

Literacy Strategies for Families through COVID-19 and Beyond

According to the **National Center on Improving Literacy**, schools and families have a shared responsibility for children’s language and literacy learning. Children benefit greatly when parents and educators work together to support literacy development. The COVID-19 pandemic resulting in long periods at-home learning for the vast majority of children has emphasized the need to improve the capacities of schools to more effectively engage parents.



Build and enhance the capacity of educators and families in the “4 C” areas:

- Capabilities (skills + knowledge)
- Connections (networks)
- Cognition (shifts in beliefs and values)
- Confidence (self-efficacy)

Contact START EPSS Literacy Coordinator, Debbie Esposito to learn more.

By phone 201-873-6473
or email

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Literacy Strategies for Families builds collaborative partnerships between families and schools to support literacy development. Our work helps schools to operationalize the [Dual Capacity Framework for Family School Partnerships](#).

Literacy Strategies for Families facilitates partnerships between families and schools by creating and supporting groups that include school staff and families who are interested in improving outcomes for students in literacy. We will focus on building/enhancing the capacities of families and staff in the following areas:

1. **Capabilities** – School staff will build trusting relationships with families. Families gain information about student learning and the workings of the school system
2. **Connections** - Staff and families will gain access to social capital through strong, cross-cultural networks built on trust and respect
3. **Cognition** - Staff must believe in the value of working as partners with families for improving student learning. Families need to view themselves as partners in their children’s education.
4. **Confidence**- Staff and families will gain a sense of comfort and ability related to engaging in partnership activities and working across lines of cultural difference

Literacy Strategies for Families is part of START EPSS, a partnership between the New Jersey Department of Education and SPAN Parent Advocacy Network. Our work incorporates the [Dual Capacity Framework for Family School Partnerships](#).



What we will do:

- ✓ Facilitate completion of an initial self-assessment. This initial self-assessment data will be compiled and will be used to identify indicator areas to prioritize for support and for action planning.
- ✓ Help school teams design activities, plan outreach strategies, and mobilize community resources (libraries, colleges, business community, etc.).
- ✓ Facilitate the planning and implementation of literacy events for families to learn about ways that they can support learning at home.
- ✓ We will be able to offer live, remote group discussions as well as asynchronous short videos focused on:
 - Strategies to make shared reading at home fun for all
 - Building key literacy skills like phonemic awareness, reading fluency, and comprehension
 - Motivating disengaged readers
 - Understanding school expectations, assignments and assessments, and resources
- ✓ **We offer these school teams a non-competitive grant to facilitate implementation of the team action plan.**

Our support will be focused on strategies that are appropriate for all families whose children attend the school, including both students who receive general education support and those identified for special education supports. The plans will be flexible and adaptable to best support culturally, linguistically, and economically diverse families and learners of all ability levels.

To receive support in your school or district, contact the START EPSD Literacy Coordinator, Debbie Esposito by phone 201-873-6473, or email desposito@spanadvocacy.org

The Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships (Version 2)



START Engaging Parents of Students with Disabilities is a partnership between the New Jersey Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs (NJOSPE) and SPAN Parent Advocacy Network.