

The Value of Parent Involvement - 2014-15

Benefits of Parent/Family Involvement:

- Students have higher test grades and test scores, better attendance, and complete homework more consistently, with achievement for disadvantaged students improving dramatically.
- Students exhibit attitudes and behaviors that are more positive.
- Schools with **effective** parent involvement have higher student achievement and make greater gains on state tests.
- Teacher morale is improved, and schools have more support and respect from families.

Keep these Points in Mind:

- Parent Involvement is more than "Muffins with Moms," "Donuts with Dads," or "Meet the Teacher Night."
- Regularly communicate with parents/families about what is going on in the classroom.
- Give support to parents; "teach" them how to help their children at home. "Parenting" is not a natural skill; many parents may not have had a role model from which to learn. "People don't know what they don't know."
- Don't be afraid to include parents/families in the educational process; let them help you. Make it a "team effort."
- Never stop reaching out to families. **Adopt the 10-second/10-feet rule:** If you are within 10 feet of a parent or near a parent for 10 seconds, then say hello and ask how the parent is doing and/or whether you can help the parent with anything.
- Go out of your way to set parents at ease. It's important to build trust and a reciprocal relationship.
- Don't give up just because you're not initially successful in forging a home-school partnership!

Common Challenges to Strong Home-School Partnerships:

- Scheduling conflicts prevent parents from attending meetings and events. **Try this:** Offer flexible scheduling and archive meetings through video so parents can access them after hours.
- Parents aren't comfortable at meetings. **Try this:** Offer food; when people sit down to eat a meal together, barriers begin to break away.
- Parents are turned away by language and jargon. **Try this:** Provide translation, spell out acronyms, and simplify other educational lingo.
- It's hard to sustain both administrative and financial support for family engagement efforts. **Try this:** Keep leaders in the loop by sharing data, and seek out local partners, such as churches and civic groups, to provide meals during parent events.

For specific ideas, strategies, resources, and/or assistance:

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