

FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
**PARENT ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT**  
September 2016

The Parent Engagement Committee wishes to thank the FNSBSD School Board for the opportunity to make recommendations for improving parent engagement and ensuring parents are active partners in their child's education. The recommendations in this report, if enacted, have the potential to significantly improve the overall effectiveness of schools and individual student success.

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Sue Hull, Chair  
Kelly Atlee  
Kristen Freiburger  
John Gregor  
Bobbi Hamilton  
Meredith Lanis  
Peter Lizardi  
Jodi Rhoades  
Becky Williams  
Teffonie Wyman

### RESEARCH FOUNDATION

Decades of research has established parent involvement as the most consistent predictor of student success. Research also shows that the policies, programs, and day-to-day interactions of leaders and staff at both the school and district level have a profound impact on parent involvement. A comprehensive approach to parent engagement results in the greatest gains. (See insert.)

### COMMITTEE FORMATION

The Parent Involvement Committee is a newly established standing committee of the School Board, created in September 2015. The committee has met on a monthly basis since its first meeting on Dec. 8, 2015. This report is its first report to the Board.

***A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement by Anne T. Henderson and Karen L. Mapp***

*A review of the research concludes that there is a positive and convincing relationship between family involvement and student success, regardless of race/ethnicity, class, or parents' level of education.*

*To put it another way, **when families are involved in their children's learning both at home and at school, their children do better in school.** The report also points to specific types of involvement as being especially beneficial to children's academic success.*

***Finding 1: Involvement programs that link to learning improve student achievement.*** *It's simple: The more parent and community involvement activities focus on improving student learning, the more student learning improves*

***Finding 2: Speaking up for children protects and promotes their success.*** *Children whose parents are advocates for them at school are more confident at school and take on and achieve more. The more families advocate for their children and support their children's progress, the longer their children stay in school and the better their children do.*

***Finding 3: All families can contribute to their children's success.*** *Family involvement improves student success, regardless of race/ethnicity, class, or parents' level of education. For involvement to happen, however, principals, teachers, and parents themselves must believe that all parents can contribute to their children's success in school.*

*-- National PTA*

## COMMITTEE DELIBERATIONS

The Parent Engagement Committee examined a range of factors impacting parent engagement and potential strategies for improvement, including the following:

- Existing tools and practices in FNSBSD schools
- Gaps in current service
- Areas of existing concern
- Barriers and strategies for under-involved groups
- Innovative national programs and strategies
- Promising practices observed in other districts
- New ideas to address specific local needs or gaps in service

The committee made a conscious effort to recognize and address the needs of parents who have not traditionally been involved. Socio-economic status, ethnicity, and/or the demands on today's working families require extra attention to reduce barriers and create new ways to engage. The

### ***National Standards for Family-School Partnerships***

**Standard 1: Welcoming all families into the school community**—Families are active participants in the life of the school, and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to school staff, and to what students are learning and doing in class.

**Standard 2: Communicating effectively**—Families and school staff engage in regular, meaningful communication about student learning.

**Standard 3: Supporting student success**—Families and school staff continuously collaborate to support students' learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.

**Standard 4: Speaking up for every child**—Families are empowered to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.

**Standard 5: Sharing power**—Families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.

**Standard 6: Collaborating with community**—Families and school staff collaborate with community members to connect students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

committee encourages board members to seek greater diversity as they choose representatives to the committee, so as to ensure broader representation. The best recommendations will surface when there are more perspectives at the table, regarding barriers, incentives, and key motivators for parents.

### **NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR FAMILY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS**

The committee voted at its first meeting to use the National Standards for Family-School Partnerships as the structure for its recommendations. (See insert.)

Like the academic standards used to develop curricula, the six national standards provide a concrete structure for examining various types of engagement. Comprehensive programs have been shown to have greater impact, so using the standards helped the group look broadly at the strategies necessary to truly make a difference.

## **PARENT SURVEY**

The school district Power of Partnerships Family Survey was developed from a survey originally created by the national PTA aligned to the six National Standards for Family-School Partnerships. The survey launched Feb. 15, 2016 in conjunction with spring semester parent teacher conferences Feb. 15 and 16.

Printed copies of the survey, promotional flyers, table tents, and reminder cards were provided to each school before the start of conferences to help encourage participation. The printed survey was translated into Spanish at the request of a staff member at Joy Elementary. The district posted announcements on the website and social media feeds and paid for advertising on Facebook to promote the survey. In addition to paper copies, the survey was made available online through Survey Monkey.

Responses were collected for two months, from Feb. 10 until April 14, 2016. The survey generated 592 responses, with 290 respondents completing the survey online and 302 completing the printed version. The data from the printed surveys was manually entered into Survey Monkey. Arctic Light and Joy Elementary Schools had the highest response rates, with 96 and 77 total responses respectively. A copy of the survey and the full final results are included in under Appendix 1.

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY**

The FNSBSD current Policy 1154 Parent Involvement was last revised in 2003. Additional policies on this topic Policy 1154.1 and Policy 1154.2 were adopted in 1988 and 1987 respectively. All three policies are due for revision. The latter two are random topics that could effectively be addressed in a comprehensive parent involvement policy. Since School Board policy guides administrative regulation and school level policies, the committee felt the creation of a new parent involvement policy deserved to be a standalone recommendation, in order to ensure the other recommendations are given adequate attention. An example of such a policy is included in this report in Appendix 2.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Parent Engagement Committee recommends the adoption of a new policy that combines the three existing parent involvement policies into one clear, comprehensive and strategic policy. Further, the committee recommends that the policy:

1. Be entitled Policy 1154 Parent Engagement;
2. Be structured around components similar to those delineated in the National Standards for Parent-Family Partnerships to ensure comprehensive breadth; and
3. Establish the core philosophy, expectations and foundational guidelines of a strong, proactive parent engagement program, including recommendations from this report where appropriate.

## PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

The Parent Engagement Committee believes the priority recommendations below will have the greatest impact on parent engagement. These crucial components are also included under the standards and are marked with three asterisks (\*\*\*).

1. **Inclusive Interactions:** All parents should be treated with respect and courtesy. Extra attention should be given to those who may feel uncomfortable engaging with the school. (Standard 1)
2. **Welcoming Environment:** Create a welcoming environment that reinforces a customer service culture and respect toward parents. (Standard 1)
3. **Back to School Event:** Hold an annual Back to School event, if possible prior to the start of school, to welcome families and students, provide school tours, and opportunities to meet school staff. (Standard 1)
4. **Parent/Principal Interaction:** Provide regular opportunities for parents to meet with the principal in large groups, small groups, or one-on-one as needed. For example, holding a monthly Brown Bag Lunch with the Principal. (Standard 2)
5. **Regular Classroom Communication:** Every teacher should be expected to communicate regularly with student families throughout each term. (Standard 2)
6. **"How to Coach":** Develop tools (online and paper) to inform parents about how to appropriately assist with homework, do's and don'ts, and links to online information about helping students at home. Highlight on school and district web sites.
7. **Textbook Availability:** Provide physical copies of textbooks to families who don't have computers at home. Ensure parents are given instructions and guidelines to use online texts. (Standard 3)
8. **"Keys to Effective Problem Solving":** Distribute and promote this brochure for solving problems, displaying it near school entrance and including it on school and district web sites. Recommend it be distributed after the first thirty days. (Standard 4)
9. **Parents as Advocates:** Develop a standing procedure for informing and engaging parents as advocates for schools. (Standard 4)
10. **Conference Scheduling:** Utilize software that enables parents to schedule their own appointments for parent teacher conferences, such as MyConferenceTime. (Standard 4)
11. **Parent-Teacher Association:** Maintain a parent-teacher association at each school and at the district level. Clarify that parent participation shall not be limited to paying members. The association should be required to have liability insurance. (Standard 5)
12. **Golden Apple Award:** Establish a means of honoring parents and parent-teacher associations as valued partners. (Standard 5)
13. **Work Credit:** Develop a means for students to earn academic credit and elective credit through work and volunteer opportunities within the community. (Standard 6)

**Standard 1: Welcoming All Families into the School Community**—*Families are active participants in the life of the school, and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to school staff, and to what students are learning and doing in class.*

## CRUCIAL COMPONENTS

- **\*\*\* Inclusive Interactions and Welcoming Protocols:** All parents should be treated with respect and courtesy. Extra attention should be given to those who may feel uncomfortable engaging with the school.
  - **Main Office Protocols:** Develop specific welcoming protocols for school front desk employees, including sample language for greeting, resolving concerns, etc.
  - **Principal Interactions:** Ensure principal interactions/activities with parents are not limited to the parent teacher association.
  - **Staff Interactions:** Ensure all staff members are welcoming and inclusive in their interactions with parents.
  - **Continuous Improvement:** Consistently seek to remove barriers to families feeling welcomed.
- **\*\*\* Welcoming Environment:** Create a welcoming environment that reinforces a customer service culture and respect toward parents.
  - **Signage:** Display welcoming signage at schools and district buildings; consider including multiple languages to be inclusive of ethnicities and cultures.
  - **Parent Bulletin Board:** Maintain a parent-focused bulletin board near the main entrance of the school to encourage involvement and provide information.
  - **Open Visitation Policy:** Maintain an open visitation policy for parents in the school and classrooms.
  - **Computer Access:** Ensure every school allows access to computers for families who may not have them at home and, if and where possible, have a computer near the main entrance for registration and other parent uses.
- **\*\*\* Back to School Event:** Hold an annual Back to School event, if possible prior to the start of school, to welcome families and students, provide school tours, and opportunities to meet school staff.
- **Parent Portal:** Strengthen the existing parent portal to include the following:
  - **Enhanced Welcome:** Encouragement to get involved.
  - **Parent Engagement Page:** General information about how to get involved, the six types of involvement, research findings, and so forth.
  - **School Links:** Links to individual school pages with additional welcoming and parent engagement information.
  - **Parent Feedback Mechanism:** Feedback to the district and each school.
  - **Parent Engagement Committee:** Link to committee agendas, information, and feedback directly to the committee.
  - **New Student Welcome Portal:** include Fairbanks info, community resources, cold weather guidelines, FAQs, etc., and provide similar templates for school and department web pages.

- **Customer Service Suggestion Box:** Provide a means of getting customer service feedback from parents who may not have access electronically. Use forms with questions such as: Did you feel welcomed? What could we do to improve?

## **STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE**

- **School Ambassadors:** Encourage school district staff to act as ambassadors outside of school grounds.
- **Parent Resource Center:** Create a place (near the main entrance if possible) where parents could check out resources, relax while waiting, do volunteer work, and so forth.
- **Parent Advocates:** Where possible, have parent advocates and/or liaisons available in the school building.
- **Winter Gear Exchange:** Provide opportunity for families to exchange outgrown winter gear with other families and meet other parents during the process.

## **Standard 2: Communicating Effectively** – *Families and school staff engage in regular, meaningful communication about student learning.*

### **CRUCIAL COMPONENTS**

- **\*\*\*Parent/Principal Interaction:** Provide regular opportunities for parents to meet with the principal in large groups, small groups, or one-on-one as needed. For example, a monthly Brown Bag Lunch with the principal.
- **\*\*\*Regular Classroom Communication:** Every teacher should be expected to communicate regularly with student families.
- **Best Means of Communication:** Annually establish parent preferences regarding means (paper or electronic) for disseminating newsletters and other school level communications to families.
- **Text Notification:** Ensure parents are aware of the option to receive text messages.
- **Communication Helps for Parents:** Develop “How to Communicate with Your Child's Teacher” resources: best times/ways to contact a teacher, sample language for communicating concerns, tips for success.
- **School Change:** Ensure parents are alerted to changes in school policies/programs and have opportunity to give input.
- **Outreach to Under-involved Populations:** Examine and improve communication with families not traditionally involved.
- **Translation Services:** Inform parents of available translation services at the school.
- **Web Site Marketing:** Actively promote material available on the website, such as the Parent Portal described in Standard 1.

### **STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE**

- **Mini-Surveys:** Promote frequent use of mini-surveys (1-2 questions) to encourage two-way communication.
- **Personal Communication:** Encourage personal phone calls to parents to compliment a child or communicate when a student falls behind; utilize the “two positives for every negative” approach. Encourage teachers to call two parents a week.
- **Outdoor Reader Board:** Where possible, have a reader board with upcoming events that is updated regularly.
- **Advance Notice:** Encourage notifications regarding school activities be sent out several times before the event. Endeavor to avoid date conflicts with feeder schools.
- **Positive Communication:** Promote positive communication from teachers/staff; provide regular reminders and sample conversational cues.
- **Two-way Communication:** Encourage two-way communication, rather than just sending out information.
- **P/T Conference Transportation:** Examine the possibility of providing transportation for parents to parent/teacher conferences.

## GOOD IDEAS

- **Classroom Group Communication:** Consider a group communication tool for classroom use, such as a closed group Facebook page.
- **Communication Apps:** Consider using two-way communication system apps, such as Class Dojo or Bloomz. (See Appendix 3.)



**Standard 3: Supporting Student Success** – *Families and school staff continuously collaborate to support students' learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.*

#### **CRUCIAL COMPONENTS**

- **\*\*\*Textbook Availability:** Provide physical copies of textbooks for families who don't have computers at home. Ensure parents are given instructions and guidelines to use online texts effectively.
- **\*\*\*"How to Coach":** Develop tools (online and paper) to inform parents about how to assist with homework, do's and don'ts, and links to online information about helping students at home. Highlight these tools on both school and district web sites. (See Appendix 4.)
- **Secondary Student Expectations:** Clearly communicate graduation requirements, course selection options, and other key information for secondary students.
- **Parent Volunteer Program:** Establish and promote a parent volunteer program that utilizes the many ways parents can give their time to provide support, both in the school and at home. (See Appendix 5.)
- **Volunteer Clearinghouse:** Create a "clearinghouse" style tool for staff members to post volunteer opportunities for parents to see and select; link to requirements for volunteering and fundraising.
- **College and Career Information:** Provide families of secondary students with regular opportunities to receive and discuss information about college and career planning.
- **Parent Notifications:** Alert parents as soon as possible when students are falling behind. Teachers should be aware of families who don't have access to PowerSchool and utilize other means of communication.
- **Parent/Teacher Conferences:** Structured for maximum participation and meaningful communication about student academics. Teachers should avoid taking personal leave during conferences.
- **Family Learning Activities:** Every school should host evening events where parents and students can learn together and schools communicate how parents can support student success.
- **Parent University:** Hold an annual, district-level parent university with an array of classes for parents about supporting student success, community resources, and college/career planning. (See Appendix 6.)
- **Learning Links:** Expand "how to" information for parents regarding the learning links, state databases, and other electronic resources available in the Parent Portal or utilized by students outside of school.

## STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE

- **Dual Credit Opportunities:** Raise parent awareness of opportunities for students to earn dual credit from other institutions or programs.
- **Credit Recovery Opportunities:** Notify parents of available credit recovery opportunities when a student fails a class.
- **High School Class Nights:** Offer an evening training for parents of students in each high school grade level. Explain upcoming deadlines, academic resources, college and career resources, and other relevant information.
- **Parent Academic Advancement:** Connect parents with community resources to advance their own education.
- **Family Volunteering:** Extend volunteer opportunities to other family members.
- **Student Success Workshops:** Provide special training to middle school students who receive one or more failing grades (and invite their parents) after the end of first term.
- **Homework Policy:** Examine the research related to the merits of homework at various grade levels and consider setting new homework policies.

## GOOD IDEAS

- **Parent Tutorials:** Create online parent tutorials for helping students at home in academic subjects, college and career planning, and how to resolve concerns.
- **Alternative to Suspension:** Investigate alternatives to suspension, such as meditation or allowing the student to attend school if a parent accompanies him/her.

**Standard 4: Speaking Up for Every Child** – *Families are empowered to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.*

#### **CRUCIAL COMPONENTS**

- **\*\*\*"Keys to Effective Problem Solving":** Distribute and promote this brochure for solving problems, displaying it near school entrance, and including it on school and district web sites. Recommend it be distributed after the first 30 days of school. (See Appendix 7.)
- **\*\*\*Parents as Advocates:** Develop a standing procedure for informing and engaging parents as advocates for schools.
- **\*\*\*Conference Scheduling:** Utilize software that enables parents to schedule their own appointments for parent teacher conferences, such as MyConferenceTime. (See Appendix 8.)
- **PTA Advocacy:** Support and encourage both school and district-level PTA's in advocacy efforts.
- **Parent Representation on Committees:** Include parent representatives on all school and district committees, unless inappropriate due to student privacy concerns. Raise awareness through a variety of means, including phone calls and non-traditional means of recruitment.
- **Relevant Meeting Agendas:** Ensure agenda topics for parent-teacher association meetings are meaningful and relevant. District could provide examples of such topics at each school level.
- **Advocacy Information:** Produce documents informing parents about major issues, such as the school budget, instructional innovation, and other issues of concern to parents. Ensure parents are aware of these materials through text notification and PowerSchool.

#### **STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE**

- **Advocacy Class:** Create an advocacy class for parents, with instruction about how to speak up for your student and others, and include the class in the Parent University.
- **"Courageous Parent: Successful Student":** Develop a course (or invite an outside expert) to train parents regarding how to advocate for their student, include information on advocating for all students as well. If possible, have the course offered both in person and as a self-paced online course.

#### **GOOD IDEAS**

- **Academic Parent Teacher Teams (APTT):** Consider establishing the nationally recognized Academic Parent Teacher Teams program that has been shown to show academic gains for students. (See Appendix 9.)
- **NPTA School of Excellence Award:** Consider applying for the National PTA School of Excellence Award, a recognition program for schools that enrich the educational experience and overall well-being of all students. (See Appendix 10.)

**Standard 5: Sharing Power** – *Families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.*

**CRUCIAL COMPONENTS**

- **\*\*\*Parent-Teacher Association:** Maintain a parent-teacher association at each school and at the district level. Clarify that parent participation shall not be limited to paying members. The association should be required to have liability insurance.
- **\*\*\*Golden Apple Award:** Establish a means of honoring parents and/or parent-teacher associations on a regular basis as valued partners in the education of children. (See Appendix 11.)
- **Open Classroom Policy:** Ensure all parents are welcome in the classroom at any time.
- **Parent Engagement Awareness Campaign:** Conduct an annual campaign to raise awareness of the value of parent engagement.
- **Parent Engagement Component in Evaluations:** Make certain parent engagement is an integral component of teacher, principal, and superintendent evaluations. (See Appendix 12.)
- **Administrative Leadership:** Principals and the superintendent should meet regularly with parents to engage them in school and district issues.
- **Volunteer Recognition:** Conduct an annual volunteer recognition event at the school and district levels.

**STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE**

- **Parent Engagement Coordinators:** Identify a parent support coordinator at each school and at the district level. Where funds are limited, consider using extra duty contracts or small stipends.
- **"How Early, How Often and How Well?":** Conduct an annual evaluation of "How Early?", "How Often," and "How Well?" parents are engaged in decision-making related to changes in school and district policy.
- **Participation Incentives:** Provide incentives for parents to come to the school to volunteer or to eat lunch/breakfast with students, such as "Bring Your Parent to School" Day, Pride Coupons, or a free school lunch.

**GOOD IDEAS**

- **Site-Based Decision-Making:** Consider establishing site-based decision-making model for budget utilization, policy oversight, and/or instructional innovation.
- **"Three for Me":** Consider the "Three for Me" volunteer program where parents are asked to volunteer three hours during the school year. (See Appendix 13.)
- **National Network of Partnership Schools:** Investigate the possibility of joining the Johns Hopkins National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS), a national support network using research-based strategies for improving parent engagement. (See Appendix 14.)

**Standard 6: Collaborating with Community** – *Families and school staff collaborate with community members to connect students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.*

#### **CRUCIAL COMPONENTS**

- **\*\*\*Work Credit:** Develop a means for students to earn academic credit and elective credit through work and volunteer opportunities within the community.
- **School Business Partnerships:** Maintain an effective school business partnerships program.
- **Community Resource Collaboration:** Collaborate with community organizations to provide services to students where funds do not allow the district to provide these services within the school.
- **Community Volunteer Program:** Establish an open door policy for partnering with senior citizens and others interested in volunteering. Establish safety procedures.
- **School Facilities:** Ensure school facilities are open and available for use by community groups.

#### **STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE**

- **Community Mentors:** Establish a district-wide mentor program for year-round mentoring of students in real world learning and interdisciplinary application of academic knowledge.
- **Extended Learning Resource List:** Develop an extended learning opportunities resource list for parents and students.
- **Break Time Activities:** Raise awareness of community activities held during school breaks. Encourage parent-teacher organizations to sponsor such events.
- **Time-Off for Parents:** Encourage local business to support students by allowing parents to take time off work for parent-teacher conferences and important school events.



# Power of Partnerships Family Survey

The best way to make sure every student succeeds is to build a strong partnership between families, your school, and the community. This survey gives you the opportunity to tell us what your school is doing to support this partnership and what we can do better.

This survey will be used by the Board of Education Parent Engagement Committee to offer informed and relevant recommendations to the Board of Education for improving parent/school engagement. Survey results will be shared with schools.

Learn more at [www.k12northstar.org/ParentEngagement](http://www.k12northstar.org/ParentEngagement).

You may also fill out this survey online at [www.surveymonkey.com/r/ParentEngagement2016](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ParentEngagement2016).

**My child attends:** \_\_\_\_\_

[SCHOOL NAME]

## Welcoming All Families into the School Community

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know N/A
1. When I walk into the school, I feel the school is inviting and that this place is where parents "belong."	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The school's policies and programs reflect, respect, and value the diversity of the families in the community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Students at the school are treated fairly no matter what their race or cultural background.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I feel welcome at PTA/parent group meetings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. The district welcomes all families into the school community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Communicating Effectively

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know N/A
6. The school keeps all families informed about important issues and events.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. The school makes it easy for families to communicate with teachers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. The school communicates with families in multiple ways (e.g. email, phone, website).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. I can talk to the school principal when I need to.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. My child's teacher communicates with me on a regular basis.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. It's easy to get a translator if I need one.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. The district communicates effectively with families.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Supporting Student Success

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know N/A
13. My child's teacher keeps me well informed about how my child is doing in school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. I understand the academic standards my child is supposed to meet and how the curriculum is linked to those standards.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. My child's teacher and the school give me useful information about how to improve my child's progress.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. My child is challenged to do his/her best.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. The district supports student success.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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**Speaking Up for Every Student**

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know N/A
18. If the school can't help me, they will connect me with someone who can.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. I understand the rules and requirements for student dress, language, and behavior.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. The school keeps me informed of my rights under federal and state laws and policies and helps me exercise those rights as needed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. I feel empowered to advocate for my own child's and other children's success in school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. The district empowers families to advocate for their child.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Sharing Power**

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know N/A
23. The school consults with me and other families before making important decisions (e.g. changes in curriculum, school policies, dress code).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24. The school provides opportunities for families to develop relationships and raise concerns with school leaders, public officials, and business and community leaders.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25. The district and families are equal partners in decisions that affect my child's education.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Collaborating with Community**

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know N/A
26. The school connects with students, families, and staff to expand learning opportunities, community services, and community improvement initiatives.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27. The district collaborates with community members to expand learning opportunities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Communication Tools**

I use the following tools to find and receive information about the school or the school district. (Circle all that apply)

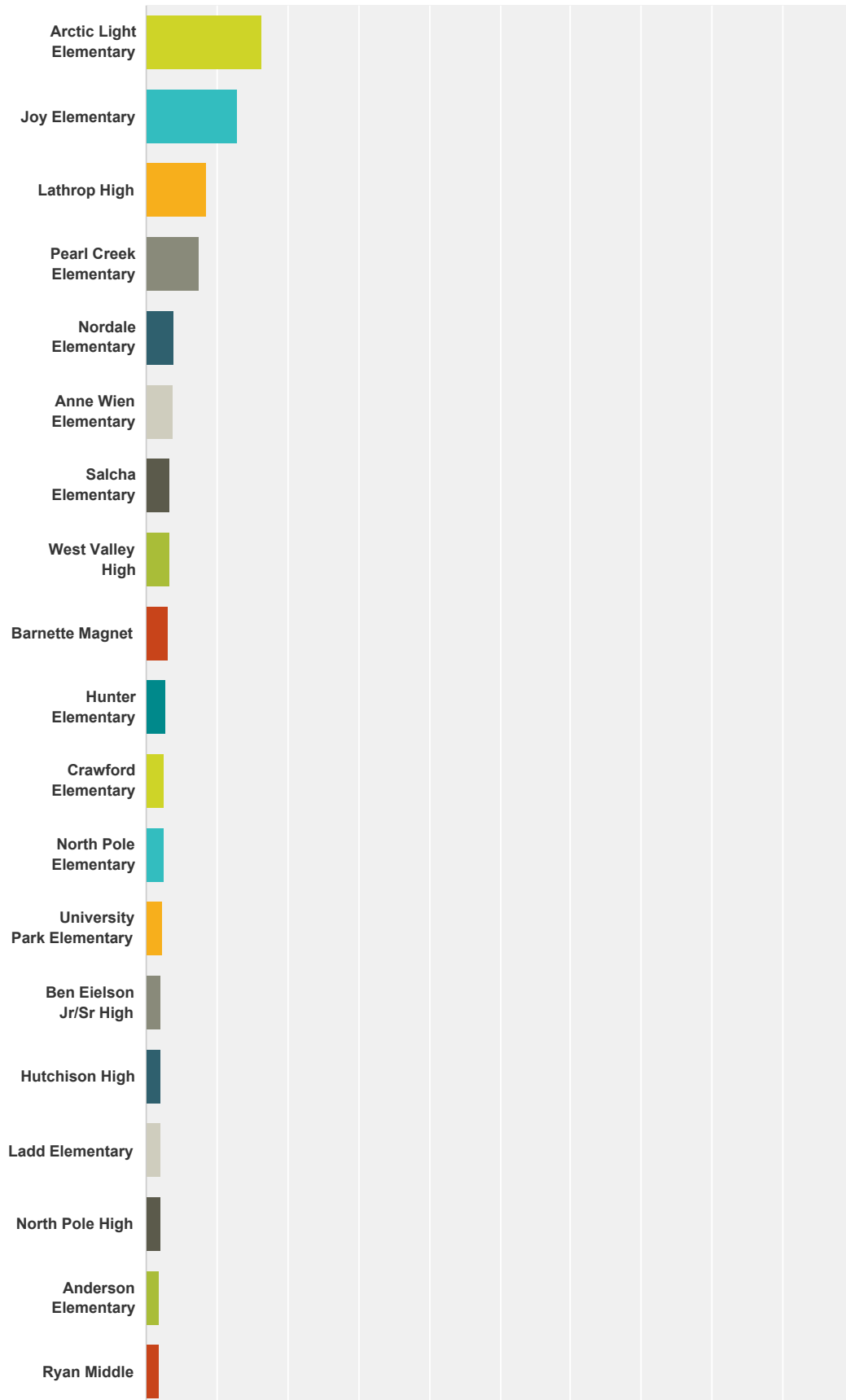
Website   School Newsletter   PowerSchool   Email   Mobile App   Facebook   Twitter   News (online)   News (print)

News (TV)   PTA/PTO   Phone   Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

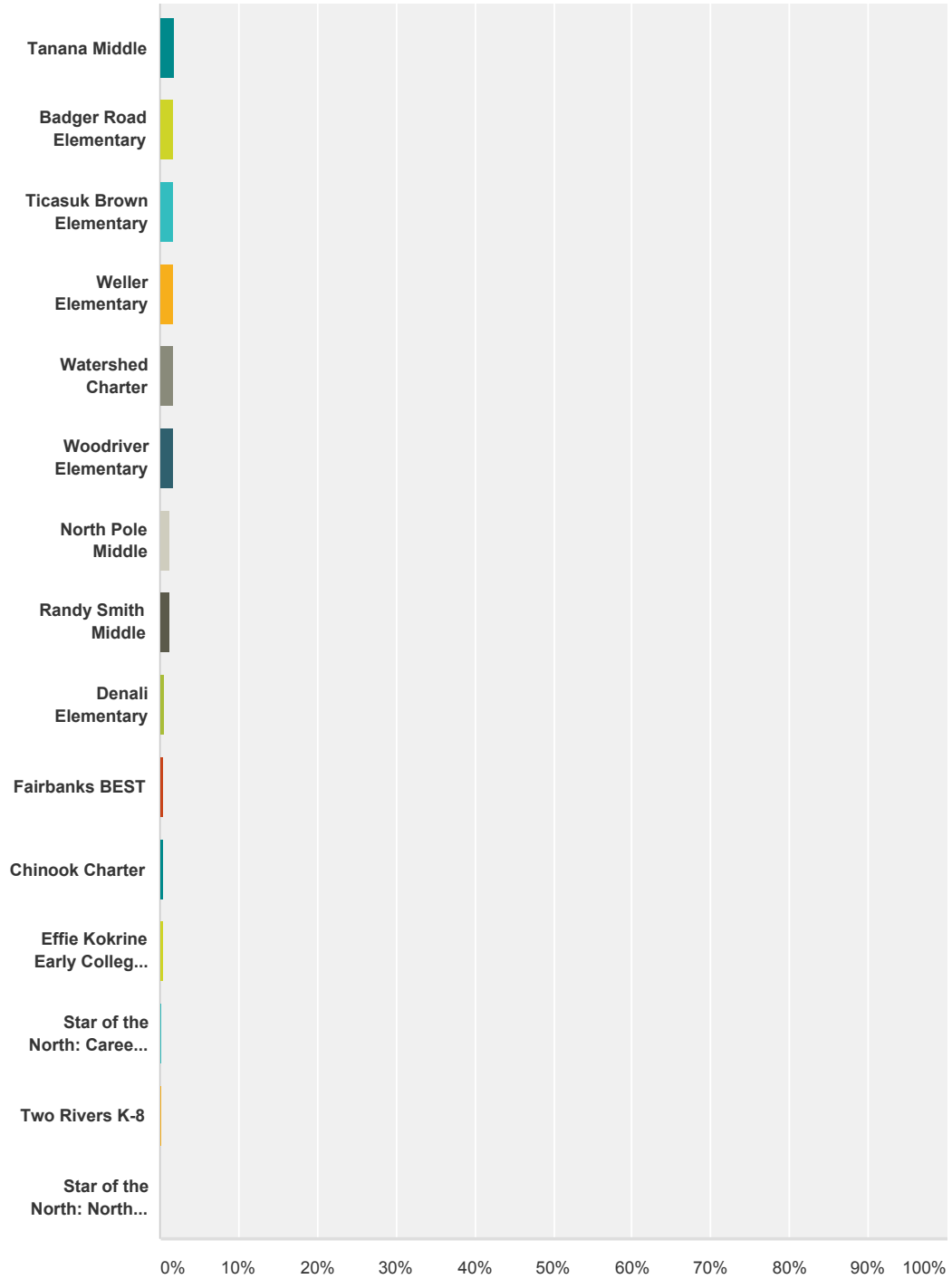
**Comments or suggestions for improving parent engagement** *(attach additional page if needed):*

# Q1 My child attends:

Answered: 592 Skipped: 0







Answer Choices	Responses
Arctic Light Elementary	16.22% 96
Joy Elementary	13.01% 77
Lathrop High	8.61% 51
Pearl Creek Elementary	7.60% 45
Nordale Elementary	4.05% 24
Anne Wien Elementary	3.72% 22

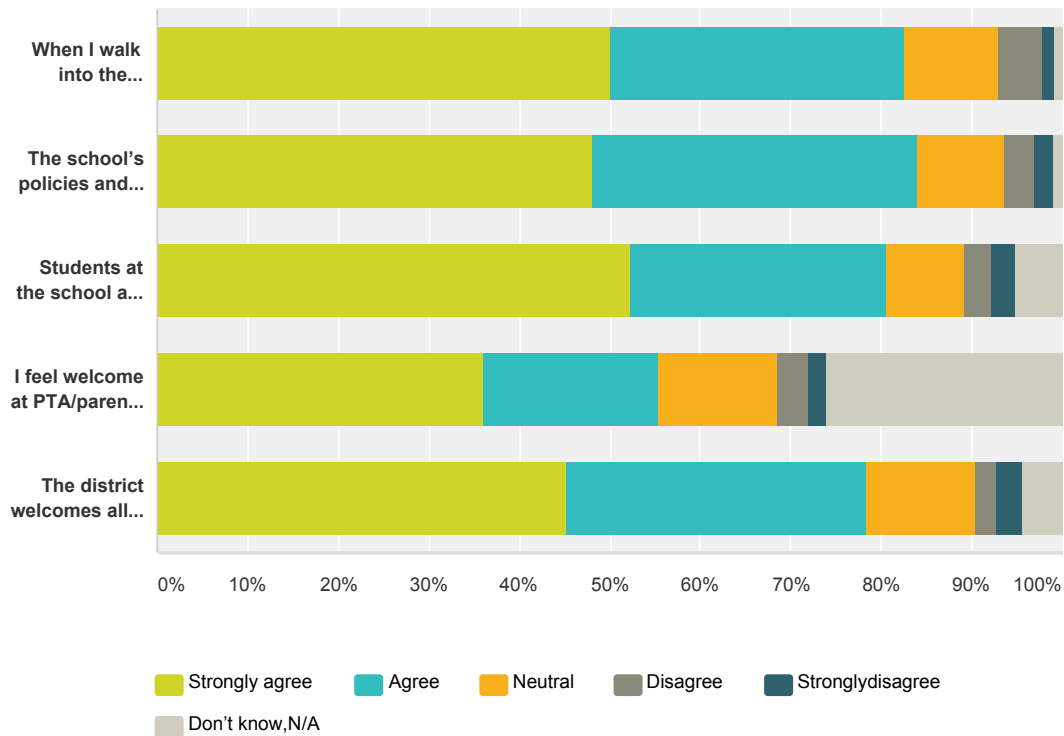
# Power of Partnerships Family Survey

## Appendix 1

Salcha Elementary	3.38%	20
West Valley High	3.38%	20
Barnette Magnet	3.21%	19
Hunter Elementary	2.70%	16
Crawford Elementary	2.53%	15
North Pole Elementary	2.53%	15
University Park Elementary	2.20%	13
Ben Eielson Jr/Sr High	2.03%	12
Hutchison High	2.03%	12
Ladd Elementary	2.03%	12
North Pole High	2.03%	12
Anderson Elementary	1.86%	11
Ryan Middle	1.86%	11
Tanana Middle	1.86%	11
Badger Road Elementary	1.69%	10
Ticasuk Brown Elementary	1.69%	10
Weller Elementary	1.69%	10
Watershed Charter	1.69%	10
Woodriver Elementary	1.69%	10
North Pole Middle	1.35%	8
Randy Smith Middle	1.18%	7
Denali Elementary	0.68%	4
Fairbanks BEST	0.51%	3
Chinook Charter	0.34%	2
Effie Kokrine Early College Charter	0.34%	2
Star of the North: Career Education Center	0.17%	1
Two Rivers K-8	0.17%	1
Star of the North: North Pole Academy	0.00%	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>592</b>

## Q2 Welcoming All Families into the School Community

Answered: 553 Skipped: 39



	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know, N/A	Total
When I walk into the school, I feel the school is inviting and that this place is where parents "belong."	50.09% 275	32.42% 178	10.38% 57	4.92% 27	1.46% 8	0.73% 4	549
The school's policies and programs reflect, respect, and value the diversity of the families in the community.	48.18% 264	35.77% 196	9.67% 53	3.28% 18	2.01% 11	1.09% 6	548
Students at the school are treated fairly no matter what their race or cultural background.	52.29% 286	28.34% 155	8.59% 47	2.93% 16	2.56% 14	5.30% 29	547
I feel welcome at PTA/parent group meetings.	36.01% 197	19.38% 106	13.16% 72	3.47% 19	1.83% 10	26.14% 143	547
The district welcomes all families into the school community.	45.24% 247	33.15% 181	11.90% 65	2.56% 14	2.75% 15	4.40% 24	546

## Q3 Additional comments and feedback:

Answered: 47 Skipped: 545

#	Responses	Date
1	We are not a BEST family, but I do know several BEST families and I think the district makes does not welcome BEST families and makes it difficult for them and does not included them in announcements	4/1/2016 8:02 AM
2	Chinook is a role module for good family engagement.	3/31/2016 10:24 AM
3	Schools need to focus on learning not being hypersensitive about race.	3/28/2016 10:43 AM
4	It does feel like the school would prefer not to have parents involved some times. I am not a BEST parent; but I know some and it seems like the District actually discourages this program. They make it very difficult for BEST parents to know what is going on.	3/27/2016 4:09 PM
5	The PTA never communicates with all families, only those who join.	3/27/2016 10:56 AM
6	I feel the district does not think the the students are to also be raised by their parents and the parents have no responsibility when it comes to raising their child and making sure the child does the school work.	3/26/2016 5:15 PM
7	Parents whom are not located in this state are left out. Even when I email teachers to ask how I can assist, I get zero response. Just because we are out of state communications with all parents is important! Please include us and provide us with real information via email or phone calls that will help us guide our children's future. Example type us a short email to let us know how they are doing in their classes when parent teach conferences are happening. This would help us formulate a course of action to getting them pointed or stay pointed in the right direction. Thank you.	3/26/2016 3:55 PM
8	There is a LGTB board at the school and they have a day to wear purple to support this, but when a guest has a table setup where students can take information and one of the items have a bible verse on it and the district sends out notices on how that shouldn't have occurred that is not having a policy of that reflects diversity.	3/25/2016 3:44 PM
9	The out of area attendance policy is infuriating and insensitive and disrespectful to military families. It is unacceptable especially when both parents work on base and one is deployed.	3/23/2016 12:48 PM
10	Parents need to choose to be involved. As with any profession, schools should clearly define meeting hours and etiquette.	3/23/2016 7:25 AM
11	It is my understanding that the district isn't going to allow any kids who live in North Pole to go to Anderson or Crawford. When a family is military and the whole family is coming on base for work/school each day, their elementary school aged students should be allowed to come along. This is a very unwelcoming practice for military families. Parents should be allowed to choose to bring their kids into base with them. It creates a hardship.	3/22/2016 3:14 PM
12	why is extra tutoring offered to Native students? (ANE) That's not fair.	3/19/2016 4:43 PM
13	The school seems to welcome anyone in its district, but seems to be rather choosy about who is allowed to attend if the student is out of district. Athletes are allowed in if living out of district, but not special ed students. Seems unfair.	3/11/2016 6:35 AM
14	I feel as though schools need to better connect with families in need.	3/10/2016 10:37 PM
15	I volunteered for an office at PTA never recieved a call ... I've also called and left messages for ideas with no return call	3/8/2016 9:37 PM
16	I wish the front desk staff didn't ignore you when you approached the front desk. I've waited upwards of 5 mins before finally being addressed, and this was only after I had to say "excuse me". They hide behind their desks. (NPMS has the best front desk staff ever!!!)	3/2/2016 1:36 PM
17	I've put neutral on some Comments; we homeschool Because our district school wasn't a supportive environment for my son with Aspergers.	2/29/2016 7:50 PM
18	One reason some parents do not want to be on PTA is because one of the teaches has a few DUI convictions and the school code is respectful, responsible, safe and involved. Drinking and driving is not responsible or safe. Then they want to offer parenting classes. It's offensive. You have a convicted felon as a teacher and you think because some of us are low income we need parenting classes.	2/29/2016 5:12 PM
19	The school climate at Tanana is amazing. It concerns that the school board is planning on closing Tanana or any other school to the idiotic notion that k-8 schools are what our community is asking for. It's a shame when a few district administrators and the superintendent can cause all this angst in order to cater to homeschool student. Shame on the district!	2/28/2016 1:27 PM

## Power of Partnerships Family Survey

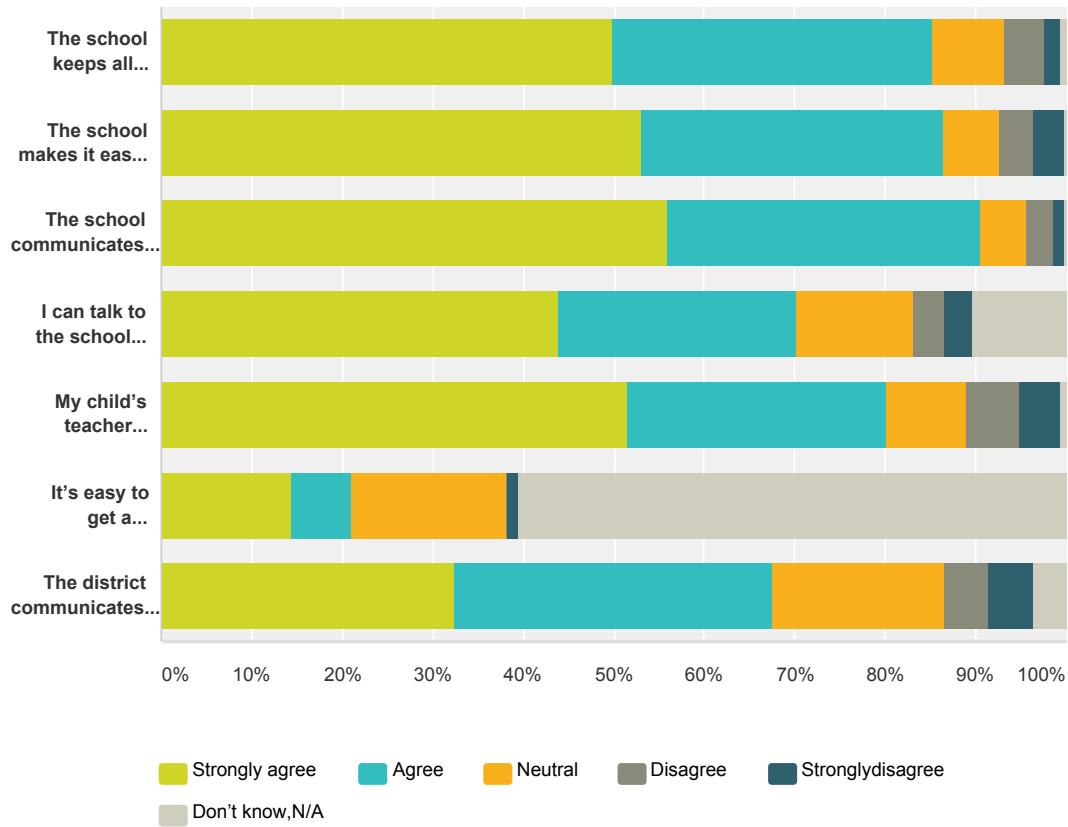
## Appendix 1

20	I had asked to come check out the school prior to the school year. It was discouraged until open house and was told I would be happy. While we are very happy, actually very impressed with staff, I didn't feel that I was encouraged to engage with the school when I was ready which was sooner than the school being ready.	2/27/2016 4:20 PM
21	The lack of support for the music programs continually is very disheartening. My son survives in school because of the elementary music program. I was disappoint to hear that the program is on the chopping block. Our fairbanksans on the budget committee should be able to do better than threatening the music teachers every year. Shame on you! Music should never be threatened.	2/27/2016 12:37 AM
22	I'm also a teacher and I've been using Remind.com and Seesaw to communicate. These online tools are transforming my ability to share student assessments in real time and communicate via texting instead of emails. The parents of my students have been pleased with the daily updates on homework, activities and assessments.	2/25/2016 7:21 PM
23	what is the resaon behind sitting in laps if for instance a couple that sits in the hallway get away with sitting in laps but then as u walk down the hall the other couple gets written up I as a parent come to my child school everyday during lunch and this behavior i would like that if each and every student was treated like any other student. no matter if they are black or white	2/24/2016 11:57 AM
24	Great teachers, awesome front staff, and great school!	2/24/2016 11:24 AM
25	Thank you for all you do.	2/24/2016 10:16 AM
26	So far so good! :)	2/24/2016 9:46 AM
27	Keep up the good work!	2/24/2016 9:39 AM
28	I don't feel very connected to the school. I wish there was more communication with the teachers outside of the conferences. Like webpages with what they are doing in class and what the assignments are. Also, initially when we went into the school to register our child, the person outside of the counselor's office was very rude to us, and made us feel very unwelcome. Others have felt more welcoming.	2/23/2016 6:26 PM
29	While I realize that the student population of Ladd is mostly military dependents it sometimes feels that all the programs and events are geared toward the military dependent children. Sometimes my children have expressed that as civilian kids they don't feel as valued by the school.	2/23/2016 2:11 PM
30	Hutch PTA is a joke. The last meeting I went to was a circus because the president conducts meetings like she's sitting down with her 7th grade classmates and is not professional at all. They also think it's okay to have people who aren't even Hutch parents on the PTA. When I found that out I figured why bother.	2/23/2016 1:59 PM
31	The front office is difficult to deal with if you don't already know exactly what you want and how it ought to work.	2/22/2016 10:41 PM
32	The time is hard for me to make meetings.	2/22/2016 10:36 PM
33	Busses need work!!! Late Buses have not been updated on website. Daughter was over 1 hour late and nothing was online!!!	2/22/2016 8:15 PM
34	The schools are not the problem within the district. The problems are from the school board and the downtown offices, especially the superintendent's office.	2/21/2016 11:46 AM
35	Hutch PTSA is a very closed, clique kind of group. It's odd that there are Hutch PTSA board members who aren't even parents of Hutch students.	2/19/2016 9:01 AM
36	I believe the strong volunteer involvement is indicative of the strong family component at Salcha.	2/18/2016 4:58 PM
37	You are not greeted when you enter the doors unless you approach the reception area. You can just walk into the school and down the halls with no questions asked. No one sits or watched the new window that looks into the entryway of the school.	2/18/2016 2:34 PM
38	There is a fine balance between freely walking into a school and walking into a school and being noticed for as a parent I want both.	2/18/2016 11:42 AM
39	Communication from PTA could be increased.	2/18/2016 10:57 AM
40	As a parent, my concerns are often dismissed. I do not feel supported as a Pearl Creek Family. While they offer many family activities and special events that are welcoming, day to day interactions are an area of concern.	2/17/2016 10:25 PM
41	The district is above all else. Not in a good way.	2/17/2016 7:56 PM
42	The district does not serve students.	2/17/2016 7:52 PM
43	"The district" doesn't answer specific patent questions or concerns very well.	2/17/2016 7:36 PM

44	There are countless military programs at the school that civilian students are not allowed to take part in which is unacceptable!! Create programs that all kids are able to participate in, military or not. OR make programs ONLY civilian students can participate in. That doesn't seem fair, does it? If you want to segregate than make Arctic Light K-8 like you're trying to do with all the other schools in the district and have ALL the military students attend there.	2/17/2016 4:37 PM
45	The district is ignoring the parents and community by allowing the current administration to bully and belittle parents and staff. There is no respect by the current administrator for the culture of the community and their needs. He treats parents and community members as if he must save them.	2/17/2016 3:37 PM
46	The front desk is off to the side when you enter and depending on who is there, the acknowledgement of parents at the desk varies. I've always thought they should treat that more as a customer service area and try to be better about saying "hello!" and "how can I help you?" - that kind of engagement makes feel people feel welcome which leads to a feeling of belonging.	2/17/2016 5:50 AM
47	As a disclaimer, I am a teacher at my child's school so I don't feel like a typical parent.	2/15/2016 7:42 AM

## Q4 Communicating Effectively

Answered: 542 Skipped: 50



	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know, N/A	Total
The school keeps all families informed about important issues and events.	50.00% 271	35.24% 191	7.93% 43	4.43% 24	1.85% 10	0.55% 3	542
The school makes it easy for families to communicate with teachers.	53.05% 287	33.27% 180	6.28% 34	3.88% 21	3.33% 18	0.18% 1	541
The school communicates with families in multiple ways (e.g. email, phone, website).	55.93% 302	34.63% 187	5.00% 27	2.96% 16	1.30% 7	0.19% 1	540
I can talk to the school principal when I need to.	43.89% 237	26.30% 142	12.96% 70	3.33% 18	3.15% 17	10.37% 56	540
My child's teacher communicates with me on a regular basis.	51.49% 277	28.62% 154	8.92% 48	5.76% 31	4.65% 25	0.56% 3	538
It's easy to get a translator if I need one.	14.53% 77	6.42% 34	17.17% 91	0.19% 1	1.13% 6	60.57% 321	530
The district communicates effectively with families.	32.53% 175	34.94% 188	19.14% 103	4.83% 26	5.02% 27	3.53% 19	538

## Q5 Additional comments and feedback:

Answered: 46 Skipped: 546

#	Responses	Date
1	I do not think the school keeps families informed about important issues--specifically if they are academic oriented. I find it very hard to find out about different events going on. The website is not very useful most times. Some of the teachers communicated effectively with parents. Several teachers do not enter grades for 4 to 6 weeks and when I ask for updates, the teacher seems offended or "put out". It is not helpful to find out 1 and 1/2 months later that my kid did poorly on a test or had a few poor participation days.	4/1/2016 8:07 AM
2	The school reaches out but don't feel same about the district as a whole.	3/29/2016 9:47 AM
3	School shouldn't have to pay for translators for parents	3/28/2016 10:44 AM
4	i have been having a hard time finding out about important academic things happening at the school. The website, specifically, is not very informative or helpful. Some teachers are very good about communicating on a regular basis. Some teachers take 5 to 6 weeks to enter grades. When I ask for grades to be updated, they are defensive. I understand they are busy, but how do I correct something I find out about 1 month later. The untimely entering of grades is extremely frustrating.	3/27/2016 4:13 PM
5	Teachers often make parents and students feel as if it's a bother to make time to talk. It's always "not right now, you can come back..."	3/27/2016 10:58 AM
6	I have never received an email, phone call or any kind of communication from the school unless I send multiple emails.	3/26/2016 3:57 PM
7	Speaking with the principal at North Pole Middle School is a waste of time. I along with many other parents do not feel he has our kids best interest.	3/25/2016 3:49 PM
8	The emails could be better. The grammar isn't always the best and sometimes there is outdated information in weekly emails.	3/25/2016 9:10 AM
9	The school district needs to be more discerning in the parents it listens to.	3/22/2016 4:18 PM
10	Ms. Missner and Mr. Hanson are the only two teachers that communicate regularly.	3/22/2016 6:07 AM
11	Some teachers do an excellent job of sending email updates at regular intervals. For others, we often feel like we have no idea what is happening in class or what the assignment are. It is extremely frustrating. In addition, it is difficult to check grades in powerschool when they are at times weeks behind in being entered.	3/10/2016 11:06 PM
12	You can't ask individuals if the school keeps ALL families... You have to ask if MY family is kept... How are we supposed to know if ALL families are communicated with, etc.	3/10/2016 4:29 PM
13	We have only one teacher that does not communicate with us, either on her own or after we contact her by email.	3/10/2016 12:37 PM
14	The district is reporting untrue information to parents to push the district agenda, not what is best for the students.	3/10/2016 12:10 PM
15	We LOVE the school sponsored events at Weller such as the Halloween Carnival, yearly dance and movie night! These events really feed the feeling of community and family!	3/10/2016 12:08 PM
16	#9 The principal has many duties now being a teacher half day so not as easy to make time to see her.	3/4/2016 10:13 AM
17	#6 The bus misconducts are given to parent way late. Sometimes I will receive it a week later.	3/4/2016 9:50 AM
18	Update the Pearl Creek website.	3/4/2016 9:46 AM
19	Provide email address for teachers and parents to communicate.	3/4/2016 9:45 AM
20	How can I find high school electives online? Website.	3/4/2016 9:00 AM
21	The school tends to scapegoat a few troubled kids and let other kids who come from "nice families" get away with being mean to their peers.	2/29/2016 5:14 PM
22	I believe the District could communicate better in regards to budget cuts and meetings related to budget cuts.	2/29/2016 12:23 PM
23	Where is the strongly disagree category? The district only communicates on an as needed basis. Closing Tanana should not be an option. As a parent, I love Canvas!!!! Please make this a requirement that all teachers use this.	2/28/2016 1:29 PM



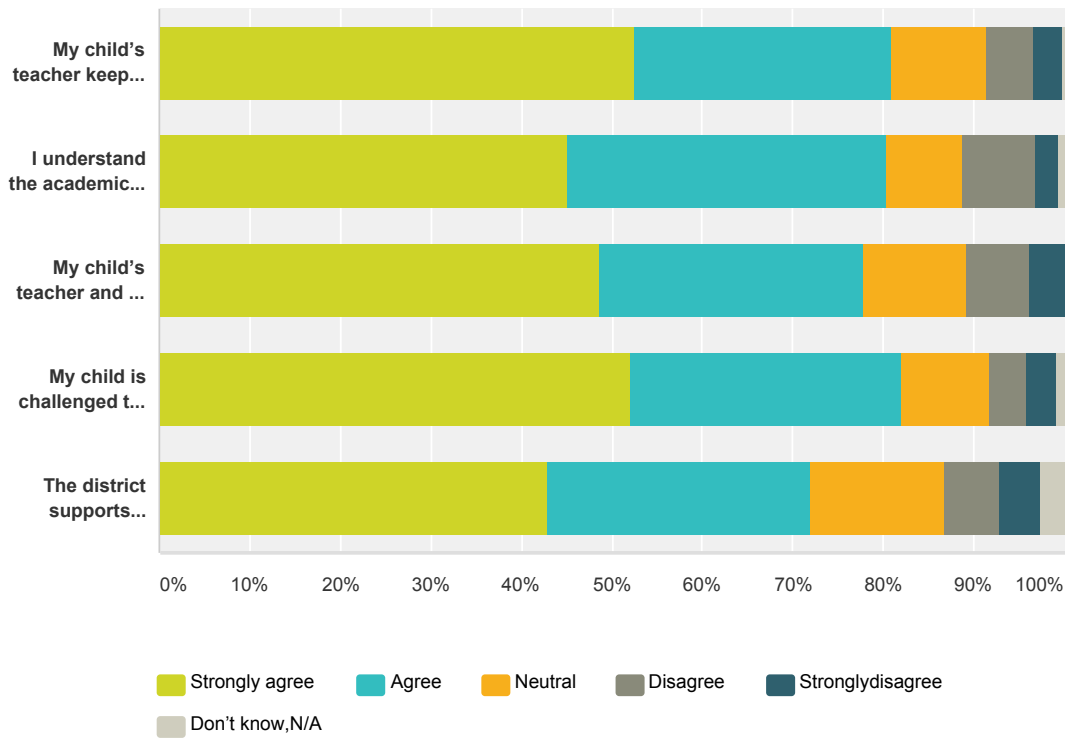
# Power of Partnerships Family Survey

## Appendix 1

24	It is easy for us to email a teacher but there isn't two way communication. We rarely get an email back from the teacher. Phone calls go unanswered.	2/27/2016 3:36 AM
25	I really like class text threads some of the teachers have started. Paper gets lost by kids and it really enhances daily communication.	2/24/2016 2:48 PM
26	Principal should be available more often when issues arise/and follow up on parent concerns	2/24/2016 11:25 AM
27	My son's teacher is terrible about communicating with me about his progress. My son has very limited verbal skills so the only way I know how he's doing is if the teacher talks to me. And she does not. Always tells me she doesn't have time to write notes about his progress.	2/24/2016 10:28 AM
28	Love PowerSchool, use a lot with teachers	2/24/2016 9:54 AM
29	More information on PTA meetings in the daily emails or other important info besides what activities are going on.	2/24/2016 9:51 AM
30	Daily email isn't always informational...format is not reader friendly - subjects not explained well...	2/24/2016 9:38 AM
31	One of my child's teachers/student teacher doesn't communicate effectively with parents nor with my child and my child's grades are suffering as a result. This has only been an issue since the student teacher has been in the classroom.	2/23/2016 7:52 PM
32	In grade school I felt like the teacher communicated much more with me. Now I have to track the teacher down, and they don't always reply. I also feel like the teacher does not even know who my kid is. That said, I guess they are doing the best they can with the funding they have. Too many kids per teacher.	2/23/2016 6:29 PM
33	Teachers make it a guessing game as to what's the best way to communicate with them, for parents and students alike. Some even turn away students by saying it's not the right time to ask questions, which is fine. But when is the "right" time? Kids who are routinely turned away eventually quit asking.	2/23/2016 3:06 PM
34	It can be hard to get teachers to return emails. I've have to go in person to get answers before. The school sends out a daily email, but the website is not very useful after what upgrade it got this past summer.	2/22/2016 10:42 PM
35	There are lots of communications going out from the school district, but no one in the downtown office, school board, or superintendent's office is listening to what parents are saying!	2/21/2016 11:57 AM
36	There is really no way for the school and/or district to know that their communication attempts are successful, especially at the school level. I always hear "well, I sent out an email so..." from teachers or staff at Hutch. Just because you send out email doesn't mean your message got to those you wanted it too. Appeal to the greed of teens... want messages to get to parents? Tell kids to inform parents... Offer them extra credit points if their parents engage with school. And it doesn't have to be a ton of points. Communication between schools and parents has been horrible for a long time, need to think outside the box on this one.	2/19/2016 9:07 AM
37	Since the Principal is teaching half the day or in meetings she is not always available when I am at the school or when I call.	2/18/2016 5:15 PM
38	Most teachers post grades regularly and communicate as needed. My child is motivated and high achieving so often doesn't need much.	2/18/2016 11:34 AM
39	Newsletters are sent home. Emails/phone calls could be increased.	2/18/2016 10:59 AM
40	The principal often makes herself unavailable. When I am able to speak with her, many of my concerns are dismissed. I often have to follow up and revisit topics multiple times prior to anything being done.	2/17/2016 10:26 PM
41	The district has difficulty answering straight forward and repeated questions.	2/17/2016 7:56 PM
42	The district does not reach out to families or respond to families who question their policies, especially if the policy is an unwritten policy. Not sure how it can be a policy as unwritten, but some things are.	2/17/2016 7:53 PM
43	Principal discounts any ideas or comments from parents. District does not follow through when issues are brought to their attention. School has no program in my place to make sure parents are connected to PowerSchool	2/17/2016 4:26 PM
44	The health teacher is terrible and took more than 6 weeks to respond to emails about how I could help my child in her class.	2/17/2016 12:10 PM
45	The teaching communicating - that depends. Currently we have two students- both parents send updates but one of them often sends late notices about activities happening in the class that require participation (food, money to be sent in for activity, etc). However, they're both very communicative and respond quickly to email, which I appreciate.	2/17/2016 5:52 AM
46	My Son's 1st Grade Teacher communicates all the time. My daughter's first 4th Grade Teacher did not communicate regularly, and when there was an issue, she did not contact the parents to take care of the situation.	2/15/2016 9:44 AM

## Q6 Supporting Student Success

Answered: 537 Skipped: 55



	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know, N/A	Total
My child's teacher keeps me well informed about how my child is doing in school.	52.51% 282	28.49% 153	10.43% 56	5.21% 28	3.17% 17	0.19% 1	537
I understand the academic standards my child is supposed to meet and how the curriculum is linked to those standards.	45.05% 241	35.33% 189	8.41% 45	8.04% 43	2.62% 14	0.56% 3	535
My child's teacher and the school give me useful information about how to improve my child's progress.	48.69% 261	29.10% 156	11.38% 61	7.09% 38	3.73% 20	0.00% 0	536
My child is challenged to do his/her best.	52.14% 280	29.80% 160	9.87% 53	3.91% 21	3.54% 19	0.74% 4	537
The district supports student success.	42.91% 230	29.10% 156	14.74% 79	5.97% 32	4.66% 25	2.61% 14	536

**Q7 Additional comments and feedback:**

Answered: 60 Skipped: 532

#	Responses	Date
1	I already commented about my frustration with grades not being entered for several weeks. There are some excellent teachers who do communicate very effectively. It would be very helpful if West Valley would keep its library open to students after school. It has been very frustrating this year...it is frequently closed and my student was told by both the librarian and the assistant principal that it wasn't there only for students. Please justify to me why a staff meeting is held in the library and students are kicked out.	4/1/2016 8:57 AM
2	The district needs to streamline processes for teachers to focus on student needs, not additional duties passed down from the district office.	3/29/2016 9:49 AM
3	The downtown admin center is bloated and a drain on school resources. They are trying to dictate what happens in the classroom	3/28/2016 10:46 AM
4	talked about this on other page. Some teachers are excellent and others are not--4 to 6 weeks before grades are entered and they seem defensive when i request grades. It does not seem that academics is necessarily a priority for the district. Certainly, there are specific teachers that are pushing academics	3/27/2016 4:16 PM
5	If all teachers had to update PowerSchool in the same way it would be so much easier to keep track of my kids progress. But there is zero consistency in PowerSchool. Trying to use PowerSchool only increases frustration with your kid because you'll argue over stuff that you thought was done and turned in, your kid will say he's turned it in, yet it's still a zero in PowerSchool so you make your kid do it again not knowing the teacher has it but hasn't done anything with it.	3/27/2016 11:02 AM
6	The school district allows students to fail. This is not happening in my child's school but in other schools. If a student chooses not to do the work, the student is allowed to do nothing. This should never be acceptable let alone even tolerated. The District needs to fix this issue.	3/26/2016 5:19 PM
7	My daughter is in 7th grade and has been failing Math for 2 years. I have been told that she will not be held back, but no additional help was offered. Mr. Verley's attempt at helping was a joke and when I went to Mr. Smith he basically told me they were doing their best. I have even contacted the district and still no help.	3/25/2016 3:51 PM
8	I'm unhappy about being given a letter about out of area attendance and having to enroll my child in the home school for the first 10 days of next year and possibly stay there. My child has gone to school here all years. The letter also came Friday before spring break, leaving no opportunity to talk to anyone about this ridiculous policy. Both parents work on Base. It makes zero sense to shift my student to a NP school that's already overcrowded when Crawford has empty rooms. I've seen the strategic plan. This does not match said plan. My child is a good student with good attendance and has parent provided transportation. The district should meet the demand of area schools when there are empty classrooms, supporting school choice. And supporting families who are already burdened by the military life with deployments, etc. This situation is beyond disrespectful.	3/23/2016 7:33 AM
9	This school district caters to the lowest common denominator.	3/22/2016 4:19 PM
10	Mr. Hanson and Ms. Missner are the only two teachers that communicate what is coming up, how to prepare, what or where the struggles were, when they will be available for additional help, etc on a regular basis.	3/22/2016 6:10 AM
11	Some teachers are better at updating grades and giving good feedback than others. 4 of my child's teachers update grades weekly. 2 update every 3-4 weeks, which makes it hard to know his grades in those classes.	3/11/2016 6:37 AM
12	I agree the district "supports" student success when all the students are middle of the line. I've seen a lot of push back with my daughter and my niece who are high achievers from letting them get harder work/skipping grades, etc.	3/10/2016 4:30 PM
13	Differentiated science classes or expectations within the course would allow students who master the content easily to be challenged. Mrs. Kershner is adept at differentiating instruction to meet all students' needs.	3/10/2016 1:08 PM
14	The math program is misaligned this year and this cohort of students is suffering because of the change in curriculum and because math teachers are not yet proficient at modifying their teaching styles to meet the new standards.	3/10/2016 1:04 PM
15	The class size for classes is way too high. My first grade student with a learning disability is sitting in a class of 29 students. That is not a student successful classroom. You are taking away valuable tutors for the students. When do you start caring about the students? I certainly don't see the district caring, other wise they would be putting more teachers in the schools to lower the class sizes and keeping tutors to help in all areas of math and language arts.	3/10/2016 12:12 PM
16	Facebook page for the school	3/4/2016 10:20 AM

# Power of Partnerships Family Survey

## Appendix 1

17	School (Pearl Creek) is great, District - not so great, needs to improve placement of students based on need, and remove lottery process.	3/4/2016 10:19 AM
18	Keep the times for parent/teacher conferences. We work also, 2nd time I've come to parent/teacher conferences and have to wait over 15 minutes so I left.	3/4/2016 10:18 AM
19	The best school ever. My son has excelled so much. (Pearl Creek Elementary)	3/4/2016 9:49 AM
20	Good job using your brains :)	3/4/2016 9:48 AM
21	Stay involved with every aspect of your child's learning experience while being open minded to support their needs.	3/4/2016 9:44 AM
22	Can we forget common core and return to common sense? I feel parents should be notified IMMEDIATELY of lockdowns, threats, etc. The curriculum is WAY to advanced for the grade levels.	3/4/2016 9:38 AM
23	If ANE population has high dropout rate, find some way to reach and engage those families. Maybe a basketball or how to use technology night - something to get parents, dads especially, involved in their child's success. ONce you get them in, tell them some facts about career goals for students, stats about those that graduate and those that don't. Have you considered giving students a homeroom or study hall in which students learn: organization, not taking, study skills. This should be taught too!	3/4/2016 9:00 AM
24	Parents should have been told when the district adopted a new math book and what that would mean to parents (i.e. Requiring high-speed Internet and a child to have his/her own computer/tablet to be able to self-teach at home).	3/2/2016 1:39 PM
25	Recently, school district employees started attending student support meetings, IEP meetings and 504 meetings. I think an ANE representative should come to every meeting about an Alaska Native child because there's still discrimination going on	2/29/2016 5:16 PM
26	My child's school encourages his success. I do however question the district desire for his success.	2/29/2016 3:44 PM
27	Canvas has been the tool that has allowed me to know what my child is doing. Make this required!!	2/28/2016 1:30 PM
28	My sons teacher this year almost never updates his progress online and it can up to 6 weeks to learn of a problem.	2/28/2016 9:13 AM
29	The school is there to support the teacher not the needs of the student. When a teacher isn't doing his/her job they should be given a chance to correct it, if that isn't successful the teacher should be fired. This is how it works in the real world. There are far to many teachers that are poor educators that have the attitude I can't be fired.	2/27/2016 3:40 AM
30	Thank you for all the amazing services you have provided for my child! You are all wonderful (Joy Elementary)	2/24/2016 3:18 PM
31	Joy is wonderful! We love it here!	2/24/2016 3:12 PM
32	We appreciate the teachers and staff at Joy being willing to talk with us and being so helpful.	2/24/2016 3:12 PM
33	My child's teacher gives me useful information. I have called the school about bullying, and although there is supposed to be zero tolerance my calls were not returned. When I emailed the teacher, I was told that it was my child's fault and she was being sensitive. The school bus has failed to pick up me child 10-20 times. When I call the school, the bus office and the district, I am told that there is nothing that they can do. This has caused my daughter to miss hours and hours of school time, as well as making me late to work.	2/24/2016 2:57 PM
34	I disagree with putting a 2nd or 3rd grade teacher into a 6th grade class shen she doesn't enjoy it. Her demeanor affects how the child learns. If the teacher doesn't enjoy her class the kids will have a harder time learned. I believe its ok to be strict but not to the point of meanness. Thank you.	2/24/2016 2:45 PM
35	District budgeting seems to be severely poorly budgeted. The district needs to reevaluate their priorities. We have amazing teachers but the district doesn't give them the tools they need to help their students.	2/24/2016 2:25 PM
36	I see my child improving every day, thank you Arctic Light Elementary.	2/24/2016 11:23 AM
37	Have summer programs at the school. Both my husband and I are active duty and it would help my child more having it here along with our work schedules.	2/24/2016 11:23 AM
38	Staffing on the playgrounds is a serious issue that should be addressed.	2/24/2016 11:21 AM
39	All teachers should use the Canvas Program - It is a great tool for students and family.	2/24/2016 10:06 AM
40	Keep AP World History!	2/24/2016 9:56 AM
41	Really parents need to be more proactive on engagement as the district provides to many opportunities/avenues.	2/24/2016 9:54 AM
42	Go back to old school teaching. Teachers have so much paperwork now days they don't have time to teach what a joke. Leave the government standards and let Alaska do their own thing.	2/24/2016 6:10 AM

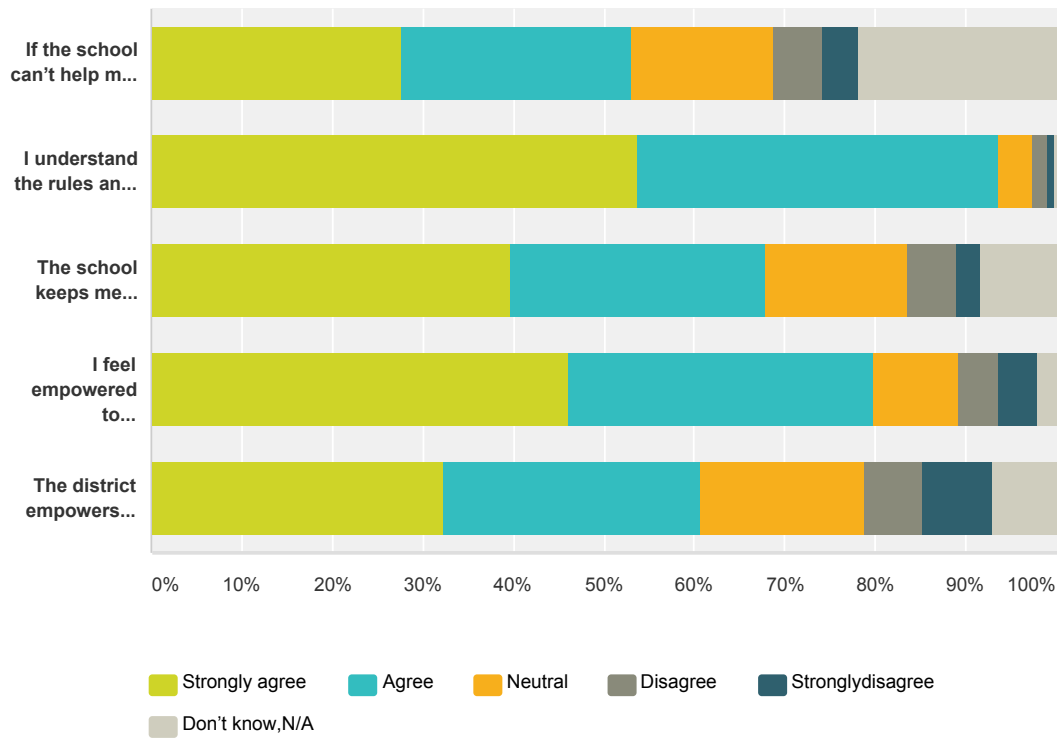
## Power of Partnerships Family Survey

## Appendix 1

43	Teachers often don't tell parents their child is failing and wait until it's way too late to do anything about it. It's discouraging to know many kids have zeros across the board and nothing is said to parents until mid quarters or conference time. By then the kids are already disconnected because they know the teacher will not take any late work. They feel like there is no hope at that point so why bother?	2/23/2016 3:09 PM
44	I guess Powerschool performs these functions, but there is no additional information in Powerschool regarding my child.	2/22/2016 10:43 PM
45	Some teachers do very well and others are lacking. This district is really lacking in how they approach and support students with learning disabilities in the general education classroom. Teachers appear to lack appropriate training if they aren't SpEd teachers.	2/22/2016 10:38 PM
46	My youngest is struggling with math, even with help at school and 2 extra hours each night.	2/22/2016 8:19 PM
47	If the school district, superintendent's office, and school board supported student success, they would listen to the teachers, staff, parents, and school administration. Not just turn a blind eye from what the people who deal with actual teaching have to say about supporting student success.	2/21/2016 11:57 AM
48	Teachers don't have much time to reach out to parents because they have too many students in one classroom.	2/21/2016 7:32 AM
49	Too many high school teachers have the "oh well, I'll be teaching this class next year. If they fail they can take it again" attitude. They've forgotten they are supposed to be teaching young people, not just moving bodies thru their class. Why has failure been acceptable? Also, many high school teachers offer students no way of recovering from failure. The whole idea that it's too late to turn in work creates a situation where high school kids figure there is no point in trying because no matter how hard they try, there is no way to pass.	2/19/2016 9:12 AM
50	There are too many kids in the classroom for some children to learn. My child learns very little while at school because of the chaos. How can children learn when they are placed in a small classroom with 25+ other students and 1 teacher. Especially when you take into account that at least a percentage of these kids suffer from ADHD, FASD or other conditions that require even more attention from the already over worked teacher.	2/18/2016 2:40 PM
51	2 teachers haven't been teaching long enough to challenge my student or to give useful info on how to improve. 1 veteran teacher seems to judge my student mostly on how much enthusiasm my student shows for the subject and the teacher and gives empty feedback on how to improve.	2/18/2016 11:37 AM
52	Parent/Teacher conference time could be longer. 20 minutes twice a year is not enough time to get one-on-one time with the teachers. For parents to be more engaged, they need more opportunities to have time with the teacher and the school.	2/18/2016 11:01 AM
53	I wish the school would do more to help me better support my child's progress.	2/17/2016 10:26 PM
54	The district likes tests and wasting time in the classroom. The district does not support reasonable class sizes. I feel my child's class size is unsafe and unproductive toward differentiation.	2/17/2016 7:58 PM
55	The district does is not in touch with student success. Large class sizes is evident if this.	2/17/2016 7:54 PM
56	More added to the plates of all little support given. Those working with students are burning out without concern from above.	2/17/2016 4:26 PM
57	They make fun of my kid because he's black	2/17/2016 4:01 PM
58	Again, the Health Teacher out at North Pole High. My child worked for hours on a project and she gave him no credit at all, the exact same credit that could have been earned by doing nothing at all, because she felt it was not artistic enough. It is not an art class, but a health class.	2/17/2016 12:13 PM
59	We've always been very pleased with the quality of teachers at Pearl Creek.	2/17/2016 5:52 AM
60	My daughters previous 4th grade teacher did not keep us informed on how well she was doing.	2/15/2016 9:45 AM

## Q8 Speaking Up for Every Student

Answered: 523 Skipped: 69



	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know, N/A	Total
If the school can't help me, they will connect me with someone who can.	27.61% 143	25.48% 132	15.64% 81	5.41% 28	4.05% 21	21.81% 113	518
I understand the rules and requirements for student dress, language, and behavior.	53.64% 280	40.04% 209	3.64% 19	1.72% 9	0.77% 4	0.19% 1	522
The school keeps me informed of my rights under federal and state laws and policies and helps me exercise those rights as needed.	39.66% 207	28.35% 148	15.52% 81	5.36% 28	2.68% 14	8.43% 44	522
I feel empowered to advocate for my own child's and other children's success in school.	46.17% 241	33.52% 175	9.58% 50	4.41% 23	4.41% 23	1.92% 10	522
The district empowers families to advocate for their child.	32.31% 168	28.46% 148	18.08% 94	6.35% 33	7.88% 41	6.92% 36	520

**Q9 Additional comments and feedback:**

Answered: 29 Skipped: 563

#	Responses	Date
1	I do not feel empowered to advocate for my child's or other children's success. In the end, I feel that the district is political, is not very interested in what parents think is important, and is just going through a process to check things off the list. I am concerned about it enough that I do not fill out teacher evaluations because they are not anonymous.	4/1/2016 8:57 AM
2	Some schools, particularly Lathrop don't enforce dress code and language in the hallways is horrible. It's really sad how foul the language is.	3/28/2016 10:47 AM
3	I feel that if there was a problem, the district would circle the wagons and protect their own at the expense of the child.	3/27/2016 4:18 PM
4	The one thing that parents are frequently told is to check PowerSchool to keep track. I learned a long time ago that checking PowerSchool isn't effective unless teachers are actually getting things out into PowerSchool in a timely manner. Teachers also add things AFTER the quarter is over, which gives parents no time to get after their kids for missing assignments.	3/27/2016 11:05 AM
5	The district does not empower families to advocate for their child.	3/26/2016 5:20 PM
6	You can contact the school and district, but they don't seem to have any plan to help these kids who are failing this awful Math program. The Everyday Math was the beginning of the problem and it has been compounded by the Common Core Math Program.	3/25/2016 3:56 PM
7	I feel empowered to advocate for my own child's success because that's my job as a parent. The school district does not empower me to do that.	3/25/2016 9:11 AM
8	The school district panders to loud obnoxious parents and this negativity affects how teachers do their jobs.	3/22/2016 4:21 PM
9	While I can advocate, I don't always get responses back to concerns.	3/22/2016 6:11 AM
10	Some parents idea of empowering their students is by bashing teachers without prior contact or clarity of situations. Teachers have a big work load and with extreme student behaviors along with higher expectations, I feel as though teachers are not having proper support from parents.	3/10/2016 10:42 PM
11	If a parent believes their child needs something and the school doesn't then the parent is out of luck.	3/10/2016 4:39 PM
12	The district is not listening to families. WE don't want the K-8 school. We want a Barnett Charter Magnet school. The full day Kindergarten is crap unless you plan to support the schools with 2 teachers one for the AM class and one for the PM class to keep the class sizes down to 14 students per class.	3/10/2016 12:14 PM
13	Parents need to assert power, no school employee is empowering parents to do so	2/29/2016 5:17 PM
14	The empowerment I feel has nothing to do with the school or the district, it has to do with I have to advocate for my child since the district and school is not	2/29/2016 12:44 PM
15	The district does not allow me to advocate for my child. This whole closing of Tanana being pushed by the superintendent shows that the district administration doesn't support parents' views.	2/28/2016 1:32 PM
16	I'd love to see a battle of the books program started at Badger Road. When I asked they said that that is more of a charter school thing.	2/27/2016 5:31 PM
17	Advocating for your child's education falls on deaf ears. You are forced to go with it. The more you complain about a teacher the more it impacts your students grades in a negative way.	2/27/2016 3:41 AM
18	Schools need to improve on policies issues, learning opportunities did bad this year! Rights of parents	2/24/2016 10:31 AM
19	Sorry but the district does what the government wants. They don't look out for the benefit of our children. Just which federal dollars they can get. Kids are just numbers not names.	2/24/2016 6:11 AM
20	More often than not, I have felt like the more I try expressing my concerns for my kid, the more struggles my kid will go thru. It's almost like they pay the price for parents speaking up. When my son was at Ryan I definitely felt like the more I spoke up the harder it was for my kid. At Hutch when I asked about a 504 all I got was the run around from the principal and the counselor.	2/23/2016 3:11 PM
21	We've gotten a lot of support from the counseling office this year.	2/22/2016 10:44 PM
22	If the school district, superintendent's office, and school board would listen to a parent's concern or advocacy for their children, I might change my mind on how I view the district advocacy.	2/21/2016 11:57 AM

## Power of Partnerships Family Survey

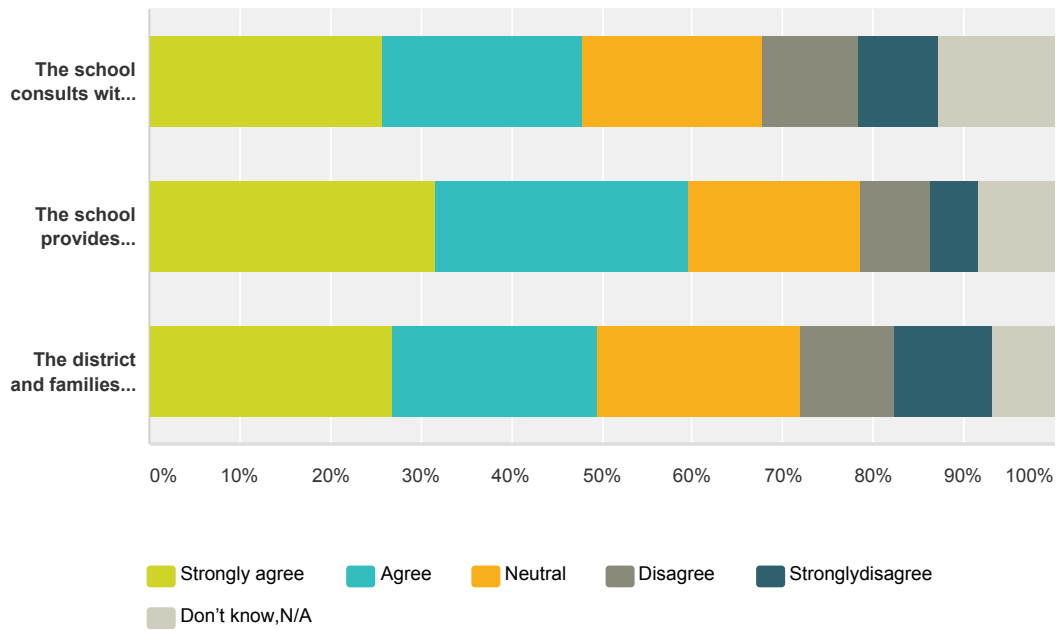
## Appendix 1

23	I do know that I can reach out but don't know who to reach out to specifically when I would like to address lunches are too short for students & that class sizes are too large for teachers to handle.	2/21/2016 7:36 AM
24	The times I have had to advocate for my student I did not feel it was a balanced discussion. I felt like they were there only to say they met with me, not to really listen to me. I left feeling more frustrated because I didn't think they went into the meeting open minded and really had made their decision prior.	2/19/2016 9:14 AM
25	I appreciate WV's approach to those of us who squeak and those who need support. Not easy.	2/18/2016 11:44 AM
26	This is an area of concern for me as a parent. I would't have to advocate for my child as much if the school was more willing to listen to my concerns as a parent.	2/17/2016 10:27 PM
27	The district does not want parents or students advocating for themselves as evidenced by their inability to answer questions about its illogical or ineffective practices.	2/17/2016 8:00 PM
28	The district would prefer parents shut up.	2/17/2016 7:54 PM
29	Issues that are brought to school and district as ignored	2/17/2016 4:26 PM



## Q10 Sharing Power

Answered: 517 Skipped: 75



	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know, N/A	Total
The school consults with me and other families before making important decisions (e.g. changes in curriculum, school policies, dress code).	25.78% 133	22.09% 114	19.96% 103	10.47% 54	8.91% 46	12.79% 66	516
The school provides opportunities for families to develop relationships and raise concerns with school leaders, public officials, and business and community leaders.	31.72% 164	27.85% 144	18.96% 98	7.93% 41	5.22% 27	8.32% 43	517
The district and families are equal partners in decisions that affect my child's education.	26.80% 138	22.72% 117	22.33% 115	10.49% 54	10.87% 56	6.80% 35	515

## Q11 Additional comments and feedback:

Answered: 38 Skipped: 554

#	Responses	Date
1	Honestly, I haven't been involved in a situation serious enough to really know whether the district and families are equal partners...BUT, from everything I have been involved with at Woodriver, our families are extremely encouraged and our involvement is highly valued! :) <3	4/1/2016 1:46 PM
2	see previous comments. I think the district has its own agenda.	4/1/2016 8:57 AM
3	Districts new proposals are damaging for teachers and students. Common core and top down teaching are not the way to go, but the district is pushing that more and more.	3/28/2016 10:49 AM
4	Several years ago, I was interested in participating in picking the new math curriculum. basically, the decision had already been made, and the District was just going through the process. There really wasn't any interest in what parents thought.	3/27/2016 4:20 PM
5	We never know about decisions made until after the fact and if our kids tell us. This year Hutch had many teacher changes and parents never knew. Some of those changes will impact seniors who need credits to graduate. The Brit Lit class has had 3-4 different teachers in 4 months. If I were a senior parent and my kid didn't pass Brit Lit this semester I'd be beyond upset since there has been zero consistency with staff for that class.	3/27/2016 11:08 AM
6	The district spends much too much money on things that will NEVER come to be such as common assessments. This does not show that families are a part in anything.	3/26/2016 5:21 PM
7	The super intendant in this district is only concerned about the money that lines pockets and over filling the admin center with jobs that do not directly help teachers and students succeed in school. Class sizes are too large and there is no extra support for struggling students. It takes way too long to get into an SST and special ed services. Students have to be failing and involved parents have to stop helping their child and let them fail in order for the student to get the services they need.	3/24/2016 11:11 AM
8	The school board only listens to people who agree with them. They should listen more to teachers.	3/22/2016 4:22 PM
9	The district makes decisions it wants to and get parents opinions when it's convenient.	3/22/2016 3:17 PM
10	It would be nice if the school informed parents of district meetings and opportunities for engagement at the district or state level.	3/22/2016 3:16 PM
11	Sure, if you go to the school board meeting on the exact time that they are discussing your issue.	3/10/2016 4:40 PM
12	The district has its own agenda and doesn't listen to the parents or teachers who are concerned about the students in this district.	3/10/2016 12:15 PM
13	I have never gotten an email or message from the district informing me of meetings where parents are encouraged to attend to give their opinions. I think that they have the assumption that parents will do their own research on where to attend school board meetings, if they feel so inclined. This is wrong on so many levels! You need to give us the information, and send out yearly calendars with dates of school board meetings so that parents have time to schedule accordingly to attend and participate.	3/2/2016 1:43 PM
14	Parents are not treated as equals, unless the parent is a white lawyer or a school district employee	2/29/2016 5:18 PM
15	Obviously this category needs a strongly disagree category. If I was an equal partner, my voice and the staff at Tanana's voice would be respected by the administration.	2/28/2016 1:34 PM
16	My child was put into a blended 3/4 class after I asked that they leave him in the 4th grade class he was in.	2/25/2016 8:19 AM
17	The schools doesn't consult with me before making important decisions.	2/24/2016 2:31 PM
18	There's a difference between allowing people to talk and really listening to them.	2/24/2016 9:54 AM
19	A few years back we were given an interim principal without having gone through the proper channels of consulting with the parents. And researching we found lots of rules and regulations that the district wasn't even aware of or following! It took a parent who was a lawyer to find the loopholes it shouldn't be that way.	2/24/2016 6:14 AM
20	The question about the school consulting parents about dress code is confusing since I thought the school board established dress codes - which need to be revisited for their sexist expectations.	2/23/2016 7:58 PM

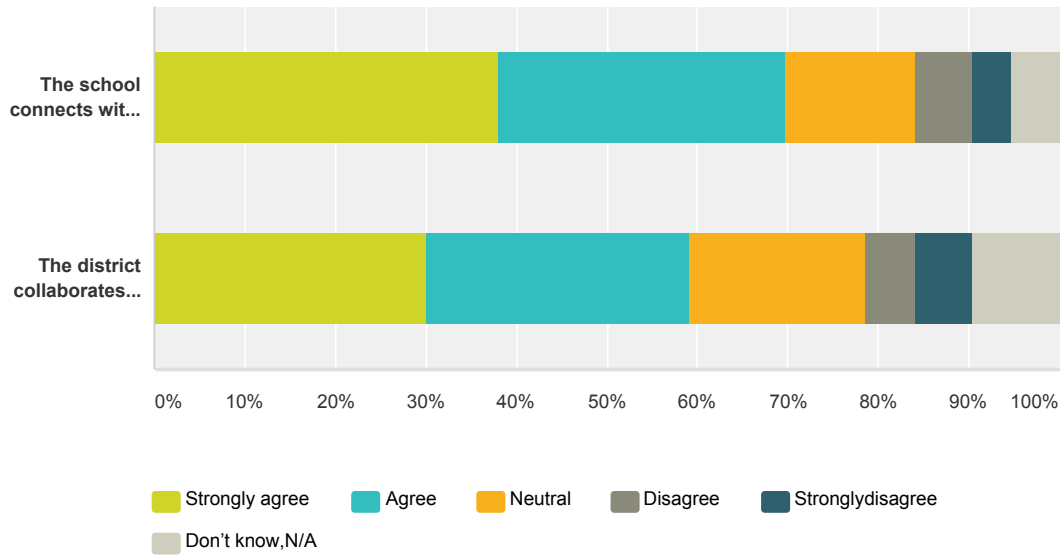
## Power of Partnerships Family Survey

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21	There is very little power sharing. The attitude of many high school teachers is like oh well, I'll be teaching this class next semester, they can take it again so I don't really care. Too many teachers have the attitude that they are above actually working with parents and students and that we are essentially at their mercy. Sadly, we are.	2/23/2016 4:06 PM
22	The high schools need to seriously reconsider allowing a raise in PTR. It is the overcrowded regular classes (like English Algebra, etc) that are killing your graduation rate. Kids get lost. That's a travesty.	2/22/2016 10:46 PM
23	I don't think it's the schools job to provide opportunities for people to voice opinions to the community leaders and business owners. That would be either city counsel, the borough or school district.	2/22/2016 10:28 PM
24	Since the district, school board, and superintendent's office turns a blind eye to anything anyone says that they don't like, I feel as though parents have no choices in our children's education.	2/21/2016 11:58 AM
25	If there are opportunities for these meetings or forums, I don't know where to find the info.	2/21/2016 7:37 AM
26	Absolutely not! Recently a well liked teacher was released, allegedly because of misuse of sick leave. Why is it okay to disrupt education and get rid of teachers who students connect well with to enforce something petty like this? If there truly was a concern, why not work with that employee and help maintain continuity of education? Instead, it felt like a convenient way to get rid of her.	2/19/2016 9:29 AM
27	For the last question, the district has more power in decisions than parents. The district asks for parent feedback but ultimately makes the decision it wants. The recent survey about changing to K-8 had misleading questions that many parents didn't understand.	2/18/2016 11:04 AM
28	The school is amazing. The district is too big and cumbersome. They think they are valuing the students and placing them first, but they are not	2/18/2016 8:56 AM
29	Collaboration with parents is a major area of concern for me in regards to Pearl Creek. As a parent I am not an equal partner in decisions that affect my child's education.	2/17/2016 10:28 PM
30	I have never felt that the district is any kind of partner in my child's education. Adversary and road block, yes. Partner, no.	2/17/2016 8:01 PM
31	Equal partners??? The district does not work well with families.	2/17/2016 7:43 PM
32	"The district" is disconnected from the school and students.	2/17/2016 7:39 PM
33	The district often puts forth initiatives that seem short sighted and doesn't give enough time to implement effectively across school levels. RTI was heavily implemented at the elementary level but kids and staff at the middle level were left with little to no support.	2/17/2016 4:49 PM
34	The district has a record of making decisions based on numbers, not the concerns of families.	2/17/2016 4:40 PM
35	Any decisions at NPE are made solely by Mr. Winford. He does not solicit ideas from parents. Everything is done his way without any consideration to the population he serves	2/17/2016 4:26 PM
36	Mrs. lafleur is not a teacher that helps support every student. Gossiping about parents, coaches, and other teachers have no place in lessons plans, classrooms, or to students. These students need role models that are positive and empowers the students such as Mr. Jones. Wonderful teacher and role model for these students at North Pole.	2/17/2016 12:27 PM
37	I suppose so, but I've never had need to do these things.	2/17/2016 5:54 AM
38	I believe the district and school board have their idea of how the school will be run and money spent, but families are asked only as a courtesy while the decision has already been made and will be implemented regardless.	2/15/2016 5:44 PM

## Q12 Collaborating with Community

Answered: 513 Skipped: 79



	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Stronglydisagree	Don't know, N/A	Total
The school connects with students, families, and staff to expand learning opportunities, community services, and community improvement initiatives.	38.01% 195	31.77% 163	14.42% 74	6.24% 32	4.29% 22	5.26% 27	513
The district collaborates with community members to expand learning opportunities.	30.14% 154	28.96% 148	19.37% 99	5.68% 29	6.26% 32	9.59% 49	511

**Q13 Additional comments and feedback:**

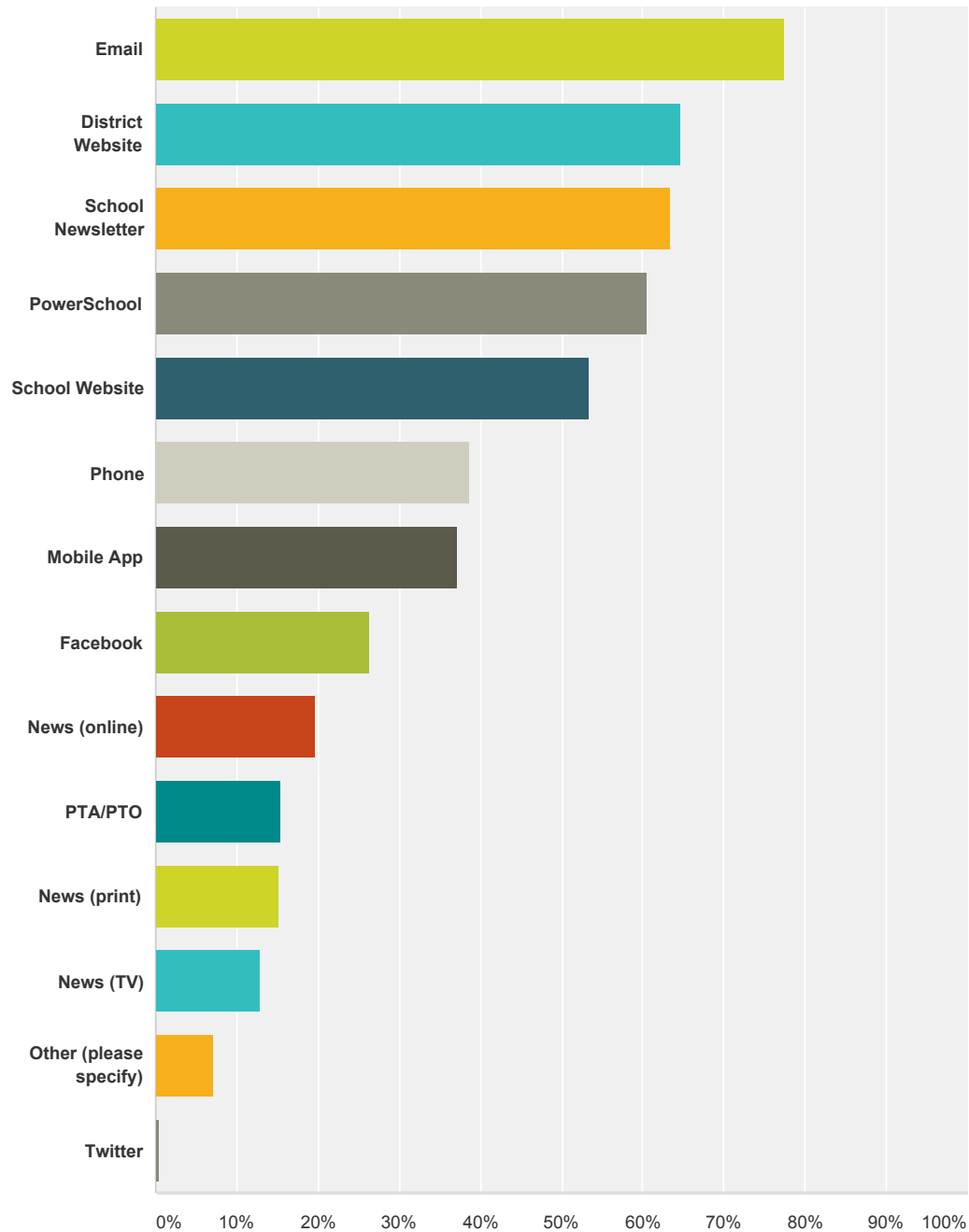
Answered: 20 Skipped: 572

#	Responses	Date
1	Class periods are too long. The bell schedule is ridiculous.	3/28/2016 1:38 PM
2	Last year I didn't know that parents must sign their kid up for summer classes/credit recovery class by a certain time. I would have loved to take advantage of this but had no idea there was a specific deadline until it passed by.	3/27/2016 11:09 AM
3	The district collaborates with other communities way more than they do with the Eielson community.	3/22/2016 3:18 PM
4	I hate Power School. There is a lag time between teachers' input and it is misleading. I've punished my child for poor grades when it was the teacher's fault for not updating Power School in a timely fashion. To use Power School as an end all be all system is in error. It is lacking.	3/16/2016 10:34 AM
5	Mrs. Haugeberg's approach to Algebra 1 did not adequately prepare my children for future math classes.	3/10/2016 1:10 PM
6	Again the district doesn't listen to teacher or parent feed back, just what the district agenda is and what they want to accomplish. It's sad the kids don't count more in their book. Talk is just talk, prove you care about these kids, because you certainly aren't showing it.	3/10/2016 12:16 PM
7	I do not like the lack of communication with the principal & behavioral staff. I had an issue with my son being physically bullied on the bus. It was a big deal when I was in there face to face but now nobody returns my calls or seems to care. I was told the cameras were down the day in question. I told them it was an ongoing thing NOT just one day. Exact words to me were "well we'll see what we can do, but ya know" with a shoulder shrug. Of course nobody has gotten back to me. Why do I have to keep asking & pretty much get told it doesn't matter & we're not going to do anything about it. Why do we have cameras on a bus if they don't work. Also they told my son "the other kid said he didn't do it & kept a straight face. We are not going to talk to you about it anymore so stop asking" really?!! So I guess it's ok for bullying? That is how my son feels. He doesn't feel safe on the bus and I will not put him on it anymore. There is a huge part of me that doesn't even want him at that school. What else could happen to him that nobody is going to care about?!! I've seen kids get in trouble for little things, and this is a big deal yet nothing was done. I don't understand.	3/7/2016 6:47 PM
8	The current administration does not respect teachers or parents. I hope the school board really looks at the poor choices the superintendent has made in her tenure - prosing closing Tanana to support homeschool students and decimating elementary programs like RTI to support high school programs. Shame on the school board for not overseeing the demise of this valued program.	2/28/2016 1:37 PM
9	Mrs. Smith (the ELP teacher) let our family know about an event in the community that was an excellent learning opportunity for my children. I really appreciated her looking beyond the classroom as to areas that would continue to challenge my children beyond the classroom.	2/27/2016 5:33 PM
10	This survey could have been made with Google Forms which is sponsored and endorsed by the school district. Thought I'd add that.	2/25/2016 7:26 PM
11	If you're Hispanic, Black, Military or Native you get all kinds of extra help in the community. But if you're just a white kid struggling along you get passed over. No help for you!	2/24/2016 6:17 AM
12	I have no idea what the community collaborations are.	2/23/2016 4:07 PM
13	Please start collaborating with parents by listening to us and the teachers and staff in the schools!	2/21/2016 11:58 AM
14	It's interesting to see/hear what the district considers as community collaboration. Maybe highlighting those collaborations on the website so everyone understands what those collaborations are would help the community see what's happening.	2/19/2016 9:31 AM
15	Our school has wonderful opportunities in and with the community.	2/18/2016 5:18 PM
16	The school does hold quality family events. Our family enjoys attending special family related activities in the evenings on on weekends.	2/17/2016 10:28 PM

17	Why are these statements about the district even here? They've created unsafe and unproductive environments for our children with their poor spending of public dollars, putting bad programs, hiring excessive administrative/program staff, etc. ahead of reasonable, productive class sizes and ahead of keeping important school staff in schools (like adequate nurses and counseling staff available to students). The district has made our schools' jobs very difficult. However, I'm impressed by the number of hours school staff put in above and beyond a normal work day that helps them ensure the school runs adequately. Overall, the district is not helpful to our students. It hinders the effectiveness schools can offer in keeping our kids safe and educated.	2/17/2016 8:07 PM
18	"The district" is not student or parent friendly.	2/17/2016 7:39 PM
19	The district needs to look at their admin positions ("downtown") and how to cut those back instead of stealing from our children. It's disgusting how this district conducts it's business and makes decisions.	2/17/2016 4:43 PM
20	The principal and the district hold to the position that North Pole family do not matter. This is shown through the continuous disregard for concerns	2/17/2016 4:26 PM

**Q14 I use the following tools to find and receive information about the school or the school district (Check all that apply).**

Answered: 482 Skipped: 110



Answer Choices	Responses	
Email	77.39%	373
District Website	64.73%	312
School Newsletter	63.49%	306

PowerSchool	60.58%	292
School Website	53.53%	258
Phone	38.59%	186
Mobile App	37.14%	179
Facebook	26.35%	127
News (online)	19.71%	95
PTA/PTO	15.35%	74
News (print)	15.15%	73
News (TV)	12.86%	62
Other (please specify)	7.05%	34
Twitter	0.41%	2
<b>Total Respondents: 482</b>		

#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	Keeping in frequent verbal and in-person communication with our school folks too	4/1/2016 1:49 PM
2	teacher's weekly letter	3/29/2016 9:52 AM
3	School websites are worthless now. They used to be a good place to go but now they are only generic.	3/27/2016 11:10 AM
4	Class newsletter	3/25/2016 9:12 AM
5	Your website is horrible. Very poorly designed. It is very frustrating and time consuming to navigate. Your app rarely reflects PowerSchool accurately. What a waste of money.	3/22/2016 4:24 PM
6	class newsletter	3/10/2016 2:12 PM
7	Class Newsletter	3/4/2016 10:27 AM
8	other parents	3/4/2016 10:24 AM
9	Radio KUAC	3/4/2016 10:00 AM
10	word of mouth	3/4/2016 9:53 AM
11	Talk to my child	3/4/2016 9:00 AM
12	Canvas	2/28/2016 1:38 PM
13	Daily Log Book	2/24/2016 3:19 PM
14	Talking with teachers	2/24/2016 3:12 PM
15	Text	2/24/2016 2:32 PM
16	Teacher Notes	2/24/2016 2:05 PM
17	I call the school on a daily basis	2/24/2016 12:00 PM
18	teachers	2/24/2016 11:29 AM
19	Reading Skill	2/24/2016 10:34 AM
20	Newsletters from teachers (weekly)	2/24/2016 10:14 AM
21	Meet/phone with teachers	2/24/2016 9:55 AM
22	KUAC	2/23/2016 6:32 PM



23	The fact that teachers either don't use PowerSchool or rarely update it until it's too late for parents to respond or they manipulate it by not putting scores in but have the assignments is very frustrating as a parent. I've had teachers say that they purposely put grades in (that aren't due for weeks) as zeros "to make parents pay attention." The number of times I've had confrontational conversations with my son because he's said he's turned things in but it's still a zero in PowerSchool is disheartening to me and my son. It shouldn't be that way.	2/23/2016 4:11 PM
24	My child's teacher uses Class Messenger. AWESOME!	2/23/2016 2:13 PM
25	The website is not really helpful anymore since the "upgrade"	2/22/2016 10:40 PM
26	Radio -- KUAC	2/19/2016 8:19 PM
27	Unless there is a set expectation for PowerSchool, it will not be a useful tool for parents. Too many high school teachers use it as a way to manipulate grades or don't update it enough. If the district isn't going to have set expectations about PowerSchool and how high school teachers should be using it, it should just be taken down.	2/19/2016 9:35 AM
28	In person communication with principal/teachers	2/18/2016 3:46 PM
29	I do see items on Facebook but that is not a preferred method of communication. Also, I use some methods for school news and other methods for district news. They are not linked together.	2/18/2016 11:06 AM
30	Other parents and teachers	2/17/2016 9:30 PM
31	Face to face with teachers	2/17/2016 4:26 PM
32	Passing me notes	2/17/2016 4:03 PM
33	Classroom newsletter	2/17/2016 11:53 AM
34	In-Person	2/17/2016 9:36 AM

**DRAFT PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY 1154****(Note: deletions to current policy are in strikethrough; insertions are underlined.)****1154 Parent Involvement Engagement**

~~The school district considers parent involvement a means of promoting better understanding among pupils, parents, and staff. Parents are welcome in the school and their support and assistance are sought. Each school shall develop with, and distribute to parents a parent involvement policy.~~

The Board of Education recognizes a child's parents as his/her first and most influential teachers. When a student begins school, the school shares in the responsibility for the student's education. Research has long indicated that parent involvement, in schools and in a child's learning, contributes in significant ways to both school effectiveness and student performance. The school district shall foster and support active parent engagement.

The term 'parent' includes a legal guardian or other person standing in loco parentis (such as a grandparent or stepparent with whom the child lives, or a person who is legally responsible for the child's welfare).

The term 'parent involvement' means:

- ~~the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring that parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning;~~
- ~~that parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education;~~  
~~and,~~
- ~~that parents are active partners in decisions affecting their child's education and, as appropriate, in school decisions that affect education in their school.~~

District regulation, programs and practices shall seek to enhance parent engagement and reflect the specific needs of students and their families, regardless of economic status, disability, English language proficiency or racial or ethnic background.

To this end, the board supports the development, implementation, and regular evaluation of a parent engagement program in each school, which will involve parents at all grade levels in a variety of roles. The parent involvement programs will be comprehensive and coordinated in nature. They will include, but not be limited to, the following components of successful parent involvement programs:

- Welcoming all families into the school community—Families are active participants in the life of the school, and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to school staff, and to what students are learning and doing in class.
- Communicating effectively—Families and school staff engage in regular, two-way, meaningful communication about student learning.
- Supporting student success—Families and school staff continuously collaborate to

5. Developing with parents a "school-parent compact" that outlines how parents, school staff and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement. The school-parent compact shall include:
  - a. A description of the school's responsibility in providing high-quality curricula and instructors, ways in which each parent will be responsible for supporting their children's learning, and ways each student shall be responsible for his/her own learning.
  - b. A statement of the importance of communication between teachers and parents, including parent-teacher conferences, frequent reports to parents on their child's progress, and reasonable access to staff, opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class and to observe classroom activities.

#### **B. School District Administration Implementation**

The school district administration shall assist schools in implementing the requirements of this policy by:

1. Providing assistance to help parents understand the state content and performance standards for students, and the state academic assessments,
2. Providing materials and training opportunities to schools to help parents to work with their children to improve their children's achievement through literacy training and using technology.
3. Educating teachers, principals and other staff in the value and utility of the contributions of parents and in how to reach out to, communicate with and work with parents.
4. Ensuring information provided to parents is sent, to the extent practicable, in a format and/or language the parents can understand.

#### **C. Parent Involvement in Assigning Student to Teachers**

Parents will follow the district's formal procedure for giving input concerning student class assignment. The principal will give consideration to parent input to best meet the educational needs of the child. If the parent and principal ~~cannot agree~~ disagree on student class assignment, the principal will meet with the parent. The principal will make the final decision concerning student class assignment.

#### **D. Parent Involvement in Course Offerings at the Secondary Level**

Parents and students will be afforded ample opportunity to provide input into which courses will be offered during the next school year.

D. ???

E. ???

**1154 Parent Involvement**

The school district considers parent involvement a means of promoting better understanding among pupils, parents, and staff. Parents are welcome in the school and their support and assistance are sought. Each school shall develop with, and distribute to parents a parent involvement policy.

The term 'parent' includes a legal guardian or other person standing in loco parentis (such as a grandparent or stepparent with whom the child lives, or a person who is legally responsible for the child's welfare).

The term 'parent involvement' means:

- the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring that parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning;
- that parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education; and,
- that parents are active partners in decisions affecting their child's education and, as appropriate, in school decisions that affect education in their school.

**A. School Parent Involvement Policies**

The school's parent involvement policy will be developed with the participation of parents and be agreed upon by parents of students enrolled in the school. The school policy shall be annually reviewed by parents. The school's parent involvement policy shall include requirements for:

1. Providing parents timely information about the school's parent involvement programs, the form for input to the teacher evaluation process, the curricula in use, the forms of academic assessment used to measure student progress, and proficiency levels students are expected to meet.
2. An annual meeting of parents to review the school's parent involvement policy, programs, and opportunities; and the school's performance and the performance of the school's students. The annual meeting shall also provide for parent comments and participation in developing parent involvement programs and school goals regarding school and student performance.
3. Specific strategies for including parents who may encounter barriers to parent involvement, including parents who are economically disadvantaged, disabled, who have limited English proficiency or limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority.
4. Notifying parents of opportunities for regular meetings to formulate suggestions and to participate in decisions relating to the education of their children.



1154.1 Parent Involvement in Assigning Students to Teachers

Parents will follow the district's formal procedure for giving input concerning student class assignment.

The principal will give consideration to parent input to best meet the educational needs of the child. If the parent and principal cannot agree on student class assignment, the principal will meet with the parent.

The principal will make the final decision concerning student class assignment.

Policy Adopted: May 17, 1988

1154.2 Parent Involvement in Course Offerings at the Secondary Level

Parents and students will be afforded ample opportunity to provide input into which courses will be offered during the next school year.

Policy Adopted: June 7, 1987



Fairbanks North Star Borough  
School District  
520 Fifth Avenue  
Fairbanks, AK 99701

Happier Classrooms. Engaged Parents.



## A Quick Overview of ClassDojo

Used by teachers in 2 of every 3 schools, ClassDojo is the most popular communication app in the U.S. ClassDojo helps teachers celebrate student moments in the classroom, and share those home with parents.

### Features

**Encourage students:** Give students positive feedback for any skill, like participation, persistence, or curiosity - it's fully customizable.

**Seamless family engagement:** Teachers can share photos, videos, and more with parents — parents get notified instantly!

**Any device:** ClassDojo works on any iOS/Android/Kindle Fire device or web browser.

**Administrator access:** Administrators can sign up as School Leaders to see Highlights from their school and to share updates with all parents easily.

**Free for everyone:** ClassDojo is free for everyone. In the future there may be some optional, premium features available for schools.

**24/7 ClassDojo Support:** We respond to all questions from teachers, parents, students, and school leaders quickly. Email us at: [hello@classdojo.com](mailto:hello@classdojo.com)

### What makes ClassDojo safe?

#### ClassDojo is fully compliant and protects personal information

- ClassDojo holds a COPPA Safe Harbor seal from iKeepSafe, and also helps schools meet their FERPA requirements. In Canada, ClassDojo abides by the PIPEDA principles.
- All information on ClassDojo is private between teachers, parents, and students. Information is never sold and ClassDojo permanently deletes students' personal information when they stop using ClassDojo.
- Teachers, parents, and students can always access and delete their information at any time. They are always in control.

#### Security is top of mind for ClassDojo

- ClassDojo uses bank-grade security at the software and network level to ensure all data is secure.
- All information is stored in highly secure, access-controlled data centers.
- ClassDojo works regularly with third-party auditors to continually improve its security measures.

**See what's happening in your school!**

Sign up at [www.classdojo.com](http://www.classdojo.com) for your School Leader account



Introducing: The best classroom  
communication app...



# ClassDojo

**What makes a ClassDojo classroom amazing?**

- Students love the positive culture
- Easy to encourage any skill or classroom value
- Parents are kept in the loop, celebrating important moments from class and helping out at home



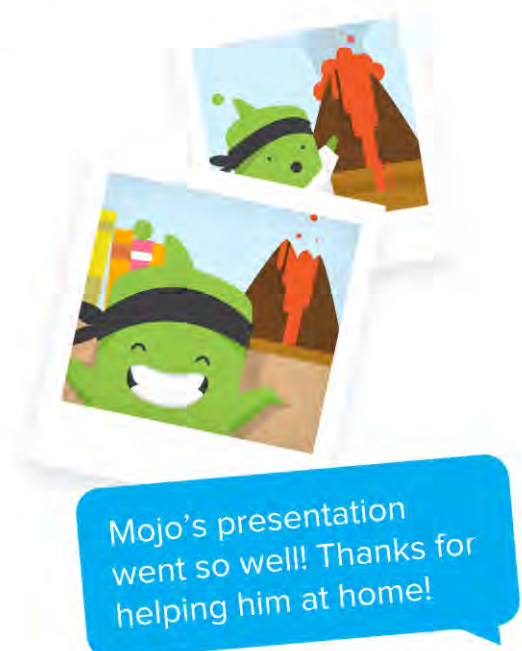
## Encourage students with positive feedback

- Award students feedback for skills like “Working hard” or “Helping others”
- Skills are fully customizable
- Students love being recognized for their hard work :)



## Share your classroom story with parents

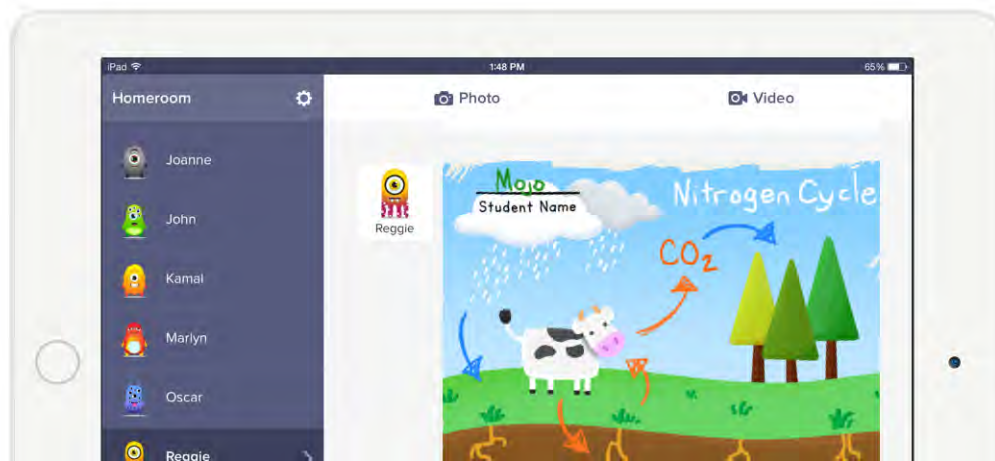
- Share photos, videos, and updates to all parents using Class Story
- Post important moments like presentations, field trips, or students working together on projects
- Send private messages to parents, and know they've been seen with Read Receipts





## Each student gets their own story, too!

- Every students gets a portfolio to showcase their classroom work
- Students can add photos and videos of their work using a shared classroom iPad - no passwords required!



## Time to get set up



### Using a phone or tablet

1. Download the ClassDojo app (available on Android and iOS)
2. Sign in or create an account
3. Add your first class!

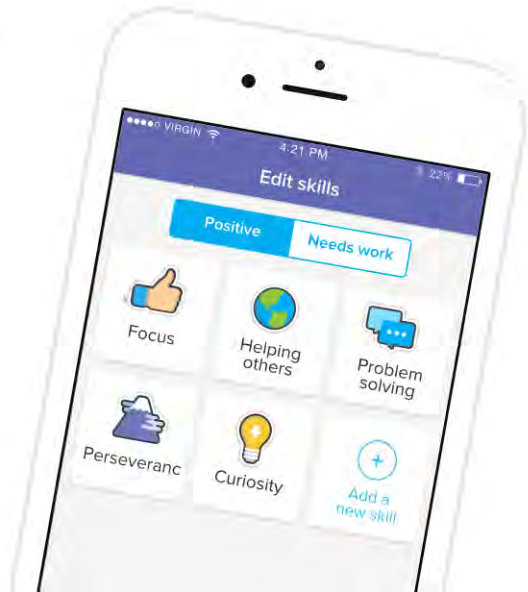


### Using a computer or laptop

1. Visit [classdojo.com/signup](https://classdojo.com/signup)
2. Sign in or create an account
3. Add your first class!

## Tips to getting started

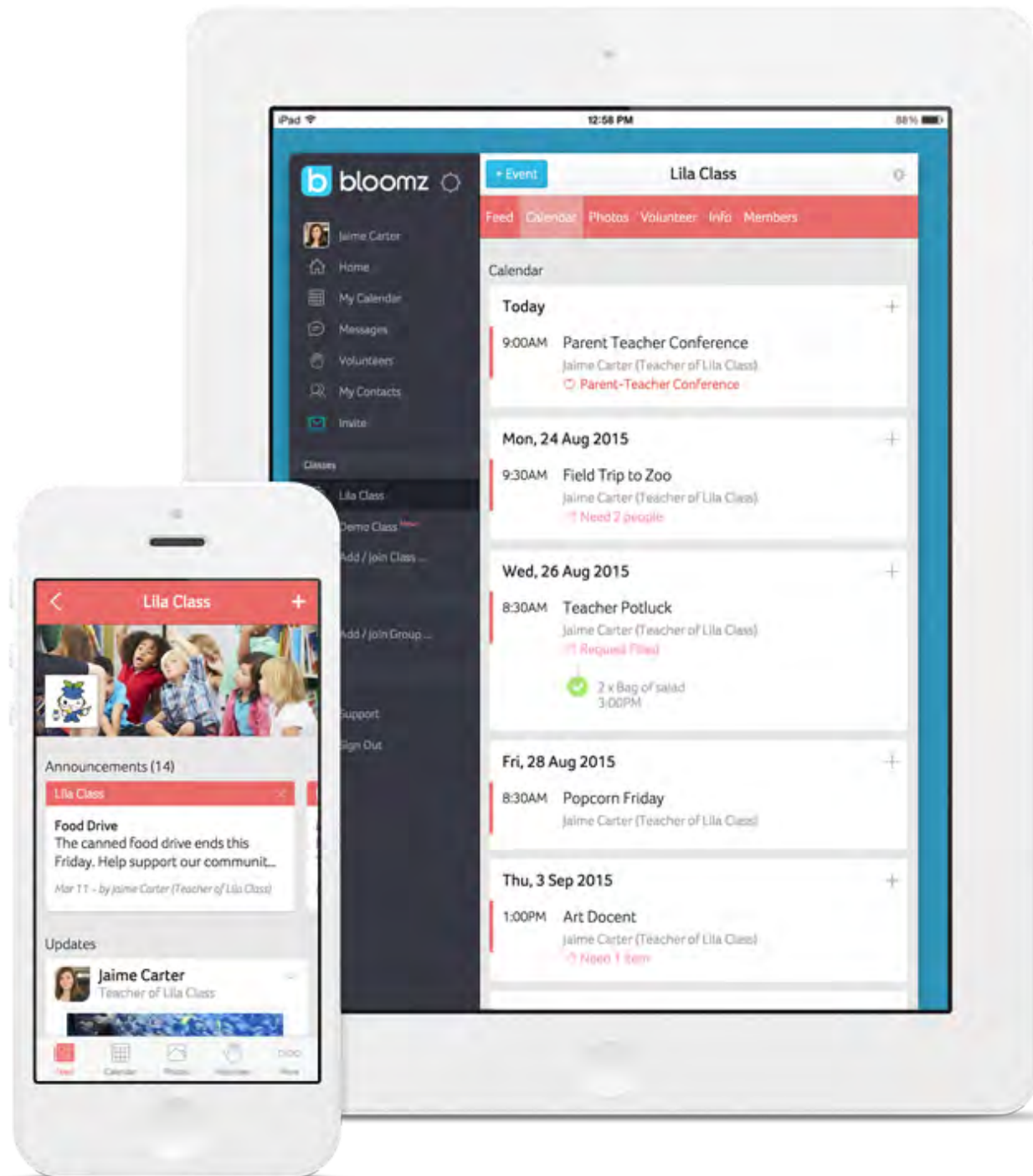
- 1 Invite parents - go to “Class Story” and hit the blue “Invite parents” button
- 2 Post a “Welcome” message on Class Story
- 3 Customize skills as a class



**That's it!**  
**Any questions?**

For more tips, how-tos, and free classroom decorations  
visit [classdojo.com/resources](https://classdojo.com/resources)





JOIN BLOOMZ

# Bloomz is an Award-Winning App...



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...And Teachers **LOVE** it!

---

"Must have teacher productivity app to kick off 2016"

I am super pumped I found an app that meets a few different needs and eliminates some of the excess.

- Caffeine & Lesson Plans

"An app that has changed my life as a teacher"

I am loving the close/immediate contact I have with these parents. The parents that have taken the leap of faith with me on this journey are

thrilled with Bloomz.  
- Focused On Fifth

"It's like finding the match to the glass slipper in Cinderella "

The perfect classroom communication tool. I'm all about a one-stop-shop, and it seems like I've found it with Bloomz!

- Virginia Is For Teachers

# This is how Bloomz works

## Connect.

### **Class Updates:**

Share class updates about the day's learnings or send reminders for assignment due dates, registration deadlines, etc.

### **Photo & Video Sharing:**

Share special moments from class or a recent field trip so parents can be engaged even when they can't be there in person.

## Coordinate.

### **Reminders & Class Calendar:**

Plan class activities and organize field trips, or track parent-teacher meetings all in one place.

### **Manage Events:**

Send invites and track RSVPs. Volunteers and conference signups make for easy planning and participation.

## Communicate.

### **2-way Messaging:**

No more searching for phone numbers and email addresses. Instantly reach one or more parents, teachers, school staff and PTA leaders, through in-app messaging.

### **Student Timelines:**

Build a portfolio of students' work and share with parents throughout the school year.

**Behavior Tracking:**

Reinforce your students' positive behavior while sharing notes and awards with parents.

## Private & Secure.

**Private and Secure:**

Share with confidence, knowing everything on Bloomz is protected by strict security measures.

See full list of features



**NOTE:** There is a guide for each grade level.

# PARENTS' GUIDE TO Student Success

This guide provides an overview of what your child will learn by the end of kindergarten in mathematics and English language arts/literacy. It focuses on the key skills your child will learn in these subjects, which will build a strong foundation for success in the other subjects he or she studies throughout the school year. This guide is based on the new Common Core State Standards, which have been adopted by more than 40 states. These K–12 standards are informed by the highest state standards from across the country. If your child is meeting the expectations outlined in these standards, he or she will be well prepared for 1st grade.

## KINDERGARTEN

### WHY ARE ACADEMIC STANDARDS IMPORTANT?

Academic standards are important because they help ensure that all students, no matter where they live, are prepared for success in college and the workforce. They help set clear and consistent expectations for students, parents, and teachers; build your child's knowledge and skills; and help set high goals for all students.

Of course, high standards are not the only thing needed for our children's success. But standards provide an important first step — a clear roadmap for learning for teachers, parents, and students. Having clearly defined goals helps families and teachers work together to ensure that students succeed. Standards help parents and teachers know when students need extra assistance or when they need to be challenged even more. They also will help your child develop critical thinking skills that will prepare him or her for college and career.

### HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD?

You should use this guide to help build a relationship with your child's teacher. You can do this by talking to his or her teacher regularly about how your child is doing — beyond parent-teacher conferences.

At home, you can play an important role in setting high expectations and supporting your child in meeting them. If your child needs a little extra help or wants to learn more about a subject, work with his or her teacher to identify opportunities for tutoring, to get involved in clubs after school, or to find other resources.

### THIS GUIDE INCLUDES

- An overview of some of the key things your child will learn in English/literacy and math in kindergarten
- Ideas for activities to help your child learn at home
- Topics of discussion for talking to your child's teacher about his or her academic progress



# English Language Arts & Literacy

Learning new language skills is a hallmark of kindergarten. Your child will learn about the alphabet and its role in reading. Your child will practice rhyming, matching words with beginning sounds, and blending sounds into words. Practice with these types of activities is a powerful step toward learning to read and spell correctly. The size of your child's vocabulary is another key factor in his or her ability to read and comprehend books and stories. Your child also will begin to experiment with writing and will be encouraged to use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing letters to share information, ideas, and feelings.

## A Sample of What Your Child Will Be Working on in Kindergarten

- Naming upper- and lower-case letters, matching those letters with their sounds, and printing them
- Comparing the adventures and experiences of characters in familiar stories, such as fairy tales and folktales
- Retelling familiar stories and talking about stories read to them using details from the text
- Using a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to describe an event, including his or her reaction to what happened
- Stating an opinion or preference about a topic or book in writing (e.g., "My favorite book is . . .")
- Taking part in classroom conversations and following rules for discussions (e.g., learning to listen to others and taking turns when speaking)
- Speaking clearly to express thoughts, feelings, and ideas, including descriptions of familiar people, places, things, and events
- Asking and answering questions about key details in stories or other information read aloud
- Understanding and using question words (e.g., *who, what, where, when, why, how*) in discussions
- Learning to recognize, spell, and properly use those little grammatical words that hold the language together (e.g., *a, the, to, of, from, I, is, are*)

### Talking to Your Child's Teacher

#### Keeping the conversation focused.

When you talk to the teacher, do not worry about covering everything. Instead, keep the conversation focused on the most important topics. In kindergarten, these include:

- Using knowledge of letters and letter-sound correspondences to figure out how to spell words as they sound
- Reading and understanding a story designed for early readers

Ask to see a sample of your child's work. Ask the teacher questions such as: Is this piece of work satisfactory? How could it be better? Is my child on track? How can I help my child improve or excel in this area? If my child needs extra support or wants to learn more about a subject, are there resources to help his or her learning outside the classroom?

Young children arrive in kindergarten with widely varying knowledge in math. By the end of the year, your child must have some important foundations in place. One of the most important skills your child should develop is the ability to add and subtract small numbers and use addition and subtraction to solve word problems. This will rely on gaining some fundamentals early in the year, such as counting objects to tell how many there are. Addition and subtraction will continue to be a very strong focus in math through 2nd grade.

## A Sample of What Your Child Will Be Working on in Kindergarten

- Counting objects to tell how many there are
- Adding and subtracting very small numbers quickly and accurately (e.g.,  $3 + 1$ )
- Comparing two groups of objects to tell which group, if either, has more; comparing two written numbers to tell which is greater
- Correctly naming shapes regardless of orientation or size (e.g., a square oriented as a “diamond” is still a square)
- Acting out addition and subtraction word problems and drawing diagrams to represent them
- Adding with a sum of 10 or less; subtracting from a number 10 or less; and solving addition and subtraction word problems

### Keeping the conversation focused.

When you talk to the teacher, do not worry about covering everything. Instead, keep the conversation focused on the most important topics. In kindergarten, these include:

- Counting to tell the number of objects (this will not be written work; ask the teacher for his or her observations of your child’s progress in this area)
- Solving addition and subtraction word problems

Ask to see a sample of your child’s work. Ask the teacher questions such as: Is this piece of work satisfactory? How could it be better? Is my child on track? How can I help my child improve or excel in this area? If my child needs extra support or wants to learn more about a subject, are there resources to help his or her learning outside the classroom?

**Talking to  
Your Child’s  
Teacher**

# Help Your Child Learn at Home

Learning does not end in the classroom. Children need help and support at home to succeed in their studies. Try to create a quiet place for your child to study, and carve out time *every day* when your child can concentrate on reading, writing, and math uninterrupted by friends, brothers or sisters, or other distractions.

You should also try and sit down with your child at least once a week for 15 to 30 minutes while he or she works on homework. This will keep you informed about what your child is working on, and it will help you be the first to know if your child needs help with specific topics. By taking these small steps, you will be helping your child become successful both in and outside the classroom.

Additionally, here are some activities you can do with your child to support learning at home:

## English Language Arts & Literacy

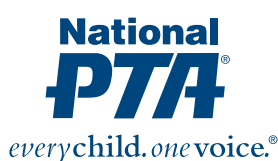
- Read with your child every day, books like *Are You My Mother* by P.D. Eastman or *Green Eggs and Ham* by Dr. Seuss. Ask your child to explain his or her favorite parts of the story. Share your own ideas. To find more books for your child to read, visit [www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix\\_B.pdf](http://www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix_B.pdf).
- Encourage your child to tell you about his or her day at school. Keep paper, markers, or crayons around the house for your child to write letters or words or draw a picture about his or her day. Have your child describe the picture to you.
- Play word games like *I Spy*, sing songs like *Itsy Bitsy Spider*, and make silly rhymes together.

## Mathematics

Look for “word problems” in real life. Some kindergarten examples might include:

- Play “Write the next number.” You write a number, and your child writes the next number.
- Ask your child questions that require counting as many as 20 things. For example, ask, “How many books do you have about wild animals?”
- Ask your child questions that require comparing numbers. “Who is wearing more bracelets, you or your sister?” (Your child might use matching or counting to find the answer.)

For more information, the full standards are available at [www.corestandards.org](http://www.corestandards.org).



**National PTA**  
 1250 N Pitt Street  
 Alexandria, VA 22314  
 Toll-Free: (800) 307-4PTA (4782)  
 PTA.org • [info@pta.org](mailto:info@pta.org)

NSPRA  
Gold Medallion Award  
2012

Harrison School District Two  
Colorado Springs, CO

**“Very Involved Parents” Volunteer Program**



**SYNOPSIS-** The communications department was tasked with putting together a strategic plan to increase parent and community engagement, increase district volunteer opportunities and conduct a community-wide campaign to expand academic privilege. The importance of a college education and influence regarding academic privilege begins in the home, which is where the strategic plan needed to target to be the most effective. HSD2 educates over 11,000 students and is one of the most socioeconomically and ethnically diverse districts in the Pikes Peak region (74% free and reduced lunch average). For maximum capacity and effectiveness, one program was developed to increase volunteer opportunities strictly targeting parents/guardians. The Very Involved Parents (VIPs) program was created in-house to promote and coordinate parent volunteer efforts at each school with an academic focus. In April 2011, each school had at least 3 to 6 parents who volunteered by making copies, baking goods, assisting in the cafeteria or purchasing extra supplies for the classroom. The goal of the VIPs program was to increase parent volunteers to 10 to 20 parents and to utilize volunteers for a more academic purpose to instill the district's philosophy of academic privilege. Each school in the Harrison District has one Very Involved Parent Coordinator who receives an outcomes-based stipend related to parent engagement and volunteer opportunities. VIPs Coordinators are communication "foot soldiers" who are aligned with the district's mission and message. Their purpose is to recruit parent volunteers, inspire and coordinate parent engagement in their school. Their secondary purpose is to assist the District communications office with rumor control, sense making and increase parent involvement in district committees and advisory groups.

**SITUATION-** The communications department was tasked with putting together a strategic plan to increase parent and community engagement, increase district volunteer opportunities and conduct a community-wide campaign to expand academic privilege. The importance of a college education and influence regarding academic privilege begins in the home, which is where the strategic plan needed to target to be the most effective. For maximum capacity and effectiveness, one program was developed to increase volunteer opportunities strictly targeting parents/guardians. The Very Involved Parents (VIPs) program was created in-house to promote and coordinate parent volunteer efforts at each school with an academic focus. In April 2011, each school had at least 3 to 6 parents who volunteered by making copies, baking goods, assisting in the cafeteria or purchasing extra supplies for the classroom.

**RESEARCH-** The communications team first began our research with a series of comprehensive brainstorming sessions to create the program purpose, measurable goals and a timeline for program development. Once the timeline for development was created, we met individually with each principal in our school district to determine the number of parent volunteers at the school. We learned how volunteers were utilized as well as successful and unsuccessful tactics used to promote parent involvement. We also needed to determine the specific goals of each school/principal so we could incorporate them into the plan for principal buy-in. We then hosted five informal focus group meetings with parents: two elementary, two middle and one high school. The purpose of the focus group meetings was to discover preferred communication methods for parents and their motivation for engaging or volunteering with their child's school. In April 2011, a third party survey company conducted a phone survey to over 400 community members and one question was asked to help us determine words and phrases to use for our academic privilege pursuit with our parent volunteers. (When you hear the phrase "College or Career Readiness," what does that mean to you?) Finally, we held meetings with Pikes Peak United Way and Colorado Springs School District 11 to learn about the necessary volunteer policies, procedures and processes to assist us in developing the systemic nuts and bolts of our program. Pikes Peak United Way offered their research and literature on attracting, motivating and recruiting volunteers. Based on our research findings we tailored the goal and objectives to meet the parental engagement needs of the district schools.

## PLANNING

**Goal:** To increase parent involvement at an academic level through a coordinated parent volunteer program at each school.

**Objective I:** To recruit one parent from each school, selected by the principal, to attend a two-day leadership training to become the VIPs program coordinator for their school.

**Objective II:** To increase the total number of parent volunteers in the district from 30 to 200 by May 2012. This would be an increase from 3 to 6 parents to 10 to 20 parent volunteers per school.

**Target Audience:** Parents/guardians

### Strategies

#### Objective I:

- Develop criteria for VIPs coordinators to assist principals with recruiting one parent from their school to attend the leadership training.
- Develop a curriculum for the two-day leadership training in collaboration with the Center for Creative Leadership to motivate and educate VIPs coordinators with key leadership skills.
- Develop a curriculum for the afternoon consisting of communication and sense making strategies to develop our VIPs coordinators into "message foot soldiers" for the district as well as educate them on volunteerism, district initiatives and the importance of parent involvement.
- Develop a strong network with the VIPs coordinators so they can stay connected, share ideas and become advocates for the district.

#### Objective II:

- Develop a pay scale to pay monthly, outcomes-based stipends to VIPs coordinators for their efforts.
- Ensure principal support of the VIPs coordinator with work space and resources in each school.
- Train VIPs coordinators to motivate and recruit parents, as well as train coordinators on the volunteer application process to follow district policies and guidelines.

## COMMUNICATION/IMPLEMENTATION

- Developed the logo and slogan for the VIPs program.
- Attended the Principals' Meeting in September to present program to principals and how the program will benefit the schools.
- Coordinated the mandatory training for all 19 VIPs coordinators (one from each school) on October 15 and 22 (full-day Saturdays).
- Invited instructors from the Center for Creative Leadership to conduct leadership training each morning session.
- Provided training on effective communication strategies; sense making skills (on the difference between a Parent Teacher Organization and the VIPs Program); how to recruit and motivate parent volunteers; and how to develop academic volunteer opportunities with teachers and the principal.

- Conducted brainstorming sessions at the end of each day for VIPs coordinators to brainstorm creative ideas and specific action plans for recruiting parent volunteers.
- Assembled a tool kit consisting of business cards, a planner, an official badge, volunteer packets and materials for each coordinator.
- Scheduled mandatory follow up meetings each month for additional training, to turn in time sheets, share ideas, answer questions and address rumors and concerns.
- Assigned first project: each VIPs coordinator must recruit 20 parents (earned \$10 per parent) from their school to attend the free VIPs Program Kick-Off Luncheon where the Superintendent presented the new five-year plan and district initiatives to parents and stakeholders in audience.
- Attended school staff meetings and provide training to principals, teachers and front desk staff on volunteer forms, handbook, tracking, opportunities/requests, application process and Parent Academy Workshop Series for parents.
- Revamped volunteer contract for 2011-2012 school year. All district volunteers must have a background check and be fingerprinted.
- Created web site for parents to inquire about volunteer opportunities and sign up to become a volunteer as well as links on all school websites.
- Developed volunteer tracking sheet.
- Developed volunteer handbook.
- Developed the Parent University workshop series for VIPs coordinators to recruit parents to attend to increase engagement and academic privilege. Parent University is one night every month where dinner and childcare is provided for parents to attend and learn about topics such as homework help, college readiness, budgeting, mental/behavioral health issues in children, etc.
- Developed a pay scale to pay monthly outcomes-based stipends to VIPs coordinators for their efforts. VIPs coordinators can be paid for: attending the monthly meeting \$20; recruit parents/families to attend district and school functions \$20; develop a monthly parent recognition program for parents who volunteer \$20; host a table at school events to recruit parents \$50; and write a monthly column for the school/parent newsletter about the VIPs program \$10, etc. Maximum earned per month is \$250.
- Instilled a sense of leadership and initiative for coordinators to develop their own recruitment methods and outcomes for a small stipend.
- Ordered t-shirts and specialty advertising items to hand out to parents who become volunteers to promote messages.
- Recognized volunteers, VIPs Coordinators and Leadership Academy attendees at end of year event in May 2012.

## EVALUATION

In conclusion, the VIPs program has proven to be an effective program for increasing parent involvement and engagement. Objective I was achieved, as 19 parents completed and graduated from the training and have become successful coordinators and messengers in their buildings. The VIPs Program Kick-Off Luncheon had 580 parents and stakeholders in attendance, the largest attendance the district has ever had for a stakeholder luncheon. For a low income at-risk district such as Harrison, parent engagement is a major task and the district has created a strong foundation for parent involvement in the first year of the VIPs Program. Objective II was also achieved: in January 2012, the district went from 30 parent volunteers to 200. As of February 22, there are 235 very involved parents throughout the district, which continues to increase. While some schools have more volunteers than others, the average number is 10 parent volunteers in each building. The VIPs coordinators have built the capacity for parents to volunteer at an academic level where they feel involved, valued and like they belong to something important. All parent volunteers must fill out an application and pass a background check. Volunteer hours are now being tracked at each school; and some schools have established a “parent of the month” recognition program where parents are recognized in the school/parent newsletter and at student award ceremonies. Many of the VIPs coordinators work in a location in the school dedicated for the VIPs Program with a bulletin board where volunteer opportunities are posted and parent volunteers can collaborate. Naturally, our elementary schools have more parent involvement than middle and high schools, however the VIPs coordinators have developed small groups of effective parents at the middle and high schools. For elementary, parents are now completing these types of volunteer activities: reading groups and centers, after school tutoring, making flash cards, fundraising for new technology and college visit field trips, and recruiting more parents to volunteer. For middle and high schools, parents are volunteering in these ways: after school for tutoring, chaperoning college visit field trips, fundraising for new technology, and assisting students with applying to colleges, filling out Individual Career and Academic Plans and FAFSA forms. The communications department has called on the VIPs coordinators on many occasions to help gather parent focus groups, recruit parents to serve on committees and advisory boards. The 2011-2012 school year was the first year of the VIPs program and we will continue to strengthen the program in the 2012-2013 school year and possibly expand to serve in another capacity within the district.

One of 63 pages of community survey responses to the question: When you hear the phrase “college or career readiness,” what does that mean to you?

Page 27 of 63

**Harrison Schools**

**Table 16: When you hear the phrase "College or Career Readiness", what does that mean to you?**

That you have the skills that you need to proceed on the path that you're going for. (0000049)

Being responsible. (0000050)

Preparation. (0000051)

That they have the skills to go into a job. (0000060)

The child is academically ready to face college or a career. (0000061)

Being ready without remedial classes. (0000062)

It sounds expensive. (0000063)

Have the knowledge to go to College. (0000064)

You're college bound or you are ready to be employed in a good job now. (0000067)

Something that prepares you for the real world. (0000068)

Being prepared and what options they have to look forward to. (0000069)


Preparing you for the next occupation that you plan to go into. (0000070)

That they have the skills and knowledge to go on with their education. (0000071)

The person is prepared and has more leverage to improve. (0000072)

Having skills to be successful. (0000073)






## Leadership Academy

**Goal of the communications department to accomplish #3 is to change behavior and attitudes in the community.**  
**How do we plan to do that?**


- Research shows parents are the first and most important teachers for children.
- Parent involvement is key to student encouragement, academic success and motivation for a successful future.
- Parents are going to help us prepare kids for college and the workforce.



## Leadership Academy

**Your purpose is to help us with parent engagement:**


- Get more parents to volunteer in the classrooms and schools
- Get more parents to serve on committees and attend District events and meetings
- Get more parents to attend school events and educational activities at the schools
- Be a message foot soldier in supporting the district and be the eyes and ears of your school community



## Leadership Academy

**Parent Volunteer vs. Parent Engagement**


- For parents who are intimidated by the background check process or maybe don't have as much time to come in and volunteer- have ideas for them to engage with the school as well as ideas for parents who are official volunteers.
- Communications challenge to get both types of parents engaged.
- Discussion- 10 minute brainstorm about things parents can do to engage in their school and things official parent volunteers can do.



## Leadership Academy

**OFFICIAL VIP- Parent Volunteer Job Description**


- Must have a strong desire to support other parents of students
- Must be recommended annually by the school principal
- Must be committed to partnership building with the school, families and the community
- Job Description:
  - School-District-Parent liaison
  - **Serve the principal as the connection to the parents**
  - Recruit for attendance at school and district events
  - Message foot soldier
  - Develop a list of active parents as a resource for the district and principal
  - Develop relationships with those parents
  - Market the school to parents and community
  - Provide information for school/parent newsletter
  - Update web site
  - Create communication channels to parents
  - Recruit more parent volunteers in the schools- Goal is 20
  - Recruit parents to attend two district stakeholder events- fill two tables of 10



## Leadership Academy

**Sense Making**

- Find out the facts
- Understand, clarify
- Determine impact and consider different interests
- Reinforce philosophy first
- Become an advocate
- Communicate the same message
- Ask the right questions:
  - Did they go to the teacher or principal first?
  - Did they request a meeting with administration?



## Leadership Academy

**Build relationships scenario**  
 How can you build relationships in these situations?

1. Parent event nights
2. Choir/band concert or drama production
3. Sporting event
4. Community meeting
5. Night of parent conferences
6. Open house
7. Girl/boy scout gathering
8. Pick up/drop off times for students or before/after school care
9. Church
10. Recreational activities



## Leadership Academy

### What volunteers are thinking:

- Why should I volunteer?
- Will I be a significant help as a volunteer?
- What's in it for me?
- How do I get involved, where do I start?
- What is the background check process like?
- What is the process?



## Leadership Academy

### Strategies for recruitment:

- Special circulation publications such as letters home, report cards, Friday homework folders, school newsletters, etc.
- Booths at school events
- Emails and phone calls
- Printed materials
- Work with Elsa Pennell



## Leadership Academy

### Strategies for recruitment:

- Begin to develop a relationship with the potential volunteer.
- Find out their interests, skills, hobbies and professional skills parents can offer.
- Identify the best position for the volunteers, may not be with the school, it's ok to refer.
- Determine what support they will need.
- Provide an opportunity for the potential volunteer to learn more about the school and district.



## Leadership Academy

### Strategies for retention:

- Problem solving skills
- Feel valued and appreciated
- Communication with volunteers
- Smooth and easy process for volunteering
- Chance for volunteers to be creative and have input
- Special recognition such as VIP of the month- recognize at award ceremony and in the school newsletter



## Leadership Academy

### Strategies for retention:

- What motivates parent volunteers?
- Does your recognition of volunteers celebrate a wide array of contributions?
- Do you have a way to record volunteer contributions and hours?
- How can the school staff be involved in recognizing volunteers?



## Leadership Academy

### Action Planning:

- What is your overall goal?
- Does your recognition of volunteers celebrate a wide array of contributions?
- Do you have a way to record volunteer contributions and hours?
- How can the school staff be involved in recognizing volunteers?
- Set a schedule for yourself as the VIP
- Set a goal to work 1 hour a day, or two hours a week, to complete your job description- you will be paid based on outcomes.



### Confidentiality

One of the most important responsibilities of being a school volunteer is to hold personal information about students in the strictest confidence. In the course of volunteering you may see, hear or otherwise encounter personal, academic or medical information about students and their families. You may be told this information by a teacher or a student, you may observe it through your service or you may be asked to assist in the grading or assessment process. Regardless of how personal information about a particular child or family comes to you, note that this information is confidential. It is never to be shared with other volunteers, acquaintances from the community or other students.

### Mandatory Reporting

If, in the course of your volunteer work with a child, you become aware that a student has suffered abuse, neglect, endangerment or exploitation of any kind by any student or adult, bring your concern to the immediate attention of the teacher, school counselor or principal. School employees are required by law to report acts of abuse to the proper authorities. Additionally, they need to know if any students are involved in dangerous or illegal activities so that they may intervene as soon as possible to keep the school community safe.

### Harassment

Harrison School District is committed to maintaining a safe, respectful and secure learning environment for all students. Harassment, intimidation and bullying of students by other students, staff members, volunteers, parents or guardians is prohibited.

Harassment, intimidation or bullying can be:

- Written, verbal or physical
- Slurs, rumors, name-calling, jokes, innuendoes, demeaning comments, drawings, cartoons, pranks, gestures, hazing
- Based on race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, academic ability or mental, sensory or physical disability

While volunteering, carefully examine your own words and actions to be sure you are not engaging in harassment, intimidation or bullying. If you feel that you, a student or staff member has been the victim of harassment of any kind, notify an administrator immediately so that the situation can be addressed.

### Diversity

Harrison School District schools are filled with children who are diverse in many ways. When you are volunteering in our classrooms, please be mindful and respectful of the differences that make each of us unique. Diversity may take many forms, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, academic ability or mental, sensory or physical disability. In your words and in your actions, be sensitive to diversity of all kinds.

### Interacting with Students

Use the following guidelines to help ensure appropriate volunteer-student interaction:

- Be sure that you are placed safely and appropriately, being mindful of any bending, leaning over and stretching that may be required in the course of your volunteer

placement.

- Adhere to all school rules while volunteering. This means you may not smoke, and may not possess weapons, drugs or alcohol on school grounds.
- Remember that many teachers establish discipline and reward systems in the classroom. It is your responsibility to follow this system. If you have concerns about discipline or rewards, discuss this with the classroom teacher privately and/or your building administrator.
- Limit physical contact to brief shows of support or praise.
- When talking to students and giving attention to students be sure to treat all students in the same way.
- Do not make sexist or sexual comments and avoid innuendo.
- Avoid being alone with a student: if you are asked to provide individualized assistance to a student, be visible and in an open location.
- Complete all volunteer activities within the designated timeframe.
- Do not provide your phone number or address to any student and do not ask for the phone number or address of any student.
- Do not give gifts to or receive gifts from students.
- As a school volunteer, do not transport students at anytime.
- Be sure to maintain student confidentiality at all times.
- Only use restrooms reserved for adults.

If you have any questions, please contact us at 530-1334.



SCHOOL DISTRICT TWO  
**HARRISON**  
Choose Through Diversity. Outgrow A Accomplish!

## SCHOOL VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION MANUAL 2011-2012

### CORE BELIEFS:

- Our main purpose is to improve student academic achievement
- Effective instruction makes the most difference in student academic achievement
- There is no excuse for poor quality instruction
- With our help, at-risk students will achieve at the same rate as non-at-risk students
- Staff members must have a commitment to children AND a commitment to the pursuit of excellence.

### QUICK FACTS:

- The district includes 24 schools
- More than 11,000 students attend Harrison School District schools
- The district covers 19 square miles and serves more than 20,000 residents

### Welcome!

Harrison School District welcomes you as a partner in the education of our young people. Thank you for the gifts of time and talent you are offering the children in our community as a school volunteer. Whether you are volunteering in a classroom, helping in a school library, working individually with students or performing office tasks, you make a difference in Harrison School District.

School is a wonderful place that is made even more outstanding when parents and community members dedicate themselves to their local school district by volunteering. Volunteering in Harrison School District schools provides many benefits to our students, school staff, community, as well as to you, our valued volunteer.

We are fortunate to enjoy strong community involvement in our schools. This support is vital to our continued success in preparing our young people to become productive members

Thank you for your interest in serving the educational needs of children across our community. As a Harrison School District volunteer, your time, energy and commitment are an invaluable asset to our students, teachers and schools.

of society and lifelong learners. You are to be applauded for making a commitment to support children in our community by volunteering in the Harrison School District. Thank you!

This School Volunteer Orientation Manual is intended to provide important background information for you as a Harrison School District volunteer. Please take the time to review all sections of this manual before you begin your volunteer experience. If you have any questions, please ask the front desk staff at your school or call the Communications Department at 538-1334 for more information.



### SIGN IN & VOLUNTEER IDENTIFICATION

It is essential to know who is coming and going through our schools. Every school has a sign-in sheet in the front office. Please sign in when you arrive at school and sign out when you leave. You may be asked to present picture identification, such as a valid driver's license. Most schools issue identification stickers or badges to volunteers. Please wear this identification at all times in the schools so you can be recognized as a volunteer.

### ATTENDANCE

We depend on our volunteers to aid the educational process, so please make every effort to fulfill your volunteer obligations and to arrive on time. If you cannot attend a scheduled volunteer placement, please call the school as soon as possible so that other arrangements can be made for the work you were scheduled to do. If you wish to cease being a school volunteer, please notify your school or the Harrison School District Communications Department so that we can process your departure.



### Volunteering in Harrison School District Schools

Many opportunities to make a difference

Volunteers and volunteer opportunities come in all varieties. Perhaps you want to stay active in the community or give something back to Colorado Spring's youngest residents. You might wish to enhance your career network or polish certain job skills. Maybe you just want to get out and about as well as meet some new people! You may have time to give each week, or maybe you will volunteer for a particular event. In the course of your volunteer work, you may have a regular placement at one school, or you might prefer helping whenever and wherever you are needed, at any school in the district. Whatever your needs as a volunteer, we can provide the right fit in Harrison School District schools.

### CLASSROOM ASSISTANCE

You may want to volunteer in the classroom. In addition to helping teachers with classroom preparation work,

reading to students is an important part of the school day. Our schools appreciate volunteers who are willing to practice reading skills with small groups or individual students. If you would like to help students with the essentials of their schoolwork, consider being a tutor for math, language arts or other subject areas. Many of our students would benefit from the guidance of a homework helper.

### SPECIAL ASSISTANCE AREAS

Other areas of our schools also offer volunteer opportunities. Consider volunteering in the school library, where you may assist students and staff alike. If you have clerical skills, our school offices need volunteers for general tasks as well as specific projects. If you know another language you are in demand as a translation volunteer. (Placement in a clerical or translation position is

contingent upon skills testing.) There are also opportunities to become part of the Harrison School District Speaker's Bureau and share your talents, career insight and international perspectives with students.

### EVENTS

Special events in Harrison School District schools are always exciting, and of course require the efforts of many individuals to make them successful. Each of our schools offers activities before and after school, as well as many special community functions throughout the year. Perhaps you would like to support our Harrison School District athletic teams or extracurricular activities as a volunteer. Field trips offer the opportunity for volunteers to serve as chaperones.



### Becoming a Volunteer

All Harrison School District volunteers are required to register with the district before they begin working in our schools. Everyone must complete the registration process, which involves completing the School Volunteer Application form available in our Communications Department at 1000 Harrison Rd.

Each application form is screened and a criminal background and fingerprint

check is performed. To ensure the safety of our students, individuals are accepted into the Harrison School District volunteer program after the screening process is complete. Once you have been accepted into the program, you will be notified by telephone and you may initiate your school of choice directly to offer your services.

Please use this volunteer manual as a reference for your

general questions and anticipate more specific training at your placement. During the first two months of school, the volunteer screening process may take up to four weeks due to the high number of applications being submitted. Your patience is appreciated!

If you have questions or concerns, give us a call at 538-1334.

### Maintaining Professional Boundaries

All staff, students, volunteers and community members play an important role in protecting children from inappropriate conduct by adults. In a professional staff/student or volunteer/student relationship, adults are expected to maintain boundaries that are consistent with the legal and ethical duty of care that school personnel have for students.

Students, parents and volunteers are strongly encouraged to notify the principal or other administrator if they believe a teacher or other staff member may be engaging in inappropriate conduct.

Descriptions of acceptable and unacceptable conduct are contained in the Harrison School District Board Policies and Procedures available at [www.hsd2.org](http://www.hsd2.org).



### HEALTH & SAFETY

We want to ensure that you are safe and secure in all our school facilities. Be sure that you receive proper training or any office equipment or other tools that you will be using in the course of your volunteer time. Also, be sure you are familiar with the school's emergency policies and procedures. Each school regularly practices evacuation and lock-down procedures. In addition, each school has emergency procedures in the event of accidents, bomb threats, fire, food, release of hazardous materials, ice storms and other natural disasters, power outages, vandalism and other emergencies. Please ask your classroom teacher or office staff to familiarize you with the particular procedures in your assigned area.

While you are volunteering, do not administer medications of any kind. Do not give food to students. Some students in our schools have severe food or environmental allergies. The district maintains a policy to address this health concern. If you have questions about how this impacts your volunteer service, please ask your classroom teacher, school nurse or principal.



## COMMUNICATION/IMPLEMENTATION

Coordinator projects in the schools to promote the program

Appendix 5



Otero Elementary VIP Bulletin Board



Soaring Eagles parent/school newsletter VIP column

## Soaring Eagles Elementary

4710 Harrier Ridge Drive • Colorado Springs, CO • 80916 • 719-540-4000

Kelli O'Neil, Principal

### PTO NEWS

Hello parents! Our next meeting will be February 2, 2012 at 3:30 pm in the library. Everyone is always very welcome, including children. Snacks are provided. At our last meeting we began organizing our next fundraiser, selling cookie dough. Your help is always welcome, so come and see how you can lend a hand. We will have a few of our parents returning with information about other fundraisers as they attend an open house for us. We are also expecting a representative from a new company to explore some additional options for our fall fundraiser. We cannot run this school without our parents! We look forward to seeing you at the next meeting; we are always looking for your ideas and suggestions to continue to make Soaring Eagles SOAR! Thank you for all you do for our students.  
-Victoria Garcia  
5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher/PTO President

### V.I.P. (VOLUNTEER) NEWS

Well it's a new month, which means we get to recognize a new volunteer of the month. This month it's Tierra Maul for all her help with the book fair, Santa shop, popcorn sales, library, and RIF. We really appreciate all your help! Thank you to all of our parents who helped with RIF this year. This program wouldn't be successful without you. Our next event will be selling candy grams for Valentine's day February 1-14 outside of the library. Contact Tiffany Slavin 719-203-6473 or 580-401-3919 to sign up or to become a VIP. Also, we request volunteer fingerprints be completed by those of you who have been notified to allow continued participation in the classroom. Thank you.

### PTO CANDY GRAM SALE

PTO is selling candy grams in honor of Valentine's Day. Students can purchase candy grams for their friends and all grams will be delivered on February



Fox Meadow Middle School VIP recruitment table



Turman Elementary VIP Bulletin Board





Kick-Off Luncheon 11/1/2011



Kick-Off Goody Bags: t-shirt, timer for reading 20 minutes each night, dry erase board reminding parents about attendance, homework and reading





## COMMUNICATION/IMPLEMENTATION

### V.I.P. Coordinator Timesheet

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Month: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



**Monthly Meeting: \$20** Attended monthly mandatory meeting with the Communications Dept. to review V.I.P. Coordinator's recruitment activities.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Time: \_\_\_\_\_

**Stakeholder Event Recruitment: \$200**  
Recruited a minimum of 20 parents to attend the stakeholder events in the Fall and Spring. Must submit guest list with timesheet. If less than 20 parents are recruited V.I.P. Coordinator will be paid at the "New V.I.P." rate.

# of Parents at Event: \_\_\_\_\_  
Event Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Is guest list attached to timesheet?: \_\_\_\_\_

**Recognition Program: \$20**  
Developed a V.I.P. of the Month Program (or non-V.I.P.) and recognized at least one V.I.P. or parent each month. Attach description of recognition program the first month.

Name of Parent/V.I.P.: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Parent/V.I.P.: \_\_\_\_\_

**New V.I.P. Recruitment: \$10**  
V.I.P. Coordinator will be paid \$10 for EACH new V.I.P. they recruit. The applicant must complete a Volunteer Contract and clear a background and fingerprint check in order to become a V.I.P.

# of V.I.P.S. Recruited: \_\_\_\_\_

**Helping with Recruitment for a School Event: \$20**  
V.I.P. Coordinator will be paid \$20 for assisting with recruitment for a school event. The event must be well attended (as determined by the school principal) as a result of the V.I.P. Coordinator's efforts.

Date of Event: \_\_\_\_\_  
Event Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
# of Parents at Event: \_\_\_\_\_  
Principal Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Column in School Newsletter: \$20**  
V.I.P. Coordinator will provide content or have a column, article or section in the school newsletter every month. Attach a copy of the publication to timesheet.

Date Published: \_\_\_\_\_  
Is newsletter attached to timesheet?: \_\_\_\_\_  
Web/Facebook Content: Yes No

**Host a V.I.P. Coordinator Table: \$25**  
V.I.P. Coordinator will be paid \$25 for EACH table they host to recruit V.I.P.S.

Date Hosted Table #1: \_\_\_\_\_  
Event Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
# of Parents at Event: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date Hosted Table #2: \_\_\_\_\_  
Event Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
# of Parents at Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Total: \_\_\_\_\_

**Monthly Limits:** The maximum stipend that can be earned each month is \$250.00.

Please contact the Communications Department with questions about compensation for recruitment activities not listed.

VIP  
Coordinator  
time sheet,  
badge and  
business cards

District and  
school web site  
advertisements

### 38 Ways Parents Can Volunteer in Schools

#### Volunteering in the classroom:

1. Tutor a student.
2. Work with individual students.
3. Work with small groups of students.
4. Listen to students read.
5. Translate or Interpret for students.
6. Help with teacher's clerical work.
7. Prepare materials.
8. Attend field trips.
9. Help students with dramatic performances, special events.
10. Help out in class with art projects, science experiences, etc.
11. Appear as a guest speaker to share professional experience, travel, culture, skills, crafts or talent.



#### I am interested in volunteering in other areas. I'd like to:

12. Help with school security (bus, school grounds, lunch room, etc.).
13. Help ESL families with enrollment and understanding our school.
14. Work in the school library.
15. Photograph school activities.
16. Videotape school activities.
17. Provide transportation to parents for conferences, events, etc.
18. Type or do clerical work.
19. Prepare newsletters.

20. Prepare posters, displays, etc.
21. Do copying and laminating.
22. Work with children on computers.
23. Work with the welcome committee for families who are new to the school.
24. Interpret for ESL families at school events or workshops.
25. Interpret school information over the phone for ESL families.
26. Volunteer in the parent resource room.
27. Work with other parents on projects and issues concerning our school.
28. Become involved in parent leadership opportunities through the Title I Advisory Committee or other site based council, Parent Teacher Association (PTA), or by attending district school board meetings.

#### I am interested in helping by working at home. I'd like to:

29. Recruit parents, community members and local businesses to participate in special reading programs for students.
30. Call parents and organize phone trees for attendance and special projects or events.
31. Enter data on a computer.
32. Gather resource materials.
33. Sew.
34. Provide snacks.
35. Cut out letters.
36. Prepare bulletin boards.
37. Stuff envelopes.
38. Distribute brochures door-to-door.

### VIP Coordinator Talking Points

### Appendix 5

#### Sample Script

Hello, I am [name], the Very Involved Parent Coordinator here at [school name], and I am also a parent. We work for the school to help increase parent involvement. We believe parent involvement is an important part of a child's academic success. There are many ways you can get involved [offer ideas]. You can become a VIP which is a parent who volunteers often in the school or you can simply get involved in simple less time consuming ways. Either way, we are happy to help you with this process.

If they are interested in becoming a VIP, you hand them a business card of Elsa Pennell and she will take care of the paper work while you connect the parent to ways they can volunteer in the building.

If they are interested in simple, less time consuming activities have some ideas available for them and be sure to ask them to do four things:

1. Get your child to school on time, every day
2. Make them do their homework
3. Make them read for 20 minutes every night at home
4. Attend school functions with your child

#### Volunteer Process is as follows:

- Get a volunteer application from the VIP coordinator, front office or central administration.
- Fill out volunteer application and turn into the building secretary
- Communications will run a background check
- When the background check has been cleared the fingerprint card can be picked up at front office or central administration
- As soon as the fingerprint card is completed and returned to the communications office the VIP is ready to volunteer

#### Your purpose is to be the school/district parent liaison who manages parent engagement efforts in alignment with the school administration's vision:

- Get more parents to volunteer in the classrooms and schools
- Get more parents to serve on committees and attend District events and meetings
- Get more parents to attend school events and educational activities at the schools
- Be a message foot soldier in supporting the district and be the eyes and ears of your school community

#### Difference between a V.I.P. volunteer and a parent engagement volunteer:

- **VIPs** (very involved parents) are considered parent volunteers in the school who are establishing relationships with students by being consistently visible in the classroom and around the school. Parents have been admitted into participation in the VIP program and are, as you have indicated, consistent volunteers in the classroom with children. District Policy states official volunteers must receive a background check and fingerprinting. All VIPs will receive special badges so you know who these folks are and your building.
- Parents who are not admitted into participation in the VIP program, or do not want to become a VIP are considered occasional volunteers. These parents can be in the school, either inside or outside the classroom and with or not with children. Parent engagement activities are simply for parents who participate in volunteering outside of the classroom or for events not during school hours, chaperone a field trip, attendance at school and district events, volunteering outside of the classroom such as cutting things, making copies, baking goods, etc. These parents do not need fingerprints or background checks. These parents are not consistently visible in the classroom or establishing relationships with students. **Volunteers, no matter their status, are never unsupervised (re: OE-4), whether they are with children or not. This volunteer supervision is an important student safeguard that must be emphasized with principals as the supervision enforcement is their responsibility.**



## SCHOOL SMARTS PARENT ACADEMY

School Smarts involves a unique collaboration between the school, districts and PTA.

### ENGAGEMENT, LEARNING AND LEADERSHIP

#### We start with a campus-wide family engagement event

Each School Smarts program is introduced at a school-wide event designed to attract families from all sectors of the school community. At this social and educational evening, parents learn about the School Smarts program. Each event is planned and customized by a local site Steering Committee. Details about the upcoming Parent Academy are shared with parents. Parents also learn how to maximize success for their children, get a chance to meet each other and school leaders, and take part in an interactive arts activity to further build community.

#### Parents learn at our seven-session Parent Academy

School Smarts trained facilitators (often teachers from the local school site) lead seven interactive sessions for 25-30 parent participants, based on a professionally developed curriculum. The sessions include individual and group activities, art activities, discussions and opportunities for parents to build relationships with each other and with school and district leaders. Each Steering Committee works with their school district to ensure that childcare and food are provided.

#### Celebrating leadership and next-level engagement

The parent academy culminates with a graduation celebration – many parent graduates then to serve on school and district committees and PTA boards, plus seek additional training to strengthen their overall engagement and their advocacy skills.

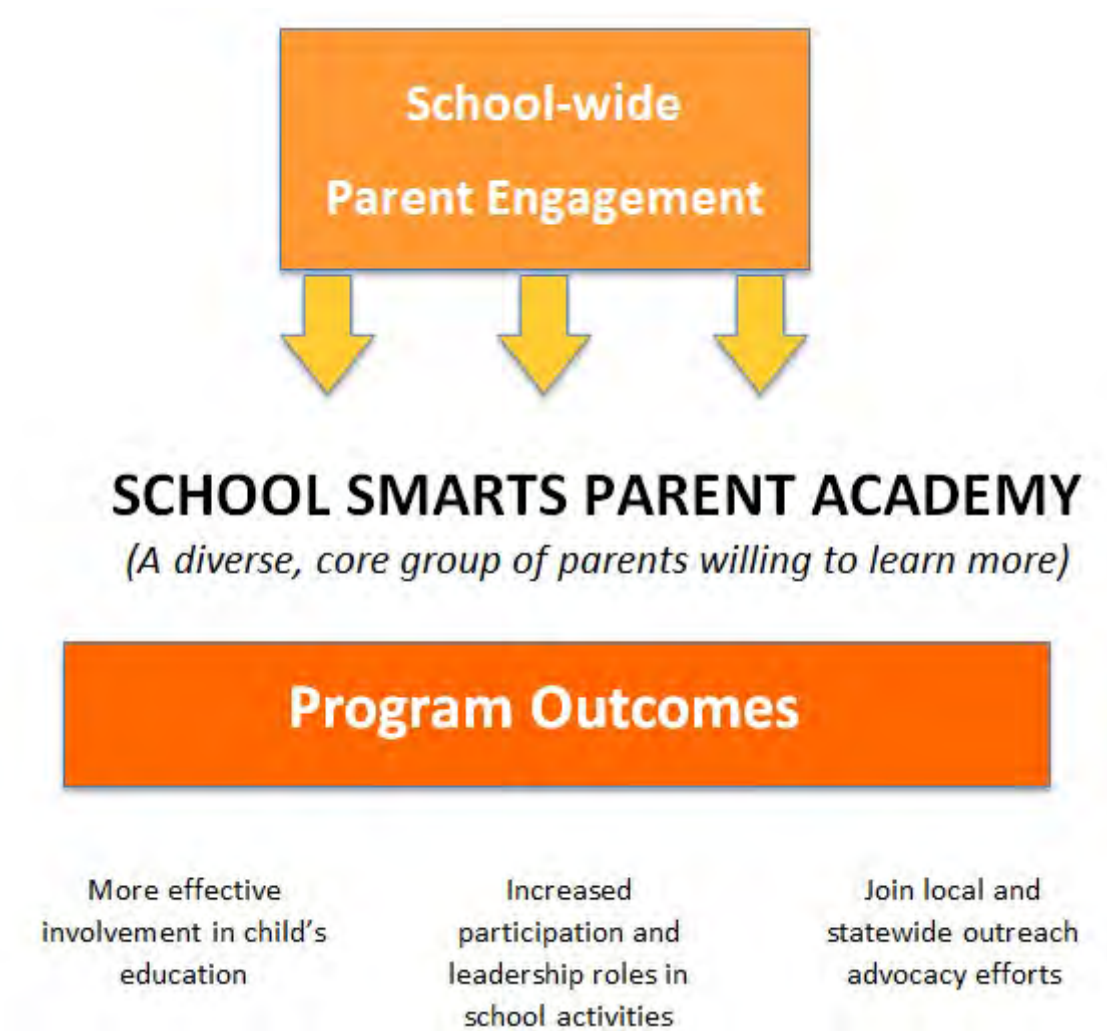
Contact [schoolsmarts@capta.org](mailto:schoolsmarts@capta.org) to find out how to get involved!

### WHAT PARENTS LEARN

- **Session 1: Parent involvement** — Parent's role as their child's first teacher and the types of parent involvement
- **Session 2: Preparing for a lifetime of learning** — How children learn and the basics of college readiness
- **Session 3: Understanding our education system** — The structure of the California public school system, including academic standards, testing and local school funding
- **Session 4: Understanding our school** — How schools are governed and decisions are made
- **Session 5: Becoming an effective communicator** — The importance of communication between families, schools and other audiences
- **Session 6: Standing up for quality education** — Becoming a leader and advocate on behalf of your child and all children
- **Session 7: Taking action/Celebrating commitment** — Creating personal and group action plans.









## PARENT UNIVERSITY

Oak Lawn-Hometown School District 123

### Empowering

Parents are the single most important factor in a child's continued success! Join the conversation. **Participate at any school** during the times listed to the right. Workshops are open to all D123 families.

### Engaging

Small group Parent University workshops are intended to foster meaningful partnerships for learning new things, as well as offer information and resources for all parents.

### Enlightening

Educators and parents will come together to discuss the impact of educational ideas on our entire learning community. The program is intended to jointly involve parents and schools in conversations that shape the lives and schooling of our children.

### QUESTIONS?

Contact your child's school office.

### Common Core **Math** Learning Standards: What parents need to know!

- ✓ What are the key shifts in mathematics education called for in the Common Core?
- ✓ What are the new strategies and practices being used for mathematics instruction in D123?
- ✓ What are the resources that can be used to support children at home in the area of mathematics?

### Join Us

February 26 - Hometown - 8870 South Duffy Avenue

March 4 - Covington - 9130 South 52nd Avenue

March 5 - Hannum - 9800 South Tripp

March 11 - Sward - 9830 South Brandt Avenue

March 12 - Kolmar - 10425 South Kolmar

March 19 - OLHMS - 5345 W. 99th St.

Join the discussion!

6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

<http://d123.org/parentuniversity>

If you plan to attend, please complete this form and return it to your child's teacher or complete the form found online at <http://d123.org/parentuniversity>.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Adults Attending \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_

Grade Level(s) of your student(s) \_\_\_\_\_



## D123 Parent University

### Frequently Asked Questions

Oak Lawn-Hometown School District 123 District Office

#### WHAT IS PARENT UNIVERSITY?

The D123 Parent University is a program designed to help parents support their child's education. It is designed as a collaborative effort between School District 123 families and staff to help bring our school, home, and community together through participation in relevant educational conversations. Small group workshops are intended to foster meaningful partnerships for learning, as well as offer training, information, and resources to all parents and caregivers. PARENTS are the single most important factor in a child's success. Parent University will offer opportunities for parents to sharpen their skills as they work in one of life's most important and demanding roles—PARENTING!

#### WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF PARENT UNIVERSITY?

The purpose of the D123 Parent University is to provide a partnering opportunity for educators and parents to share stories and discuss the impact of educational ideas on our entire learning community. The program is intended to jointly involve parents, schools, and the community in educational conversations that shape the lives of our children. The focus of our program will be based on Epstein's Framework for School, Family, and Community Partnerships (2011).

#### WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF PARENT UNIVERSITY?

The goals of Parent University are to:

- ENGAGE parents as collaborative partners in the school community in order to foster student success
- EMPOWER parents to become informed partners in education by having relevant educational conversations within the school community, to advocate for parental voice, and provide parent feedback into school decisions
- ENLIGHTEN perspectives of parents and educators of what can be further learned in the field of education across school communities, as well as how it applies to our community and our children

#### WHY BE INVOLVED?

Research has shown that parents can increase a child's academic success through their involvement with schools and communities. Parental involvement improves student morale, attitudes, and academic achievement across all subject areas. Whether you are a parent, family member, or caregiver, we encourage you to partner with the school district and become involved with Parent University. Sessions will meet for one hour and a "D123 Badge" will be awarded to each participant.

#### HOW IS THE PARENT UNIVERSITY BEING DEVELOPED?

Collaboration with a District Parent Steering Committee will meet with District leadership, educational institutions, and community partners to identify needs, as well as design and schedule workshops. All groups



within the district will work collaboratively to provide information and help plan meaningful workshops for our parents.

### WHAT TOPICS WILL BE COVERED?

Parent University will integrate workshop offerings within four primary strands:

- Strand I is Parent Awareness. These offerings will provide information that can empower parents to raise confident, educated children ready for the future.
- Strand II is Helping Your Child Learn in the 21st Century. These offerings will provide parents information about how to support children's academic opportunities and challenges today.
- Strand III is Health and Wellness. These offerings will support information and activities to help families build healthy lifestyles physically, as well as emotionally.
- Strand IV is Personal Growth and Development. These offerings will help parents to grow personally and professionally, so they can become the most effective advocates for their children.

### WHO CAN ATTEND?

Anyone! If you'd like to come and invite a friend please feel free. We will be promoting classes to anyone interested. Our philosophy here is "The more the merrier!" You do not have to have a child that attends School District 123 to attend sessions.

### WILL CHILDCARE BE PROVIDED?

No, unfortunately at this time childcare will not be provided. However, we do encourage parents to bring children with them to workshops. Children of age can either read or work independently at a nearby table.

### WHERE AND AT WHAT TIMES WILL WORKSHOPS BE OFFERED?

Workshops will be offered at four flexible times on **Thursdays** in the fall and spring at all of our D123 schools. Sessions will run precisely one-hour and be repeated each Thursday at different school locations from 7:30AM-8:30AM, 8:45AM-9:45AM, 2:00PM-3:00PM, or 7:00PM-8:00PM. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to just "pop-in" and are welcome to attend any of the workshops, at any location since the workshops all share the same objectives throughout the month.

### WHO LEADS THE WORKSHOPS?

Workshops are facilitated by school district leadership, with the support of parents and community resources.

### REFERENCES

- Epstein, J. L. (2011). *School, family, and community partnerships: Preparing educators and improving schools* (2nd ed.). Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Epstein, J. L., Galindo, C. L., & Sheldon, S. B. (2011). Levels of Leadership: Effects of district and school leaders on the quality of school programs of family and community involvement. Revised and submitted to *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 47, 446-461.
- Epstein, J. L., Sanders, M. G., Sheldon, S., Simon, B. S., Salinas, K. C., Jansorn, N. R....Williams, K. J. (2009). *School, family, and community partnerships: Your handbook for action* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

# Keys to Effective Problem Solving

For parents (and students) in the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District.

*Parents, teachers, students, administrators, and School Board members all want the same thing: the opportunity for all students in our community to learn and grow in safe and productive schools. However, sometimes problems arise that need to be resolved, questions need to be answered. The following information is designed to provide keys to effective ways of resolving problems and concerns.*

## How to use Problem Solving Keys

Problem solving keys are helpful in many situations. Successful problem solving leaves all parties feeling heard and treated respectfully. The discussion is focused on the problem and resolution is reached without attacking or demeaning the parties involved.

### *Make an appointment with the person involved.*

Key Calmly tell them you have a concern and want to discuss it to see how you can work on it together. By saying you want to work together, you are showing a willingness to find a solution and to listen.

### *Try to avoid building defensiveness on either side.*

Key When people are defensive, it is more difficult to listen with an open mind. While the other person is talking, we tend to concentrate on what we are going to say next or how we can justify our actions. Attacking often adds to the problem and can become the focus more than the original issue. When trying to solve problems, listening is as important as talking.

### *It's okay to be nervous.*

Key If you are nervous about the meeting, make notes of the key points you want to cover and go through your list during the meeting.

### *Build in some positives.*

Key It is helpful to acknowledge what is going well, not just the specific problem.

### *Use "I" statements.*

Key Use "I" statements rather than "you" (which can be perceived as accusatory). Practice filling in the blanks in the following:

When \_\_\_\_\_ happens, I feel \_\_\_\_\_ and am concerned about \_\_\_\_\_.

I'm confused about how \_\_\_\_\_ is handled.

It seems like \_\_\_\_\_ happened and I am concerned. How do you see the situation?

### *Stay focused.*

Key Keep the focus of your concern or disagreement on the action or decision. Criticizing the person doesn't address the problem and creates more tension which can then become a bigger problem than the original issue.

### *Be aware of possible barriers.*

Key Think about the various barriers to solving the problem. You can understand that public schools have limitations without giving up on the problem. Flexibility is an important key to problem solving.

### *Be sure to follow up.*

Key Finish the meeting with a summary of the discussion and conclusions. This assures that everyone understood the results of the meeting in the same way.



## Tips for Effective Problem Solving



- Get involved early in the problem-solving process. It's easier to solve minor problems than major ones.
- Distinguish between problems that cause "discomfort" and those that may cause "damage."
- Discomfort problems are relatively minor and may be able to be resolved by the student, with adult help. By trying to solve problems themselves, students learn valuable problem-solving skills they'll be able to use throughout their lives. These tips will help students as well as adults.
- Potentially damaging problems need immediate adult help and quick response.
- Be sure you have the facts. Try not to react to rumor or opinion. Get all sides of the story.
- Think about constructive solutions you can suggest to resolve the situation.
- Follow the process outlined in this document. Backtracking later may be frustrating for everyone involved.

## Steps to Solving Problems

The problem solving process is a series of steps. Use the keys listed on the previous page in each of the steps below.

**Step One:** Always start with the teacher or other staff person directly involved. The counselor can help arrange a meeting, if you like.

**Step Two:** If you think the problem has not been resolved, please call or make an appointment with the principal.

**Step Three:** If you need further assistance, talk to the appropriate assistant superintendent at the school district administrative center, 452-2000, ext. 11411.

**Step Four:** If you are still not satisfied, call the superintendent's office, 452-2000, ext. 11401, and explain your problem. The superintendent will return your call as soon as possible, or you may schedule an appointment.

If these steps are not satisfactory, you may appeal an administrative decision to the School Board, 452-2000, ext. 11400. To discuss your concern with the School Board:

- ◆ Write a letter, email ([schoolboard@k12northstar.org](mailto:schoolboard@k12northstar.org)), or discuss the issue with School Board members.
- ◆ Speak during public comment at a School Board meeting. School Board meetings are held the first and third Tuesday of each month during the school year. Testimony is limited to three minutes. Meetings are broadcast on KUAC FM 89.9 radio, GCI Cable, and internet stream on the district website [www.k12northstar.org](http://www.k12northstar.org). *When addressing the Board, please note that libel laws may apply to public criticism of individuals identified by name.*

If you need help resolving a problem or getting information, please call the school district by dialing 452-2000 and the following extensions.

x 11411	Assistant Superintendent
x 11421	Curriculum
x 11463	EEO/ Affirmative Action
x 11301	Finances
x 11201	Fairbanks B.E.S.T.
x 11382	Human Resources
x 11241	Library/ Media
x 11403	Public Relations
x 11400	School Board
x 11441	Special Education
x 11361	Student Records
x 11401	Superintendent's Office
x 11351	Transportation
451-1004	Nutrition Services
X16600	



*This brochure was designed and distributed by the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District with input from parents, teachers, school staff, and administrators.*

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Ms. Bett Schaffhauser, Employment and Educational Opportunity Director  
520 Fifth Avenue, 4th Floor, Suite A, Room 411, Fairbanks, Alaska 99701  
(907) 452-2000, ext. 11466 – Fax (907) 452-3172  
[bett.schaffhauser@k12northstar.org](mailto:bett.schaffhauser@k12northstar.org)

# About MyConferenceTime

MyConferenceTime is an online parent-teacher conference scheduler developed by [FislerData, LLC](#).

MyConferenceTime is incredibly flexible. Some schools have one person do all of the parent-teacher conference scheduling for the entire school; others have individual teachers set up their own conference schedules. Whichever option you choose – or even an option in between these two – MyConferenceTime can handle it.

MyConferenceTime places **absolutely no advertising on the site**. MyConferenceTime does not release any personal information to a third party – **information is used by the school and goes nowhere else**.

All conference schedules are accessible using one URL. This means all schedules are easy to find and in one location. Parents don't want to type in many URLs in order to find conference schedules. With MyConferenceTime, finding conference schedules is as simple as going to the school's [easy-to-type account](#).

MyConferenceTime is a subscription service. Schools, entire districts or individual teachers can subscribe to MyConferenceTime to facilitate the scheduling of parent-teacher conferences. Subscriptions are for one calendar year.

[Pricing](#) is very affordable. Please [contact us](#) to get started with a free trial. Free trials are available and encouraged so that when you subscribe, you are confident that MyConferenceTime is the correct fit for your school.



# Features

## Features of **MyConferenceTime**:

1. **Very affordable pricing.** You schedule parent-teacher conferences a few times a year, so we keep our prices low. In fact, MyConferenceTime saves you money vs. the cost of paying staff members to schedule conference times.
2. Administrators and/or teachers quickly and easily **post conference schedules online.**
3. Parents **sign up for an available conference** and immediately know the date and time of the appointment.
4. Parents receive **confirmation email.**
5. Parents can **view multiple teachers' schedules side-by-side** to schedule several conferences on the same date during the same time period.
6. **English and Spanish** translations included with each subscription.
7. **Limit the number** of conferences per student and/or **prohibit** overlapping conferences.
8. Option to **password-protect** a schedule so that only invited participants can view available times and sign up.
9. Organize conference schedules in **folders** for easy site navigation.
10. **Administrative conference reports** showing the total number of available conferences and the number of conferences scheduled by day or by teacher. Each day is reported as a whole and also broken down by hour so you can determine which dates/times are the most attended.
11. **Teachers' option** to receive confirmation email for each conference.
12. **Twenty customizable field names** – you decide if the site will say “Student’s First Name,” “Child’s First Name,” etc. You decide which fields will be displayed. You decide which fields will be optional or required.
13. Once a parent signs up for a conference, the **time slot is reserved** and no one else is able to sign up for that opening.
14. **Search feature** for staff to find specific students' conference dates and times.
15. **Customizable statuses** to indicate completed, postponed, or canceled conferences.
16. Quick, easy **administrative controls** to instantly lock, unlock or delete conferences school-wide.
17. Compatible with scheduling **student-led conferences.**
18. Administrators can **email each teacher a pdf attachment of his/her schedule** prior to conferences.
19. Options to schedule **one conference per time slot, multiple conferences per time slot**, or even zero conferences per time slot to block out time for dinner.
20. All information is **confidential and securely encrypted.**
21. **100% web browser-based** with no additional software to install.
22. Teachers can **view each other's schedule.**
23. **Flexibility** allows for scheduling conferences, arranging meetings, setting up athletic physicals: unlimited possibilities.
24. Teachers can **lock their schedule** to prevent surprise, last-minute online signups.
25. Once a schedule is set up for one teacher, the **template can be quickly copied** and used by other teachers.
26. Parents who do not have Internet access can be signed up by the teacher – quickly, easily via a phone call or note from home.
27. Teachers and/or administrators can send **email reminders** to parents prior to conferences.
28. **Staff Groups** allow admins to create reusable sets of staff in order to quickly select staff. Perfect of automatically selecting grade level teachers or subject area teachers.
29. Two options:
  - A. Only school staff members have accounts. Parents simply sign up without logging in – **no parent username/password to distribute.** Our most popular option.



- B. Parents and staff members have accounts. Parents log in and sign up for a conference. Schools are responsible for parent accounts and distributing log in information.
30. Conference data can be downloaded as a **CSV (spreadsheet) file**.
31. Best of all, FislerData's **excellent customer service**.

# Pricing

**Introductory price for new subscriptions: \$300 for all conferences through June 30, 2017.** Pay just \$300 for unlimited conference scheduling through June 30, 2017. Price includes conference scheduling, account set up, and support. Offer good on new subscriptions only. **Offer valid through September 30, 2016.**

Please **contact us** so we can **answer your questions, help with purchase orders, set up a trial account, or offer any other help you might need.**

[Subscribe Now with a Credit Card](#)

**Regular price for an annual subscription to MyConferenceTime is \$379/school.** Please inquire regarding district discounts, multi-school\* discounts and discounts for schools with enrollments less than 250 students. We often are able to offer a lower price.

If you are a **teacher who would like to use MyConferenceTime for yourself** but your school does not subscribe, the individual subscription cost is **\$14.99/year**.

Each school subscription includes at no extra cost:

An unlimited number of **staff and admin accounts**: all of your staff members can have an account so each one can log in and view/edit/create conference schedules. (Individual teacher subscriptions have only one staff/admin account.)

An unlimited number of **conferences**: even if you schedule conferences every day of the year, the cost does not increase.

An unlimited number of **students**: all of your students and parents can sign up for conferences, regardless of the number.

There is no additional fee for initial set up. FislerData, LLC, creators of MyConferenceTime, will help you get your staff members imported into the system and show you how to get your conference schedules created. We even have templates we can send you to help you notify parents of upcoming conferences.

[Subscribe Now with a Credit Card](#)

\*Multi-school discount is available for schools in the same district and billed on the same invoice/purchase order.

Published Online: September 29, 2015

Published in Print: September 30, 2015, as **Parent-Teacher Conferences Get a Makeover**

## Parent-Teacher Conferences Get a Makeover

By **Sarah D. Sparks**

Two years ago, back-to-school night at Ruth Hill Elementary School looked like most open houses.

"You would come to your teacher's class, meet the teacher, look at what's on the walls, see what's in the SOAR [behavior rules] report, and that's about it," said Lucia Woods, Ruth Hill's counselor. "That was our traditional communication method for years and years."

That was before the Newnan, Ga., school was tapped in 2014-15 as one of 10 schools in the state to pilot academic parent-teacher teams, a model developed by WestEd researcher Maria C. Paredes five years ago to build more goal-focused, academically oriented relationships among teachers and parents, and among the parents themselves.

Academic parent-teacher teams are one way educators are starting to reimagine that autumn classic, the parent-teacher conference.

In spite of emerging online and text-messaging communication methods, the general meeting is still the most common—and for some parents, the only—contact with teachers during the year, and more school and district leaders are looking for ways to boost its impact.

The **APTT model** has spread to 250 schools in 16 states in the past five years. Georgia and four other states—Arizona, Florida, Montana, and Wisconsin—have launched grants for schools to train school staff members to create the teams.

"Our education system was not set up to create a professional learning community between parents and teachers," said Paredes, a senior program associate for family and community engagement at the research group WestEd. Traditional parent-teacher conferences were "never intended to be a place for learning, a time for parents to meet together and share what they know," she said.

### Who Shows Up?

**Nearly 9 in 10 parents—including more than 3 in 4 impoverished parents—attend general parent-teacher meetings each year**, according to 2012 data, the most recent available, from Child Trends, a nonprofit data bank. That's more than 10 percentage points higher than any other type of parent involvement in schools—such as scheduled meetings with a teacher or school events or committees.

For poor parents, racial minorities, and those with low education levels, general parent-teacher conferences dominate school involvement methods by even bigger margins.

Yet the limitations of the traditional parent-teacher-conference model haven't changed much in the decades it's been in use.

"Conferences are short, the info a parent receives is hard to interpret, and it's unclear what **actions a parent or the teacher should take to maximize the student's strengths**," said Heather W<sup>83</sup>s, the

[Back to Story](#)



founder and director of the Harvard Family Research Project.

Moreover, studies have found these quick-hit meetings can be minefields for teachers, be they with helicopter parents or with those reluctant to engage because of other obligations or their own bad school experiences.

"Teachers are typically not trained to do this, and both parents and teachers are often anxious about it," said Weiss, which was not part of the WestEd project. "The parent-teacher conference has been bogged down with 'that's my job, that's not my job' arguments between teachers and parents. We need to reframe it as a shared responsibility and a public good."

Paredes conceived the academic parent-teacher team while working in Phoenix schools as a way to bring parents into a professional learning community.

At the 460-student Ruth Hill Elementary, it could be easy for parent-teacher conferences to become fraught. The school has the highest poverty rate in the Coweta County school district, at 80 percent, and the lowest performance on state tests. It has roughly equal-sized black and white populations, with a rising number of Hispanic students, and parents with a wide array of interests and concerns.

In Ruth Hill and other APTT schools, the first school meeting is long—75 to 90 minutes—and all parents meet together rather than individually. The teacher discusses the learning concepts that students must master by the end of the academic year and shows a chart of every child's status on a key foundational skill, like subtraction or reading comprehension. The chart is anonymous, but each parent receives a packet that includes the identification code for his or her child, to help them understand how their child performs in relation to peers.

Parents then each set a 60-day goal for their child on that foundation skill. The teacher models home activities to improve the skill, and parents work through them during the meeting.

They also receive materials required for the activities to take home.

Providing materials can put families on an even footing, said M. Elena Lopez, the associate director of the Harvard Family Research Project, who is not involved in the APTT project.

"For families facing economic disadvantages, who may have trouble just getting to the meeting, ... the question becomes, what can they do, and what's possible to do to make things better for their students?" she said. "That's an important question, and often it doesn't get brought up."

### **Year-Round Effort**

After 60 days, the teacher meets with each family alone for 30 minutes to review progress on the goal they set together, as well as discuss any issues and introduce a new foundation skill and activities. The full parent group meets two more times, in each quarter of the spring semester.

Ruth Hill counselor Woods said the program has helped parents become more confident reaching out.

"Before, if there was a child struggling, the teacher might meet with a parent and say, 'Your child needs to work on multiplication,' but ... it appeared to us that frequently the parents didn't feel comfortable asking about it or they said 'OK, OK,' but then went home and didn't know how to [help]," she said. "Now, we model the activity, the parents practice the activity. So the chances of follow-through are so much greater."

Gail Parmer, the principal at Temple Middle School in Carroll County, another Georgia pilot school, said academic parent-teacher teams have changed discussions among parents from, " 'Let me volunteer and make copies or do a pizza night' to 'Let's focus on academics.' "

Participation rose precipitously, Parmer said, from about three parents schoolwide attending a January open house in 2013 to

"parents in every hall, in every classroom" at the APTT meetings every quarter now.

"We all say we want parent involvement, but we have looked at the difference between parents being involved and parents being engaged in their child's learning," Parmer said.

She has received more enthusiasm from parents participating in the academic teams, she said, "because it's not us asking them to go sell something and work at some event; it's showing them we want their child to be successful."

Vol. 35, Issue 06, Pages 1,13



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Harvard Family  
Research Project

www.hfrp.org



October 2010

## Academic Parent–Teacher Teams: Reorganizing Parent–Teacher Conferences Around Data

Maria C. Paredes

**FINE Newsletter, Volume II, Issue 3**

**Issue Topic: Using Student Data to Engage Families**

### Voices From the Field

*Maria C. Paredes, Director of Community Education at Creighton School District in Arizona, discusses one of the district's family engagement strategies that was developed—in part—from data she collected demonstrating that parents were more interested in attending academically-oriented activities than other types of events such as potlucks or family-fun nights.*

Creighton School District is a small urban community in Arizona with approximately 7,200 students, of whom 85% are Hispanic and 90% qualify for free and reduced-price lunch. Children in the district are tested informally on a weekly basis and then formally every quarter with a district-developed standards-based assessment in the areas of reading and math. To help families better understand the results of these tests, educators in the Creighton School District have reorganized the structure of parent–teacher conferences to accommodate the shift to a more focused discussion around data.

### A NEW PARADIGM FOR THE PARENT–TEACHER CONFERENCE

Instead of relying on traditional parent–teacher conferences, Creighton gives the option for teachers to use a new program consisting of Academic Parent–Teacher Teams (APTT). Teachers who elect to participate in Academic Parent–Teacher Teams (APTTs) agree to hold 75-minute parent team meetings three times a year and individual parent–teacher meetings once a year. (See text box for a description of the two main components.) This structure diverges from the usual parent–teacher conference schedule where teachers hold 15-minute individual conferences at the beginning and end of the school year. Instead, parents of children in the entire class come together three times over the school year to analyze data together as a team.

**Presenting the Data:** During team meetings, the teachers provide data on aggregate classroom performance. Each parent receives a folder containing his or her child's academic data and is able to understand the child's performance in relation to the rest of the class on standards for reading and math. Over the course of the year the data also depict how a child is progressing in relation to these standards. Teachers present the data in creative and concrete ways. For example, some teachers make a linear achievement line designating where the “average” child might score at different points in the year and ask parents to chart where their own child falls. Other teachers have parents color bar graphs to represent areas their child has mastered.

**Setting Goals:** The teacher then helps parents set 60-day goals for their child based on his or her academic scores. For example, if the standard is for 1st graders to learn 120 high-frequency words by the end of second quarter, children working ahead of the curve might have a goal of mastering all 120 by the end of November, whereas a child behind the curve might have a goal of 75.

#### **Demonstrating how parents can support learning:**

After families set goals for their children, the teacher models different ways parents can support their child's learning at home. Parents are then given an opportunity to practice these activities with other parents. The district has also developed Parent Learning Calendars in Reading and Math for each grade level. These are academic pacing guides that inform parents what skills are being learned in the classroom and that provide practical home activities for each academic skill. Teachers use these [calendars](#) to select the activities they will model for parents during team meetings.

Team meetings end with an opportunity for parents to network and socialize with other parents and families. One-on-one parent-teacher meetings are held once a year, or more regularly if requested, to also give parents a formal opportunity to meet with teachers on an individual basis.

### **Academic Parent-Teacher Teams involve two main components:**

1. **Three 75-minute classroom team meetings each year.** These team meetings are initiated by a personal invitation to the parent by the teacher, and consist of the teacher, the entire class of parents, and a parent liaison. Each meeting includes a review of student academic performance data, parent-student academic goal setting, teacher demonstration of skills to practice at home, parent practice, and networking opportunities with other parents.
2. **One 30-minute individual parent-teacher conference.** In this yearly individual meeting parents and teachers review student performance data and create action plans to optimize learning.

[Click here to view two videos about Creighton's Academic Parent-Team training.](#)

### **MANAGING THE NEW STRUCTURE**

The Director of Community Education is responsible for meeting student achievement goals through family involvement. This individual provides training for teachers, district board members and administrators, and the parent liaisons. The Title I facilitator at each school oversees the APTTs and helps teachers plan for each team meeting, reflect on past meetings, and ensure that the process goes smoothly. The teacher is considered the master of teaching strategies and helps explain to parents their children's progress. Each school in Creighton District also has a parent liaison who is hired by the school to promote family engagement. The parent liaison sits in on APTT meetings at each school and supports the teacher in outreach and making sure attendance is high. The parent liaison also coaches parents in academic activities and receives extensive training in understanding data and offering extra support to parents.

### **MEASURING THE RESULTS**

Data sharing has helped Creighton School District shift the paradigm for how parents and teachers work together. A study of how APTTs influence student achievement and parent involvement is under way; however, anecdotes, short surveys, and analysis of utilization rates suggest six main results:

1. **Improved social networks:** Parents report expanded social networks as a result of getting to know other families at team meetings.
2. **Increased teacher participation:** APTTs are not a district mandate, but rather an optional grassroots project that teachers can adopt if they chose. In the 2009–2010 school year, 12 classrooms participated, while 79 classrooms have already signed on for the upcoming 2010–2011 school year. This increase speaks to the power and success of the program.
3. **Increased father involvement:** A surprising result has been the high numbers of fathers who have come to team meetings—more than in classrooms with conventional parent-teacher conferences. When fathers were asked what made them more interested in coming to team meetings, they said that they were specifically interested in academics and wanted to be involved in understanding their child's progress.

4. **High attendance:** In the classrooms that had APTTs, attendance at meetings was 92% on average. That was much higher than participation in conventional parent–teacher conferences.
5. **Improved efficiency and time use:** With APTTs, teachers are more efficient and use their time in a more productive way. APTTs require the same number of hours as conventional conferences because the entire group of parents meets together at once, but instead of seeing parents only twice over the school year parents and teachers have four formal opportunities to meet.
6. **Parents are empowered:** Many of the parents who participated in last year’s APTTs asked to continue the program. They want their children to be in a classroom that will be participating in APTT this coming school year.

For more information and tools to develop Academic Parent–Teacher Teams, [click here](#).

*This resource is part of the October 2010 FINE Newsletter. The FINE Newsletter shares the newest and best family involvement research and resources from Harvard Family Research Project and other field leaders. To access the FINE Newsletter Archive, visit [www.hfrp.org/FINENewsletter](http://www.hfrp.org/FINENewsletter).*

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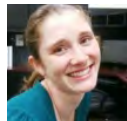
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## SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

# The Power of Academic Parent-Teacher Teams

NOVEMBER 26, 2012



Anne O'Brien

Deputy Director of the Learning First Alliance

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This time of year, many people are reflecting on what is truly important in life and all they have to be grateful for. The most common item of the top of these lists: family.

Many successful individuals can point to family as a factor in that success -- perhaps because of their unwavering belief in our abilities, perhaps because they pushed us beyond what we thought we were capable of, perhaps for their financial contributions to our education. But the overarching feeling is, because of their support.

For those of us fortunate enough to be born into families that knew how to best support us, particularly in our academic endeavors, this support almost goes without saying. But in some families, parents who would like to help their children succeed don't know how best to do so. As educators, we can help families develop the skills needed to support their children in school and beyond. One model for doing so: [Academic Parent-Teacher Teams](#) (APTT).

## Academic Parent-Teacher Teams

In the mid-2000s, [Dr. Maria C. Paredes](#) was Director of Community Education in Phoenix's Creighton Elementary School District and a doctoral student at Arizona State University. Responsible for creating family engagement opportunities, she set up parent workshops, hired parent liaisons and more. One major accomplishment: Repurposing the district's parent-teacher conferences, which she found "mostly ineffective, lack[ing] strategy, ... void of relevant academic substance, and ... without accountability for parents and teachers."

As her doctoral action research project, she developed the APTT model, in which teachers coach parents to become engaged, knowledgeable members of the academic team. In other words, teachers help build parental capacity, developing parental understanding of their children's grade-level learning goals and how to help them meet or exceed standards.

## The Model

APTT has two main components. The first is three classroom team meetings each year. The "classroom team" consists of the classroom teacher and all the parents in the class. In these group meetings, the teacher reviews and explains class-level academic data, in addition to providing parents with individual data about their own child's performance and helping parents set 60-day SMART (Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Realistic, and Time-Bound) academic goals for their children. She or he also models and provides materials for activities that parents can do with their children at home, giving parents time to practice these activities with each other in a small group setting. In addition, parents can share tips among themselves. (See what

these [look like in action](#) -- the video is long but worth it to get a sense of the type of material covered as well as the level of comfort that parents have with teachers.)

The model also includes one thirty-minute in-depth individual conference between the teacher, a student and his or her family each year. At these meetings, they review performance data, create an action plan for continuous improvement, discuss how to support student learning at home, and develop stronger relationships. Additional individual conferences are scheduled as needed.

## The Impact

This model appears very promising. Student achievement in both math and reading is up for students whose families have access to APTT compared to students whose families do not. The program also seems to increase student engagement, confidence and attendance, as well as improve parent-teacher communication and parent self-efficacy for supporting student learning at home. Some principals report that the model promotes a sense of community within the school that decreases discipline problems among students and that parents are more comfortable reaching out to other families to resolve conflicts. As Paredes says, "Strangers have become partners in purpose."

Perhaps one of the best ways to assess the perceived impact of the program is to look at teacher participation. The program started with just nine participating teachers in the Creighton School District. The next year, 79 teachers joined the program. In the third year, 187 participated. Now in year four, about 218 classrooms in Creighton are participating. And the model (which Paredes has copyrighted) has spread across the nation -- it is now reaching about 28,000 students in five states and the District of Columbia.

According to Paredes, one of the greatest challenges implementing this (or any model of family engagement) is some educators' mindset about families. As she says, "We often doubt families' capacity to help their children, and we often have mistaken perceptions of their ability to commit to higher expectations and standards for learning," particularly for the families of disadvantaged and minority children.

This season, as we reflect on the support we've received from our own families, we should remember that all individuals desire the opportunity to provide that support to their children. And we should take advantage of our position as educators to help them do so. While not every school or teacher can participate in something like APTT, we can all take steps to build the capacity of families to help their children succeed.

## [ANNE OBRIEN'S PROFILE](#)

## National PTA School of Excellence



**National PTA School of Excellence** is a recognition program that supports and celebrates partnerships between PTAs and schools to enrich the educational experience and overall well-being for all students.

As a **National PTA School of Excellence**, families feel welcomed and empowered to support student success, and PTA is a key partner for continuous school improvement.

The path to excellence starts with a joint commitment of PTA and school leaders to work together to achieve **PTA's National Standards for Family-School Partnerships**.

Through the School of Excellence program, your PTA and school will gain new ways to engage families in school decision-making, such as improvements to programs, practices and policies related to education, health, safety or the arts. Contact [excellence@pta.org](mailto:excellence@pta.org) or call (800)307-4782 for more info.

Enrollment **extended to Oct. 15** for the **2016–2017** school year.

**Enroll Now →**

**Tell Me More →**

### National School of Excellence Award Recipients

Meet our **current and past award recipients** to learn more about their commitment to strong family-school partnerships. Read the success stories in the **2016 School of Excellence Report**.



[Read the Full Report](#)

## What does it take to become a National PTA School of Excellence?

1. Enroll your PTA between **April 1 and Oct. 15**. You will receive the "Getting Started Guide," which describes program components, including your first steps to gather feedback from families and set goals with your school partner.
2. Survey your school community and share the results with National PTA by submitting a Family–School Partnership Scan by **Nov 15**.
3. Receive a customized "Roadmap to Excellence" containing recommendations that respond to your specific results from the Family–School Partnership Scan.
4. Complete the National PTA School of Excellence application before **June 1**.
5. Celebrate your excellence! All National PTA School of Excellence recipients will receive a toolkit to support celebration activities.

Follow National PTA's hashtag #PTAExcellence on [@Storify!](#)



**National PTA School of Excellence**  
*Tell Me More*

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## 1. LEARN ABOUT THE NATIONAL PTA SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE PROGRAM

**National PTA thanks you for expressing interest in our School of Excellence program!**

School of Excellence is a recognition program that supports and celebrates partnerships between PTA and schools to enrich the educational experience and overall well-being for all students.

Maybe you are looking to step up your PTA's involvement in school improvements. Maybe something meaningful is already happening between your PTA and school, and you would like to see that recognized. In either case, National PTA's School of Excellence program offers turn-key tools to help you to make a substantial, positive impact on school and student success, and to earn recognition for your PTA and school.

By participating in this program, you will **gain a better understanding of what you can do to support improvements at your school**, and your PTA will gain a seat at the table when important decisions are made.

In the final step of the program, we will determine whether your efforts have paid off, resulting in a stronger family-school partnership. If so, your PTA and school will receive the National PTA School of Excellence distinction and all of the recognition that comes with an honor of this caliber.

### What is a National PTA School of Excellence?

**At a National PTA School of Excellence, families feel welcomed and empowered to support student success, and PTA is a key partner for continuous school improvement.**

As a **National PTA School of Excellence**, your school and PTA will be known as leading the nation in **family-school partnerships** and at the forefront of engaging families in continuous school improvement.

### Ready to get started?

Enroll today at [PTA.org/excellence](https://pta.org/excellence). Then follow the steps we outline for you, use the tools we provide, and enjoy the pride and recognition that come with the designation of National PTA School of Excellence!



## PTA's National Standards for Family-School Partnerships

Nurturing family-school partnerships is the core of the National PTA School of Excellence program. Research shows that family engagement supports student success. Regardless of income or background, when families are consistently involved in their children's education, students are more likely to:

- ☐ Earn higher grades
- ☐ Attend school regularly
- ☐ Enroll in higher level classes
- ☐ Develop stronger social skills
- ☐ Graduate from high school and go on to postsecondary education
- ☐ Secure productive work and rewarding careers

**Family Engagement =  
Student Success**

Because family engagement is so important, National PTA has worked with leading researchers to identify the three components of effective family engagement:

1. **A shared responsibility.** Schools, community organizations and families all play a role in student success.
2. **Cradle to career.** Family engagement is an enduring commitment throughout a child's life, from Early Head Start programs through high school and even college and career.
3. **Integrated across contexts.** To be effective, family engagement is carried out everywhere that children learn, including home, school, after-school programs and faith-based organizations.

PTA's National Standards for Family-School Partnerships were developed with national experts and reflect the research about how parents, schools and communities can work together to support student achievement. They include the following:

- ☐ **Standard 1: Welcoming All Families Into the School Community.** Families are active participants in the life of the school and feel welcomed, valued and connected to each other, to school staff and to what students are learning and doing in class.
- ☐ **Standard 2: Communicating Effectively.** Families and school staff engage in regular, two-way, meaningful communication about student learning.
- ☐ **Standard 3: Supporting Student Success.** Families and school staff continuously collaborate to support students' learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and they have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.

- ☐ **Standard 4: Speaking Up for Every Child.** Families are empowered to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.
- ☐ **Standard 5: Sharing Power.** Families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence and create policies, practices and programs.
- ☐ **Standard 6: Collaborating With Community.** Families and school staff collaborate with community members to connect students, families and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services and civic participation.

For more information about PTA's National Standards for Family-School Partnerships, visit the National PTA website: [PTA.org/familyengagement](https://pta.org/familyengagement).

## Goals and Objectives

National PTA's goal for the School of Excellence program is **to enrich the educational experience and overall well-being of students**. We will achieve that goal by forming family-school partnerships that leverage community resources to strengthen family engagement in supporting student and school success.

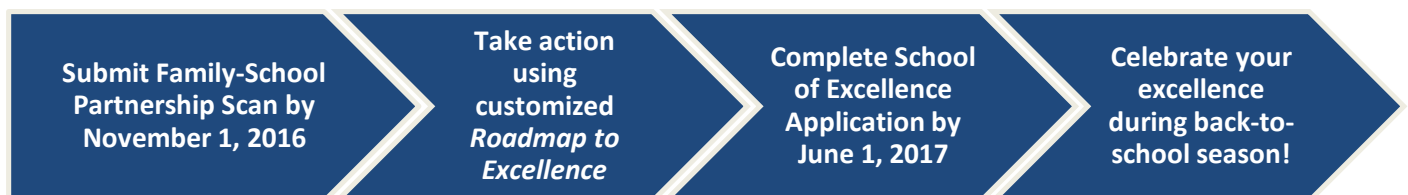
By participating in this program and applying the National Standards for Family-School Partnerships to a specific problem identified by your school community, your PTA will realize the following benefits:

- ☐ Help make your school a **more welcoming place for families**.
- ☐ Empower families to **be part of school decision-making**.
- ☐ Demonstrate to school leaders that **PTA is a key partner** for continuous school improvements.
- ☐ Receive **recognition in your community, at the state level and nationwide** for engaging families in a way that makes a substantial, positive impact on your school and student success.

## Program Timeline

### Step #1: Enroll Your PTA

Complete the enrollment process by October at [PTA.org/excellence](http://PTA.org/excellence). Then follow the timeline below to complete this process and become a nationally recognized PTA School of Excellence.



### Step #2: Survey your school community

Survey all members of your school community to include your families, school administrator(s), and PTA leaders to gather feedback using the School of Excellence survey tool. You will use the survey results to guide your responses on the Family-School Partnership Scan.

### Step #3: Submit Family-School Partnership Scan by November

A Family-School Partnership Scan involves the collection of information from **school leaders, families, and PTA leaders**. Their feedback will help you measure current family engagement strategies and establish a shared goal and objective, which will become a focus for your PTA's efforts for the year.

This focus should be in one of three areas:

- ☐ Improving **family engagement in education**
- ☐ Ensuring students' **health and safety**
- ☐ Supporting **arts in education**

The first component of the Family-School Partnership Scan is feedback from school administrators. You will visit our Web portal for School of Excellence participants and download a School of Excellence flyer and sample agenda for the meeting with your school administrators. At the meeting, share the School

#### ACCESS TURN-KEY TOOLS FOR ENROLLEES ONLINE

- A.** PTA School of Excellence Flyer
- B.** Agenda for School Administrator Meeting
- C.** School Leader Questionnaire
- D.** Family Survey
- E.** Sample Family-School Partnership Scan
- F.** Sample Action Plan
- G.** Frequently Asked Questions

Leaders Questionnaire we provide and ask to collaborate in administering a Family Survey (available on Web portal). You and the school administrator also will discuss setting a shared goal and objective that PTA can support by engaging families throughout the year.

Once you have the results from all members of your school community, as well as determined a shared goal, you must submit the School of Excellence Family-School Partnership Scan on our Web portal for School of Excellence participants.

#### **Step #4: Take Action Using Your Customized *Roadmap to Excellence***

Once you submit your Family-School Partnership Scan, you will receive a customized ***Roadmap to Excellence***, which contains specific recommendations that respond directly to the results you shared and the goal you identified. If you submitted the scan online, you can expect your *Roadmap to Excellence* to arrive in your email inbox within minutes. Be sure to check your spam folder if you don't see it!

Your *Roadmap to Excellence* will include an array of tools and resources to help you implement your action plan. In other words: **Your *Roadmap to Excellence* will tell you exactly what you need to do to become a National PTA School of Excellence.**

Once you have your *Roadmap to Excellence*, your PTA will determine which of the customized recommendations will have the greatest impact on increasing family engagement and achieving results toward your goal. Then you will develop and implement an action plan. Visit the Web portal for a sample action plan.

#### **Step #5: Complete the National PTA School of Excellence Application by June**

At the end of the school year, you will conduct a second Family-School Partnership Scan to evaluate your progress. Once again, you will gather feedback from your school administrator(s) and families, repeating the Family Survey.

Then, you will visit on our Web portal for School of Excellence participants to complete the National PTA School of Excellence Application online. This application mirrors the original Family-School Partnership Scan, with the addition of a brief narrative question, which asks you to describe how you have strengthened your family-school partnership and achieved progress toward your desired goal. **Only applications submitted by the due date will be considered for this cycle of award recipients.**

Then, a team of National PTA volunteers will review applications and narratives. A National School of Excellence designation will be given to those **PTAs and schools that meet a specific threshold or make significant improvements in strengthening their family-school partnership**. The review process will take into account the fact that PTAs and schools are starting at different levels of existing family engagement and have varying resources. This approach helps to even the playing field and ensure that all PTAs have the opportunity to participate and achieve excellence.

### Step #6: Celebrate Your Excellence

In August, you will be notified whether you have been selected to be a National PTA School of Excellence. Upon notification, you will receive a ***Celebrate Excellence Guide*** to help you plan your school and community celebrations. You also will receive a **banner** to hang prominently at your school. This banner will announce to families: You are welcome here and important to our students' success!

Other celebration tools arriving in the mail with your banner will include:

- ☐ Media outreach tools and templates
- ☐ Graphics for school and PTA stationery
- ☐ Event-planning suggestions and tools

National PTA's School of Excellence recipients throughout the country will be recognized by State and National PTAs in a number of ways, including promotion in national media outlets, on the National PTA website, in our annual report and at National and State PTA Conventions.

#### PHOEBE APPERSON HEARST AWARD

Each National PTA School of Excellence will automatically qualify to be considered for a Phoebe Apperson Hearst Award, which is National PTA's highest honor and includes a \$2,000 grant.

**Your school will carry this designation for two years (e.g., 2017–2019).** We will prompt you to begin working toward renewing the designation. National PTA's School of Excellence recipients are encouraged to renew every two years, to continuously strengthen family-school partnerships and address a variety of school and community needs. In addition, working toward the School of Excellence designation will help attract new, action-oriented PTA members who want to focus on the issues that affect our children the most. Consider this program a very powerful membership development tool!

**Schools that do not qualify for the National PTA School of Excellence designation** will receive a National PTA Certificate of Merit and a new *Roadmap to Excellence: Are We There Yet?* to help them continue to pursue excellence during the following school year. They will build on the momentum they started, and National PTA will provide even more support to help them overcome barriers along the way.

## 2. BUILD YOUR PTA SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE TEAM

Now that you know the flow of the program, let's back up and talk about the first steps for getting started. The path to excellence begins with a joint commitment by PTA and school leaders to welcome all families, communicate effectively, support student success, speak up for every child, share power and collaborate in the community.

Your PTA School of Excellence team should include:

- ☐ PTA members who want to contribute to long-term school improvements
- ☐ A school administrator
- ☐ Teachers and support staff
- ☐ Student leaders (depending on age)
- ☐ Community members

This group will work together to conduct the family-school partnership scan, set shared goals for school improvement and oversee the implementation of recommendations in your school's customized *Roadmap to Excellence*.

### Recruit Volunteers

Start by identifying and inviting representatives of any existing leadership team involved in continuous school improvement. These groups are known by various names. Yours might be called a *school advisory council*, *parent advisory council*, *school improvement team*, *school-building leadership team* or something similar.

When recruiting additional team members, keep in mind that successful PTA School of Excellence teams will reflect and be representative of stakeholders throughout the school and community. Consider building a team that is representative of the demographics—race, ethnicity, socioeconomic, geographic—of families at your school. Also consider gender, age and family structure. Diversity enriches the process by bringing a variety of perspectives, connections and ideas to the table.

## Practice Effective Leadership Skills

It has been said that people *work for* managers, but they *follow* leaders. In order to lead your PTA and school successfully down the path to excellence, you will need to inspire others to share your vision and get excited about the process. Consider the following tips for effective leadership in diverse groups.

TOPIC	EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP TIPS
<b>Encouraging participation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Be flexible in meeting times, locations and formats (e.g., face to face, conference call, email) to engage the greatest number of people.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Find ways for those who cannot attend planning meetings to be heard. Distribute key questions ahead of time, and invite people to submit their thoughts via social media or email.</li> </ul>
<b>Facilitating productive meetings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Develop and distribute an agenda for each meeting.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Keep a clock visible for all to see, and reference it when you must move on.</li> </ul>
<b>Communicating effectively</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A strong leader knows how to listen! Ask questions, invite discussion and be open to new ideas.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Communicate with your team regularly and in a variety of formats (in-person, phone, email).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Consider setting up a social media site (e.g., Facebook page) where team members can keep in touch and share ideas.</li> </ul>
<b>Managing volunteers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Volunteers need meaningful tasks that match their unique needs and talents.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide adequate support and training for each volunteer and task.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Recognize your volunteers often!</li> </ul>
<b>Resolving conflict</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Know your leadership style, and be aware that good leaders sometimes must adapt their style to fit the task at hand.</li> </ul>



### 3. CONDUCT A FAMILY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP SCAN

As a group, your PTA School of Excellence team's first major task will be to conduct a Family-School Partnership Scan. This involves meeting with school leaders, gathering family input and setting a shared goal and objective for the year.

#### Collect Information From School Leaders

Schedule a meeting with your school administrator(s) or a person designated by the principal. The purpose of this meeting will be to introduce the National PTA School of Excellence program, solicit support and learn about the school's perspective on existing family engagement measures. National PTA has created a template agenda and survey that you can use to structure this conversation.

#### EXCELLENCE TOOLS

National PTA helps you every step of the way with a Web portal full of numerous templates and turn-key tools to strengthen your family-school partnership.

At this meeting, ask to review your school's continuous improvement plan (if available). Discuss with the administrator (or representative) his or her priorities for engaging families in the following areas: **education, health and safety, and arts in education**. Where does he or she think that PTA's involvement and enhanced family engagement could make the biggest difference?

#### Gain Feedback From Families

National PTA also provides a template introductory letter and survey that your PTA may use to gather feedback from your school's families (see Web portal after you enroll).

A survey is only one option: Discussions at PTA meetings, "town hall"-style public forums and telephone calls (using the questions provided in the National PTA Family Survey to guide discussion) are other ways to learn about family members' concerns and priorities.

Be sure to consider the following:

- ☐ Employ the methods that make sense for your school and community.
- ☐ Gather feedback from families who are representative of your school.
- ☐ Use multiple methods, if necessary, to ensure that input from *all* families is welcomed and included.

## Set a Shared Goal and Objective

After you gather information from all stakeholders, it is time to compile and analyze what you have learned. In a meeting of your School of Excellence team, review the questions on the sample Family-School Partnership Scan form (see the Web portal when you enroll). As indicated, answers will come from all the members of your school community that you have surveyed.

Then, facilitate a dialogue about one shared school improvement goal. What is the biggest priority for your school—family engagement in education, health and safety, or arts in education? Within that broad priority, what is one specific objective that best describes how you will prioritize your efforts? **It is essential that this selection reflect the input from families and school leaders.**

Choose a goal and objective from a list like the one below. These are the priority issues that National PTA has developed resources or partnerships to support your efforts. Your customized *Roadmap to Excellence* will contain guidance from National PTA and its partners for the objective you select.

### GOAL: Improve Family Engagement in Education

- ☐ To support implementation of college-and career-ready standards and assessment (i.e., Common Core State Standards)
- ☐ To increase family engagement supporting student success (e.g., literacy, math, science)
- ☐ To increase involvement from dads and other role models
- ☐ To create a culture and climate that welcomes all families
- ☐ To facilitate consistent meaningful two-way communication between families and school
- ☐ To grow volunteer opportunities and volunteer participation among families
- ☐ To grow family participation in school wide decision-making
- ☐ To prevent school dropouts
- ☐ To grow family participation in advocacy
- ☐ To engage community partners and raise family awareness of community resources

### GOAL: Ensure Health & Safety of Students

- ☐ To promote healthy lifestyles at home and at school
- ☐ To customize and implement the local school wellness policies
- ☐ To address the problem of hunger among families in the school community
- ☐ To prevent injury at home and at school

- ☐ To promote Internet safety
- ☐ To prevent all forms of bullying and encourage healthy peer relationships
- ☐ To support students' emotional and mental well-being
- ☐ To advocate for safer routes to school (bicycling, walking, parking, busing)
- ☐ To ensure emergency preparedness, school and personal safety
- ☐ To prevent student substance use
- ☐ To promote teen driver safety
- ☐ To improve the environment for students with allergies, asthma, epilepsy, diabetes or other chronic conditions

#### GOAL: Support Arts in Education

- ☐ To increase access to arts programs
- ☐ To increase available resources for student learning in the arts (supplies, teacher resources)
- ☐ To build successful community partnerships
- ☐ To advocate for the values of arts in education

#### Complete the National PTA Family-School Partnership Scan

Once you have input from all stakeholders, one representative of your team will submit your answers to the Family-School Partnership Scan online on our Web portal. In order to be considered for the National PTA School of Excellence designation, **you must submit by the publicized due date (e.g., November 1, 2016).**

When you do—you are on your way!

## 4. PREVIEW NEXT STEPS

### Gain Support From National PTA

Within minutes of completing the Family-School Partnership Scan online, you will receive your PTA's customized *Roadmap to Excellence*.

This report will include the following:

- ☐ More information about family-school partnerships and National PTA School of Excellence
- ☐ Ways National PTA and your State PTA will support you throughout the year
- ☐ Customized steps your school can take to achieve a stronger family-school partnership
- ☐ Recommended strategies for your specific goal and objective
- ☐ Links to relevant resources from National PTA and selected partners
- ☐ Tools to support you in leading your team, developing your action plan and promoting your progress in your selected priority area
- ☐ Information about completing the National PTA School of Excellence Application

Throughout the year, you can expect National PTA to provide ongoing support, including the following:

- ☐ **Timely emails** with information about family engagement, program reminders and links to resources that support your goal for school improvement
- ☐ **Webinars** on the National Standards for Family-School Partnerships
- ☐ **Answers to your questions** via email at [excellence@pta.org](mailto:excellence@pta.org) or by phone: 800-307-4PTA (4782)

### Start Today!

Just over a year from now, you could be celebrating your status as a National PTA School of Excellence, acclaimed throughout your state and across the country as an example of best practice in family-school partnerships.

In the course of achieving this goal, your PTA will have strengthened its collaboration with school leaders, staff and the community; made a substantial impact on the school and student well-being; and claimed your “seat at the table” as an essential partner for engaging families and informing future school improvements.

**We look forward to working with you to make this vision a reality!**

# ‘Crystal Apple’ award goes to Shenandoah Elementary volunteer from military sector who is always eager to help out

by Charles Lussier [clussier@theadvocate.com](mailto:clussier@theadvocate.com) MAY 4, 2016 - 4:08 AM (0)



Advocate staff photo by PATRICK DENNIS --Master Sergeant Scott Kelly was | Schools with its highest Crystal Apple Award. In its annual ceremony, Kelly w | which goes to a volunteer (or volunteer organization) that has been devotin | Rouge public schools for at least 10 years.

Scott Kelly first started volunteering at **Shenandoah Elementary School** more than 15 years ago for a simple reason: his wife, Dana.

The two were dating at the time and would get married soon after, in 2001.

“He would see me come home tired from work and would ask, ‘What can I do to help?’ ” Dana Kelly recalled.

As the technology coordinator at Shenandoah, she deals a lot with computer and technical issues. Scott Kelly’s day job is as a major sergeant working in telecommunications for the Louisiana Air National Guard based in Hammond. It was a natural fit.

Pretty soon, he was a regular at the Baton Rouge public school — fixing this, ironing out that.

“I’m her tech support,” he said.

“People think I know everything, but I just call him,” she said with a smile.

Over time, Scott Kelly has steadily added school duties as his readiness to help became clear. He reads to students, teaches lessons on citizenship, helps organize school events, helped set up and operate the school’s planetarium and trains the fifth-graders tasked with the honor of raising, lowering and properly handling the school’s U.S. flag.

**Volunteers in Public Schools** on Tuesday gave Scott Kelly its 2016 Crystal Apple, awarded to a standout person or organization volunteering in East Baton Rouge Parish’s public schools for at least 10 years. Kelly beat out two other veteran volunteers to win the coveted honor.

Although being attached to someone on the Shenandoah faculty is what brought him to the school, he’s found it brings with it its own satisfactions: “The kids, the smiles on their face. The pride they take when they see me in my uniform.”

Although he’s lived in Baton Rouge for almost 30 years, Scott Kelly grew up a military brat, traveling the world with his family, changing schools regularly.

He recalls being a Cub Scout but not in a stereotypical way. His father, who later retired as a colonel from the U.S. Air Force, was stationed in Naples, Italy. His troop would spend weekends camping out in an abandoned volcano.

A calling to the military came naturally, but he resisted for years, not joining the National Guard until he was 27 years old.

“I fought it,” he recalled. “My hair was long.”

He said his dad had soured on the military, failing to get a promotion he thought he deserved, and some of that bad feeling rubbed off on him. But after joining up, Scott Kelly quickly found himself at home and now is the epitome of spit and polish. He fretted Tuesday because he hasn’t had a haircut in two weeks, meaning his very close-cropped cut is a little longer than he likes.

He’s quick to sing the praises of the military life.

“We go to parties and he’ll recruit people,” Dana Kelly said.

At Shenandoah, the master sergeant routinely shows up in uniform, sometimes getting called “Army man,” though he works in a different branch of the service.

He travels routinely for duties and training opportunities. He has deployed before, including a 2011 stint in Afghanistan.

Shenandoah students dutifully hand-wrote letters overseas to Master Sgt. Kelly.

“I replied to every one,” he said.

Volunteers in Public Schools also awarded Golden Apple honors Tuesday to the following individuals: Leroy Harrison, Jr., who volunteers at Ryan Elementary; Dustin LaFont, **whose bike shop volunteers with several schools** including Glasgow and Westdale middle schools; Jo Ann Ponville, organizes volunteers at Sharon Hills Elementary; and Sassy Wheeler, an LSU professor who has her students volunteer at Bernard Terrace, Buchanan, Dufrocq, Southdowns and Westdale Heights elementary schools.

To sign up as a volunteer through VIPS, visit **vipsbr.org** or call (225) 226-4702.





## Parent/Guardian Feedback Tool Danielson Framework Alignment

This input form allows for ongoing parent/guardian input, which is important in improving the quality of education for all our students. Forms are available on the district website or at any school office. Copies of completed feedback forms will be made available to teachers upon request.

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Location \_\_\_\_\_

		Consistently	Most of the Time	Sometimes	Never	Not Observed
1	Has knowledge of subject area taught to my child.					
2	Passes on subject knowledge to my child.					
3	Responds to my child in a respectful and positive manner.					
4	Demonstrates respect and understanding of my child's cultural values.					
5	Maintains a classroom in which my child feels physically and emotionally safe.					
6	Has high expectations and encourages my child to do their best.					
7	Returns corrected homework within a reasonable time period.					
8	Provides useful information about my child's progress through tests, corrections, and other methods, which ensures and/or reinforces my child's learning.					
9	Regularly communicates with me in a clear way about my child's behavior and academic progress.					
10	Solicits feedback and welcomes my ideas.					
11	Responds to my concerns.					
12	Lets me know when special concerns arise.					
13	Provides appropriate assistance so that I can help my child at home.					

**General Comments** (additional page may be attached) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Complete and sign the form, place in sealed envelope and forward to building principal.*

Revised: June 11, 2015

## PTA Three for Me

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**Three for Me** is a PTA program designed to effectively involve parents and families in support of children and their education. This program will help PTAs and parents find different ways to volunteer at home, in school, and in the community—all which support student learning. This way, parents can volunteer when they have time during the day, in the evening or on the weekends.

**Three for Me** online resources include:

- Creative ways to connect all families to their child's school and education
- Ideas to strengthen home-school-community partnerships
- Resources to motivate parent forum for program and idea sharing
- Helpful ways to track volunteers and the positive impact they are having on student success

Get **Three for Me** started at your school or organization today and put a new face on parent involvement.

## Resources

**Promise Cards** in English and Spanish to distribute to families who promise to volunteer.

[Promise Cards \(fillable\)](#)

[Promise Cards \(Spanish\)](#)

[Promise Cards \(non-fillable\)](#)

**Certificates** to customize and distribute to families who donate their time to volunteer. Available in English and Spanish, as well as in black and white or full color.

[Certificate \(fillable\)](#)

[Certificate \(Spanish\)](#)

[Certificate \(non-fillable\)](#)

**Benefits for Your School** is a tip sheet for families to help them understand the value of their donated time.

[Benefits Tipsheet](#)

**Visitor Badges** in English and Spanish.

[Visitor Badge](#)

[Visitor Badge \(Spanish\)](#)

**Additional Three for Me** resources include a leader's guide and, a volunteer tracking spreadsheet, sign in sheets, and surveys that can be customized and downloaded.

[Leader's Guide](#)

[Volunteer Sign-In](#)

[Volunteer Badge](#)

[Volunteer Survey](#)

[Volunteer Hours Spreadsheet](#)

[Volunteer Survey \(Spanish\)](#)

# National Network of Partnership Schools at Johns Hopkins University

Joyce L. Epstein, Director

*Educators and families agree that school, family, and community partnerships are essential for children's success in school.*

*Based on more than three decades of research and the work of many educators, parents, students, and others, we know that it is possible for all elementary, middle, and high schools to develop and sustain strong programs of partnerships that help students succeed.*

*Districts and states can establish policies and take leadership to help all schools develop excellent programs of partnerships.*

*As a member of the National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS), you will be guided, supported, and recognized in your efforts to maintain goal-oriented school, family, and community connections.*

## What is the National Network of Partnership Schools?

Established at Johns Hopkins University in 1996, the National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS) assists schools, districts, states, and organizations that are committed to developing strong programs of school, family, and community partnerships. Each Partnership School strengthens its program with an Action Team for Partnerships, a framework of six types of involvement to engage parents in different ways, and a written action plan for goal-oriented family and community involvement linked to the school improvement plan. District, state, and other leaders assist schools to develop, evaluate, and continually improve their partnership programs.

## Why Become a Member of the National Network?

- ★ Comprehensive handbook to guide partnership program development
- ★ Certificate of membership
- ★ Invitations to attend leadership and development conferences
- ★ Type 2, NNPS Newsletter
- ★ Annual collection, *Promising Partnership Practices*
- ★ Colorful posters of six "keys" to successful partnerships
- ★ Technical assistance by phone, e-mail, and website
- ★ Opportunities to participate in research and evaluation projects
- ★ Other benefits and experiences

Members benefit from the experience of the NNPS staff and by sharing ideas with other schools, districts, and states working to increase and improve partnerships. In every issue of the NNPS newsletter, at workshops, and on the NNPS website, members share creative solutions for improving family and community involvement.

## Who May Join the National Network of Partnership Schools?

Membership is open to all schools, districts, states, and organizations that agree to the requirements listed on the following page.



# Membership Requirements

Members work with NNPS to improve connections with students, families, and communities. Schools, districts, and states must meet a few requirements.

*Developing good connections of home, school, and community is an on-going process that takes time, organization, and effort.*

*NNPS offers a research-based framework, tools, and strategies that enable all schools, districts, and states to organize school, family, and community partnerships to improve schools, strengthen families, and increase student success.*

*Organization and university partners are welcome to join NNPS to assist schools and districts in their regions.*

To join NNPS, there is a \$200 processing fee for schools; \$300 for districts, states, and organizations.

Annual renewal fees are waived for all members that return the annual UPDATE survey.

## At the SCHOOL LEVEL, each Partnership School will:

- ✓ Create an Action Team for Partnerships.
- ✓ Use the framework of six types of involvement to plan and implement a goal-oriented program of partnerships linked to school improvement plans.
- ✓ Allocate an annual budget for the work and activities of the school's Action Team for Partnerships.
- ✓ Allocate time for an initial One-Day Team-Training Workshop and at least one hour per month for the Action Team Partnerships to meet to plan and evaluate activities.

## At the DISTRICT LEVEL, each Partnership District will:

- ✓ Assign the equivalent of one full-time facilitator to assist 15 to 30 schools to create their Action Teams for Partnerships. Part-time coordinators may work in districts with fewer than 15 schools.
- ✓ Allocate an annual budget for the district facilitator's salary and activities to develop, strengthen, and maintain partnership programs in all schools.
- ✓ Assist each participating school to fulfill the requirements listed above for the school level.

## At the STATE LEVEL, each Partnership State will:

- ✓ Create or identify an Office or Department for School, Family, and Community Partnerships.
- ✓ Assign the equivalent of one full-time coordinator and adequate staff to conduct state-wide leadership activities or school, family, and community partnerships.
- ✓ Allocate an annual budget for the work of this office and for the activities to support districts and schools to develop excellent partnership programs.
- ✓ Assist districts and schools to fulfill the membership requirements listed above.

## ALL MEMBERS will:

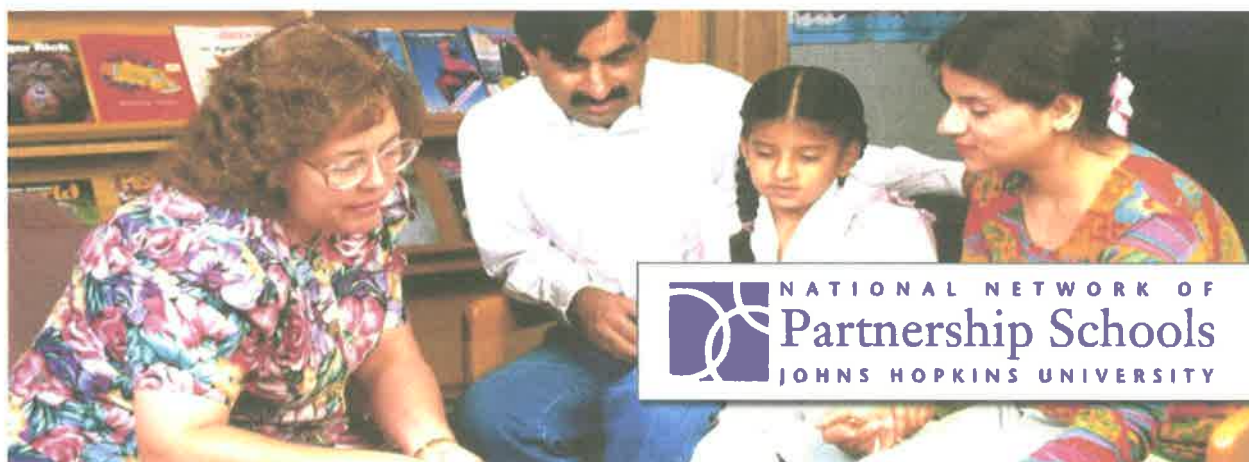
- ✓ Complete an annual UPDATE survey to report progress and to renew membership in NNPS.

If your school, district, state, or organization is ready to develop strong programs of school, family, and community partnerships for student success, you are invited to join the National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS).

For more information and membership forms visit [www.partnershipschools.org](http://www.partnershipschools.org) and the section Join NNPS.

Or contact us at NNPS, Johns Hopkins University, 3003 N. Charles Street, Suite 200, Baltimore, MD 21218  
E-mail: [nnps@csos.jhu.edu](mailto:nnps@csos.jhu.edu) Tel: 410-516-2318 Fax: 410-516-8890



[NNPS Model](#)[Success Stories](#)[Research & Evaluation](#)[Professional Development](#)[Publications & Products](#)[TIPS](#)[Contact](#)

## Welcome National Network of Partnership Schools! Working Together for Student Success

Established at Johns Hopkins University in 1996, NNPS invites schools, districts, states, and organizations to join together and use research-based approaches to organize and sustain excellent programs of family and community involvement that will increase student success in school.

"Based on more than three decades of research on parental involvement, family engagement, and community partnerships, NNPS's tools, guidelines, and action team approach may be used by all elementary, middle, and high schools to increase involvement and improve student learning and development," explains Dr. Joyce L. Epstein, Founder and Director of NNPS. NNPS also guides district leaders to help their schools develop goal-oriented programs of family involvement and community connections, and to meet NCLB requirements for parent involvement. In addition, NNPS assists state departments of education and organizations to develop policies and take actions that will support districts and schools in strengthening their partnership programs.

Researchers and facilitators at the Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships at Johns Hopkins University work with the members of NNPS to study the nature and results of involvement. NNPS aims to increase knowledge of new concepts and strategies; use research results to develop tools and materials that will improve policy and practice; provide professional development conferences and workshops; share best practices of parental involvement and community connections; and recognize excellent partnership programs at the school, district, organization, and state levels.

This website provides NNPS members with updated information, research results, and ideas for action from the NNPS staff and members across the country. The site also informs prospective members about NNPS approaches, benefits, and services.

## Join NNPS

[Meet the Staff](#)
[Join NNPS](#)
[Member Benefits & Services](#)
[Membership Requirements](#)
[Membership Forms](#)

## News

**LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE  
for NNPS Districts and  
Organizations  
October 20-21, 2016  
Register NOW!**

### NEW BOOK!

*Promising Partnership Practices 2016.*

**READ IT NOW.**

**NNPS UPDATE Surveys Evaluate  
Progress Renew Membership**

**DUE NOW!**



## Member Benefits & Services

[Home](#) » [Join NNPS](#) » [Member Benefits & Services](#)

### To assist members with their work, NNPS provides:

One copy of *School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action, Third Edition* which includes research summaries, tools, and guidelines for developing effective partnership programs.

Certificate of membership.

Semi-annual newsletter, *Type 2*, which provides examples of best practices, solutions to challenges, and guidelines for continuous progress on partnerships.

Annual collection of *Promising Partnership Practices*, with good ideas for improving goal-oriented activities of family and community involvement.

Monthly e-briefs from NNPS Facilitators.

Technical assistance "on call" by phone and e-mail ([nnps@jhu.edu](mailto:nnps@jhu.edu)) from NNPS Facilitators.

Professional development conferences and training institutes in Baltimore. Discounts on registration for NNPS members.

Web-based conferences on strategies for program development.

Posters of the six types of involvement in English and Spanish.

Annual *UPDATE* survey to evaluate progress, assess challenges, and renew membership in NNPS for the next school year.

Annual summaries of *UPDATE* data from schools and districts in NNPS; and customized summaries of *UPDATE* data for districts with 8 schools or more in NNPS.

Website with program guidelines, research results, best practices from NNPS members.

Networking opportunities to learn about effective partnership practices from other schools, districts, states, and organizations.

Tools and training linked to NCLB, Sec. 1118 requirements for family involvement.

New research results, reports, tools, and materials as they are developed.

NNPS Incentive Items for ATP members and others who support school, family, and community partnerships.

Contract services for on-site basic training, advanced workshops, and conference events.

[Membership forms](#)

You need Adobe Acrobat Reader to view files.

If you don't have Acrobat Reader, click to download:



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## Membership Requirements

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The National Network of Partnership Schools invites schools, districts, state departments of education, and organizations to become members. Each level of membership has different requirements. Please select one of the following to view the requirements most appropriate for your interests.

### School Level

To join the National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS), each school must agree to fulfill the following requirements for developing a research-based, goal-oriented program of school, family, and community partnerships.

Create or identify an [Action Team for Partnerships](#) (ATP) including educators, parents, and community members.

Write an annual [One-Year Action Plan for Partnerships](#) linked to school improvement goals.

Use the framework of [Six Types of Involvement](#) to select family and community involvement activities that create a welcoming climate of partnerships and contribute to student learning and development.

Allocate an annual budget for the activities in the annual plan for partnerships.

Allocate time for an initial One-Day Team Training Workshop, and at least one hour per month for the ATP to meet, plan, coordinate, and evaluate activities

Complete an annual [UPDATE](#) survey to evaluate progress and to renew school membership in NNPS for the next school year.

Send \$400 to join NNPS for professional development on partnerships, and to receive the Handbook and other [benefits and services](#).

The annual renewal fee for schools is \$200.

[Invitation to join NNPS and School Membership Form.](#)

### District Level

To join the National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS), district members must agree to fulfill the following requirements as they develop district leadership and school-based programs of school, family, and community partnerships.

Assign the equivalent of one full-time facilitator or coordinator (1 FTE) to work with [Action Team for Partnerships](#) (ATP) in 15 to 30 schools. Districts with fewer than 15 participating schools may propose a part-time equivalent facilitator.

Write an annual Leadership Plan for Partnerships. NNPS provides templates for district plans and an inventory, Lead and Succeed, to help district leaders organize their work at the district level and with all schools.

Help each participating school join NNPS and meet the SCHOOL LEVEL requirements of membership.

With guidance from NNPS, district leaders will provide training on partnerships for school ATPs and help ATPs write action plans, encourage implementation, share best practices, promote evaluations, and connect schools with NNPS.

Allocate an annual budget for staff salaries and program activities in the Leadership Plan for Partnerships.

Complete an annual [UPDATE](#) survey to evaluate progress and to renew district membership in NNPS for the next school year.

Create or identify an Office, Department, or Program of School, Family, and Community Partnerships. (Required of large districts with more than 30 schools.)

## For More Information...

[Member Benefits & Services](#)

[Membership Requirements](#)

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### READ IT NOW.

**NNPS UPDATE Surveys Evaluate  
Progress Renew Membership**

### DUE NOW!



Send \$400 to join NNPS for professional development on partnerships and to receive the Handbook and other [benefits and services](#).

The annual renewal fee for districts is \$200.

[Invitation to join NNPS and District Membership Form](#)

## State Level

To join the National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS), State Departments of Education must agree to fulfill the following requirements as they develop statewide leadership and programs of school, family, and community partnerships.

Create or identify an Office (e.g., Department, Division, Bureau, or Program) for School, Family, and Community Partnerships.

Assign the equivalent of one full-time Director or Coordinator and adequate staff to conduct statewide leadership activities for school, family, and community partnerships.

Write an annual Leadership Plan for Partnerships with clear goals, objectives, and activities to encourage districts and schools in the state to strengthen their programs of school, family, and community partnerships.

NNPS provides templates for state plans for partnerships. The inventory, *Lead and Succeed*, may help state leaders select activities to encourage work on partnerships by districts and schools. States may provide information to districts and schools about NNPS resources that will help them develop their partnership programs.

Allocate an annual budget for staff salaries and program activities in the Leadership Plan for Partnerships.

Complete an annual [UPDATE](#) survey to evaluate progress and to renew state membership in NNPS for the next school year.

Send \$400 to join NNPS for professional development on partnerships and to receive the Handbook and other [benefits and services](#).

The annual renewal fee for states is \$200.

[Request an invitation to join NNPS and State Membership Form.](#)

## Organization Level

To join the National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS), organizations and university projects that assist states, districts, and/or schools to develop research-based partnership programs must agree to fulfill the following requirements.

Identify a leader for partnerships, necessary staff, and adequate time to work with school, district, and/or state partners.

Write an annual Leadership Plan for Partnerships with clear goals, objectives, and activities to encourage districts, schools, and/or states in the area or project strengthen their programs of school, family, and community partnerships. NNPS provides templates for plans for partnerships. The inventory, *Lead and Succeed*, could help organizational leaders plan their work on partnerships with districts and with schools.

Help the districts, schools, and/or states in the area join the NNPS and meet NNPS requirements for membership.

Allocate an adequate budget for staff salaries and program activities in the Leadership Plan for Partnerships.

Complete an annual [UPDATE](#) survey to evaluate progress and to renew organization membership in NNPS for the next school year.

Send \$400 to join NNPS for professional development on partnerships and to receive the Handbook and other [benefits and services](#).

The annual renewal fee for states is \$200.

[Invitation to join NNPS and Organization Membership Form.](#)

**NOTE:** Some organizations that join NNPS work “like a district.” They should examine District Membership Requirements. Other organizations work “like a state.” They should examine State Membership Requirements.

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## Handbook for Action



Ten chapters offer step-by-step strategies to improve leadership and programs of school, family, and community connections. [Learn more!](#)