



Parents Reaching Out
Your One Stop Resource for a Stronger Family

New Mexico Parent Information Resource Center (NMPIRC) Framework for Implementing the Epstein Model for School-Family-Community Partnerships

Parents Reaching Out is the home of the New Mexico Parent Information and Resource Center (NMPIRC). The NMPIRC is funded through the US Department of Education Title I, Office of Innovation and Improvement (OII). **(See: DYK: What is a PIRC?)** The goal of the NMPIRC is to work collaboratively with the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED), school districts and other stakeholders to promote parental involvement in schools by using the Epstein Model and the New Mexico Toolkit (based on the Epstein Model) for School-Family-Community Partnerships. **(See: Letter from the Secretary of Education)**

The NMPIRC Framework promotes what we believe families need to feel for *genuine* Family Involvement to take place:

- **Sense of Belonging:** *Sincerely* welcome families.
- **Competence:** Offer a range of relevant opportunities for shared learning.
- **Usefulness:** Invite families to become equal partners.

The NMPIRC Framework is also aligned with the Parents Reaching Out mission and beliefs.

The mission of Parents Reaching Out is to enhance positive outcomes for families and children in New Mexico through informed decision making, advocacy, education, and resources. Parents Reaching Out provides the networking opportunities for families to connect with and support each other. **(See: PRO handout)**

This mission supports all families including those who have children with disabilities, and others who are disenfranchised.

Parents Reaching Out achieves this by:

- Developing family leadership
- Connecting families to each other
- Building collaborative partnerships
- Providing families knowledge and tools to enhance their power

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- ➔ **The NMPIRC Framework is not just another cookie-cutter program.** The Framework is a flexible, collaborative and inclusive model for organizing and aligning the existing parental involvement efforts within a district/school, such as PTO/PTA, School Advisory Council, Goal Teams etc. and integrating them with the Action Team for Partnerships in order to meet all State and Federal mandates for parental involvement under NCLB. We call this, “*Getting all the wheels heading in the same direction.*” The NMPIRC Framework will help participating schools and districts meet the legal requirements of:
 - NCLB Section 1118 (**See: NCLB, Title I, Section 1118: Parental Involvement handout**)
 - Creating and honoring the School Compact
 - Jointly developing school policy
 - Conducting an Annual Evaluation
 - Meaningfully involving parents in school activities
 - NM House Bill 212: Advisory School Councils (**See: NMHB 212 Card**)
 - Calling parents to be involved by advising and working with their school Principal in decision-making on the budget, school rules and policies, instructional issues, and curricula
 - Requiring schools to involve and partner with the community
 - The NM Toolkit and promoting the six National Standards/Types of Parental Involvement
 - Parenting
 - Communicating
 - Volunteering
 - Learning at Home
 - Decision Making
 - Collaboration
- ➔ By utilizing Dr. Epstein’s model *with fidelity*, research shows that schools who implement the “Epstein Model” with fidelity gain 10% in AYP scores (**See: NNPS Special Report**) Additionally, Parents Reaching Out has observed a decline of “Special Education” related calls coming through their Parent Training Information Center (PTIC) from those schools who implement the NMPIRC Framework. We believe this decline is due to the improved relationships, communication and trust that is fostered through participation in the Framework.
- ➔ The Implementation Checklist is a well thought out plan for what needs to happen and when in order for Action Teams implemented through the NMPIRC Framework to be successful. (**See: Sample Implementation Checklist**) The step-by-step checklist is an invaluable tool, as it allows PIRC staff, the school site and the district to be continually updated and aware of progress. It also ensures transparency in our work, while holding all partners accountable. This Implementation Checklist includes developing a goal for an exit plan. The exit plan is different for each individual school, depending on progress, but it defines what sustainability for that school looks like and when and how PRO should exit without compromising that sustainability.



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- As a part of the NMPIRC Framework, we developed and implemented the use of Memorandums of Understanding (MOU). (**See: Sample MOU**) The MOU has become instrumental in our success as it clearly defines the roles and expectations of all involved, including the NMPIRC, the district and the school site. We strive to enter into these MOU's at the District level. The MOU clearly defines:

The NMPIRC's role

- Provide technical assistance and mentoring
- Support each school's EPSS
- Provide workshops

The district's role

- Support the PIRC and the school(s)
- Be transparent about the MOU
- Enforce the MOU

The school's role

- Identify Action Team Members
- Assure that ATP members are available
- Provide snacks and access to office and equipment
- Provide a Family Room/Resource Center

- **The NMPIRC Framework is not just another other “hit and run” program.** What we have seen in the past with other programs is that they come into a school and give information, (often in volumes of T/A guides laden with jargon) and then leave, not bothering to assist with the actual implementation. The NMPIRC not only shares information, but provides intensive, meaningful mentoring and ongoing technical assistance to each school and their families until capacity is built for sustainability. (**See: September 2005 article**) The NMPIRC offers:

- **Knowledge.** Through personal and professional experiences and family friendly resources.
- **Flexibility.** We work within the current school structure.
- **Partnership.** We will work with *all* existing groups, including existing school committees, such as PTA/PTO, School Advisory Councils, Goal Teams, ENLACE, Appleseed, etc.
- **Structure.** Every district/school the NMPIRC partners with must agree to and sign an MOU that clearly defines the roles of all partners.
- **Strategy.** The NMPIRC Framework is not a haphazard or imposing process. The NMPIRC Framework ensures that there is a rhyme and reason to what we do and when we do it and we do not force a school to go faster or slower than they are ready to go.
- **Technical Assistance and Mentoring.** T/A and mentoring is a major component of the Framework from the onset, however, it is also an important part of the exit plan. The NMPIRC offers continued T/A and mentoring for as long as needed by each individual school.

- Expected Outcomes from using the NMPIRC Framework for Parental Involvement (**See: DYK #11**)
- Higher student achievement
 - Districts and schools meet the requirements of the laws
 - Families become involved in the life of the schools
 - Higher teacher and staff satisfaction
 - Community support for schools
 - Less work for administrators and staff