Family Engagement in RtI/ MTSS Survey: Educator Version (FERS:E)

Description and Purpose

Theoretical Background

The *Family Engagement in RtI/MTSS Survey: Educator Version (FERS:E)* was developed by Project staff to assess educators' (a) beliefs about family engagement, (b) perceptions of knowledge and skills for implementing family engagement activities, and (c) perceptions of the degree to which they implement family engagement practices (behaviors). Research suggests cognitive components (beliefs about family engagement, perceptions of knowledge and skills for family engagement) and behavioral components (educators' active outreach to families) impact the degree to which families and educators form positive, collaborative partnerships for the purpose of supporting student learning. Beliefs, perceptions of knowledge and skills, and perceptions of practices represent interrelated constructs that impact the degree to which the outcome of effective family engagement is achieved. The degree to which educators believe that family engagement is important and perceive that they know how to engage families is related to the degree to which educators actually implement family engagement practices. The converse holds true as well, suggesting that educators' increased practice at implementing family engagement efforts is related to their positive beliefs and perceptions of knowledge and skills for engaging families.

Effective family-school engagement is the result of a functional partnership between educators and families. Obtaining reliable and valid information from families and educators informs the development of plans to engage families effectively in RtI/MTSS implementation.

Description

The *Family Engagement in RtI/MTSS Survey: Educator Version (FERS:E)* is a 32-item instrument that measures educator beliefs about the importance of family engagement, perceptions of knowledge and skills for engaging families, and perceptions of practices for engaging families in educational activities as part of RtI/MTSS implementation. Respondents use the following scale when completing items from the survey: *1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree*.

Purpose

Data obtained from the *FERS:E* is intended to inform the school's plans and practices to engage families in RtI/MTSS practices. The *FERS:E* has two primary purposes. First, the survey measures educators' beliefs about the importance of family engagement, perceptions of their knowledge and skills for working with families to support student learning, and educators' perceptions of the degree to which they implement various family engagement practices. The data obtained from the *FERS:E* can inform professional development designed to teach educators about the importance of family engagement and to increase their skills in implementing effective family engagement practices.

Second, the survey measures changes in these constructs (i.e., beliefs about family engagement, knowledge and skills for family engagement, family engagement practices) over time. Therefore, the survey can be used to measure the impact of professional development on educator beliefs, knowledge, skills, and practices.

Intended Audience

Who should complete the Family Engagement in RtI/MTSS Survey: Educator Version?

Any instructional staff who may be relevant to the purpose(s) of using data from the *FERS:E*. Depending on the purpose(s) of data collection, the relevant instructional support staff might include all, or a combination, of the educators who play a role in supporting family engagement throughout the school. For example, administrators, general education teachers, special education teachers, student services personnel, reading specialists, interventionists, or anyone else who assists with delivering curriculum and interventions to students, might be asked to complete the survey.

Who should use the results of the survey for decision making?

The School-Based Leadership Team (SBLT) members should receive the results from the *FERS:E*. SBLTs are comprised of approximately six to eight staff members selected to take a leadership role in facilitating RtI/MTSS implementation in a school. See other chapters in this Technical Assistance Manual for more information about composition and functioning of SBLTs.

District-Based Leadership Team (DBLT) members should also receive the results for the district's schools individually as well as aggregated at the district level. Members of the DBLT provide leadership to schools implementing RtI/MTSS practices. Staff included on the team mirrors the SBLT in terms of representation of disciplines and roles and responsibilities. Examples of leadership provided by DBLT members include:

- facilitating the creation of policies and procedures and districtwide action plans to support family engagement in RtI/MTSS implementation (e.g., establishing pre- and post-meeting procedures for SBLT members to support

families' full participation in problem-solving meetings),

- providing access to professional development targeting beliefs, knowledge and skills, and practices of educators in the district (e.g., strategies for communicating effectively with diverse families for the purpose of supporting student learning),
- and meeting with schools to review implementation and student outcomes (e.g., discussing strategies for making direct links between the school's family engagement efforts and student outcomes [e.g., reading, math, behavior]).

Results of the *FERS:E* should also be shared with the instructional staff and with families (e.g., during school-sponsored family meetings, posted on the school's website). Sharing the results with instructional staff and with families can be used as a strategy for facilitating discussions about each school's goals and priorities for family engagement and as a strategy to obtain input on improving existing family engagement plans and practices.

Directions for Administration

Venues and Methods of Administration

The *FERS:E* can be administered in venues such as trainings, staff meetings, or grade-level meetings. The survey may also be administered through dissemination in staff mailboxes with directions for returning the survey. Finally, the instrument can be administered electronically through district-supported or commercially available technology resources (e.g., SurveyMonkey®). Regardless of the method chosen to administer the survey, every effort should be made to ensure high return rates from staff members so that the information gathered adequately reflects the staff in the school. Regardless of the method used, it is suggested that those administering the survey follow the procedures outlined below for providing directions to educators completing the survey.

Step 1. Prior to administration, it is highly recommended that an explanation of the purpose of the *FERS:E*, how it will be used, and how it ties to the priorities of the school and district is provided to those individuals completing the survey. It is also important to emphasize that the survey results are anonymous because no personally identifying information is requested.

Step 2. Select appropriate venue/method (e.g., paper pencil, SurveyMonkey®) for disseminating the survey. Consider strategies for increasing the rate of return (e.g., provide staff data regarding completion rate and the goal on a regular basis, provide incentives for grade levels with 100% completion rates) that are appropriate and fit within the context of the school.

Step 3. Disseminate survey according to plan identified in Step 2. It is important to provide staff with specific instructions for completing the survey.

Step 4. Ensure there is a process or method available for educators to have their questions regarding the survey or how to complete the survey answered.

Step 5. Identify a specific deadline for survey completion. Typically a two-week period is sufficient with a prompt provided to staff after the first week.

Frequency of Use

The *FERS:E* is sensitive to changes in beliefs, perceptions of knowledge and skill, and practices. Therefore, the frequency of survey administration is determined by the reason the survey is being used. Typically, the survey is given the first time to establish a baseline level of beliefs, knowledge/skills, and practices. Repeated administrations of the survey are conducted over time (e.g., annually) to measure changes in those beliefs, knowledge/skills, and practices as a result of intentional activities such as professional development.

Although schools and districts will need to make adjustments based on the resources available, general recommendations for completing the *FERS:E* are provided below. General recommendations are to administer the survey to educators:

- Prior to beginning professional development targeting family engagement in RtI/MTSS.

- At the end of the first year of professional development activities to determine the extent to which beliefs about family engagement, knowledge and skills for family engagement, and family engagement practices changed.

- At least one time each subsequent year to monitor the family engagement in RtI/MTSS over time. Administration at the end of each year can be used to provide information on the relationship between professional development activities and family engagement during the year as well as serve as a baseline to determine the impact of next year's activities.

Technical Adequacy

Content Validity Evidence

To create the items for the *FERS:E*, the family engagement/school-family partnerships/family involvement literature was reviewed along with existing measures of family engagement (Westmoreland, Bouffard, O'Carroll, & Rosenberg, 2009). Items were constructed that were similar in content and wording to existing, psychometrically sound measures of family engagement (Westmoreland et al., 2009). However, items were adapted to reflect RtI/MTSS implementation language, content, and activities. The *FERS:E* was developed with items reflecting beliefs about family engagement, perceptions of knowledge and skills for engaging families, and practices to engage families in RtI/MTSS.

A draft of the instrument was sent to an Expert Validation Panel (EVP) for review and evaluation. The EVP consisted of educators from varying disciplines with knowledge of RtI/MTSS and family engagement. The EVP provided feedback on the representativeness of the items covered, clarity and quality of the individual items, and suggested modifications to items before final versions of the surveys

Content validity: Content-related validity evidence refers to the extent to which the sample of items on an instrument is representative of the area of interest the instrument is designed to measure. In the context of the *FERS:E*, content-related validity evidence is based on a judgment that the *FERS:E* is representative of the beliefs, knowledge and skills, and practices that are associated with effective family engagement in RtI/MTSS implementation.

Construct validity: Construct-related validity evidence refers to the extent to which the individuals' scores derived from the instrument represent a meaningful measure of a domain or characteristic. In the case of the *FERS:E*, exploratory factor analysis was conducted to assess the internal structure of the measure as well as to develop evidence to support the validity of interpretations based on individuals' scores on the resultant factors. Results of the factor analyses suggest that the *FERS:E* meaures four underlying domains (or factors).

Internal consistency reliability: Internal consistency reliability evidence is based on the degree of homogeneity of scores (i.e., the extent to which the scores cluster together) on items measuring the same domain. In the context of the *FERS:E*, an internal consistency estimate provides a measure of the extent to which educators who responded one way to an item measuring a domain (or factor) tended to resond the same way to other items measuring the same domain.

were developed. Finally, a small pilot study was conducted with educators ($n = 10$) to determine the clarity of directions for completing the survey and wording of survey items, and amount of time required to complete the survey. More information on the EVP used to examine the content validity of the survey is available from the Project by contacting Devon Minch at **dminch@usf.edu**.

Construct Validity *Evidence (Factor Analysis)*

An exploratory common factor analytic (EFA) procedure was used to determine the underlying factor structure of the survey. The EFA was conducted using responses from 933 educators in 40 schools in a single school district. The school district was one of the seven school districts that participated in the FL PS/RtI pilot project. Maximum likelihood (ML) extraction method and standard errors corrected for the nested data structure (i.e., educators nested within schools) were used in the analysis. Examination of the data suggested retention of four to six factors. A four-factor solution yielded the best fit of the data including simple structure and interpretability of factors. The factors were labeled as follows: Factor 1 – *Educator Beliefs about Family Engagement*, Factor 2 – *Educator Knowledge and Skills for Family Engagement*, Factor 3 – *Educator Family Engagement Practices*, and Factor 4 – *School-wide Family Engagement Practices*. Importantly, the final factor solution was consistent with the way in which the survey items were developed.

Internal Consistency Reliability

Internal consistency reliability estimates (as measured by Cronbach's alpha) for the survey is provided below.

- **Factor One** (*Educator Beliefs about Family Engagement*): α = .91
- **Factor Two** (*Educator Knowledge and Skills for Family Engagement*): α = .92
- **Factor Three** (*Educator Family Engagement Practices*): α = .92
- **Factor Four** (*School-wide Family Engagement Practices*): α = .90

Scoring, Interpretation, and Use of the Data

Examination of Broad Domains & Item Responses

The Florida PS/RtI Project primarily uses two techniques for analyzing survey responses for evaluation purposes. First, the mean rating for each item can be calculated to determine the average level of beliefs, knowledge and skills, or practices for family engagement reported by educators who completed the survey. Second, the frequency distribution of each response option selected (e.g., *Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neither Disagree nor Agree, Agree, Strongly Agree*) can be calculated for each survey item.

Calculating item means provides an overall impression of the beliefs, knowledge and skills, and practices of those individuals within a school, district, etc. Calculating averages can be done at the domain (i.e., factor) and/or individual item levels. A score for each of the four domains (i.e., factors) measured by the instrument

may be computed for each respondent or for groups of respondents to the survey by calculating the sum of the ratings of the items that comprise the domain. These values can be added together and divided by the number of items within the domain to **determine the average level of beliefs/perceptions of knowledge and skills/individual practices/school-wide practices for each domain** (see Figure 13 on page 224 for an example of school-level domain averages). The items that comprise each domain are as follows:

- **Factor One** (*Educator Beliefs about Family Engagement*): Items 1-7
- **Factor Two** (*Educator Knowledge and Skills for Family Engagement*): Items 8-13
- **Factor Three** (*Educator Family Engagement Practices*): Items 14-24
- **Factor Four** (*School-wide Family Engagement Practices*): Items 25-32

Average levels of beliefs, knowledge and skills, and practices for family engagement can also be examined by item. Calculating the mean rating for each item within a domain provides an analysis of the extent to which educators agree with particular items. This information can be used to identify specific beliefs, knowledge and skills, and practices that may facilitate or hinder the implementation of family engagement efforts, but does not provide much information on the variability of responses to items measuring specific beliefs, knowledge and skills, or practices.

Calculating the frequency of educators who selected each response option (i.e., *SD, D, N, A, SA*) for an item, on the other hand, provides information on the range of beliefs/knowledge and skills/practices for family engagement (see Figure 14 on page 225). This information can be used to determine the percentage of respondents who agree or disagree that they hold a particular belief/possess certain knowledge and skills/or implement particular practices. When planning family engagement efforts, information on the percentage of educators who endorse particular beliefs, knowledge and skills, or practice items can help to inform decisions regarding the implementation of family engagement efforts.

It is recommended that key stakeholders analyze *FERS:E* survey data in ways that best inform the evaluation questions they are asking. The data collected from the instrument can be used to answer a number of broad and specific questions regarding family engagement. To facilitate formative decision-making, stakeholders should consider aligning the analysis and display of the data with specific evaluation questions. Example evaluation questions, data sources, and graphs are illustrated below.

For example, if an educator selected *A, N, A, N, D, A, N* when completing the 7 items that comprise the "Beliefs about Family Engagement" domain, the values corresponding with those responses would be added together to obtain a total value of 23 (i.e., 4+3+4+3+2+4+3=23). The total value of 23 would be divided by the number of items (7) to obtain the average domain score (i.e., 23/7 = 3.29). An average domain score of 3.29 could be interpreted as the educator, on average remaining slightly above neutral (neither disagreeing nor agreeing), with belief statements regarding the importance of family engagement.

Evaluation question: What is the general trend in staff beliefs regarding the importance of family engagement over time?

- **Data source**: Displaying the average Belief domain score across all educators in the school on the y-axis with each corresponding time point on the x-axis.
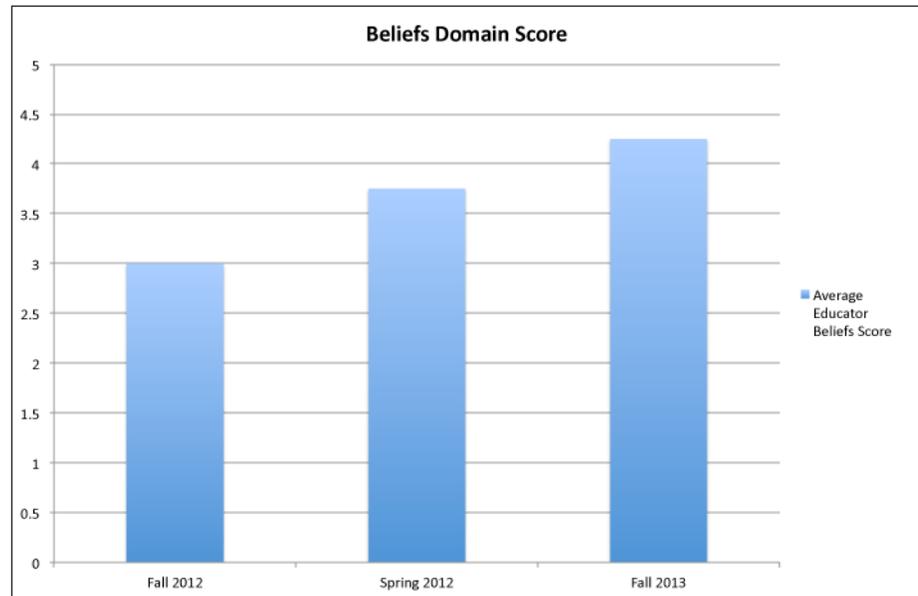- **Example graph**:

Figure 13. Example One

- **Evaluation question**: What specific beliefs about the importance of family engagement do staff tend to agree, remain neutral, or disagree? How have these beliefs changed over three time points?
- **Data source**: Displaying the percentage of educators who report disagreement, neutrality, or agreement with each item in the Belief domain on the y-axis and the belief items listed across the x-axis. Of note, the *SD* and *D* categories were collapsed into red, while *SA* and *A* categories were collapsed into green. These were contrasted with the *N* response option in yellow to allow for easy comparison of *D*, *N*, and *A*.
- **Example graph**:
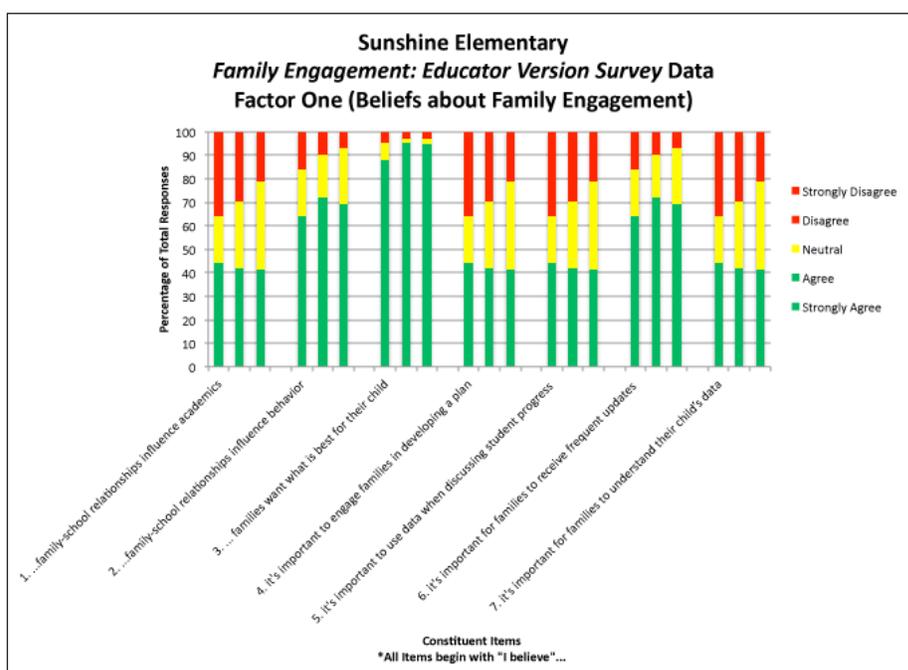
Figure 14. Example Two

Identifying which evaluation question(s) are currently being asked will guide how to analyze the data and communicate the information to facilitate decision-making.

Data Dissemination to Stakeholders

It is recommended that the data be shared with DBLTs and SBLTs, instructional school staff, families, and any other relevant stakeholders as quickly and frequently as possible following survey administrations. Quick access to the data allows stakeholders in leadership positions to discuss the results from the family engagement survey, develop and/or modify family engagement goals, design professional development activities to facilitate changes in family engagement efforts, and develop more effective family engagement implementation plans. SBLT members can use the data presented to facilitate discussions among the staff to obtain consensus for the importance of family engagement and to obtain staff input regarding factors that contribute to, or hinder, effective family engagement.

One helpful strategy for facilitating discussions about family engagement survey data is to provide educators with guiding questions. The use of guiding questions is designed to facilitate discussions about the school's progress toward reaching the school's family engagement goals. Listed below are examples of guiding questions that can be used to facilitate discussions among staff when examining data from the *FERS:E*.

Given the nature of family engagement as a partnership between families and educators, it is important to obtain families' perspectives as well. Thus, the questions below also reference data obtained from the *Family Engagement in RtI/MTSS Survey: Family Version* (*FERS:F*; see page 238 of this chapter). The questions were developed to provide scaffolding when interpreting the data and focus discussions around the development of effective family engagement plans. Stakeholders in leadership positions can generate additional guiding questions to better meet their particular needs.

- Did your building's beliefs about family engagement change from the first administration to the second administration?
  - For educators? For families?
  - If yes, what beliefs made the greatest change? Why do you think they might have changed in that way?

- Did your building's knowledge and skills for engaging families change from the first administration to the second administration?
  - For educators? For families?
  - If yes, what knowledge and skills made the greatest change? Why do you think they might have changed in that way?

- To what extent do you believe that your building possesses the skills to effectively engage families in supporting student learning (e.g., communicating data to families effectively, explaining the intent RtI/MTSS to families, answering families' concerns and questions about RtI/MTSS, etc.)?
  - What implications does this have for staff professional development?

- Did your building's family engagement practices change from the first administration to the second administration?
  - Did educators report implementing more/less practices?
  - Did families report engaging in more/less activities to support student learning?
  - Did families perceive that educators were implementing more/less outreach efforts to engage families in student learning?
    - If yes, what practices changed the most?

- Currently, do families and educators hold similar perceptions of family engagement?
  - Do families and educators hold similarly positive beliefs about family engagement?

⬩ Do families and educators report having the skills necessary to engage in partnership activities?

⬩ Do families and educators report that educators are reaching out to and engaging families in student learning?

• What do you think these data mean in the context of engaging families in RtI/MTSS in your building?

⬩ How can these data inform professional development and on-site coaching support targeting educators' and families' beliefs, knowledge and skills, or practices for family engagement?

⬩ How can these data inform efforts to build families' capacity to support student learning?

⬩ What additional questions do we have? What additional data may be needed?

Technology Support

School personnel should consider using district supported or commercially available technology resources to facilitate analysis of the data. Software and web-based programs vary in terms of the extent to which they can support administration of an instrument (e.g., SurveyMonkey®) and automatic analysis of data, as well as their degree of user-friendliness. Decisions about the technology used to facilitate data analysis should be made based on available resources as well as the knowledge and skills possessed by those responsible for managing and analyzing data from the *FERS:E*. If your district and/or school has a SurveyMonkey® Select (paid) account and you are interested in having the surveys transferred to your account, please contact the project at **judihyde@usf.edu**.

Training Required

Training resources for administering the survey as well as data analysis and interpretation can be accessed on the Florida RtI website at **http://floridarti.usf.edu/resources/topic/parent_resources/index.html**.

Training Recommended for Administering the Family Engagement Survey

A brief training is recommended prior to administering the *Family Engagement in RtI/MTSS Survey: Educator Version*. Although administering surveys is common in school settings, issues such as specific administration procedures and the amount of questions administrators are likely to receive about survey content vary. Therefore, trainings of individuals responsible for administering the survey should include the components listed below. The contents of this manual, as well as resources on the project website, can serve as resources for developing and conducting trainings on the measure.

• Theoretical background on the relationship between beliefs about family engagement, family engagement knowledge and skills, and family engagement practices and behaviors.

- Description of the instrument including information on the items and how they relate to each other (e.g., domains of family engagement that the items assess).
- Administration procedures developed and/or adopted.
- Common issues that arise during administration such as frequently asked questions and strategies to facilitate higher return rates in school settings.

Training Recommended for Analyzing, Interpreting, and Disseminating Survey Data

- Appropriate use of the survey given its purpose and technical adequacy

- Guidelines for analyzing and displaying data derived from the survey

- Guidelines for interpreting and disseminating results

- Guidelines for using data to inform decision-making specific to family engagement in RtI/MTSS implementation

School-Level Example of Family Engagement Data

The following example demonstrates how key stakeholders may use data derived from the *FERS:E* to inform the school's efforts to engage families in RtI/MTSS implementation. Data from the survey is displayed graphically. Following the graphs, background information on the school's initiative and an explanation of what is represented on each graph is provided. Finally, ways in which the data were used by the school to identify needs and monitor progress is discussed. Importantly, although the example occurs at the school-level, the concepts discussed can be generalized to other units of analysis (e.g., district-level, state-level).

Thinking about your work with families relative to RtI/MTSS implementation at your school, please select the response option that best represents how much you agree or disagree with each statement below.

13. I have the knowledge and skills to explain to families that the intent of Response to Intervention (RtI) is to develop a plan for helping the child, which may not require ESE

12. I have the skills to use data to examine a child's academic and behavioral progress with his or her family.

11. I have the skills to listen to families and identify their concerns and priorities when it comes to their child.

10. I have the skills to explain a child's academic and behavioral data to his or her family in a way the family can understand.

9. I have the skills to communicate with families effectively.

8. I have the skills to engage families in problem-solving using important data (information) about their child's performance.

7. I believe that it is important for families to have a good understanding of what their child's academic and/or behavioral data mean for their child's success in school.

6. I believe that it is important for families to receive frequent updates regarding their child's progress in school.

5. I believe that it is important to use a child's academic and/or behavioral data (information) when discussing student progress with his or her family.

4. I believe that if a child struggles in school, it is important to engage his or her family in developing a plan to help the child succeed.

3. I believe that families want what is best for their child.

2. I believe that family-school relationships have an important influence on how well a child does behaviorally in school.

1. I believe that family-school relationships have an important influence on how well a child does academically in school.

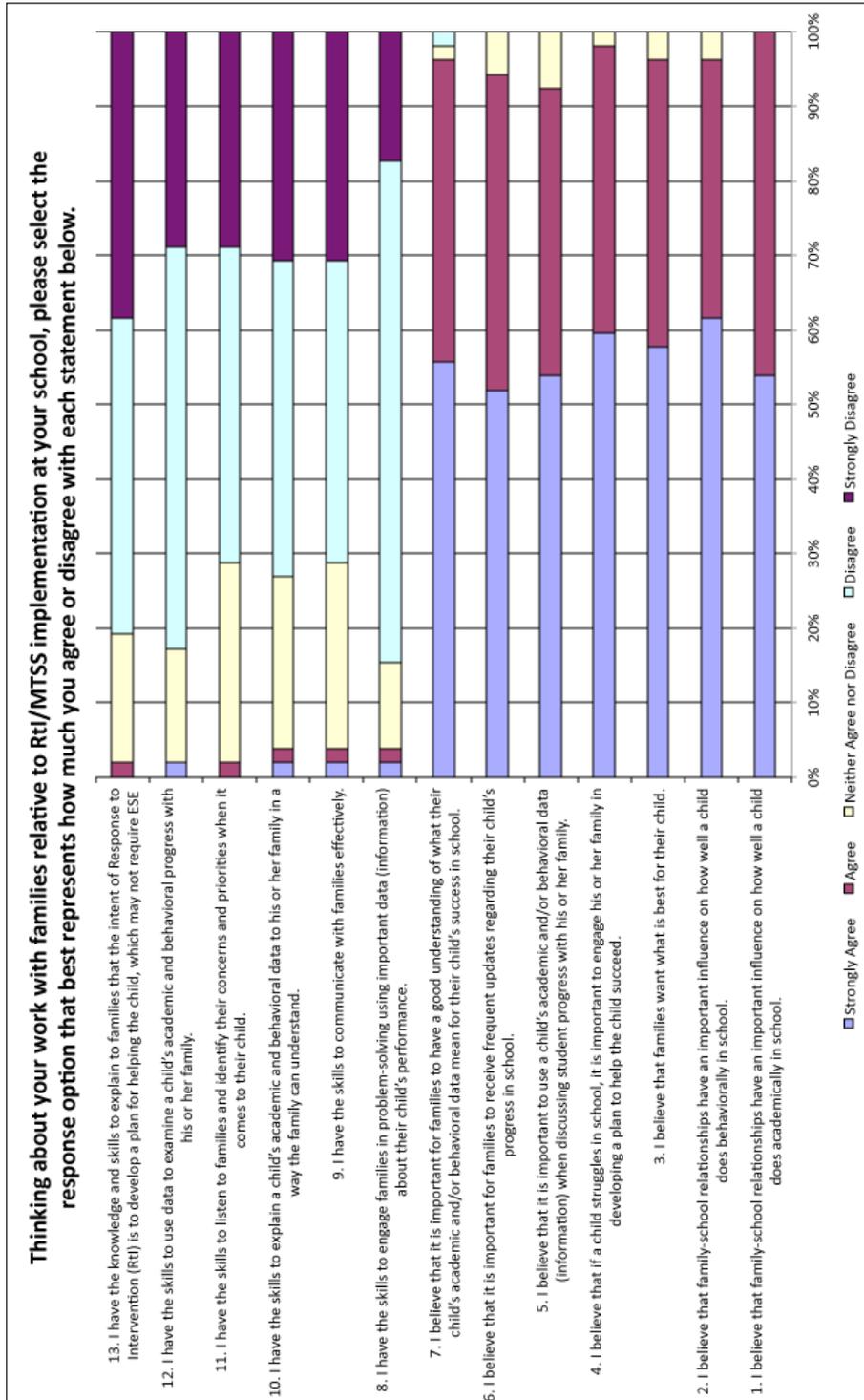☐ Strongly Agree   ■ Agree   ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree   ☐ Disagree   ■ Strongly Disagree

Figure 15. Example FERS:E Survey Graph of Items from Factor 1 – Beliefs about Family Engagement and Factor 2 – Knowledge and Skills for Family Engagement.
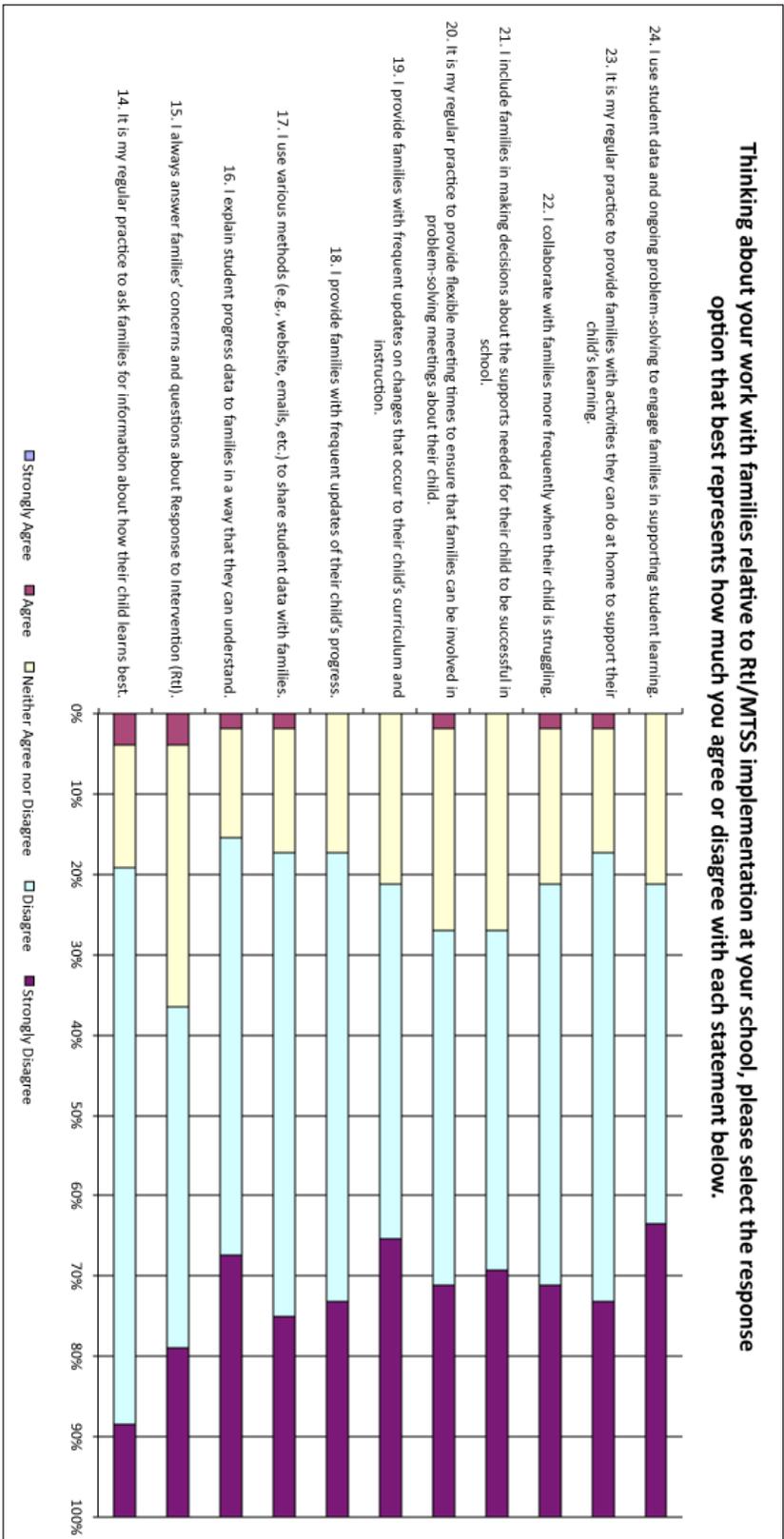
Thinking about your work with families relative to RtI/MTSS implementation at your school, please select the response option that best represents how much you agree or disagree with each statement below.

Figure 16. Example FERS:E Survey Graph of Items from Factor 3 – Educator Family Engagement Practices.

Thinking about your school's work with families relative to RtI/MTSS implementation at your school, please select the response option that best represents how much you agree or disagree with each statement below. My school (or staff at my school):
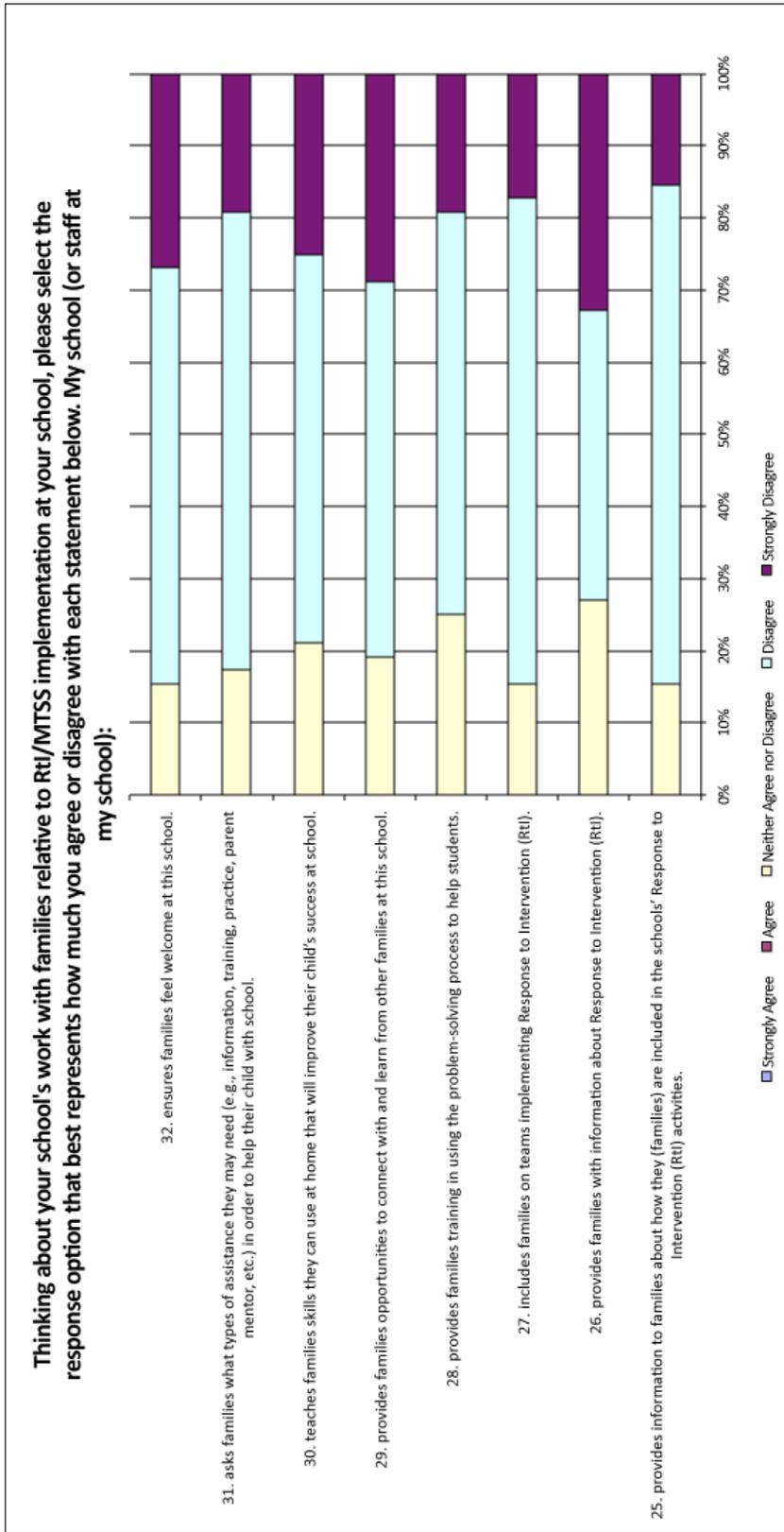

Figure 17. Example FERS:E Survey Graph of Items from Factor 4 – School-wide Family Engagement Practices.

Explanation of the Graphs

The SBLT at Sunshine Elementary wanted to support the development and implementation of effective family engagement efforts. In order to ensure a comprehensive plan, the SBLT wanted to assess the following: (a) the degree to which the beliefs of the instructional school staff aligned with the core beliefs of effective family engagement, (b) the degree to which staff perceived they had sufficient knowledge and skills for family engagement; (c) the degree to which staff reported implementing family engagement practices; and (d) the degree to which school-wide family engagement practices were being implemented.

In order to evaluate staff beliefs, perceptions of knowledge and skills, and perceptions of family engagement practices, the SBLT members decided to administer the *FERS:E* at the beginning and end of the first year of RtI/MTSS implementation and at the end of each subsequent year. Sunshine elementary also administered the *FERS:F* each year. The results of the *FERS:F* are discussed in the section of this chapter on the *FERS:F*.

Sunshine Elementary was interested in analyzing the current level of beliefs, knowledge and skills, and practices among staff, so percentage of staff indicating each response option (*Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neither Disagree nor Agree, Agree, Strongly Agree*) was graphed by item. The items were organized by factor to allow for easy comparison. Therefore, the items for each factor were displayed on separate graphs, one graph for each factor, with the exception of Beliefs and Knowledge and Skills items that are provided on the same graph. Figure 15 displays data on staff beliefs and perceptions of knowledge and skills for family engagement (Factors 1 and 2), Figure 16 displays data on staff perceptions of individual family engagement practices (Factor 3), and Figure 17 displays data on staff perceptions of school-wide family engagement practices (Factor 4).

Each graph provides data for a single time point, the beginning of the first year of implementation (baseline). Graphs indicate the percentage of staff that chose each response option (*Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neither Disagree nor Agree, Agree, Strongly Agree*) with a different color for each response option. These data were shared with SBLT members and school staff shortly after administration of the survey.

Sunshine Elementary's Use of the Data for Decision Making

When examining staff data, Sunshine Elementary SBLT members started by visually analyzing the data across items for each of the four factors (Beliefs about Family Engagement, Knowledge and Skills for Family Engagement, Individual Family Engagement Practices, and School-wide Family Engagement Practices). Following a review of broad domains, SBLT members drilled down into the data to analyze the data by item. Discussions of each graph follow.

Beliefs about Family Engagement. Visual analysis of Figure 15 indicates that between 90-100% of the staff tended to agree or strongly agree with items repre-

senting general family engagement. Although there was not significant variability among the beliefs items, higher percentages of staff indicated neutral for items #5 and #6 and even a small proportion who indicated disagree with item #7. Of note, items #5, #6, and #7 represent family engagement practices specific to a school implementing RtI/MTSS (i.e., they reflect the use of data within a problem-solving process). This would suggest a potential target for professional development and job-embedded coaching support.

<u>Knowledge and Skills for Family Engagement</u>. Next, the SBLT examined staff perceptions of knowledge and skills for family engagement (Figure 15). As evident in Figure 15, 70-90% indicated that they generally did not feel as though they had the knowledge and skills to effectively engage families. Although there was not significant variability across the items for this domain, there are a few noteworthy results. The items with the greatest percentage of disagreement were items #8, #12, and #13 and these items represent the knowledge and skills to engage families in problem-solving practices. Furthermore, there were no staff that indicated they strongly agreed that they had the skills for items #11 or #13. Although all items on this factor are potential targets for professional development, the items identified above are considerably noteworthy.

<u>Individual Family Engagement Practices</u>. Educators generally indicated that they were not implementing family engagement practices that were consistent with RtI/MTSS implementation. Of note, there were no staff that strongly agreed they implemented these practices and few staff who agreed that they implemented any of the practices. The percentage of educators indicating *Neutral* might suggest an area for follow-up and clarification. These results would be important to compare with results from the *FERS:F*.

<u>School-wide Family Engagement Practices</u>. The trend continued for school-wide family engagement practices with 70-80% of educators reporting their school did not implement any of the practices and reporting agreement that any practices were being implemented.

<u>Family Perspectives</u>. Of note, the SBLT also reviewed the data collected from the *FERS:F*. The graphs and data are discussed more in depth in the section on the Family Version of the survey. These data are helpful as the discrepancy in perspectives may be indicative of ineffective family engagement efforts. The SBLT kept this information in mind during small group discussions and planning efforts.

Conclusions from the Data

At a staff meeting the SBLT organized the staff into small groups and presented each small group with graphs of the data described above in addition to guiding questions to facilitate discussions. The guiding questions included:

1. What trends do you see in staff beliefs about family engagement, knowledge and skills for family engagement, and family engagement practices?

2. What factors contributed to the variability and specifically, the low levels of agreement for some of the items? What are the barriers to implementing

family engagement practices?

3. What factors contributed to the high levels of agreement for some of the items?

4. What could be done to address the identified factors for #2 considering the discussion of the factors that worked well (#4)? What can the leadership do to help address the barriers identified in #2?

5. What do the data indicate in terms of professional development and support needs of the staff?

The SBLT members considered the feedback from the group discussion and created a family engagement action plan that addressed professional development needs and ongoing coaching support to facilitate sustainable implementation of practices. The action plan included a data collection schedule to monitor changes in staff beliefs, skills, and practices over time as a result of increased support and professional development. Additional items on the action plan included specific responsibilities for family engagement outlined for teachers that they were asked to perform weekly during planning periods and downtime (e.g., positive phone calls home to families of the lowest performing students). The principal established a system that allowed teachers to request class coverage for up to 30 minutes each week in order to implement family engagement practices. Additional action plan items focused on professional development (PD) and on-site coaching support targeting the importance of family engagement for obtaining student outcomes and particularly, engaging families in data-based problem-solving meetings (e.g., Conjoint Behavioral Consultation [CBC]; Sheridan, Kratochwill, & Bergan, 1996; Sheridan & Kratochwill, 2008) for those students receiving the most intensive levels of support (i.e., tier 2 or tier 3 support). Furthermore, the professional development plan targeted strategies for implementing effective home-school communication practices (e.g., see Henderson & Mapp, 2002). Staff were provided models of effective practices and given opportunities to demonstrate newly learned skills and receive feedback from peers. The content of the PD was focused on strategies for using student data as a primary vehicle for engaging and communicating with families.

Blank Family Enagement in RtI/MTSS Survey: Educator Version

Family Engagement in RtI/MTSS: Educator Version

Family Engagement in RtI/MTSS: Educator Version

School Name: _____

Your current job position (select one):

○ General Education Teacher   ○ Special Education Teacher

○ Instructional Support Staff (hourly   ○ Student Services Personnel (school psychologist,
   teacher, interventionist)   guidance, social worker)

○ Administrator   ○ Other, please specify: _____

Are you a member of your school's School-Based Leadership Team (SBLT)?

○ Yes   ○ No

Thinking about your work with families (i.e., parents, legal guardians) relative to RtI/MTSS*
implementation at your school for the current school year, please select the response option that best
represents how much you agree or disagree with each statement below.

    ① = **Strongly Disagree (SD)**
    ② = **Disagree (D)**
    ③ = **Neutral, neither agree or disagree (N)**
    ④ = **Agree (A)**
    ⑤ = **Strongly Agree (SA)**

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
1. I believe that family-school relationships have an important influence on how well a child does *academically* in school.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2. I believe that family-school relationships have an important influence on how well a child does *behaviorally* in school.	①	②	③	④	⑤
3. I believe that families want what is best for their child.	①	②	③	④	⑤
4. I believe that if a child struggles in school, it is important to engage his or her family in developing a plan to help the child succeed.	①	②	③	④	⑤
5. I believe that it is important to use a child's academic and/or behavioral data (information) when discussing student progress with his or her family.	①	②	③	④	⑤
6. I believe that it is important for families to receive frequent updates regarding their child's progress in school.	①	②	③	④	⑤
7. I believe that it is important for families to have a good understanding of what their child's academic and/or behavioral data mean for their child's success in school.	①	②	③	④	⑤

*RtI/MTSS = Response to Intervention/Multi-Tiered Systems of Support   1

Family Engagement in RtI/MTSS: Educator Version

Thinking about your work with families (i.e., parents, legal guardians) relative to RtI/MTSS* implementation at your school for the current school year, please select the response option that best represents how much you agree or disagree with each statement below.

①= **Strongly Disagree (SD)**
②= **Disagree (D)**
③= **Neutral, neither agree or disagree (N)**
④= **Agree (A)**
⑤= **Strongly Agree (SA)**

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
8. I have the skills to engage families in problem solving using important data (information) about their child's performance.	①	②	③	④	⑤
9. I have the skills to communicate with families effectively.	①	②	③	④	⑤
10. I have the skills to explain a child's academic and behavioral data to his or her family in a way the family can understand.	①	②	③	④	⑤
11. I have the skills to listen to families and identify their concerns and priorities when it comes to their child.	①	②	③	④	⑤
12. I have the skills to use data to examine a child's academic and behavioral progress with his or her family.	①	②	③	④	⑤
13. I have the knowledge and skills to explain to families that the intent of RtI/MTSS* is to develop a plan for helping the child, which may not require special education (ESE) consideration.	①	②	③	④	⑤
14. It is my regular practice to ask families for information about how their child learns best.	①	②	③	④	⑤
15. I always answer families' concerns and questions about RtI/MTSS.	①	②	③	④	⑤
16. It is my regular practice to explain student progress data to families in a way that they can understand.	①	②	③	④	⑤
17. It is my regular practice to use various methods (e.g., website, emails, etc.) to share student data with families.	①	②	③	④	⑤
18. It is my regular practice to provide families with frequent updates of their child's progress.	①	②	③	④	⑤
19. It is my regular practice to provide families with frequent updates on changes that occur to their child's curriculum and instruction.	①	②	③	④	⑤
20. It is my regular practice to provide flexible meeting times to ensure that families can be involved in problem-solving meetings about their child.	①	②	③	④	⑤
21. It is my regular practice to include families in making decisions about the supports needed for their child to be successful in school.	①	②	③	④	⑤
22. It is my regular practice to collaborate with families more frequently when their child is struggling.	①	②	③	④	⑤
23. It is my regular practice to provide families with activities they can do at home to support their child's learning.	①	②	③	④	⑤

*RtI/MTSS = Response to Intervention/Multi-Tiered Systems of Support   2

Family Engagement in RtI/MTSS: Educator Version

Thinking about your work with families (i.e., parents, legal guardians) relative to RtI/MTSS* implementation at your school for the current school year, please select the response option that best represents how much you agree or disagree with each statement below.

    ① = **Strongly Disagree (SD)**
    ② = **Disagree (D)**
    ③ = **Neutral, neither agree or disagree (N)**
    ④ = **Agree (A)**
    ⑤ = **Strongly Agree (SA)**

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
24. It is my regular practice to use student data and ongoing problem solving to engage families in supporting student learning.	①	②	③	④	⑤

*Thinking about **your school's** work with families (i.e., parents, legal guardians) relative to RtI/MTSS* implementation at your school for the current school year, please select the response option that best represents how much you agree or disagree with each statement below.*

    ① = **Strongly Disagree (SD)**
    ② = **Disagree (D)**
    ③ = **Neutral, neither agree or disagree (N)**
    ④ = **Agree (A)**
    ⑤ = **Strongly Agree (SA)**

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
25. My staff (or staff at my school) provides information to families about how they (families) are included in the school's RtI/MTSS* activities.	①	②	③	④	⑤
26. My staff (or staff at my school) provides families with information about RtI/MTSS*.	①	②	③	④	⑤
27. My staff (or staff at my school) includes families on teams implementing RtI/MTSS*.	①	②	③	④	⑤
28. My staff (or staff at my school) provides families training in using the problem-solving process to help students.	①	②	③	④	⑤
29. My staff (or staff at my school) provides families opportunities to connect with and learn from other families at this school.	①	②	③	④	⑤
30. My staff (or staff at my school) teaches families skills they can use at home that will improve their child's success at school.	①	②	③	④	⑤
31. My staff (or staff at my school) asks families what types of assistance they may need (e.g., information, training, practice, parent mentor, etc.) in order to help their child with school.	①	②	③	④	⑤
32. My staff (or staff at my school) ensures families feel welcome at this school.	①	②	③	④	⑤

Thank you for completing this survey.

*RtI/MTSS = Response to Intervention/Multi-Tiered Systems of Support   3