

# Children's Cabinet Meeting

## North Dakota Family Engagement

**November 21, 2023**

**Lucy Fredericks**, NDDPI, Director Indian/Multicultural Education, Family Engagement Core Team Lead,  
[lkfredericks@nd.gov](mailto:lkfredericks@nd.gov)

**Sara Mitzel**, NDDPI, Assistant Director of Assessment, Adult Ed. Program Manager/Adult Ed. Lead,  
and Family Engagement Core Team, [sjmitzel@nd.gov](mailto:sjmitzel@nd.gov)

# Family and Community Engagement

NDDPI recognizes that **families provide an integral foundation** for their children to learn and grow into successful adults. NDDPI is committed to providing knowledge, information, and resources for **families “and schools”** to support academic learning.

# (2023) State Superintendent's North Dakota Family Engagement Cabinet



*Six NDDPI and NDHHS Internal Core Team Members  
First Family Engagement Cabinet began in the Spring, 2019  
-Seeking applicants for upcoming 2024*

# What's the Difference?


**ARE YOU**

**Engaged**      **OR**      **Involved**

- Parent knowledge and experience is combined with school staff knowledge and experience
- Parents work alongside and are part of the decision making process
- Research and development regarding policies are developed with parents and educators together.

- Generally focused on parents volunteering with classroom activities, fundraising and support
- School staff meet to review and select what program would be taught in their school.
- School staff make decisions on what consequences are put in place and then inform the parent.

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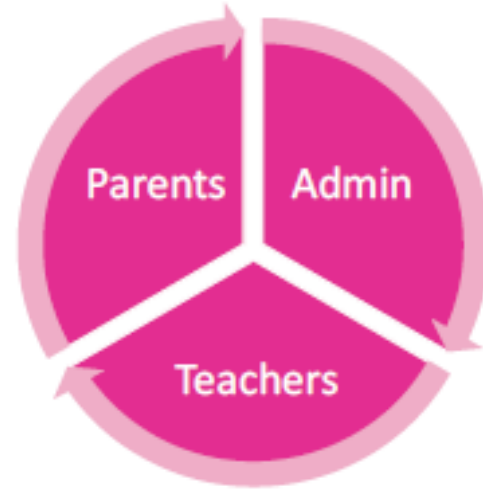
parents  matter™

# Levels of Engagement

Engagement is built with the grit, gumption, and caring of good work done well, with others, every day.

## Three ways to build Engagement

1. Enhance Formal/Traditional Interactions
2. Creating New Shared Stories and Experiences
3. Positioning Parents as Leaders

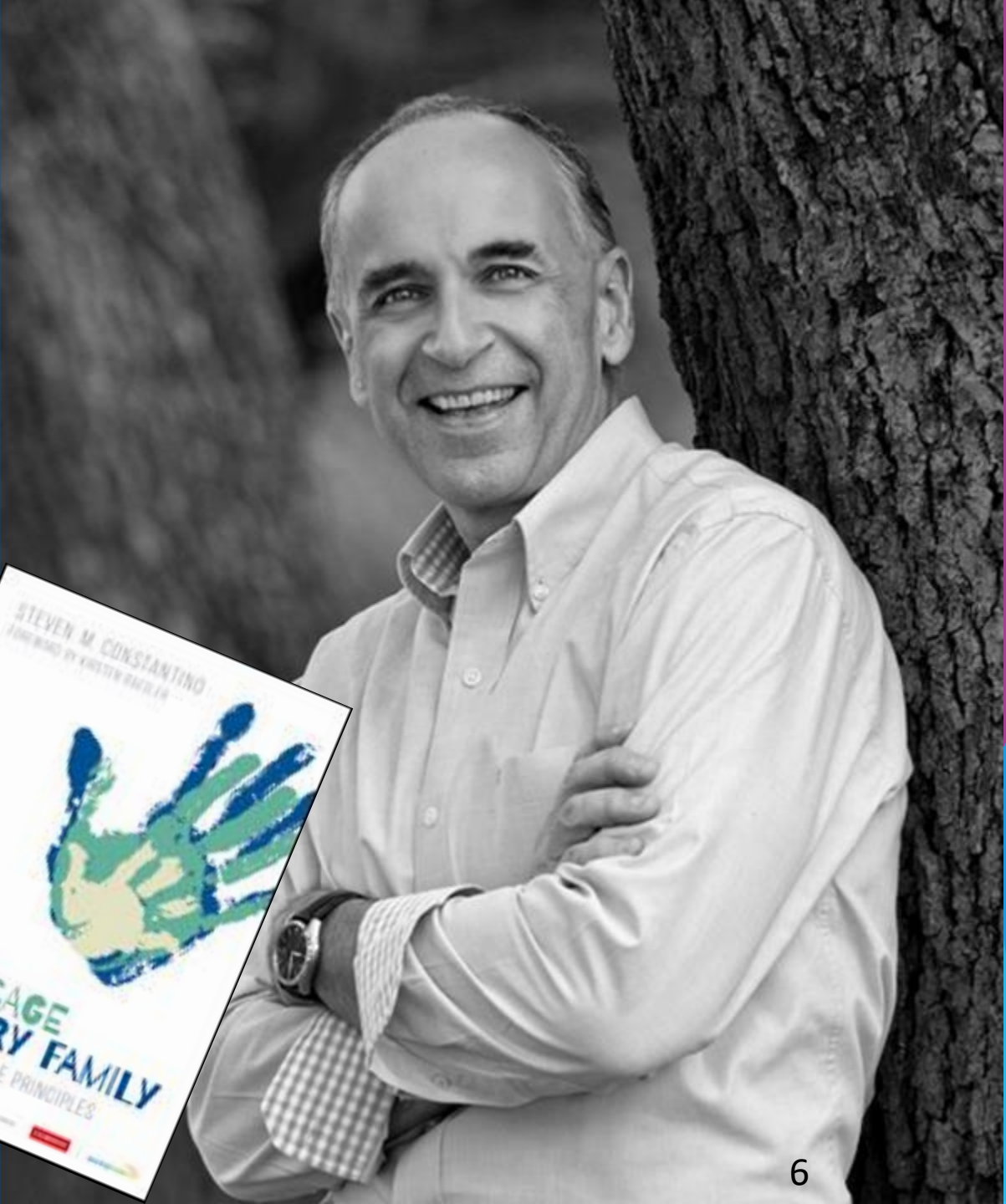


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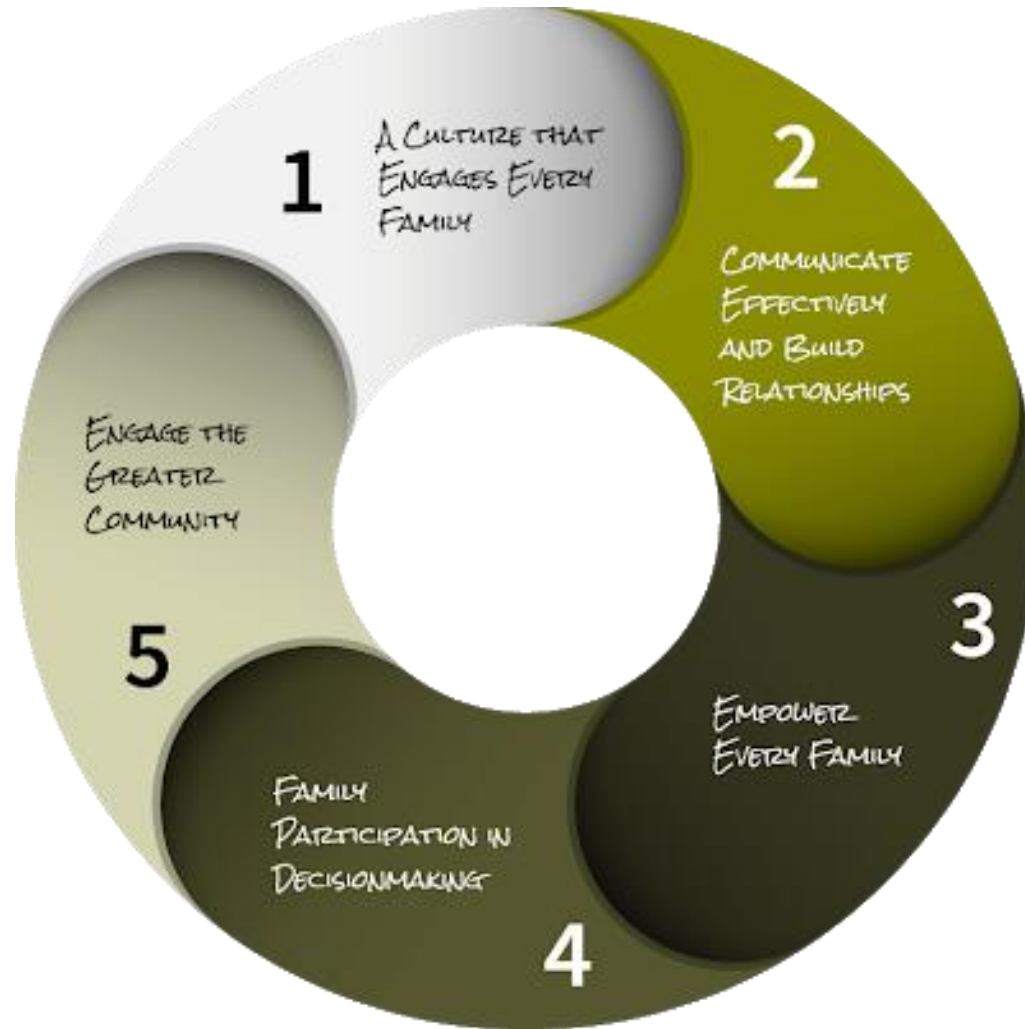
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**ENGAGE  
EVERY CHILD  
EVERY FAMILY  
EVERY TEACHER  
EVERY DAY**



# FIVE SIMPLE PRINCIPLES





## Key Accomplishments with Family Engagement

- Joyce Epstein work and training pilots-aligning goals with Family Engagement in schools-"Planning for School, Family, & Community Partnerships"
- Secured funding through ESSER funds to offer two rounds of Family Engagement grants to K-12 schools-ongoing efforts
- ND "Engage Every Family" Conference in partnership with Waterford- guest Dr. Constantino spring 2023
- Partnerships with Regional Education Associations on continued Professional development
- First administered ND Family Engagement Survey-partnership with Gallup



- Families/Community**
- [+ COVID-19](#)
  - [+ Community](#)
  - [- Families](#)
    - [eTranscripts](#)
    - [+ Home Education](#)
    - [- \*\*Family Engagement\*\*](#)
      - [Family Cabinet Resource Kit](#)
  - [+ State Superintendent Cabinets](#)
  - [+ Students](#)

## Family Engagement

In North Dakota, our communities are not foreign to the concept of community and family. North Dakota's heritage and the values expressed by its people are rooted in togetherness. It's how the pioneers led the development of our state's public education. For many years, family engagement has been a challenging priority among the nation's school districts. The ND Legislature and the Department of Public Instruction are putting a much sharper focus on family engagement as a strategy to improve classroom learning.

You may have heard it before but it's worth repeating: "Families are the first and most influential teachers of their children." Partnering with families increases your ability as a leader to influence school reform and improve student achievement.

Families are an invaluable resource to schools. New efforts are being developed across the state to ensure we are doing all we can to partner together for the betterment of our students.

### Family Engagement Cabinet

The Department of Public Instruction created it's first-ever [Family Engagement Cabinet](#) in the Spring 2019. The Family Engagement Cabinet provides an outlet for family members to share experiences in education and advocate for changes they'd like to see be made. The Cabinet assists NDDPI in facilitating partnerships and collaboration with families and schools.



### 2022 FAMILY ENGAGEMENT INCENTIVE GRANT AWARDS

[2022 Family Engagement Incentive Grant Awards](#)



### FAMILY RESOURCE TOOLKIT

[Family Resource Toolkit](#)

# Gallup Survey Timeline

## NDDPI Family Survey Detailed Timeline (Revised)

ACTIVITY	Date	Notes
Survey Finalized	December 5, 2022	Gallup/NDDPI will iterate on drafts ahead of the deadline. Gallup will submit for IRB approval.
Mail Survey Preparation	November 21, 2022-January 20, 2023	Activities include translations, sample approach and load, incentive orders, hard copy survey print layout, proofs, and finalization. Taking into account holidays.
Mail Survey Sent to North Dakota Families	January 23, 2023	After the initial send, families will receive two reminder post cards to take the survey.
Data Collection	January 23, 2023-March 20, 2023	This gives us about 8 weeks in the field to maximize participation. This is a recommended amount of time for mail surveys.
Data and Initial Insights to NDDPI	April 3, 2023	Gallup will provide initial insights of data findings upon delivery of the full dataset. Initial insights will be used to help frame the final report, in collaboration with NDDPI
Report and Tableau Dashboard Development	April 3-May 25, 2023	Gallup will provide drafts of the report to obtain feedback from NDDPI. A collaborative process to develop the Tableau dashboard will also occur. Gallup will have the report fully edited and designed by our in-house design team.
Final Reporting & Deliverables	May 26, 2023	Final report, Tableau dashboard, delivered to NDDPI.

# Gallup Survey Question Themes

- General
- Curriculum
- Education quality/student success
- Student support at school
- Safety in Schools
- Life after high school
- Family Engagement/communication
- Family Engagement: Assessments-specifically State Assessment

# How Well Does North Dakota Engage Families?

A brief overview of findings from the NDDPI-Gallup Family Engagement Study



# Table of Contents



<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>Key Findings</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Detailed Findings</b> .....	<b>8</b>
★ <b>1. School-Family Partnership</b> .....	<b>8</b>
Communication Between Schools and Families .....	13
Engaging Every Family .....	14
★ <b>2. Academic Progress and Parents' Perceptions</b> .....	<b>17</b>
Informing Parents .....	19
★ <b>3. Optimizing the School Environment</b> .....	<b>22</b>
Technology Access at School.....	24
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	<b>26</b>
<b>Methodology</b> .....	<b>28</b>

# Introduction



In the spring of 2023, Gallup partnered with the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) to conduct a survey of almost 3,000 public school parents statewide.

The goal of the research was to better understand parents' and guardians' experiences with education and their child's school, and to measure the current state of family engagement at schools across the state.

In North Dakota, "family engagement" refers to the partnership between families and schools as a strategy to improve classroom learning and student outcomes.<sup>1</sup> Strong engagement is built on mutual trust and understanding.

Gallup implemented an address-based sampling methodology to collect mail survey responses from 2,938 public school parents and guardians across the state in early spring 2023. The approach resulted in a representative sample of public school parents in North Dakota, meaning that the characteristics of respondents match the characteristics of public school parents in North Dakota.

Findings provide important insight into parents' current thoughts about their child's educational success and engagement, as well as their concerns and worries. Parents also provide information on topics including school technology access, school safety, academic progress, communication with their child's school and other aspects of family engagement. The study shows strong family-school communication and positive perceptions of the school environment, as well as areas for future improvement. NDDPI is committed to providing information to schools to make informed decisions regarding family engagement, and data will ultimately assist in efforts to improve support for every child, school and family.

# Key Findings

- **A majority of parents (73%) say their child's school encourages family engagement.**

Very few families have negative perceptions: Only 1% say family engagement is discouraged by their child's school. This is true for families of all racial/ethnic backgrounds, where statistical comparisons are possible.<sup>2</sup>

- **Cultural education is related to family engagement.**

Parents who say their child receives Native American history education are more likely than others to also say their school encourages family engagement (78% vs. 69%). Among Native American parents, the difference is even greater (83% vs. 61%).

- **Families communicate with schools frequently and openly, especially through their child's teacher.**

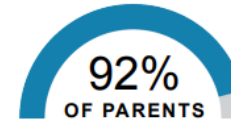
Eighty-six percent of parents agree there is an open channel of communication with their child's teachers, and 70% say they've provided feedback to administrators or teachers at some point in the school year. Native American parents are even more likely to say they've provided feedback to administrators or teachers (85% say they have provided feedback).

- **Parents generally report positive opinions when it comes to their child's educational environment.**

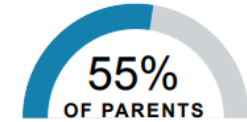
Eighty-two percent say the school is a welcoming environment for families from all backgrounds, and 84% believe their child's school provides students with the knowledge and skills they need to be successful.

While family involvement and engagement are similar, researchers say **engagement is the key to success**. Engagement goes beyond involvement when parents have two-way communication and are part of the decision-making process.<sup>3</sup> In this study, parents report involvement and engagement in several ways:

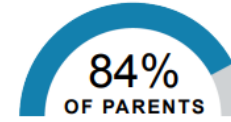
## INVOLVEMENT



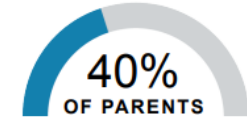
communicate with their child's teacher at least a few times a year, and 51% do so at least a few times a month.



have volunteered at least a few times this year outside of school hours.

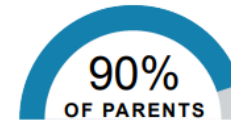


report attending a parent-teacher conference in the 2022-23 school year, as of March of 2023.

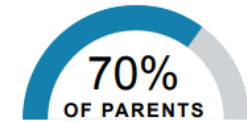


have volunteered at least a few times this year during school hours.

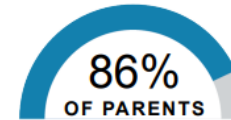
## ENGAGEMENT



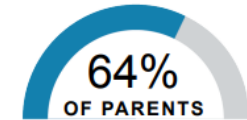
say teachers are always or mostly responsive to parents' concerns.



have provided feedback to the school's administrator or to their child's teacher in the current school year.



agree there is an open channel of communication with their child's teacher.



agree their child's school understands what is important to them as a parent.



# A Short Tour of the Detailed Findings

...for more data and information, see the report!



About three in four parents say family engagement is encouraged at their child's school, including one in four who say engagement is highly encouraged. Just 1% say family engagement is discouraged.

CHART 2

Is family engagement encouraged or discouraged at your child's school?

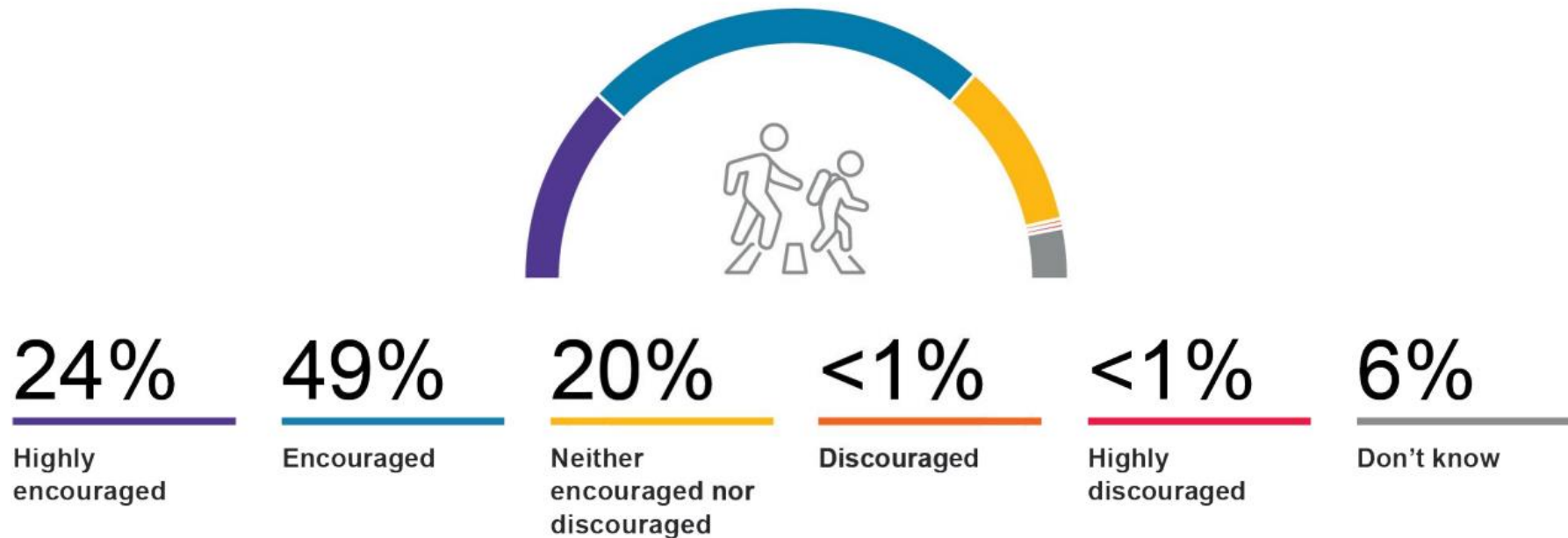
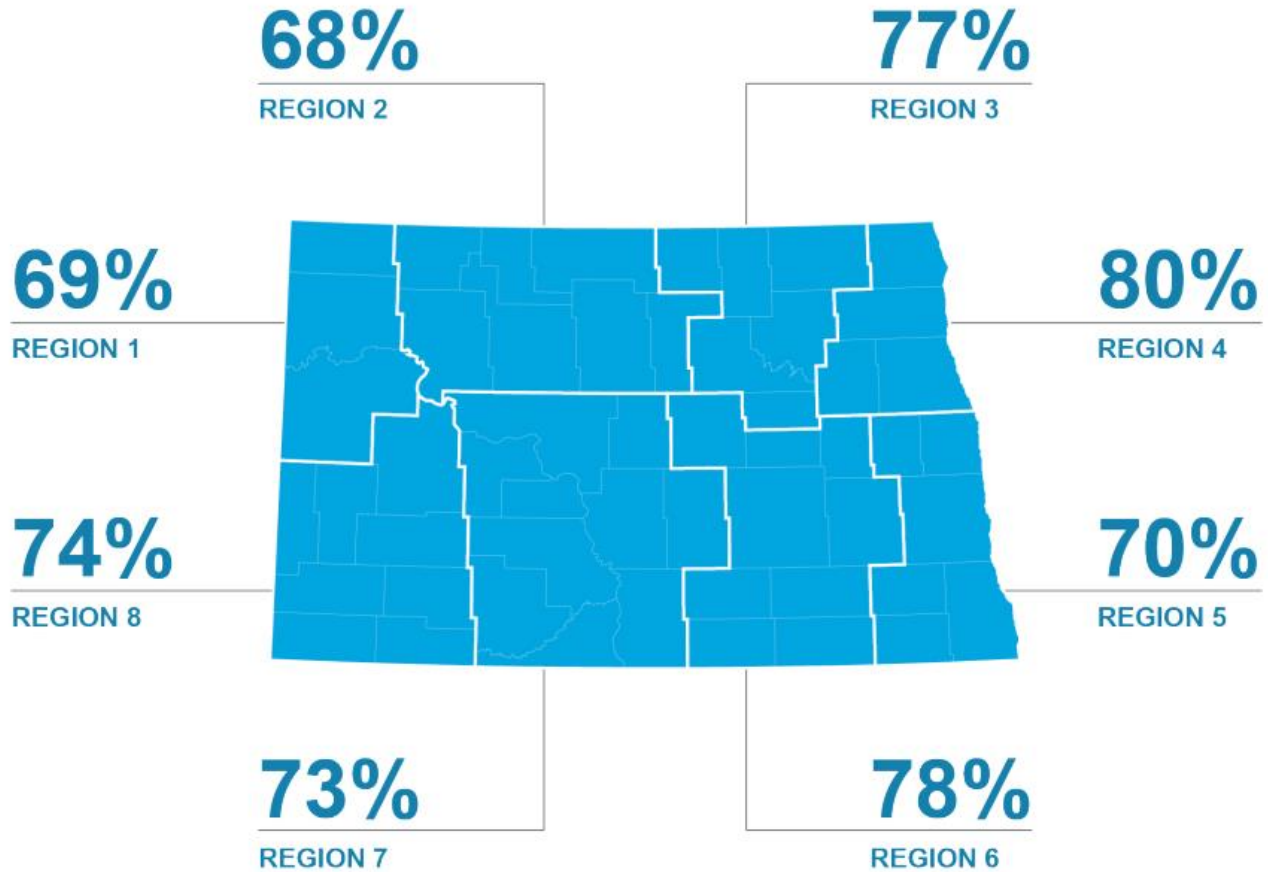


CHART 3

Is family engagement encouraged or discouraged at your child's school?

% Encouraged or highly encouraged



See [Methodology](#) for region breakdown.

# Diving into engagement...

CHART 4

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements.

■ % Strongly agree or agree   ■ % Neither agree or disagree   ■ % Strongly disagree or disagree

There is an open channel of communication that allows me to reach my child's teacher(s).



Parents at my child's school are involved in school activities and their children's education.



My child's school understands what is important to me as a parent.



My child's school provides a variety of ways for parents to become involved.



Parents who disagree that their child's school understands what is important to them (11% overall) **report having more trouble communicating with the school** than other parents. They are also more likely to say teachers are mostly or always unresponsive to concerns than other parents (35% vs. 4%) and to say the quality of communication they receive from the school is fair or poor (72% vs. 8%) than those who agree their child's school understands what is important to them. While communication seems more challenging, this group of parents reports similar rates of providing feedback to administrators or teachers (78%, vs. 74% of those who feel their child's school understands what is important to them).





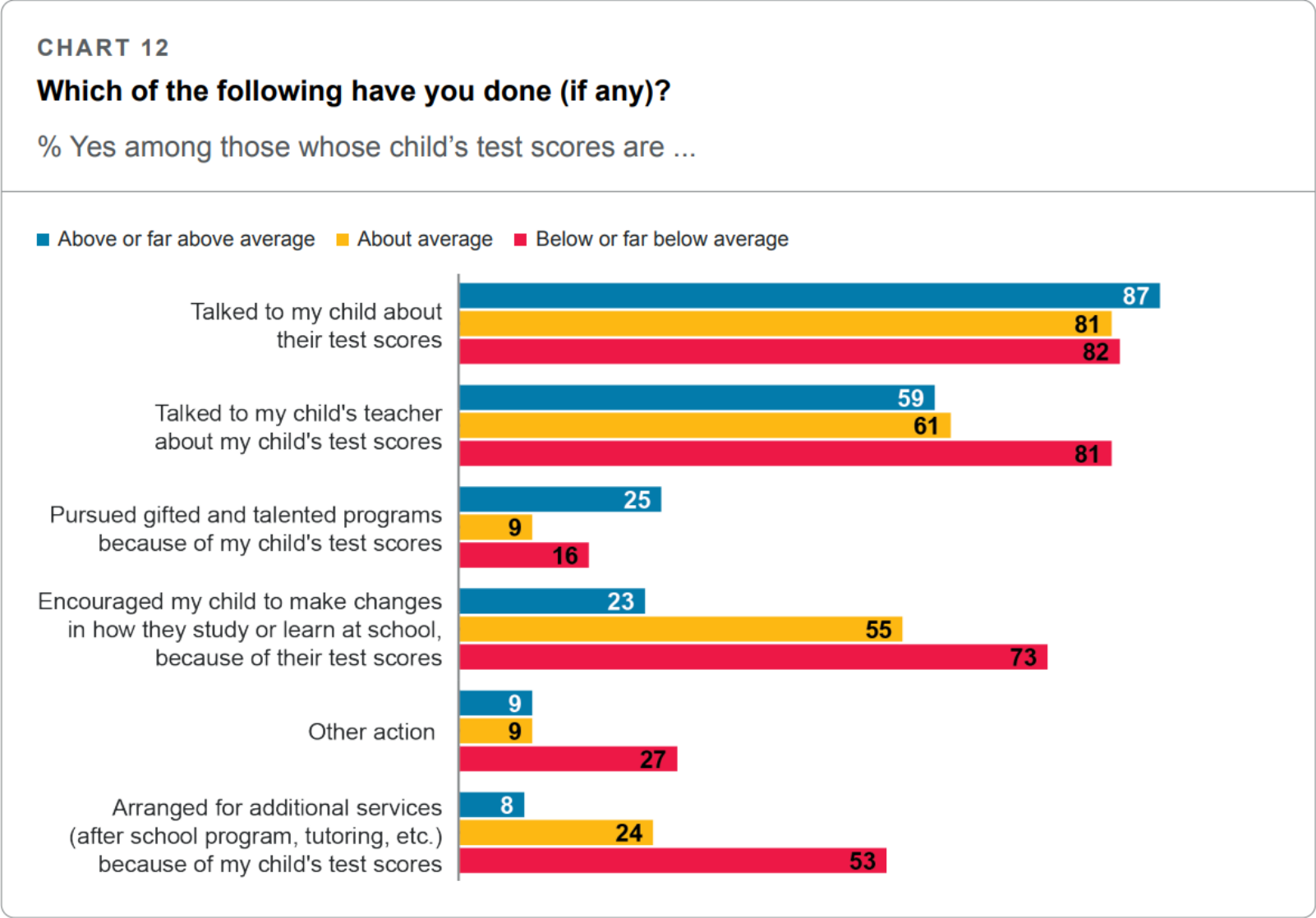
### Communication Between Schools and Families

How satisfied are parents with the communication they receive from their child's school? **A majority (82%) of families say they receive excellent (34%) or good (48%) communication from their school. Just 4% say the quality is poor.**

In terms of responsiveness, 91% of parents say teachers are always (46%) or mostly (45%) responsive to parents' concerns. Eighty-eight percent of parents say the same about support staff, and 78% say the same about the administration (e.g., superintendent, principal). Eleven percent of parents say they don't know how responsive the administration is, which may represent those who have never contacted administration to share a concern.



# Information is power for parents who want to support their child academically.



For more insights, see the full report.

### How Well Does North Dakota Engage Families?

NDDPI-Gallup  
Family Engagement Study



# Conclusion

- Families surveyed felt there is a **quality of education**, the **environments were welcoming**, and their children received the **knowledge and skills** needed.
- Families expressed they **took actions based on test scores**-tutoring, supports, or encouraging programs to challenge them.
- **Helping families understand their child's scores** would be beneficial.
- **Classroom teachers** play a critical role as primary touch point
- **Family-School Communication** plays a role to help families understand test results and identify steps to improve learning experiences.



# Conclusion Continues

- Overall, North Dakota public schools have a strong foundation with families, built on open lines of communication, responsive school staff, and confident in educational quality.
- As schools and families work together to build on that foundation, **parents' voices** will be crucial to help aim development and to best engage every student and family.

Thank you!

# CCSSO National Survey

## Website:

- [Imagining More: CCSSO's Summit on Modernizing our Education System |](#)

## Videos:

- [CCSSO Videos](#)