Supporting Parent, Family, and Community Involvement in Your School

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Foreword

The family makes critical contributions to a child's achievement from early childhood through high school. Talking and playing with infants, reading bedtime stories with toddlers, playing math and reading games with elementary school students, helping middle school students with their homework, and establishing appropriate boundaries for teenagers are foundations for success in school. Many families, however, require assistance in providing these basics of a supportive home learning environment.

When parents, families, and members of the community are involved with schools, all children benefit. Adult participation sends the message that school is important and the work children do there is worthy of adult attention. Many people, however, do not feel welcome at school. They may want to volunteer, but don't know how to begin. They may believe that children and teachers do not want them there, or they may not know how to fit one more activity into an already tight schedule. These situations present perfect opportunities for schools to reach out and provide avenues for parents, family members, and others to provide support.

The family makes critical contributions to a child's achievement.

Research regarding the effects of family involvement on educational outcomes has shown that parent involvement makes a difference in children's academic achievement.

This guide provides ideas and suggestions taken from research on family and community involvement in schools and can help school staff and others design a long-term approach to garnering the positive involvement of all concerned. These ideas represent the tip of the iceberg of what is possible. There are as many solutions for creating a comprehensive plan to involve parents, families, and the community in the education of children, as there are schools. Each school has its own demographic mix, community context, and history. Following are ideas that can be modified and expanded upon to suit the needs of the school.

What the Literature Tells Us About
Parent and Family Involvement

Studies of families show that what the family does with the children is more important to student success than family income or the education level of the parents.
Parental participation improves student learning whether the child is in preschool or in the upper grades, whether or not the family is struggling economically or is affluent, or whether the parents finished high school or graduated from college (Epstein, 1991; Henderson, & Berla, 1994; Liontos, 1992; Reynolds, et al., 1991; Zellman, G.L., & Waterman, J.M., 1998).

Both students and schools benefit from active participation by families in the process of educating children.
The benefits for students when parents are actively involved in schools include:
- Higher grades and test scores
- Better attendance and more homework completed
- Fewer placements in special education
- More positive attitudes and behaviors
- Higher graduation rates
- Greater enrollment in post-secondary education

(Clark, R., 1993; Griffith, J., 1996; Dauber, S.L. & Epstein J.L., 1993)

Parent involvement is more than good attendance at school-sponsored events or having a strong volunteer program.
The strongest support for learning occurs at home through positive parenting styles, nightly reading, homework policies, and high expectations. Schools that measure their success in reaching out to parents by the number of volunteers and attendance at workshops and meetings could be missing valuable opportunities to connect with families who can't be there or who are not comfortable coming to school (Epstein, J. et al., 1997; Dornbusch, S. et al., 1987; Dauber, S., 1993; Comer, J. & Haynes, N.M., 1992; Zellman, G., 1998).

The need for strong family involvement starts by the time children are in preschool and continues through high school.
As children grow older, the methods and expectations for family involvement must change and continue to evolve until graduation. Patterns of communication between families and the school as children enter middle school must be altered to accommodate multiple teachers and increased independence; nonetheless, parents remain valuable allies in increasing student achievement. Schools have shown success by enlisting the support of parents in areas ranging from developing homework routines, providing after-school supervision, limiting television viewing, and helping children prepare for college and other post-secondary education (Eagle, E., 1989; Funkhouser, J.E., & Gonzales, M.R. 1997; Scott-Jones, D., 1994; Goodman, J. et al, 1995; Sheilds, P., 1995).

Six Major Types of Partnerships
Between Schools, Families, and Communities

The Six Types of Partnerships Framework, developed by Joyce Epstein (1995) and her colleagues at Johns Hopkins University, is a useful model for analyzing and designing family-involvement programs. This framework describes the general categories of partnerships that exist between schools, families, and communities. They are:

- **Parenting**: Helping families establish home environments to support children as learners
- **Communications**: The use of effective forms for school-to-home- and home-to-school communications
- **Volunteering**: The recruitment and organization of the school's volunteer program
- **Learning at Home**: Helping families assist their children with homework and recognizing other learning at home opportunities
- **Decisionmaking**: Including parents, students, and community members in the school decisionmaking process
- **Collaborating with the Community**: The identification and integration of resources and services from the community

The *Measure of School, Family, and Community Partnerships* (Epstein, Salinas, Sanders, Davis, & Douglas, 1999) is based on the Six Types of Partnerships Framework and is included in this document as Appendix A. It is a tool schools can use to analyze their current practices and make plans for future activities. It can help schools see their strengths and build upon them to create a comprehensive approach to family and community involvement that promotes student success.

As schools design their approaches to increasing and enhancing partnerships, they may want to consider some additional findings from research and from work that Epstein and her colleagues have documented in *School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action* (1997):

- Schools with more affluent populations, on average, experience more family involvement.
- Schools with higher percentages of students on free and reduced-price lunches face more challenges to building positive partnerships.
- If the school does not actively seek the attendance of single parents, fathers, working couples, and families whose first language isn't English, they're unlikely to participate in events and volunteer activities.
- Contacts with families tend to be about problems students are having in schools.
- Parents and families care about their children. They just vary in their current capacity to be strong partners with schools.

- Teachers and administrators want to improve the outcomes for students, though they vary in their current capacity to reach out to families and the community.

Having a comprehensive approach to partnerships between schools, families, and communities allows schools to build on their strengths. A comprehensive approach fosters positive attitudes about the school and about families and community members because it respects the varying capacities of the school population as a whole. Actions and activities related to the Six Types of Partnerships that are suggested in detail in this document are intended to provide school staff and others involved in planning with ideas that other schools have used successfully to increase involvement. There are hundreds of ways to reach out, create, and strengthen partnerships. Each school must design its own plan based on how far it has already come.

Research from the field shows that strong parent, family, and community involvement doesn't just happen and isn't limited to certain types of schools. People come into the school community with a variety of prior experiences with schools, conflicting pressures, and expectations. Some may have underlying issues of suspicion or other conflicts that can affect the relationships between home, community, and school. Many schools have gone to the expense and effort of planning a series of events for parents and community members and have only two or three people attend. When this happens, school staff become disillusioned and begin to wonder if school partnerships are even worth the effort.

What is the best way to improve parent, family, and community involvement? Are there some strategies that work better than others? Can educators find ways to make the process easy?

Getting Started

Assembling the Team

The first step to improving parent, family, and community involvement in your school is to assemble a team composed of:

- Parents who represent any major groups at the school, i.e., parent-teacher association, English-language learners, representatives of majority ethnic groups
- Federal programs staff (i.e.,Title I, Title IV, and Title VII)
- Community members and agencies
- The principal
- Teachers
- Students, when appropriate
- District staff

The team begins by assessing the current situation. Data can be collected by assigning tasks to the team. The best decisions are made when data about the school informs the process so that a comprehensive view is achieved. If your school has been involved in the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program or another schoolwide reform program, this information may already be compiled and should be reviewed prior to launching an entirely new effort. Once the school has initiated an effort to look carefully at information gathered about the status of partnerships, priority areas can be identified, tasks assigned, and plans to evaluate progress can be put into place.

Collecting Data

Begin by studying past and existing school partnership efforts. Using *The Measure of School, Family, and Community Partnerships* (Epstein, Salinas, Sanders, Davis, & Douglas, 1999), evaluate your school's progress thus far.

Next, review the characteristics of the families in your school community. Ask questions such as:

- Is this a school with a high percentage of single-parent homes?
- Is this a school with many English language learners?
- Is this a school with a high mobility rate?
- Are there many families where at least one parent is predominately in the home?
- Is there a high percentage of homes where violence, abuse, addiction, physical or mental illness is present?
- What educational goals do families have for their children?

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As a group, review the school's achievement data and then translate it into a clear, easy-to-understand report. Disseminate this information to parents and community members asking them what the school is doing well, where improvements need to be made, and what contributions they feel they can make to help the students succeed.

Using Data to Make Decisions about Priorities

Once information has been gathered about the status of the school, it can be used to answer the following questions:

- What are our school's goals for improving our school, family, and community partnerships over the next three years?
- How can we effectively involve families and the community in the decisionmaking process?
- Do decisionmakers have the appropriate research and training to make informed decisions?
- Do materials need to be translated?
- Do translators need to be provided at meetings?
- Does childcare need to be provided while parents attend meetings or volunteer at school?
- Should school personnel be making home visits? If so, how?
- Is student attendance a problem?
- What kind of support do teachers need?
- What are the achievement trends?
- How can outreach to families and the community link to the academic needs of the school?
- What do parents say about past successful events?
- What activities do parents feel would be most beneficial?
- How can we most effectively use community resources?

Writing a Partnership Plan

Once priorities have been set, the team can write the school's partnership plan. On the following pages, you will find issues, benefits, and strategies of:

- Encouraging positive parenting skills
- Enhancing communication with families
- Increasing volunteerism and attendance at school events
- Enhancing learning at home
- Increasing the number of parents in leadership and decisionmaking roles
- Enhancing and improving community collaborations

Encouraging Positive Parenting Skills

Students, schools, and families will benefit if parents are supported in establishing home environments that foster children's growth and learning. Families whose basic needs of food, clothing, and shelter are not being met have a more difficult time helping their children to do well in school. Schools and community agencies can work together to provide support so that parents can focus on their children's needs.

The issues and challenges around encouraging parenting skills are:

- **Resistance:** Parents being resistant to the information being provided

- **Materials:** Gathering information that assists parents in providing the necessary boundaries, high expectations, adult role models, support for academic achievement, and an environment that nurtures the positive social/emotional development of children

- **Reaching all families:** Discovering ways to provide useful information to all families, not just to those who attend meetings at school

- **Acknowledging and embracing all families and cultures:** Assuring that all families are welcomed at school and invited to participate at all levels of involvement

The benefits of helping families enhance their parenting skills are:

- **Self-confidence and support:** Parents feel the school is supporting them and they are confident that they are helping their children.

- **Learning readiness:** Parents send their children to school ready to learn, and children are able to concentrate on school issues, without worrying about safety or basic needs.

- **Development of parenting strategies:** Parents are learning parenting strategies they can use as their children move from one phase of development to another.

Strategies for Encouraging Positive Parenting Skills

☑ **Survey parents**: Ask parents what information and workshops they would find most helpful.

☑ **Consult with parents and others in the community:** Ask about their preferences and the best ways to translate or modify messages to all parents.

☑ **Establish home visiting programs:** When teachers visit with parents in the home, teachers can share with them school and classroom expectations, and parents can share information about home situations that might affect student achievement.

☑ **Make referral information readily available:** Put referral information on bulletin boards, in newsletters, and on information tables at school events. This information can include times and locations of parenting classes, agency services to families, and parks and recreation schedules. Offer information about parenting that is provided by community agencies and churches.

☑ **Offer school space:** Have a room available for parent-led support groups and parenting education classes where parents can share their parenting successes and challenges and gain knowledge to enhance their parenting skills. Schools having the greatest success with parent centers are those with a parent-and-teacher team that coordinates activities and use of the room. When parents know it is a place they can gather informally, as well as hold scheduled meetings, it can become more than a place of work; it becomes a place to connect with others.

☑ **Provide child development information:** Conduct workshops on what parents can expect as their child moves into middle school or high school. Workshop topics can include:

  ☑ Changes in homework requirements

  ☑ Communication with your adolescent or teen

  ☑ Specific issues of parenting the adolescent

☑ **Capitalize on parent attendance at neighborhood and community fairs and events:** Offer outreach materials such as brochures, posters, bookmarks, tip sheets, school phone numbers, and welcoming messages.

☑ **Offer a sharing night for parents:** Have parents share their best practices for nurturing, discipline, homework help, creating time for reading, or other pertinent topics.

Enhancing Communication With Families

The more that parents and teachers share pertinent information with each other about students, the better equipped they will be to help those students become successful. Parent and teacher consultation and collaboration create the climate for maximum realization of a student's potential. Effective communication with families means that the school welcomes and consistently supports families to support their children. Two-way communication about school programs and children's progress will result in better outcomes for students.

The issues and challenges of enhancing communication with families are:

- **Clear expectations:** Communicating frequently with parents about curriculum, classroom expectations, and ways parents can become involved

- **Frequent and positive communication:** Helping teachers see the importance of using frequent, clear, and positive communication strategies with parents

- **Conveying that the school is a welcoming, caring place:** Ensuring that visitors are greeted by welcoming signs and responsive staff

- **Developing appropriate strategies:** Using information from parents, families, and community members to focus on appropriate strategies

- **Getting information into parents' hands:** Getting information home via students and parents being inundated with competing information

The benefits of enhancing communication with families are:

- **A feeling of community:** Parents feel that they are part of the school community, as they are kept aware of school events and other important school information.

- **Clear information:** Parents learn about the school's curriculum, assessments, achievement levels, and reporting methods.

- **Parents receive information about how to support their children:** Parents have the information they need to help their children thrive and achieve. When families are happy, children tend to do better in school.

- **Relationships are developed:** When schools and families share information and strategies, everyone feels connected to the school community.

- **Positive outcomes:** School staff realize the positive ways that parents contribute to student success.

Strategies for Enhancing Communication With Families

☑ **Emphasize the importance of strong family involvement:** Devote staff meeting time to exploring ways to improve communication with families.

☑ **Devote Title I or other funds to compensate teachers for time spent making home visits:** This time can pay back huge dividends when teachers develop relationships with families and can communicate with them about ways to support their children.

☑ **Solicit financial support to improve telephone communication opportunities with families:** Many schools are still operating with only one or two phone lines, making it virtually impossible to reach teachers during the day.

☑ **Share school expectations:** Share the school's goals and policies about student expectations and school assessment procedures.

☑ **Make sure that all teachers have an e-mail address with easy and regular access:** This form of communication can link parents at work and at home.

☑ **As a faculty, develop a format for classroom newsletters:** Basic information about classes and opportunities for parent support can be included and sent home on a weekly or twice monthly basis. Students can do some of the reporting, which can be directly linked to writing goals.

☑ **Have several mechanisms for gathering opinions from parents, students, and teachers:** Have a suggestion box in the hall, a tear-off suggestion form in the newsletter, a questionnaire at student-teacher conferences, a random sample phone-call effort, focus groups, or an annual satisfaction survey.

☑ **Communicate frequently about the school's achievement data:** Share the school's achievement data and offer parents suggestions about ways they can help their children succeed.

☑ **Send information to both parents:** In the case where a child doesn't live with both parents, it's important to keep each parent informed about the child's progress and about school activities.

☑ **Update signs around the school:** Be sure that notices asking parents to check in at the office include a warm welcome in all languages represented at the school. Students can create the signs as part of their language arts curriculum.

Increasing Volunteerism and Attendance at School Events

Recruiting and organizing volunteer support of school events can be truly helpful to teachers while increasing community awareness of the school, its mission, and the issues teachers face.

The issues and challenges of increasing volunteerism and attendance at school events are:

- **Offering flexible times to volunteer:** People have varied and hectic schedules.

- **Child care:** Many parents will need child care so that they may participate at their child's school.

- **Providing meaningful volunteer experiences and matching volunteer strengths to schools needs:** Volunteers want to feel that the work they are doing is beneficial to the students and staff. Their work should be a reliable form of assistance to teachers.

- **Language and cultural barriers:** Schools will need to address the issues of language and cultural barriers.

- **Past negative experiences:** Some people may be reluctant to volunteer or attend school events because of past negative school experiences.

- **Training teachers to work with volunteers:** Teachers may need some training to expand how they work with volunteers. When teachers are asked to use volunteers, schools must provide them time to plan for including volunteers in their classrooms.

- **Volunteer recognition:** To motivate and retain volunteers, it is vital to recognize them for their efforts.

The benefits of increasing volunteerism and attendance at school events are:

- **Time for teachers to work individually with students:** Often, when teachers have assistance in the classroom, they have more time to work one-on-one with students.

- **Positive relationships:** Creating a welcoming environment lays the groundwork for positive relationships. By increasing parent, family, and community participation, schools raise awareness of how much their help is needed and appreciated.

- **Increased skills and knowledge:** Volunteer opportunities can lead to paid positions or increased knowledge that can be used in the workplace.

Strategies for Increasing Volunteerism and Attendance at School Events

☑ **Survey potential volunteers:** Throughout the year, survey parents about their interests and availability to volunteer.

☑ **Hire or appoint a volunteer coordinator:** A volunteer coordinator can make phone calls to remind volunteers of their commitments, to provide training on equipment such as the copy machine, laminator, and playground equipment, and to organize volunteer activities and recognition events.

☑ **Offer a variety of times to volunteer:** People have varied and hectic schedules, so successful school volunteer programs will need to offer flexible volunteer schedules.

☑ **Offer training to volunteers:** Offer volunteers training in interpreting academic performance assessments so that they can better understand what is expected of students and can provide help accordingly in the classroom. It is vital for the school to help volunteers feel competent about their ability to assist.

☑ **Invite parents to ride the school bus and eat lunch with their children:** This offers another way for the school to be accessible and welcoming.

☑ **Train parents to become parent mentors:** Parent mentors can work with new volunteers and answer questions at their school.

☑ **Encourage opportunities for volunteers to be seen as positive adult role models:** Offer regular career exploration opportunities. Have volunteers answer basic questions about their careers, such as job title, subjects to take in school that will help them to do the job, training needed to do the job, great things about the job, and tough things about the job.

☑ **Publicize volunteer opportunities throughout the year:** By publicizing volunteer opportunities year-round, families and community members who come to the school mid-year can be made aware of the volunteer opportunities and can become connected with the school community.

☑ **Include students in meetings with parents:** Have students participate in some way in the meeting with parents. This provides additional incentives for families to attend together.

Enhancing Learning at Home

This type of partnership shows the most promise for increasing student achievement. Families make a huge impact on how successful their children are with schoolwork, yet schools don't often know what is happening at home. Schools need to invest time and effort into influencing learning-at-home routines.

The issues and challenges of enhancing learning at home are:

- **Expectations:** Parents are often unaware of the teacher's and the school's expectations of students.

- **Curriculum-related decisions:** Schools generally have not developed strategies to involve parents in curriculum-related decisions.

- **Clear communication between teachers and parents:** Strategies will need to be developed to overcome children's tendencies toward not discussing their homework requirements with their parents.

- **Teacher preparation time:** Teachers will need time to prepare homework assignments and projects that truly engage students, promote higher levels of learning, and productively involve parents.

- **Busy family schedules:** Schools will need to work through the issues of busy family schedules, single parent homes, and children switching between homes.

The benefits of enhancing learning at home are:

- **Parental understanding:** Parents will understand the material their children are responsible for knowing.

- **Attainment of learning goals:** Parents can assist their children with attainment of learning goals.

- **Positive attitude:** Students develop a more positive attitude about homework.

Strategies for Enhancing Learning at Home

☑ **Make parent support at home an important topic:** At the beginning of the school year, hold discussions about parent support at home. This can be done at open houses, back-to-school nights, in school newsletters, at parent meetings, and during parent-teacher conferences.

☑ **Encourage parents:** Ask parents to spend at least 30 minutes a day working with their children, reading all student work and newsletters, and providing an adequate workspace.

☑ **Offer suggestions to parents:** Suggest informal ways to strengthen children's reading and math skills by playing games like cribbage, Scrabble, or rummy. Suggest ways they can help children make connections between schoolwork and the world. In addition, give parents guidelines to follow as they assist their children with school projects.

☑ **Have family reading, math, or science nights at school**: Give parents practical and fun ideas on how to work with their children at home.

☑ **Ask parents for input on homework assignments:** Ask questions such as:
  ☑ Was this assignment appropriate for your child's ability level?
  ☑ Did your child have problems completing this homework?
  ☑ Do you have any questions or concerns about your child's homework?

☑ **Develop learning activities for families to use in the car:** Families spend a great deal of time going to or from places together. Offer parents suggestions on ways to make outings fun learning experiences.

☑ **Send home a simple handwritten newsletter:** Include expectations for students and suggestions for parent involvement during the upcoming grading period.

☑ **Have a library of games that students can check out:** Encourage them to play with a family member at home. Games that reinforce literacy and math skills will also provide opportunities for interaction among family members.

☑ **Help families celebrate successes:** Offer parents suggestions about ways they can praise their children and celebrate their academic achievements.

☑ **Establish a homework hotline:** Offer parents a homework hotline that they can call to identify assignments, due dates, and ways to get help with homework questions.

Increasing the Number of Parents in Leadership and Decisionmaking Roles

Schools benefit when they include parents in the decisionmaking process. When parents provide their opinions and preferences regarding issues under consideration, they are more likely to buy-in to school policies and initiatives. When parents are aware of the complexities of running a school, they are often more supportive. Additionally, parents can help the school reach out to other parents, share ideas, and gather input because they have informal access through extra-curricular activities and neighborhood connections.

The issues and challenges to increasing the number of parents in leadership and decisionmaking roles are:

- **Key roles:** Offering parents key roles in the school decisionmaking process

- **Inclusive representation:** Assembling a representative group of all parents

- **Leadership training:** Offering parents training on how to serve effectively as leaders and parent representatives

- **Time constraints:** Developing strategies for overcoming parent and staff time constraints that interfere with arranging meetings

- **School data:** Making school data understandable and available to teachers and parents so that they can make informed decisions

- **Resistance issues:** Developing strategies for working through staff resistance to change, turf issues, and power struggles

The benefits of increasing the number of parents in leadership and decisionmaking roles are:

- **Parents are more supportive:** When parents are involved in leadership and decisionmaking roles, they become more supportive of the school's efforts and they have a better understanding of school issues and priorities.

- **Schools are more aware:** By involving parents in leadership and decisionmaking roles, schools are more aware of parents' perspectives.

- **Funding issues:** Involved parents are more supportive of school funding issues.

**Strategies for Increasing the Number of Parents
in Leadership and Decisionmaking Roles**

☑ **Award one parent a stipend**: Have that parent contact other parents, welcome new parents to the school, help resolve conflicts between the home and school, and actively seek parents' opinions and support.

☑ **Make decisions after surveying comprehensive data:** Study data on student and family characteristics, academic achievement, and parents' opinions and willingness to support proposals for change.

☑ **Offer leadership training:** Bring in a trainer or develop a leadership training workshop which is offered to both parents and staff.

☑ **Do a parent check-in:** Before there is an urgent need to make decisions about vandalism, violence, and drug and alcohol issues, check in with parents. Discuss these problems before a crisis occurs. This offers parents an opportunity to play an active role in these very critical areas.

☑ **Deal with conflict promptly:** Explore the issues with a neutral facilitator who will help set boundaries for the discussion and guide parties in developing common purposes, methods for working together, and timelines and check-in points to make sure that the resolution is achieved.

☑ **At the end of meetings, do an "ABC" evaluation:**
    ☑ What **action** will you take as a result of the meeting?
    ☑ What was the **best** part of this meeting?
    ☑ What **concerns** do you have?

☑ **Recognize parents for their efforts:** Recognize all of the efforts made by parents who serve on school advisory committees and in other decisionmaking roles. This will not only give credit where credit is due; it will help other parents to know who is representing them.

Improving Community Collaborations

Schools are increasingly relying on collaborative efforts with partners such as local businesses, after-school care providers, higher education, foundations, and other community-based agencies. Building better connections to meet the needs of children and further the goals of school reform starts with effective school and community partnerships.

The issues and challenges of improving community collaborations are:

- **Improving communication within the community:** Often community members are not aware of the positive things happening in a school, so schools will want to help community partners understand the value of school/community partnerships.

- **Matching community contributions with school goals:** Clearly illustrating how communities can contribute to achieving school goals

- **Integrating child and family services with education:** Working closely with the agencies and service providers that deal with parents and families to assure equal opportunities for services and that information about community resources is provided in appropriate languages

- **Establishing clear policies about the importance of confidentiality:** It is important for all parties to have a clear understanding of the school policies concerning confidentiality.

- **Extending the use of school buildings:** Providing neighborhoods with a place to hold activities, thereby elevating the status of schools within the community

The benefits of improving community collaborations are:

- **Schools feel they are getting help from multiple sources:** With the support of their communities, schools can accomplish their goals, which in turn, can result in more community support for increased school funding.

- **Communities can unite around the shared responsibility of educating youth, and schools are able to expand the number of positive role models:** Community partners can offer varied mentoring experiences to students.

- **Community businesses can make people aware of their support for schools and families:** Businesses can benefit from the positive public relations of working closely with schools.

Strategies to Improve Community Collaborations

☑ **Convene at least three meetings a year:** Invite all agencies and community partners who serve students or families within the school populations. Ask everyone to come prepared to talk briefly about who they serve, what is their mission, and with whom they are already partnering. Create a plan for working together, along with check-in points to assure progress is occurring.

☑ **Invite businesses to school events:** Extend invitations to businesses for events such as performances and recognition celebrations. This gives businesses the opportunity to be a part of the school's life and promotes long-lasting partnerships.

☑ **Publicly acknowledge partnerships:** Partnerships can be acknowledged through newsletters and signs at the school. The goal is to make partnerships more visible.

☑ **Mention generosity frequently and prominently:** When businesses agree to assist the school by making donations, providing staff, or helping in other ways, be sure to acknowledge their contributions.

☑ **Get feedback and ideas to improve outreach to families:** When community-based organizations meet to discuss programs and services they are providing to families, use the opportunity to discuss any ideas they may have about improving outreach to families.

☑ **Ask all who participate in meetings to evaluate progress and identify obstacles:** Ask questions such as:
   ☑ Does the work provide further opportunities to share resources and reach more families?
   ☑ Was the meeting an opportunity to expand possibilities?
   ☑ How can future meetings be more productive?

☑ **Write thank you notes:** Have students write thank you notes to businesses that contribute to the school.

Annotated Bibliography of Resources
on Parent and Family Involvement

Chavkin, N.F., & Williams, D.L., Jr. (1993). Minority parents and the elementary school: Attitudes and practices. In N.F. Chavkin (Ed.), *Families and schools in a pluralistic society* (pp.73-83). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

> This article describes a study on the attitudes and practices of minority parents and involvement in their children's education. Recommendations include assuring that parents have opportunities to provide input on activities that are planned for them.

Clark, R. (1993). Homework-focused parenting practices that positively affect student achievement. In N.F. Chavkin (Ed.), *Families and schools in a pluralistic society* (pp.85-105). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

> This study of low and high achieving third grade students shows that high achievers tend to come from families in which parents set high standards for their children's educational activities and maintain a home environment that supports learning.

Cohen, D.L. (1995, May 3). Joining hands. *Education Week, 14*(32), 35-38.

> This article discusses advantages of linkages between schools and community-provided health and welfare services. Examples of typical pitfalls in providing integrated services to families may be useful to schools embarking on this journey.

Comer, J.P., & Haynes, N.M. (1992). *Summary of School Development Program effects.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Child Study Center.

> This paper summarizes evaluation findings on the School Development Program (SDP) developed by James Comer. The parent and school "fit" model used in this approach is described. The findings showed that students in the predominantly low-income elementary and middle schools implementing the SDP improved in four areas: academic performance in reading and math, behavior and adjustment to school, self-concept, and positive ratings of classroom climate.

Dauber, S.L, & Epstein J.L. (1993). Parents' attitudes and practices of involvement in inner-city elementary and middle schools. In N.F. Chavkin (Ed.), *Families and schools in a pluralistic society* (pp.53-71). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

> This report on a survey of 2,317 inner-city elementary and middle school parents showed that the level of parent involvement is directly linked to the specific practices that schools and teachers use to encourage involvement at school and strategies for how to help their children at home. The survey showed that parents who are more involved tend to have children who are performing better in school.

Dornbusch, S.M., Ritter, P.L., Leiderman, P.H., Roberts, D.F., & Fraleigh, M.J. (1987). The relation of parenting style to adolescent school performance. *Child Development, 58*(5), 1244-1257.

> In this study, parents with authoritative parenting styles have children who receive higher grades. Authoritative parenting is characterized by a combination of structure, discipline, and open communication as contrasted with authoritarian and permissive parenting styles.

Eagle, E. (1989, March). *Socioeconomic status, family structure, and parental involvement: The correlates of achievement*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, CA.

> This study addresses the varying effects of socioeconomic status, parent attention, mother's working patterns, and family structure on high school student achievement. Although parent education level and income are associated with higher achievement, when controlled for SES, only parent attention had a significant impact on student achievement.

Epstein, J.L. (1991). Effects of students' achievement of teacher practices of parent involvement. In S.B. Silvern (Ed.), *Advances in reading/language research: Vol. 5. Literacy through family, community and school interaction* (pp. 261-276). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

> In a study of student achievement in the classrooms of 14 elementary school teachers who used varying techniques to involve parents in learning activities at home, the author finds a positive and significant effect on student reading achievement.

Epstein, J.L. (1995). School/family/community partnerships: Caring for the children we share. *Phi Delta Kappan, 76*(9), 701-711.

> Epstein discusses the overlapping spheres of influence that directly affect student learning and redefines the six types framework. The author gives suggestions for developing action teams to promote school, family, and community partnerships.

Epstein, J.L., Coates, L., Salinas, K.C., Sanders, M.G., & Simon, B.S. (1997). *School, family, and community partnerships: Your handbook for action*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

> Activities and practical suggestions based on 12 years of field-testing, this handbook describes a process of using action teams to plan, implement, and maintain successful partnership between school, families, and the community.

Finders, M., & Lewis, C. (1994). Why some parents don't come to school. *Educational Leadership, 51*(8), 50-54.

> Educators should not assume that a parent's absence from the classroom means they don't care. This article examines some of the barriers that can inhibit parents from participating in their child's education.

Flood, J., Lapp, D., Tinajero, J.V., & Nagel, G. (1995)."I never knew I was needed until you called!" Promoting parent involvement in schools. *The Reading Teacher, 48*(7), 614-617.

> Parents can assist and support classroom instruction both as in-school resources and as at-home teachers. This article describes the success one large, multicultural school had in including family members in the education process, both in and out of the classroom.

Funkhouser, J.E., & Gonzales, M.R., (1997). *Family involvement in children's education: Successful local approaches. An idea book.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, National Institute on the Education of At-Risk Students.

> An idea book of successful local approaches that is based on case studies of 20 successful education programs in elementary and secondary schools that receive Title I funds. All schools can do these approaches with low-income students and families. The section on Texas' Roosevelt High School (pg. A55-A60) discusses how they employed key strategies to link with families and increase student success.

Goodman, J.F., Sutton, V., & Harkavy, I. (1995). "The effectiveness of family workshops in a middle school setting: Respect and caring make the difference." *Phi Delta Kappan, 76*(9), 694-700.

> The authors describe a series of workshops organized for families of students attending an urban middle school. The workshops focused on academic achievement and violence prevention and were held on Saturdays. Evaluations showed that parents who participated were wildly enthusiastic about the opportunity to connect with other parents, and by the respect, caring, and support they encountered. The authors found that bringing families to school on a regular and sustained basis is possible and very rewarding, but only happens with tremendous outreach efforts.

Griffith, J. (1996). Relation of parental involvement, empowerment, and school traits to student academic performance. *Journal of Educational Research, 90*(1), 33-41.

> This two-year study looked at the relationship between parental involvement, parental empowerment, and student test performance in 41 urban elementary schools. Involvement was defined as parents attending events such as conferences and back to-school nights. Empowerment was defined as parental perceptions of the school's willingness to accommodate parents. Parental involvement and empowerment are consistently correlated with higher achievement.

Henderson, A.T., & Berla, N. (Eds.). (1994). *A new generation of evidence: The family is critical to student achievement.* Washington, DC: National Committee for Citizens in Education.

> This publication summarizes 66 studies, reviews, reports, analyses, and books that highlight the important role parental involvement plays in improving student achievement. The overarching message is that a variety of methods of family involvement are successful, as long as the overall approach to involving families, based on parent input, is well planned, and is comprehensive in nature, and does not consist of a series of unlinked, "one-shot" efforts.

Kellaghan, T., Sloane, K., Alvarez, K., & Bloom, B.S. (1993). *The home environment and school learning: Promoting parent involvement in the education of children.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

> This book reviews a large body of research and finds that the home environment is a powerful factor in determining the academic success of students--their level of achievement, their interest in learning, and the years of schooling they will complete. The authors also outline a program parents can use at home to support their children's scholastic development.

Lareau, A. (1987). Social class differences in family-school relationships: The importance of cultural capital. *Sociology of Education, 60*(2), 73-85.

> This study, comparing family and school relationships in a middle-class versus a working-class elementary school, finds that the differences in the way parents respond to teacher requests and interact with the school may explain the lower achievement, aspirations, and life prospects for working-class children.

Liontos, L.B. (1992). *At-risk families and schools: Becoming partners.* Eugene, OR: ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management.

This book provides information about the many facets of parent involvement. Various strands of theory, research, and practice are described. Examples and how-to-do-it advice are offered for getting and keeping parents involved.

Luchuck, V.L. (1998). *The effects of parent involvement on student achievement*. Masters thesis, Salem-Teikyo University, Salem, West Virginia. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 424 926)

This study investigated the relationship between parent involvement in elementary school and student achievement. Findings indicated that parent's involvement as measured by the "Parent Involvement Check-Up Scale" was associated with higher performance on the Stanford Achievement Test.

Nettles, S.M. (1991). Community involvement and disadvantaged students: A review. *Review of Educational Research*, *61*(3), 379-406.

This review of 13 studies of community based programs designed to improve the achievement of students at risk suggests that such efforts can have positive effects on school-related behavior and achievement, as well as on attitudes and risk taking. Nettles defines community involvement as "the actions that organizations and individuals (e.g. parents, businesses, universities, social service agencies, and the media) take to promote student development."

Pfannensteil, J.C., Lambson T., & Yarnell, V. (1991). *Second wave study of the parents as teachers program.* St. Louis, MO: Parents as Teachers National Center.

This is a summary of evaluation findings on the Parents as Teachers program (PAT), a parent education and support program for families with children from birth to age three. At the end of first grade, the PAT children scored significantly higher than comparison group children on standardized tests of reading and math, and participating parents were twice as likely to be involved in their children's school experiences.

Reynolds, A.J., Mavrogenes, N.A., Hagemann, M., & Bezruczko, N. (1991). *Schools, families, and children: Sixth year results from the longitudinal study of children at risk.* Chicago, IL: Chicago Public Schools, Department of Research, Evaluation, and Planning.

This report presents the findings of the Longitudinal Study of Children at Risk (LSCAR), an ongoing study of low income, minority children in the Chicago Public Schools. The study finds that parents' expectations for their children and parents' satisfaction with the school are major contributors to their children's academic and social adjustment.

Salinas, K.C., Epstein, J.L., Sanders, M.G., Davis, D., & Douglas, I. (1999). *Measure of school, family, and community partnerships* [Teacher survey]. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University, & Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

> This instrument, based on Epstein's six types of involvement, is designed to measure how a school is reaching out to involve parents, community members, and students in a meaningful manner.

Shields, P.M. (1995). Bringing schools and communities together in preparation for the 21st century: Implications of the current educational reform movement for family and community involvement policies. In B. Rutherford (Ed.), *Creating family/school partnerships* (pp.191-207). Columbus, OH: National Middle School Association.

> The questions addressed in this article include: What are the most appropriate roles for parents and communities in the current efforts to improve schooling? What policies should federal, state or local decision makers put in place to support this involvement? The author focuses special attention on policies related to the middle grades (4-8).

Snipes, A.G., Blendinger, J., & Jones, L.T. (1995, November). *Principals' perceptions of parent involvement practices in high and low academically achieving elementary schools.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of Mid-South Educational Research Association, Biloxi, MS.

> Both high and low academically achieving elementary schools frequently practiced the same top five activities: sending student work home; holding problem solving conferences with parents, sending letters and notes home; back-to-school nights and conferences; and special music and family nights. Higher achieving schools reported more classroom newsletters, more active parent-teacher organizations, and better relationships with parents.

Swap, S.M. (1993). *Developing home school partnerships: From concepts to practice.* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

> The field of school and family partnerships has grown over the past decade. Research, policy, and practice have improved and advanced. This book offers a review of the progress and offers practical ideas to help educators develop partnerships.

U.S. Department of Education. (1994). *Strong families, strong schools: Building community partnerships for learning. A research base for family involvement in learning from the U.S. Department of Education.* Washington, DC: Author.

> This publication underscores reasons why family involvement is so important to learning and summarizes recent research. It offers practical tips to parents, schools, businesses, and community groups about how to connect families to the learning process.

Zellman, G.L., & Waterman, J.M. (1998). Understanding the impact of parent school involvement on children's educational outcomes. *Journal of Educational Research, 91*(6), 370-80.

> This study of 193 second and fifth graders and their mothers indicates that parent/school involvement contributes to positive child outcomes. How parents interact with their children through enthusiasm toward school and a positive parenting style is a more important indication of academic outcomes than the extent to which they are involved at school.

Appendix A

Measure of School, Family, and Community Partnerships

Karen Clark Salinas, Joyce L. Epstein, and Mavis G. Sanders, Johns Hopkins University; and Deborah Davis and Inge Aldersebaes, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

This instrument is designed to measure how your school is reaching out to involve parents, community members, and students in a meaningful manner. The measure is based on the framework of six types of involvement developed by Epstein (1995). At this time, your school may conduct all, some, or none of the activities or approaches listed. Not every activity is appropriate at every grade level. The selected items show that your school is meeting challenges to involve all families in many different ways that will improve the school climate, strengthen families, and increase student success in school. Your school may be conducting other activities for each type of involvement. These may be added and rated to account for all major partnership practices that your school presently conducts.

> **Directions:** Carefully examine the scoring rubric below before rating your school on the six types of involvement. As you review each item, please circle the response that comes closest to describing your school. A score of 4 or 5 indicates that the activity or approach is strong and prominent. A score of 1, 2, or 3 indicates that the activity is not yet part of the school's program, or needs improvement. The results provide information on the strength of current practices of partnership, and insights about possible future directions or needed improvements in your school's partnership program.

Scoring Rubric

1 – **Not Occurring:** Strategy does not happen at our school.

2 – **Rarely:** Occurs in only one or two classes. Receives isolated use or little time. Clearly not emphasized in this school's parental involvement plan.

3 – **Occasionally:** Occurs in some classes. Receives minimal or modest time or emphasis across grades. Not a prevalent component of this school's parental involvement plan.

4 – **Frequently:** Occurs in many but not all classes/grade levels. Receives substantive time and emphasis. A prevalent component of this school's parental involvement plan.

5 – **Extensively:** Occurs in most or all classes/grade levels. Receives substantive time and emphasis. A highly prevalent component of this school's parental involvement plan.

I. PARENTING: Help all families establish home environments to support children as students.

Our School:	Rating				
	Not Occurring	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Extensively
1. Conducts workshops or provides information for parents on child development.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Provides information, training, and assistance to all families who want it or who need it, not just to the few who can attend workshops or meetings at the school building.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Produces information for families that is clear, usable, and linked to children's success in school.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Asks families for information about children's goals, strengths and talents.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Sponsors home visiting programs or neighborhood meetings to help families understand schools and to help schools to understand families.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Provides families with information/training on developing home conditions or environments that support learning.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Respects the different cultures represented in our student population.	1	2	3	4	5
Other types of activities:	1	2	3	4	5

II. COMMUNICATIONS: Design effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communications about school programs and children's progress.

Our School:	Rating				
	Not Occurring	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Extensively
1. Reviews the readability, clarity, form, and frequency of all memos, notices, and other print and nonprint communications.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Develops communication for parents, who do not speak English well, do not read well, or need large type.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Establishes clear two-way channels for communications from home to school and from school to home.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Conducts a formal conference with every parent at least once a year.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Conducts an annual survey for families to share information and concerns about student needs and reactions to school programs, and their satisfaction with their involvement in school.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Conducts an orientation for new parents.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Sends home folders of student work weekly or monthly for parent review and comment.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Provides clear information about the curriculum, assessments, and achievement levels and report cards.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Contacts families of students having academic or behavior problems.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Develops school's plan and program of family and community involvement with input from educators, parents, and others.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Trains teachers, staff, and principals on the value and utility of contributions of parents and ways to build ties between school and home.	1	2	3	4	5

Our School:	Rating				
	Not Occurring	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Extensively
12. Builds policies that encourage all teachers to communicate frequently with parents about their curriculum plans, expectations for homework, and how parents can help.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Produces a regular school newsletter with up-to-date information about the school, special events, organizations, meetings, and parenting tips.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Provides written communication in the language of the parents.	1	2	3	4	5
Other types of activities:	1	2	3	4	5

III. VOLUNTEERING: Recruit and organize parent help and support.

Our School:	Rating				
	Not Occurring	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Extensively
1. Conducts an annual survey to identify interests, talents, and availability of parent volunteers, in order to match their skills/talents with school and classroom needs.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Provides a parent/family room for volunteers and family members to work, meet, and access resources about parenting, childcare, tutoring, and other things that affect their children.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Creates flexible volunteering and school events schedules, enabling parents who work to participate.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Trains volunteers so they use their time productively.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Recognizes volunteers for their time and efforts.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Schedules school events at different times during the day and evening so that all families can attend some throughout the year.	1	2	3	4	5

Our School:	Rating				
	Not Occurring	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Extensively
7. Reduces barriers to parent participation by providing transportation, childcare, flexible schedules, and addresses the needs of English-language learners.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
8. Encourages families and the community to be involved with the school in a variety of ways (assisting in classrooms, giving talks, monitoring halls, leading activities, etc.)	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Other types of activities:	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

IV. LEARNING AT HOME: Provide information and ideas to families about how to help students at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions, and planning.

Our School:	Rating				
	Not Occurring	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Extensively
1. Provides information to families on how to monitor and discuss schoolwork at home.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
2. Provides ongoing and specific information to parents on how to assist students with skills that they need to improve.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
3. Makes parents aware of the importance of reading at home, and asks parents to listen to their child read or read aloud with their child.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
4. Assists families in helping students set academic goals, select courses, and programs.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
5. Schedules regular interactive homework that requires students to demonstrate and discuss what they are learning with a family member.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Other types of activities	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

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V. DECISIONMAKING: Include parents in school decisions, developing parent leaders and representatives.

Our School:	Rating				
	Not Occurring	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Extensively
1. Has active PTA, PTO, or other parent organizations.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Includes parent representatives on the school's advisory council, improvement team, or other committees.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Has parents represented on district-level advisory council and committees.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Involves parents in an organized, ongoing, and timely way in the planning, review, and improvement of programs.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Involves parents in revising the school/district curricula.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Includes parent leaders from all racial, ethnic, socioeconomic and other groups in the school.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Develops formal networks to link all families with their parent representatives.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Includes students (along with parents) in decisionmaking groups.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Deals with conflict openly and respectfully.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Asks involved parents to make contact with parents who are less involved to solicit their ideas, and report back to them.	1	2	3	4	5
Other types of activities	1	2	3	4	5

VI. COLLABORATING WITH COMMUNITY: Identify and integrate resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning and development.

Our School:	Rating				
	Not Occurring	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Extensively
1. Provides a community resource directory for parents and students with information on community services, programs, and agencies.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Involves families in locating and utilizing community resources.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Works with local businesses, industries, and community organizations on programs to enhance student skills and learning.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Provides "one-stop" shopping for family services through partnership of school, counseling, health, recreation, job training, and other agencies.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Opens its building for use by the community after school hours.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Offers after-school programs for students with support from community businesses, agencies, and volunteers.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Solves turf problems of responsibilities, funds, staff, and locations for collaborative activities to occur.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Utilizes community resources, such as businesses, libraries, parks, and museums to enhance the learning environment.	1	2	3	4	5
Other types of activities	1	2	3	4	5

A.   What major factors have contributed to the success of your school's family and
      community involvement efforts?

B.   What major factors have limited the success of your school's family and
      community involvement efforts?

C.   What is one of your school's major goals for improving its program of school,
      family, and community partnerships over the next three years?

References:

Epstein, J.L. (1995). School/family/community partnerships: Caring for the children we
share. *Phi Delta Kappan, 76*: 701-712.

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present practices of school-family community partnerships. In J.L. Epstein, L. Coates,
K.C. Salinas, M.G. Sanders, & B.S. Simon, *School, family, and community partnerships:
Your handbook for action* (pp.122-125). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Yap, K.O. & Enoki, D. (1995) Fall/Winter. In search of the elusive magic bullet: Parental
involvement and student outcomes. *The School Community Journal*, 5(2), 97-106.

Note: For information on the National Network of Partnership Schools at Johns Hopkins
University, visit the Network's web site: www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000.
For information about NWREL's services, call 1-800-547-6339 ext. 676, or access the
web site: www.nwrel.org.

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory   NATIONAL NETWORK OF PARTNERSHIP SCHOOLS
                                                                 Johns Hopkins University

Appendix B

Basic Information About Families Worksheet
Sources: principal, school secretary, school district, Title I program
(Do not survey families for this information—it is available through the school)

Our school population:_____

How many at each grade: (how many more or less is this from last year?)

_____   _____   _____   _____   _____   _____

Student-teacher ratios:_____

Number of students from families where English is not the first language:_____

What percentage of our school population is this? _____

Approximately how many single-parent families do we have?_____

What is our school's daily attendance average?_____

Approximate number of students who participate in after-school care:_____

What is our mobility rate? (i.e., percentage of students who do not return each year)_____

What is the ethnicity of our students?

What is the ethnicity of our staff?

Total number of teachers and administrators:_____

Number of instructional assistants, secretaries, cafeteria staff, custodians:_____

What is our teacher turnover rate?_____

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Appendix C

Achievement Trends Worksheet

(Past three years of state testing information)

Reading scores for grade_____

Percentage of students **not meeting** standards

_____   _____   _____
   year 1____   year 2____   year 3____

We have _____students who are **not meeting** standards than we did three years ago. (more, less, roughly the same or mixed percentage)

Percentage of students **meeting** standards

_____   _____   _____
   year 1____   year 2____   year 3____

We have _____students who are **meeting** standards than we did three years ago.
          (more, less, roughly the same or mixed percentage)

Percentage of students **exceeding** standards

_____   _____   _____
   year 1____   year 2____   year 3____

We have _____students who are **exceeding** standards than we did three years ago.
(more, less, roughly the same or mixed percentage)

Math scores for grade_____

Percentage of students **not meeting** standards

_____   _____   _____
    year 1____   year 2____   year 3____

We have _____students who are **not meeting** standards than we did three years
ago. (more, less, roughly the same or mixed percentage)

Percentage of students **meeting** standards

_____   _____   _____
    year 1____   year 2____   year 3____

We have _____students who are **meeting** standards than we did three years ago.
(more, less, roughly the same or mixed percentage)

Percentage of students **exceeding** standards

_____   _____   _____
    year 1____   year 2____   year 3____

We have _____students who are **exceeding** standards than we did three years ago.
(more, less, roughly the same or mixed percentage)

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Appendix D

Achievement Trends Worksheet

(Past three years of local testing information)

Reading scores for grade_____

Percentage of students **not meeting** standards

_____   _____   _____
   year 1____   year 2____   year 3____

We have _____students who are **not meeting** standards than we did three years
ago. (more, less, roughly the same or mixed percentage)

Percentage of students **meeting** standards

_____   _____   _____
   year 1____   year 2____   year 3____

We have _____students who are **meeting** standards than we did three years ago.
(more, less, roughly the same or mixed percentage)

Percentage of students **exceeding** standards

_____   _____   _____
   year 1____   year 2____   year 3____

We have _____students who are **exceeding** standards than we did three years ago.
(more, less, roughly the same or mixed percentage)

Math scores for grade_____

Percentage of students **not meeting** standards

_____   _____   _____
year 1____   year 2____   year 3____

We have _____students who are **not meeting** standards than we did three years
ago. (more, less, roughly the same or mixed percentage)

Percentage of students **meeting** standards

_____   _____   _____
year 1____   year 2____   year 3____

We have _____students who are **meeting** standards than we did three years ago.
(more, less, roughly the same or mixed)

Percentage of students **exceeding** standards

_____   _____   _____
year 1____   year 2____   year 3____

We have _____students who are **exceeding** standards than we did three years ago.
(more, less, roughly the same or mixed percentage)

Appendix E

Meeting Evaluation Form

Please take a couple of minutes to let us know how this event worked for you. We appreciate your input and will use it when we plan our next event. Thanks!

1. Was this event a positive experience? (circle one) yes   no

2. What did you like best?

3. What did you learn that you would use at home?

4. How can we make this event better the next time?

Your name (optional)_____Phone_____

Appendix F

Family Opinion Sheet

Please take a few minutes to share your opinions about our school and how we can develop strong partnerships between families and the school. Thanks!

In general, what are three ways the school is doing a very good job?
1.

2.

3.

What are three ways you think the school could make improvements?
1.

2.

3.

Does your family usually feel "up-to-date" and well informed about events and special dates?

     Often *(weekly or monthly)*   Sometimes *(once or twice)* Never

Does someone in your family volunteer at the school?

     Often *(weekly or monthly)*   Sometimes *(once or twice)* Never

Have you received enough information to help with homework or other school projects?

     Always   Most of the time   Usually   Sometimes   Never

Are there opportunities for the adults in your family to offer their opinions by serving on school committees or in other ways that seem important? If no, why?

     Yes   No

What advice do you have for school staff on how to get more families involved?

Your name (optional)_____phone_____

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