

PARENT, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

VISION

Students master academic skills and develop civic responsibility, because of family, school and community support enhanced by school partnerships with parents, families and community organizations that enable parents to:

1. understand their children's school experience;
2. participate as volunteers in school;
3. support student learning at home;
4. develop effective parenting skills;
5. participate in important decisions affecting their children; and
6. rely on community resources to support their parenting efforts.

STRUCTURE

A. Building Level: Parent and Community Partnership Plans

Each school and the families and community it serves is different. Therefore, each school must have its own approach to parent and community partnerships. Working together staff and parents at each school shall develop a five year plan to achieve the following goals:

1. Multiple techniques assure that (a) all parents understand their children's school experience and (b) the school staff understands parents' and community expectations for the school.
2. School staff work with parent and community volunteers in the school in ways that are beneficial to students and that strengthen school and community relations.
3. Families receive information about how to support their children's learning at home and will have access to someone to advise them when they encounter difficulty.
4. All staff members are able to refer parents to resources for assistance in developing their parenting skills, or to obtain advice on family financial, health or welfare issues. Connections are maintained with community resources and agencies to assure current information and continuous cooperation.
5. Representatives of parents and the community served by the school have a full and equal role in the school's student learning improvement team. All parents have the opportunity to review and advise on their student's learning experiences.
6. Collaborations and exchanges are established with businesses and agencies in the community to broaden the learning opportunities for students and expand options for teachers.

Each school's Family and Community Partnership plan shall include a timeline for implementation, success indicators, evaluation procedures, and a system for reporting to the community and the school district. When a parent is unavailable to fulfill the parent's role, reasonable efforts will be made to identify an adult, acceptable to the family, to act as a communicator and supporter for the student's education.

B. District Level: Expectations, Support and Resources

The success of each school's plan depends upon its appropriateness to the school's service area. Just as those plans must meet the expectations of this policy, they must have the support of the district. The district shall develop a five year plan to achieve the following goals:

1. In-service training enables teachers and administrators to perfect their skills in working with parents and families as partners in students' learning.
2. Financial and staff resources are allocated to assist and support the implementation of individual school plans.
3. When hiring and promoting personnel, consideration is given to experience and performance in developing effective parent, family and community partnerships.
4. Family resource centers are developed by the district in partnership with individual schools or other community organizations to support the development of parenting skills, including helping parents to develop the capacity to support students' learning at home.
5. Partnerships with other units of government and public and private social, health, welfare and fraternal agencies are developed to create a community support system to strengthen families' ability to guide the academic and character development of their children.

ACCOUNTABILITY

- A. An information system shall be developed to enable the district to assess progress toward its Parent, Family and Community Partnership goals. Using the information reported to it, the board shall review progress each year toward the policy's goals reported by each school and the district.
- B. Subject to legal and contract requirements, criteria shall be included in personnel performance reviews to assess the effectiveness of district personnel in carrying out their role in Parent, Family and Community Partnerships.

ADVOCACY

- A. Each year the Board shall focus the community's attention on Parent, Family and Community partnerships by reviewing progress toward the district's goals and hosting a community forum to promote discussion among school, parent and community leaders about how they can continue to work together to support the academic and civic development of students.
- B. The Board shall use polling, community meetings and participation in the meetings of other organizations to (1) understand public expectations for the schools and (2) explain the school's work in strengthening parents' and families' ability to support students' academic and civic development.

Adoption Date:

Parent Involvement

For purposes of enhancing school-home relations the following suggestions are offered:

A. PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

The parent-teacher conference should serve to:

1. Provide a progress report on a child's achievement, e.g., academic (SLO progress), social-emotional (zest for learning, study habits).
2. Enable the teacher to learn more about the child from the parent's perspective.
3. Improve the academic conditions in the home by discussing the role of the parent in parent-child conversations about school and everyday events; encouragement and discussion of leisure reading; monitoring and joint critical analysis of television viewing and peer activities; deferral of immediate gratifications to accomplish long-term goals; expressions of affection and interest in the child's academic and other progress as a person, and, efforts to strengthen the climate of the home through laughter, caprice, serendipity and spontaneity.

Effort should be made to achieve 100% contact. To accomplish this, it may be necessary to contact parents in the evening-by home visit or by telephone. In some instances, it may be advantageous to maintain contact on a regular basis, e.g., every two weeks.

B. OPEN HOUSES

This event can be used to "showplace" the accomplishments of the school. Parents, students and staff, as "stockholders", should "celebrate" their accomplishments so that all have pride and ownership in the accomplishments.

C. BUILDING AND ROOM NEWSLETTERS

Such communication should let the respective audiences know what is going on. The room newsletter should explain the curricular progress so that parents know what is going on and can correlate that information with homework assignments and the information conveyed by the child. Newsletters should be "proofread" to avoid grammatical and spelling errors.

D. PARENT-STAFF MEETINGS

Such meetings can be used to discuss child development issues-homework, study habits, positive-image building, active listening, motivating, etc. In some instances, resource specialists may be helpful in providing an additional perspective. <Note: see also 1 ©> In some instances, it may be beneficial to meet parents on their own "turf" by holding a "coffee klatsch" for a group of parents in a home.

E. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

School improvement projects are most successful when parents, staff and students collaborate. Improvement committees should receive a specific assignment or "charge" so that the committee members have and understand the common purpose.

F. PRESCHOOL EDUCATION

Parent education can contribute to the success of the child when he/she enters school. Informational meetings accompanied by support materials are beneficial to the parent of a preschool child. Such sessions can also be incorporated with the Child Find component of special education.