

Family to School (Receiving)

As families begin to prepare for the transition into formal schooling, they feel a range of emotions. There may be pride that their child is entering school and will be facing new challenges. There also may be concern about how their child will cope with the change. They are apprehensive about their child growing up and having less control over the experiences of the day. They hope that the transition to formal schooling will be a smooth and happy one.

Studies show that successful programs actively involve parents in their programs. The family’s influence is fundamental in the early years. Studies show that when families are actively engaged in the transition process their involvement tends to continue throughout their child’s school career (Barnett, M. A., 2009, Ferguson, C. & Wood, L., 2005). Family involvement has been linked to positive student outcomes. This section emphasizes practices to involve and engage families in the transition process, fostering positive attitudes toward school and learning and helping families act as partners in their children’s learning.

	Best Practice Emerging	Best Practice Progressing	Best Practice Achieved
Orientation to School	School provides written information to families about the school, classrooms, registrations, expectations.	In addition to written information, school provides opportunity for face-to-face contact with school personnel including the child’s teacher prior to the start of school (this can be at registration event but must include designated and intentional time for families and school personnel to meet and connect).	School engages in intentional outreach to families prior to the start of school. This might include the participation in home visits, individual meetings with incoming families that go beyond mere filing of paper work; personal outreach by family mentors, the transition coordinator, or members of the PTA.
Current Practice:			
What’s working:			

What can be improved?			
Ideas for next steps:			
Orientation to Family	School receives basic family information as part of registration paperwork.	School develops a family needs survey which the family is asked to complete as part of registration process and provides written information or a resource list to families with identified needs.	School develops a family needs survey which the family is asked to complete as part of the registration process and personally follows up with families with identified needs.
Current Practice:			
What's working:			
What can be improved?			
Ideas for next steps:			

Partnerships	School provides written information to assist families in preparing their child(ren) for school. E.g. distribution of readiness calendars and other materials.	The school provides developmental screenings including basic health screenings as part of registration and follow-up activities are offered for identified children (summer readiness activities, parent workshops).	Developmental screenings including health screenings are provided multiple times throughout the year and follow-up activities are offered throughout the year.
Current Practice:			
What's working:			
What can be improved?			
Ideas for next steps:			

Companion resources can be found at www.pdesas.org or at www.pakeys.org.