

## NECESSARY BUT NOT SUFFICIENT: THE ROLE OF POLICY FOR ADVANCING PROGRAMS OF SCHOOL, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS BY JOYCE L. EPSTEIN AND STEVEN B. SHELDON.

School and district policies, as well as federal and state legislation, affect the quality of school based partnerships. Review an analysis of data from 347 in 21 districts to identify different ways policy mandates are implemented.

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Analysis of data from 347 schools in 21 districts to better understand how policies are enacted within schools to foster family engagement, including school and district policies' impact on the quality of school-based partnerships.

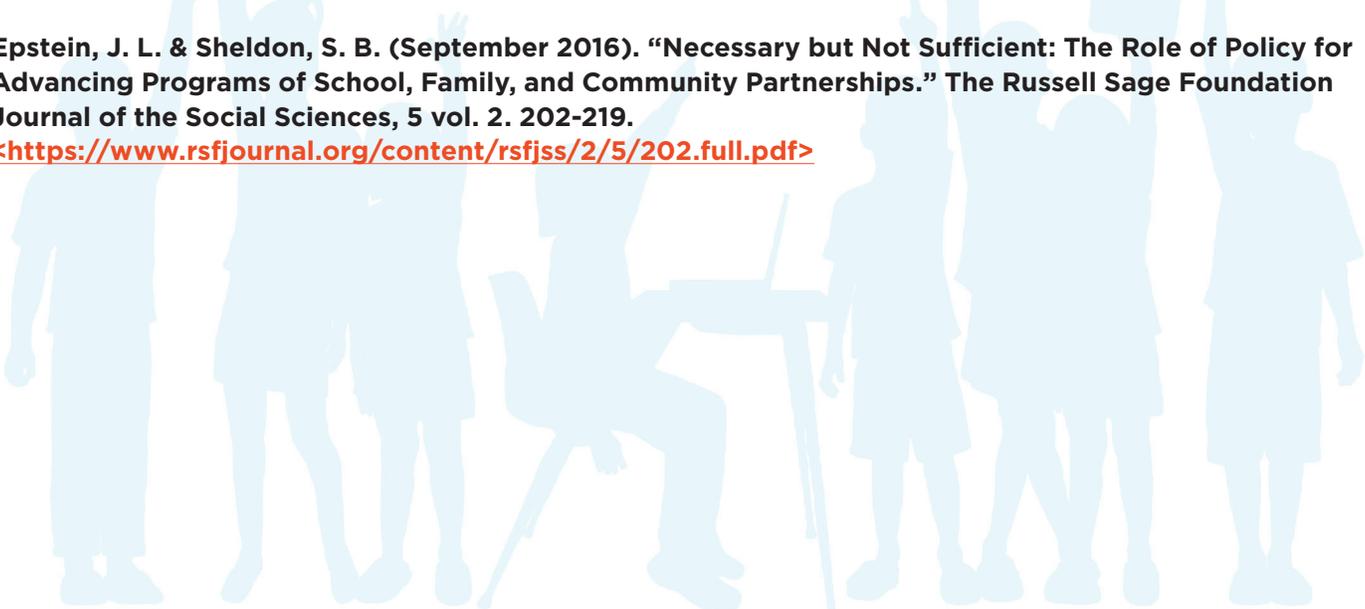
The article gives the history of the *Equality of Educational Opportunity (EEO)* report (Coleman et. al. 1966), which reviews a child's academic progress in relation to their family background, specifically focused on socioeconomic status, and the debate about the role of families and schools in the education community. With this historical backdrop the authors pose a question to frame their research: "if families are so important for student success in school, how can all schools engage all families so that more students benefit from their parents' support and encouragement to do their best in school?" Additionally, the study seeks to identify ways school administrators can support more equitable, family engagement programs in their schools.

The authors review federal policy mandates like the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which lists the obligation for schools, districts and states to engage families through partnership programs. The authors point out that while federal policy requires family engagement programs, it does not outline how schools, districts and states can specifically implement programs to improve the quality of such engagement.

Pulling from three theories - *sociocultural learning theory, organizational learning theory and the theory of overlapping spheres of influence* - the authors lay out a theory of change framework of six types of engagement to categorize what is happening at the school and district level. The six types of involvement include: *parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making and collaborating with the community*. The study looks at top-down policy enforcement and grassroots bottom-up changes impact partnerships programs, while using learning to show how and why side by side collaborations, with the use of Action Teams for Partnerships (ATP), might improve family engagement efforts.

**Epstein, J. L. & Sheldon, S. B. (September 2016). "Necessary but Not Sufficient: The Role of Policy for Advancing Programs of School, Family, and Community Partnerships." The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences, 5 vol. 2. 202-219.**

**<https://www.rsfsjournal.org/content/rsfjss/2/5/202.full.pdf>**



Thanks to generous support from the Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Our Neighborhood*, is a compilation of stories and research from the family engagement field. It is intended to be a living repository and guide for STEM Learning Ecosystems and other communities interested in cultivating strong community partnerships to prepare the next generation.

This annotated bibliography was compiled by TIES for *Our Neighborhood*.