



**NCSE** | National Center for School Engagement

**Developing a  
Report Card for Triple A Schools**

**National Center for School Engagement**

**December 2006**

**An initiative of the Colorado Foundation for Families and Children  
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Studies on school connectedness, school climate, family involvement and student engagement all validate the importance of school engagement in producing positive student outcomes. In the report, *School Connectedness: Improving the Lives of Students*, Dr. Robert Blum summarizes that “the extent to which schools create stable, caring, engaging and welcoming environments is the extent to which all our children will thrive.”

While the importance of school engagement is becoming more evident, concept and characteristics still need to be explored (Frederick, Blumenfeld, Paris, 2004.) Frequent inquiries made to the National Center for School Engagement (NCSE), indicate that schools and communities need assistance in applying what the research says. There is a need to translate research into practice and action. As a result, NCSE has embarked in developing a self-assessment tool that schools and family-school-community partnerships can use to rate their level of school engagement. The tool under development is being designed as a “Report Card for Triple A Schools.” This approach is intended to complement federal and state mandates for school accountability.

In related studies, school engagement is often defined from the student perspective and reflects students’ sense of belonging and feelings of being valued (Frederick, Blumenfeld, Paris, 2004.) In the context of creating a report card, the definition of school engagement is broader and inclusive of a range of stakeholders including students, families, school staff, and community leaders. It is defined through a framework for school success developed by NCSE and is based on the integration of the three A’s Attendance, Attachment and Achievement (*see Figure 1. on next page*). Too often, our efforts to increase high school graduation rates are limited to a single issue such as increasing test scores, or decreasing truancy, or improving teacher training. While each has merit, it is imperative that we take an integrated approach and look at the big picture. For example, gains in reducing truancy may be short lived if they are not connected to broader strategies such as providing academic tutoring to help students catch-up with their studies and building connections to caring adults in schools. Professional development of teachers is important, but attention to student attendance is also needed to

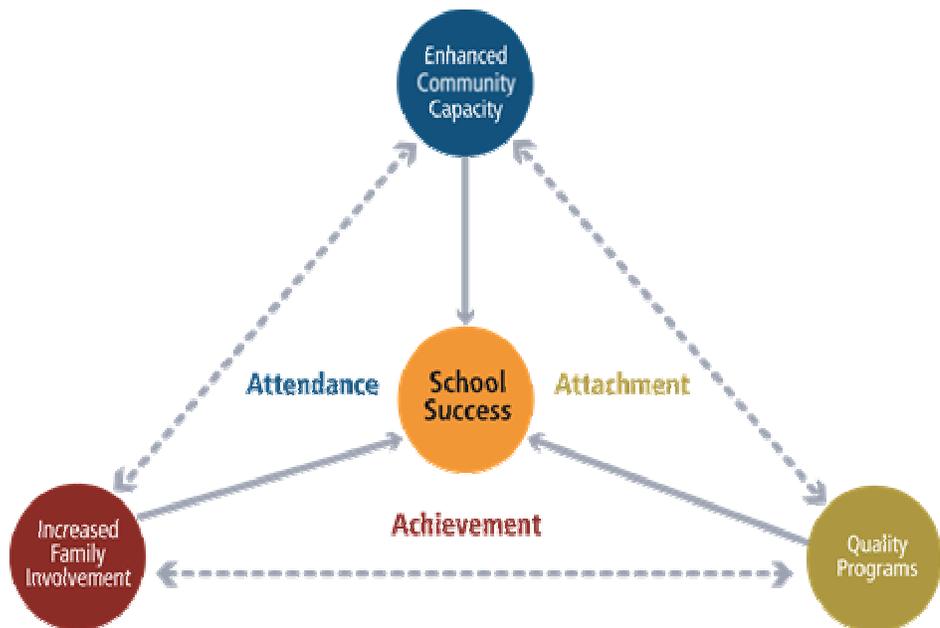
ensure that all students are in their seats ready to learn. The Triple A's are interdependent, as outlined in the following framework.

### NCSE Framework for School Success

- Promoting **Attendance** involves the design and implementation of evidence-based strategies to reduce excused and unexcused absences and to address issues of high student mobility.
- Promoting **Attachment** involves establishing meaningful connections with youth and their families through caring, support, and mutually-defined expectations. It includes developing positive school climates, family and community engagement, and student-focused programs and activities.
- Promoting **Achievement** involves ensuring that students have the tools and resources to complete courses and graduate from high school.

This framework (see Figure 1.) is supported by parent and family involvement in schools, community partnerships, and quality programs and resources for students who are at high-risk of dropping out of school.

*Figure 1.*  
*NCSE Model for*  
*School Success*



## **School Engagement Research**

A starting point in developing a tool to rate school engagement and promote best practices involves a review of emerging research. Consistently, studies show that relationships, resources and school climate play a significant role in school engagement. Of special interest to NCSE are studies that address engagement of students at high risk for dropping out of school. The intent is to identify leverage points for school engagement that can be tracked and measured in both low and high performing schools.

In his recent research, Dr. Blum connects positive school engagement to healthy behavior and academic achievement. He identifies three dynamic influences that impact school engagement (Blum, 2005.) They include:

- 1) Individuals: Student and school staff – Positive relationships developed between students and school staff help motivate and energize students in the learning process.
- 2) Environment: School Climate – Includes “a strong emphasis on academic achievement, positive student-teacher relationships, and respect for others, fair and consistent discipline, attention to safety, and family and community involvement.”
- 3) Culture: Social needs and learning priorities – These are related to positive peer relationships, clear rules and conflict resolution skills.

Similar influences were identified by E. Alana James, EdD, in her research on homelessness and high student mobility (James, 2004). Dr. James explains that 50% of the United States has moved in the last five years and studies show that in urban areas any given cohort of students may change more than 50% of their population every five years. This has considerable impacts on students because schools in the U.S. are not on the same curricular schedule and moving from school to school is like “surfing waves of educational strategy,” leaving highly mobile students years behind their peers in literacy and comprehension.

To mitigate negative impacts and foster school engagement, James offers the “Three Domains of Educational Practice” that schools can use to accommodate highly mobile students:

- The first domain is **access to educational services**, which refers to addressing issues that are barriers to learning and education.
- The second domain is **welcoming and inclusive school culture**, which includes setting up a safe social/emotional context for learning.
- The third domain is **flexible instructional strategies and systems** that incorporate helping students succeed in their education.

A comprehensive examination of school engagement was the focus of the September 2004 edition of *The Journal of School Health*. A featured article by Heather Libbey, *Measuring Students’ Relationships to School: Attachment, Bonding, Connectedness, and Engagement*, includes a literature review and examination of concepts related to school engagement. Libbey explains that a variety of definitions, terms and titles are used to describe aspects of student-school connections. In addition to *school engagement*, other common terms include, *school attachment*, *school bonding*, *school climate*, and *school connection*.

*School attachment* and *school bonding* both represent a social-emotional link to school. Measurements may include “the degree to which students feel close to people at school, are happy to be at school and feel like a part of the school” (Libbey, 2004). *School climate* generally refers to the culture of the school and reflects school spirit, equitable enforcement of school rules and student-teacher relationships. *School connection* often focuses on commitment to school, a student’s feelings of belonging at school and belief in rules. The term *school engagement* tends to be more comprehensive than others because it considers the perceptions of multiple stakeholders. It includes the perspectives of students, teachers, parents and community members. School engagement considers relationships among stakeholders (student-teacher, parent-teacher, community-school), academic motivation and achievement, and student behavior.

Libbey's literature review of research on school engagement and related terms shows that whether examining academic performance or health related behaviors, students do better if they have a sense of belonging and have teachers who are supportive and fair (Libbey, 2004). Consistent themes cited in the research include:

1. Students' sense of belonging
2. Being part of the school
3. Whether or not students like school
4. Level of teacher supportiveness and caring
5. Presence of a good friend in school
6. Fair and effective discipline
7. Participation in extracurricular activities
8. Feeling safe

In the area of school completion, there is evidence that school engagement helps protect individuals from dropping out of school (Frederick, Blumenfeld, Paris, 2004).

This point is made in the report, *The Silent Epidemic: Perspectives of High School Dropouts*, sponsored by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The report reflects the findings from focus groups and interviews with over 400 people who dropped out of school. When asked about why they dropped out, respondents reported reasons related to a lack of connection to the school environment; a perception that school is boring; feeling unmotivated; academic challenges; and the weight of real world events (Bridgeland, J., DiIulio Jr, J. and Morison, K., 2006). In addition to identifying contributors to dropping out, respondents identified what could be done to improve students' chances of completing school. Their suggestions were aligned with positive school engagement and included:

- Opportunities for real-world learning (internships, service learning, etc.) to make classroom more relevant – 81%
- Better teachers who keep classes interesting – 81%
- Smaller classes with more individual instruction – 75%
- Better communication between parents and school, get parents more involved – 71%

- Parents make sure their kids go to school every day – 71 %
- Increase supervision at school: ensure students attend classes – 70%

In summary, recent studies consistently corroborate NCSE's framework for school success. It is becoming clearer that to ensure positive school outcomes, the role of school is not just about testing and knowledge acquisition. Its role also includes attention to non-academic elements reflected in NCSE's Triple A's of school engagement (Libbey, 2004).

### **Report Card Development Phase I: Logic Model and Indicators**

Given the research, the development of a report card on Triple A schools is centered around, *Attendance*, *Attachment*, and *Achievement*. In this design, relevant subcategories and indicators contribute to a logic model that features areas of competencies in school engagement.

To identify subcategories and indicators, NCSE hosted a community forum, as part of its annual *Summit for Leaders in School Engagement*, held in Boulder, Colorado on September 18, 2006. Community leaders, educators, non-profit providers, parents, and students were invited to inform the development of a report card on school engagement. As a result, 80 people participated in ten roundtable discussions facilitated by staff and advisory council members of NCSE and the Colorado Foundation for Families and Children (CFFC). Each group was asked to answer the following questions:

1. What are the primary subcategories of the areas of school engagement?
2. What would excellence in each of the subcategories look like?
3. How would you track the success of the strategies and practices to engage students and families? What means of assessment would you recommend?
4. What (report card) rating system would you use?

For more details, see Appendix A, *Creating Triple A Schools: A Logic Model for Action*.

The themes consistently expressed by groups are listed below by the triple A's:

- **Attendance**
  - Clear expectations of students, families and school staff-roles are understood and contracts are developed to support students' attendance
  - Monitoring and rewarding good attendance – consistent and accurate tracking of absences and follow-up with truant students, and providing incentives and rewards for good/improved attendance
  - Outreach to families and communities on the importance of attendance
  - Policies that promote attendance – include assessment, development and implementation
- **Achievement**
  - High expectations for academic achievement of all students – there is an expectation that every student is important and every student is expected to do well, teachers support and encourage their students
  - Relevant, rigorous and culturally competent curriculum
  - Flexible instruction to address different learning styles – involves data drive instruction to meet the educational needs of all students and tutoring for students who fall behind and/or struggle academically
  - Multi-measures of success including college bound, technical/trade school bound, and workforce bound
- **Attachment**
  - Positive relationships among students (student-teacher, teacher-family, and school-community)
  - Safety – students, staff and families feel safe and issues of bullying and student harassment are effectively addressed
  - School-based supports and resources such as after school programs, family support programs, mentoring, sports, arts/music are available and provided in cooperation with community groups
  - Welcoming school climates – office staff are friendly and familiar with students and families, adults model respectful communication, and positive peer relationships are developed

- **Themes Across the Triple A's**
  - Family Involvement – opportunities for families to be involved in their children's education, parent training, and effective communication of successes and problems
  - Professional Development – opportunities for educators and school administrators on school engagement, welcoming school climate, and individualized instruction
  - Leadership – advisory council of students, families and teachers to track school engagement, inclusion of community partners, and inclusive decision making

The subcategories identified are aligned with the research cited earlier in this paper. Repeatedly, it is stated that school engagement is connected to school climate. A welcoming school climate includes a safe and clean environment, responsive office staff, and before/after school programs. It involves effective, two-way communication that supports families in taking an active role in their students' education (Constantino, 2003).

### **Report Card Development Phase II: Next Step**

The report card is being designed to utilize a rating scale system to determine progress and performance in three areas of school engagement:

1. Attendance
2. Attachment
3. Achievement

Self-assessment models used by education systems and organizations are being reviewed in an effort to structure an instrument that is compatible with reporting and accountability requirements of schools. Sample of sources includes:

- Kentucky Department of Education's Standards and Indicators for School Improvement (SISI) tool
- Family and Community Engagement Survey, Intercultural Development Research Association
- State Education Indicators with a Focus on Title I, U.S. Department of Education

- Council of Chief State School Officers

To further develop the report card, NCSE seeks to include students, teachers, and families' voices through focus groups and interviews. The intent is to ensure that the tool is relevant to all stakeholders. Those interested in contributing to design and testing of the report card are encouraged to contact NCSE at [info@schoolengagement.org](mailto:info@schoolengagement.org), and/or call 1-888-272-0454, ext. 105.

**References:**

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## APPENDIX A

### *Creating Triple A Schools: A Logic Model for Action\**

#### ATTENDANCE CATEGORY

<b>Group Number</b>	<b>ATTENDANCE: Sub Categories</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Other</b>
<b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Truancy</li> <li>• Suspension and expulsions</li> <li>• Support services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lots of transportation and child care options</li> <li>• Flexible schedules</li> <li>• Incentives for students – prizes</li> <li>• New ways of disciplining – mediators, committees, student choice in discipline</li> <li>• Court order attendance plans</li> <li>• Educate school systems on homelessness and immigration legal rights</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100 % graduation rate</li> <li>• Low truancy rate</li> <li>• High attendance rates</li> <li>• Availability of transportation, childcare, medical services and school hours and alternative discipline options.</li> </ul>	<p>Focus Issues: Immigration Homelessness</p> <p>Important to have accurate data</p>
<b>2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support - Caring adults/mentors</li> <li>• Policies are student-focused showing acceptance of student dress, culture, situation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incentives /recognition</li> <li>• Transportation accessible</li> <li>• Home visits</li> <li>• Two-way communication</li> <li>• Implement Positive Behavior Support (PBS)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Award assemblies</li> <li>• Student leadership group and parents involved with policy making</li> </ul>	<p>Improvements in attendance helps improve class participation and extracurricular activities</p> <p>Culturally competent classes are important</p>
<b>3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing truancy</li> <li>• Improving communication</li> <li>• Teachers and students wrap around services-Looking for catch-up, not punishment</li> <li>• Parent involvement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance outreach</li> <li>• Saturday/evening school hours</li> <li>• Phoning/emailing (use technology)</li> <li>• Home visits</li> <li>• Language translation</li> <li>• Sharing information across agencies</li> <li>• Flexible schedules</li> <li>• Broad co-curricular activities for students and parents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduation rate at 100%</li> <li>• Enrollment increases/stabilized</li> <li>• Track attendance of individual students</li> <li>• Decreased suspension rates</li> </ul>	<p>Focus Issue: Climate represents diversity of students</p> <p>Address educational needs of immigrant students and homeless youth</p>

\*Source: Summary of responses from the Community Forum held on September 18, 2006, during the NCSE National Summit of Leaders in School Engagement in Boulder, Colorado.

<b>Group Number</b>	<b>ATTENDANCE: Sub Categories</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Other</b>
<b>4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent awareness of attendance issues and engagement in school</li> <li>• Tracking systems to monitor attendance</li> <li>• Policies on attendance that promote success</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent/school communication and family liaisons</li> <li>• Attendance policy – Intervention – support ladder for teachers to use</li> <li>• Family/student/ school contracts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reasons for excuses</li> <li>• Numbers of students</li> <li>• Monthly report for feedback</li> <li>• Data being used by teachers</li> <li>• Personal contacts/ number of Home visits</li> <li>• Number of parent contracts</li> <li>• Reduced absences</li> <li>• Reduced dropout rate</li> <li>• Increased graduation rate</li> <li>• Increased attendance rate</li> </ul>	<p>Helpful to have daily attendance reports that are accessible to staff</p> <p>Courts need to deal with 16 and 17 year olds who are truant</p>
<b>5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy</li> <li>• Parent and community engagement</li> <li>• Dedicated staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternatives to out of school suspension</li> <li>• Investigation regarding causes of truancy and follow-up</li> <li>• Review boards/due process</li> <li>• Offer incentives (breakfast before school, after school programs)</li> <li>• Flexible schedules</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rising attendance</li> <li>• 96% attendance rate</li> <li>• Lower suspensions and absences</li> <li>• Increased parent participation in parent conferences</li> <li>• A number of parents activities offered by school</li> <li>• Ongoing relationship attendance and achievement</li> <li>• Policies are assessed to promote school success vs. push out</li> </ul>	<p>Set goals for excellent attendance</p>
<b>6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance improvement</li> <li>• Policies (incentives, investigation, review board, staff accountability)</li> <li>• Family and student services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No suspension for truancy</li> <li>• Mental health services offered</li> <li>• Truant officers help educate parents, students and community on attendance policies</li> <li>• Policies are evaluated and restructured where needed to promote attendance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Truancy rate decreases</li> <li>• Numbers of home visits</li> <li>• Improved data keeping</li> <li>• Analysis of student attendance</li> <li>• Less suspensions</li> </ul>	<p>Policies need to be enforced</p>

<b>Group Number</b>	<b>ATTENDANCE: Sub Categories</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Other</b>
<b>7</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Physical presence: tardies, day skipping, class skipping</li> <li>Mental presence</li> <li>Protocol for addressing absences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incentives</li> <li>Intervention teams</li> <li>RTI – special education</li> <li>Saturday school to recover credit</li> <li>Data collection systems that record reasons for absences (suspension, court, babysitting, foster children-parental visits, etc.)</li> <li>Make sure families know rules</li> <li>Flexible schedules such as half days and evenings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance rates increase (school wide and student by student)</li> <li>Attendance goals are set and met</li> </ul>	<p>What happens if a student is truant? Do they get the homework or not?</p>
<b>8</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parent involvement</li> <li>Positive rewards/encouragement/celebration</li> <li>Clear expectations for students, parents and staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Home visits/positive phone calls</li> <li>Parents calling/working with other parents</li> <li>Signed contracts by students</li> <li>Advisory council for high-risk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased attendance</li> <li>Improved scores/academics</li> <li>Students want to come to school</li> <li>Minimum of 6 days excused = 93% attendance rate</li> </ul>	<p>A key to good attendance is good communication between parents/families and teachers</p>
<b>9</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incentives/award systems – individual and group</li> <li>Clearly publicized expectations</li> <li>Utilizing position peer culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Positive behavior support program</li> <li>Media, newsletters</li> <li>Community support/ sponsorship</li> <li>Appropriate economic development of jobs for students</li> <li>Peer and adult mentoring programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased attendance, attachment and academic achievement</li> <li>Positive peer culture and accountability</li> <li>Lower student office referrals</li> <li>Lower suspensions and expulsions</li> <li>Rising graduation rates</li> </ul>	<p>School as a whole should focus on attendance</p>
<b>10</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Timely intervention</li> <li>Clear expectations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intervention begins after 4 absences with asset-based strategies</li> <li>Involve all people who know the child</li> <li>Use alternative to suspension</li> <li>Provide clear guidelines and expectations</li> <li>Conduct home visits/phone calls that are positive</li> <li>Contracts developed to improve attendance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>90% attendance rate</li> <li>Decrease unexcused absences</li> <li>Reduced tardies</li> </ul>	<p>All stakeholders need to be involved in promoting school attendance</p>

## ATTACHMENT CATEGORY

Group Number	ATTACHMENT: Sub Categories	Strategies	Indicators	Other
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent/grandparent engagement</li> <li>• Engaging, culturally responsible curriculum</li> <li>• Adult–child meaningful connections</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 1 adult in school has a meaningful attachment and responsibility for every child – adult is accountable for that child</li> <li>• Provide incentives, rewards and acknowledgement for students all the time</li> <li>• Give opportunities for youth voice in planning, collaboration and learning</li> <li>• After school activities and extra curricular programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance of parents in school</li> <li>• Happy kids! (ask them on a survey)</li> <li>• Decrease in discipline referrals</li> <li>• Attendance increases</li> <li>• Available transportation and childcare options for other school activities (meetings, PTA, sports, clubs, tutoring, etc.)</li> </ul>	<p>More parents at school who know the teachers</p> <p>Help develop positive study habits</p>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early family support and ongoing active positive mentoring</li> <li>• Relationships between staff, students, community and families</li> <li>• Youth voice in school improvement</li> <li>• Continuum of services (wrap around services)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invitations from schools to parents (parent-teacher relationships)</li> <li>• Fun, food, family</li> <li>• ESL for parents</li> <li>• Parents supporting learning</li> <li>• Student centered environment</li> <li>• User friendly schools</li> <li>• Welcome center for new students and families</li> <li>• Additional training for teachers on parent involvement and building positive relationships with students</li> <li>• Training on inclusion of youth voice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of choices in school activities</li> <li>• Number of class visits by parents</li> <li>• Structured feedback system for students and administrators</li> </ul>	<p>PBS (Positive Behavior Support) helps increase understanding of expectations</p>

Group Number	ATTACHMENT: Sub Categories	Strategies	Indicators	Other
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent involvement/teachers, students, everyone</li> <li>• Student/parent interactions with staff</li> <li>• Opportunities for after school (sports, clubs, classes, tutoring)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classes after school – additional meeting times for parents</li> <li>• Community service – student/parents assistance, i.e., helping in classroom</li> <li>• Multidisciplinary approach with everyone</li> <li>• Specialized transportation services accessible</li> <li>• Opportunities for non-parent caregivers to get involved</li> <li>• Hire multi-lingual staff/translator</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased scores, attendance, etc., all related</li> <li>• At least one adult in school knows the names of all students</li> <li>• Increased attendance at school meetings</li> <li>• Students participate in at least one extracurricular activity (e.g., after school program)</li> </ul>	<p>Important to recognize success/improvement</p> <p>When students are “happy kids” there are less office referrals, less discipline referrals and more participation</p>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civic/community engagement</li> <li>• Engaged in classroom activities (all students)</li> <li>• Focus on social/emotional aspects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community events at school (Optimist Club, government meetings, official visits, presentations)</li> <li>• Teachers know about things in child’s home life</li> <li>• Home visit with teacher/principal required</li> <li>• Broad selection of after school programs that are accessible</li> <li>• Parenting classes accessible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students can identify 2 adults in the building whom they are connected with</li> <li>• Increased attendance</li> <li>• Active participation in school community</li> <li>• Increased participation in the classroom and in after school activities</li> <li>• Increase volunteerism</li> <li>• Increased student retention in school</li> <li>• Increased self-esteem survey/ownership</li> <li>• Increased participation in counseling</li> </ul>	<p>School staff must get to know families to strengthen parent engagement</p> <p>Utilize strategies to help students know someone cares about them</p>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student buy-in</li> <li>• Parent buy-in</li> <li>• Teacher/administration buy-in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive incentive programs – incentives to kids for positive behavior, but also helps teachers focus on students’ positive side</li> <li>• Extracurricular or after-school programs</li> <li>• Bullying prevention programs</li> <li>• Home visits by teachers</li> <li>• Various opportunities for parent involvement</li> <li>• Staff development focusing on cultural sensitivity and other teacher-identified areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased participation school pride and trust – to be measured via self-reports</li> <li>• Increased student leadership in program activities</li> <li>• Easier transition from one grade to another</li> <li>• Increased number of parent/teacher and parent/school contacts</li> <li>• Increased parent leadership in program activities</li> <li>• Increased parent satisfaction – to be</li> </ul>	<p>Recognize success and create welcoming school that supports self-discovery</p> <p>Student has to feel that somebody cares (counselor, lunchroom staff, teacher, or friend)</p>

Group Number	ATTACHMENT: Sub Categories	Strategies	Indicators	Other
		of need	measured via self-reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decreased staff turnover</li> <li>• Increased teacher satisfaction – to be measured via self-reports</li> </ul>	
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relationship building</li> <li>• Activities</li> <li>• School climate/culture</li> <li>• Support services</li> <li>• Recognition</li> <li>• Teachers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mentoring</li> <li>• Tutoring</li> <li>• Staff development</li> <li>• Parent Education (Love and Logic)</li> <li>• Collaborative goal setting</li> <li>• Programs that support both students and school staff</li> <li>• Train staff on cultural differences</li> <li>• Evaluate welcoming environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased number of activities and participation (80% of students involved in an after/outside school activity)</li> <li>• Students, families and teachers report positive communication and connections to school</li> <li>• 75% of parents/family members attend parent/teacher conferences</li> <li>• Awards given for doing good things</li> <li>• Increased number of professional development activities about connection, teacher mentors and importance of relationships.</li> <li>• One caring adult per student</li> </ul>	When there is pride in school-less vandalism and attendance increases
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent leadership</li> <li>• Feeling safe</li> <li>• Sense of belonging and pride in school</li> <li>• Student-family-school relationships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cut down on school transience, especially child welfare students</li> <li>• Student mentoring/shadowing</li> <li>• Welcome baskets for new students</li> <li>• Before/after school enrichment programs</li> <li>• Differentiated instruction/ incorporate different kinds of learning styles</li> <li>• Norms of behavior communicated such as bullying and teasing</li> <li>• 360 degree evaluations of staff by students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decrease in office referrals</li> <li>• Students indicate sense of ownership/pride in the school</li> </ul>	Parent may not know about resources and may be too embarrassed to ask  Consider school within-a-school model (includes continuity, teachers follow students across the years)  Address language barriers and financial barriers

<b>Group Number</b>	<b>ATTACHMENT: Sub Categories</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Other</b>
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent and family involvement</li> <li>• Parent-Student-Teacher connections (caring teachers)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School activities</li> <li>• Resources for families</li> <li>• Cooperative learning</li> <li>• Professional development for teachers on building school spirit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alls students regardless of ethnicity or language feel valued, respected and are challenged to reach their full potential</li> <li>• Measure degree of participation – not just numbers, but how often families participate</li> </ul>	Value the gifts/experience of home and family
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family involvement</li> <li>• Student involvement</li> <li>• Staff involvement</li> <li>• Safety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive phone calls and information (parent calling other parents with information)</li> <li>• Clear expectations of staff and parents</li> <li>• Parent volunteers in the classroom</li> <li>• Signed student contracts</li> <li>• Teachers have “20” students they advise and support</li> <li>• Celebrate students being in school</li> <li>• Encouragement through activities (journaling, sharing...)</li> <li>• Encourage involvement and pride in school</li> <li>• Teacher training on parent involvement and connecting with students</li> <li>• Bi-lingual programming</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation is tracked – everyone (students, teachers, families) involved in at least one project</li> <li>• Reduction in violence/bullying incidences</li> <li>• Teacher peer reviews conducted</li> </ul>	Parent involvement is important at all levels  Evaluation of teachers by their peers
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student involvement</li> <li>• Parent/family involvement</li> <li>• Teacher/staff involvement</li> <li>• School safety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent liaisons are available</li> <li>• Offer clubs, sports and relationship-building activities/programs</li> <li>• Home visits are conducted</li> <li>• Encourage sharing skills and interests-conduct interest survey/needs assessment to develop programs for families (parenting classes, cooking classes, ...)</li> <li>• Bullying prevention programs</li> <li>• Parents have access to information in their native language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey indicates user-friendly school (students and parents feel welcome)</li> <li>• Student can identify names of staff members they trust</li> <li>• Events, meeting, activities are well attended</li> </ul>	Helpful to praise high-risk students when they come through the door Let them know they are missed when they are not in attendance

## ACHIEVEMENT CATEGORY

Group Number	ACHIEVEMENT: Sub Categories	Strategies	Indicators	Other
<b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High expectations</li> <li>• Relevant coursework</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognition for success</li> <li>• Self discover – goal setting, making positive choices</li> <li>• Homework for extra credit (not required)</li> <li>• Tutoring readily available</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tutoring at various times of day/locations</li> <li>• Classes for diverse population</li> <li>• Fewer behavior problems and high attendance rate, pride in school and themselves</li> </ul>	<p>It is helpful if teachers are engaged and look interested in their students</p> <p>Relationship building is a cornerstone to engagement</p>
<b>2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher training on school engagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise literacy/proficiency in reading, writing, math, speaking and technology</li> <li>• Improve teaching and learning styles</li> <li>• Improve study skills</li> <li>• Habits of success:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Respect for others</li> <li>- Being healthy and safe</li> <li>- Service learning and leadership</li> <li>- Life long learning</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective and inclusive leadership</li> <li>• Parent engagement</li> </ul> <p>Relationships between:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents and teachers</li> <li>• Teachers and students</li> <li>• Students and parents</li> <li>• High expectations</li> <li>• Focus on positives</li> <li>• Strengths based – reflects the strengths of the community</li> </ul>	
<b>3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional development for teachers and school staff in area of relationship building – welcoming schools</li> <li>• High expectations for students, staff, administration and community in regard to the 3 A's</li> <li>• Data driven instruction which meets the learning styles of students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family focused curriculum components – history of families</li> <li>• Professional development for training youth so their voice may be heard</li> <li>• Relevant teacher preparation training in universities in the areas of relationship building and classroom management</li> <li>• Differentiated instruction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Higher standardized test scores</li> <li>• Higher graduation rates</li> <li>• More students attend college</li> <li>• Higher attendance rates</li> <li>• Fewer pushed out students</li> </ul>	

Group Number	ACHIEVEMENT: Sub Categories	Strategies	Indicators	Other
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective teaching methods</li> <li>• Variety of class offerings</li> <li>• Focus on helping students express themselves</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate testing</li> <li>• Parent education</li> <li>• Community partnerships</li> <li>• Academic support services</li> <li>• Incorporate proven strategies for effective classroom instruction (<i>Robert Marzano</i>)</li> <li>• Reward teacher innovations</li> <li>• Differentiated instruction incorporated into lesson planning</li> <li>• Journaling by students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of community presentations and community is responsive to school needs</li> <li>• Higher grades</li> <li>• Multiple measures for achievement</li> <li>• Increased number of tutoring and other services</li> <li>• Need assessments are ongoing</li> <li>• Case management for low achievers</li> </ul>	Use scale to rate engagement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing</li> <li>• Not meeting</li> <li>• Meeting</li> <li>• Exceeding</li> </ul>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum</li> <li>• Instruction</li> <li>• Tracking/expectations</li> <li>• Rigor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Streamline curriculum across the state to alleviate mobility concerns</li> <li>• Differentiated instruction for kids and learning styles</li> <li>• No tracking – integrate all learners</li> <li>• Relevant coursework</li> </ul>	Multiples measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State</li> <li>• Local tests</li> <li>• Formative and summative assessments</li> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Graduation rates</li> <li>• Student portfolio</li> <li>• Parent friendly report cards</li> <li>• Vision beyond high-school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get other systems – court, doctors, foster care, child welfare-on board to not pull kids out of school</li> <li>• Everyone is accountable – students, families, school staff and administration</li> </ul>
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic growth</li> <li>• Tutoring</li> <li>• Testing and screening</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent education</li> <li>• Community partnerships</li> <li>• Testing students for needs (health screenings, special education assessment)</li> <li>• Utilize appropriate testing – needs assessment to measure growth</li> <li>• Mentor and coach new teachers</li> <li>• Celebrate successes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress reports</li> <li>• GPA increases</li> <li>• Scholarships received</li> <li>• High graduation rates</li> <li>• Multi-measures of growth (number of students college bound, tech bound, workforce bound)</li> </ul>	Recognize that achievement looks different for everyone (perhaps use pre and post test in core subject areas to track growth)

<b>Group Number</b>	<b>ACHIEVEMENT: Sub Categories</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Other</b>
<b>7</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students know what they need to complete an assignment</li> <li>• Students have the supplies they need</li> <li>• Students are encouraged to succeed</li> <li>• Students understand and complete their homework</li> <li>• Learning for adults</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize improvement – “on a roll” award</li> <li>• An honor roll for students who improve their GPA</li> <li>• Tutoring</li> <li>• ESL for parents</li> <li>• Differential learning methods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduation rates</li> <li>• Rates of homework completion</li> <li>• Number of college bound students</li> </ul>	<p>Important to increase understanding of link between education and job opportunities</p> <p>Eliminate possibility of failure (high expectations for all students)</p>
<b>8</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessments</li> <li>• Curriculum (rigor and relevance)</li> <li>• Skill development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Variety of assessment to measure learning</li> <li>• Support to reach academic goals</li> <li>• Utilize techniques to meet the diverse learning styles of students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview family members and students</li> <li>• Use student engagement survey</li> </ul>	Teachers have the ability to make the curriculum relevant to real world experiences
<b>9</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved achievement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assistance in the classrooms (paras/parents)</li> <li>• Saturday school – for missed classes, make up school work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct open-ended, qualitative interviews with students, parents, and staff</li> </ul>	Improving attendance will increase overall achievement
<b>10</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pertinent curriculum (culturally competent)</li> <li>• Relevant classes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Home-based tutoring</li> <li>• Less standardization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving grades</li> </ul>	

\*Source: Summary of responses from the Community Forum held on September 18, 2006, during the NCSE National Summit of Leaders in School Engagement in Boulder, Colorado.

**APPENDIX B**

**NCSE Summit for Leaders in School Engagement  
Community Forum: Indicators of School Engagement**

Table # \_\_\_\_\_

<i>Areas of School Engagement</i>	<i>Individual Report Card Form Triple A Schools – Self Assessment Tool</i>		
	<i>Primary Subcategories Top 3</i>	<i>Examples of Excellence in Subcategories, includes Strategies and Practices</i>	<i>Indicators of Success</i>
<b>ATTENDANCE</b>			
<b>ATTACHMENT</b>			
<b>ACHIEVEMENT</b>			

Names: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please turn in your notes at the end of the session. It will help us in further identifying indicators of Triple A Schools.*

*Questions:*

1. What are the primary subcategories of the areas of school engagement?
2. What would excellence in each of the subcategories look like? Please be specific.
3. How would you track the success of the strategies and practices to engage students and families? What means of assessment would you recommend?

What rating system would you use? Please check your top choice, or write in an alternative.

\_\_\_\_\_ Low Performing to High Performing

\_\_\_\_\_ Letter Scale - A to F

\_\_\_\_\_ Poor to Excellent

\_\_\_\_\_ Unsatisfactory/Satisfactory

\_\_\_\_\_ Number Scale – 1 to 5

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

The National Center for School Engagement (NCSE) is an initiative of The Colorado Foundation for Families and Children (CFFC). NCSE strives to build a network of key stakeholders who share the belief that improving school attendance and school attachment promotes achievement and school success.



NCSE was established as a result of more than a decade of educational research about youth out of the educational mainstream conducted by CFFC. The impact of this work has been the development of significant investments of state funds to reduce suspensions expulsions and truancy. Over five years ago, CFFC began working with the OJJDP, US Department of Justice to assist in the planning and implementation of pilot demonstration projects across the country. As projects developed, CFFC became the national evaluator of this five-year truancy demonstration project.

The culmination of ten years of program experience and research has identified truancy and school engagement as the centerpiece of NCSE's work to improve outcomes for youth who are at the greatest risk of school failure and delinquency. We are national leaders in applying research to help communities prevent and reduce truancy.

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*Special thanks to all the leaders in school engagement who attended the NCSE Summit on September 18, 2006. The information shared was critical in starting the process to develop a report card on school engagement.*

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