

New Orleans Early Childhood Parent Leadership Collaborative Parent/Community Assessor Call for Applications November 2023

Overview

The New Orleans Early Childhood Parent Leadership Collaborative (the Collaborative) seeks to build power among parents of young children. New Orleans has seen significant recent growth in public investment in early childhood programs. To be most effective, programs and services for young children and their families must engage families in meaningful ways that leave them feeling valued, respected, and fully supported.

With financial support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and Kresge Foundation, administrative support from the Urban League of Louisiana, and consulting and facilitation from Evan James Consulting and Advancing Communities for Equity, a diverse group of local parents and family-serving non-profit leaders have explored the local parent engagement landscape, convened partners, and formed the Parent Leadership Collaborative to lead the work of developing parent engagement standards. The Collaborative is led by a 14-member Steering Committee of parent, family, and community leaders.

Since January 2022, the Collaborative has learned and shared about effective examples of family engagement and developed a set of parent engagement standards and associated indicators for organizations and agencies that serve families with young children in New Orleans. These parent engagement standards provide a framework for the assessment and improvement of best practices in parent and family engagement among child- and family-serving agencies and offer a foundation for systems changes that lead to greater power among parents. The framework is designed for use by partners across multiple systems to fulfill a common vision centered on the lived experience of families.

Now, the Collaborative seeks New Orleans parents and community members to assess participating agencies in their application of the parent engagement standards and their impacts on parent leadership. As part of this process, the Collaborative is accepting applications from local parents to lead as assessors to help agencies implement the standards by providing feedback via assessment tools designed to support agencies in implementing said standards.

The Parent Engagement Standards

The Collaborative has established 16 standards across four domains for effective parent and family engagement among agencies and organizations that serve families with children ages five and under.

DOMAINS	STANDARDS	DESCRIPTIONS
FAMILY-CENTERED Approaches families in a manner that engages, strengthens, and supports them.	Accessible	The hours, location, physical accessibility, and languages respond to the preferences and needs of families.
	Inviting	The space is safe, clean, welcoming, and inviting.
	Holistic	The interests of all members in a family, including children, elders, and other non-biological members in and outside of the household or people identified as a participant are addressed.
	Communicative	Staff listens to parents and families, and communicates and follows up regularly with them in preferred methods that work for each family.
	Family Friendly	Childcare or a child-safe space is provided along with other supports for parents' active engagement
PARENTS AS COLLABORATORS Prioritizes and champions engaging parents as collaborators to achieve positive, equitable outcomes for children and their families.	Leadership	Parents are mentored & supported as advocates and take formal roles in leadership and decision-making.
	Choice	Families have the power to choose the level and type of support they want.
	Representative	The parents who take leadership roles are representative of the community served in terms of race, age, gender, culture, language, income, and education.
	Strength-Focused	Agency recognizes the strengths of all families and works to identify and build on what is working well for each family.
PARTNERSHIP FOCUSED Partners with parents, other organizations, and communities to ensure parents have the information to fully benefit from systems and programs and that these systems and programs are responsive to parents and families.	Personal	There is a consistent point of contact who builds trust, understands, and responds to individual families' needs.
	Accommodating	Families are connected to resources before they need them. Support plans and approach are adjusted as needed, taking into account the bigger picture and the family's long-term goals.
	Connected	The agency is part of a network and parents receive help identifying and connecting with other resources with "hot" handoffs, not just referrals.
	Reliable	Procedures are clear and streamlined for families; staff follow up consistently.
EQUITABLE Builds a culture of respect, inclusion, and equity that prioritizes families and helps achieve equitable outcomes for children and their families.	Compassionate	There is a deep respect for a family's expertise and lived experience as a source of wisdom.
	Equity-Centered	The agency intentionally and proactively addresses racial, ethnic, cultural, and language disparities.
	Inclusive	Staff and leadership, including parent leaders, reflect the parents, constituents, and communities of the families served in terms of race, age, gender, ability, culture, language, income, education, and experience.

Parent Assessor Expectations

The Collaborative seeks a diverse cohort of approximately 20 parents and community members who commit to assessing and providing feedback to agencies, using an assessment rubric and processes from January through May 2024.

The Process and Timeline

Parent Assessors agree to the following:

- **Full Participation:** Participate in all required activities (detailed in the following bullets) between January and May 2024, and be open to ongoing participation beyond May 2024.
- **Standards and Assessment Training and Orientation:** Complete a training (estimated 8 hours) on the parent engagement standards and indicators, which will include the completion of a practice assessment of a sample agency's current level of implementation of these standards (to be scheduled in January 2024).
- **Agency Assessments:** Complete up to five agency assessments with a team of parent leaders and allies from the Collaborative. Each assessment will be

followed by a team debrief to ensure alignment and appropriate feedback to participating agencies. All assessments will be completed by May 31, 2024.

- **Program Debrief and Evaluation:** Participate in a program debrief and overall evaluation to identify what is working and what can be improved in the initiative and the assessment tools and process by May 2024.

Time Commitment

Parent assessors are expected to provide between 20 and 35 hours of time to the initiative between January and May 2024. An estimated break down of the time commitment required for parent assessors is provided below:

- **Training and Orientation:** 8 hours to complete external/parent assessor training in January 2024.
- **Agency Assessments:** 2-3 hours to complete each assessment visit + 1 hour debrief in spring 2024. Each assessor will be expected to participate in a minimum of 3-5 agency assessments.
- **Program Debrief and Evaluation:** 3-4 hours to complete program debrief and evaluation season with all assessors by May 2024.

Compensation

Participating parent assessors will receive a stipend of approximately \$1,750 for participation in the initiative. These stipends will be paid in pro-rated monthly portions upon completion of key deliverables (training and orientation, assessment visits, etc.). Resources will be available to assist with child care, interpretation and translation, and transportation as needed.

Eligibility Criteria

The Collaborative seeks to intentionally select a cohort of approximately 20 parent leaders and community members to participate as assessment team members. We are looking for participating parents and community members who meet the following criteria:

1. Are familiar with and/or willing to learn about successful methods of family engagement.
2. Support the standards for organizations and agencies that serve families with young children in New Orleans to enable parent leadership and decision-making.
3. Have experience in and/or willingness to advocate for parents' power, influence, and leadership in programs, policies, and systems that impact them.
4. Believe in and support the role of parents to guide and lead this effort.
5. Live in and are invested in the future of the greater New Orleans metropolitan area (including surrounding parishes) and the children of the region.

Submission Requirements & Deadline

All required application questions are included below for reference. **Please submit them via Google Form at [PLC Parent/Community Assessor Application](#) by 5 pm, Friday, December 1, 2023.** Any questions about the application or problems with the online form can be directed to Gabrielle@EvanJamesConsulting.com.

Frequently Asked Questions

The following frequently asked questions and responses are designed to offer answers to common questions about this initiative, application, and selection process.

1. Who designed this initiative and why?

This initiative was designed collaboratively by a group of parents, grandparents, community, and agency leaders who convened for over a year with support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. It is meant to create systemic changes to foster and support greater power among parents and caretakers of young children who have been marginalized in the institutions, agencies, programs, policies, and services that impact them.

2. How long will this application take to complete?

It is estimated that this application should take less than 1 hour to complete.

3. How do I submit my application?

You must submit your application via this link online: [PLC Parent/Community Assessor Application](#). Emailed or hand-delivered applications cannot be accepted. Note that the application form does not save your responses. We recommend you prepare your responses in a word processing program and copy and paste them into the application when you are ready to submit.

4. How will selections be made?

A committee made up of members of the Parent Leadership Collaborative will review applications. A select number of applications will be invited for an interview in early December, which will allow the members of the Collaborative to ask additional questions and get to know you better. Final decisions will be made by the Parent Leadership Collaborative Steering Committee.

5. What agencies will we be assessing?

The agencies that are volunteering to participate in this initiative are being selected this fall. For more about the agency eligibility and application selection process, click [here](#).