 3-year re-evaluation. Also request a copy of the report in advance.
 - Review the report and make notes of questions to ask, as well as points of agreement and disagreement.
 - Ask for clarification of jargon.
 - Request the identification of student's strengths if only weaknesses are identified.
 - State your agreement and/or disagreement with evaluation results and provide a rationale.
 - Remember that IDEA provides that families can request an independent evaluation by someone outside of the school district if you disagree with the results and the school does not hold a due process hearing to prove the appropriateness of their evaluation.

5. Specify Appropriately Ambitious Goals

- Professionals' & Families' Tasks
 - Prioritize student's needs in light of:
 - ✓ future visions, strengths, & interests
 - ✓ evaluation results & current levels of performance
 - Generate appropriately ambitious goals for all areas that require specially designed instruction.
 - Determine evaluation criteria, procedures, and schedules for documenting progress to ensure that appropriately ambitious progress is being made.
 - Specify how family will be informed of progress.

Equity Respect Communication Advocacy Commitment

6. Determine the nature of supports & services to ensure progress

- Professionals' & Family's Tasks
 - Identify placement options in the least restrictive environment (LRE).
 - Specify supplementary aids & services, including timeline
 - ✓ Universal design of instruction-- <https://www.cast.org/>
 - ✓ Assistive technology-- <https://www.thetechadvocate.org/assistive-technology-students-disabilities/>
 - ✓ Positive behavior support-- <https://www.pbis.org/>
 - ✓ Co-teaching-- <https://www.understood.org/en/articles/6-models-of-co-teaching>
 - ✓ Related services-- <https://www.parentcenterhub.org/iep-relatedservices/>
 - ✓ 1:1 aide
 - Specify related services, including timeline—speech, physical therapy, occupational therapy, counseling, transportation

6. Determine the nature of supports & services to ensure progress

- Professionals' & Family's Tasks
 - Address the five special factors
 - ✓ Use of positive behavior support
 - ✓ Language needs if child has limited English proficiency
 - ✓ Assistive technology
 - ✓ Braille
 - ✓ Communication needs for students who are deaf
 - Determine if student will participate in state or district tests; and, if so, modifications that will be provided.

Equity Respect Communication Advocacy Commitment

7. Conclude the meeting

- Professionals' Tasks
 - Assign follow-up responsibility for any tasks requiring attention.
 - Set a tentative plan for reviewing IEP implementation.

- Both Professionals' & Families' Tasks
 - Share preferred options for ongoing communication.
 - Express appreciation for being partners in decision-making
 - Affirm the benefits of having a trusting partnership.

Equity Respect Communication Advocacy Commitment

Five Dimensions of Trusting Partnerships

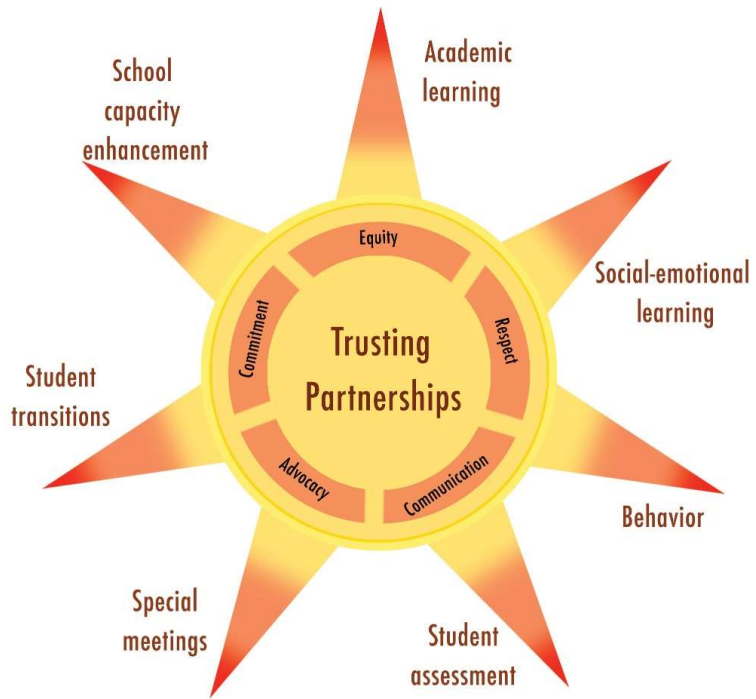
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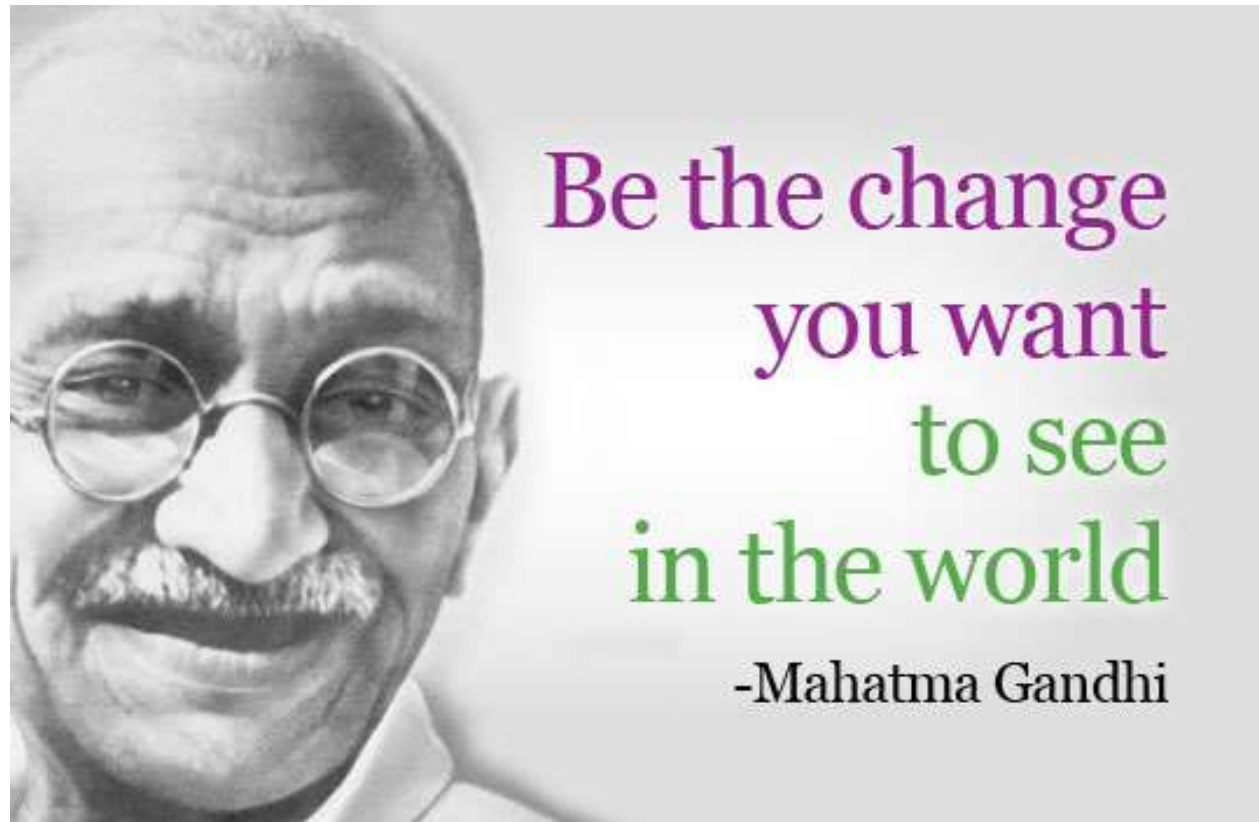
Communication: Engaging in culturally responsive and positive interactions that are reciprocal, frequent, and regular

Advocacy: Taking action to solve problems or remove barriers in order to accomplish valued outcomes

Commitment: Making deliberate choices to prioritize and value partnerships, as well as to assume responsibility for partnership outcomes



- Infuse all five dimensions of trusting partnerships into all of your professional and personal relationships





"When they go
low, we go high."

MICHELLE OBAMA

GOES AROUND... AROUND...
TAKES BACK
COMES BACK

What goes around
comes around.
Keep your circle positive.
Speak good words.
Think good thoughts.
Do good deeds.

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