

**Title:** HB 20-1235: Advancing Research-Based Family-School Partnerships in Colorado

**Sponsors:** Reps. Coleman & Larson

**Purpose:**

Students perform better at school when they are supported both at home and at school. When parents, families, and communities are meaningfully engaged, there are demonstrated benefits in how students navigate life and school, and in the experiences of teaching staff and school culture. Family-school partnerships employ research-based, culturally relevant strategies to meaningfully involve parents, families, and communities as partners in students' academic, social, and emotional development. They go beyond one-time, reactive practices and instead focus on long-term, proactive strategies that share power and build leadership across a diverse and representative group of parents, educators, and students.

**Background:**

We want our kids to have the highest quality of education; this work has to take place in communities, classrooms, and schools across the state. Our educators, school, and district leaders need more support so they can foster and support strong partnerships with families. This bill will bolster previous legislative efforts to support family engagement and advance previously identified priorities in education. Two key facts come from a consistent and growing body of research on family engagement: family-school partnership is a necessity in student success and school improvement, and not all forms of family partnerships are universally or equally impactful. Students can experience a wealth of benefits from family-school partnerships, including but not limited to: reduced dropout rates, higher graduation rates, increased academic achievement, positive attitudes toward learning, and reduced chronic absenteeism. Education systems in Utah, Illinois, and Washington D.C. have experienced improvements in their schools and educator experience from family-school partnerships. These states have seen higher expectations for all students, minimized bias based on student demographics, positive student-teacher relationships, higher levels of trust among colleagues and between teachers and parents, increased cultural competence and community awareness, and more equitable and inclusive school governance.

**Bill Action:**

HB 20-1235 establishes a family-school partnership coordinator in the Department of Education. The coordinator will support local education providers with researching, designing, and implementing research-based family-school partnerships, and will also support educator preparation programs that provide training to educators related to implementing family-school partnerships. The coordinator will prepare a yearly report that describes innovations that advance family engagement practices and provides information about research and resources available to education providers and educator preparation programs that may assist in implementing family-school partnerships.

