

Elementary School Model to Increase Parent Involvement

•Identify and recruit key parent players

There are 'leaders' in every parent community. Look for them. Listen - see what they have to say. Encourage them to take small steps toward school involvement. Snowball this effect. Find easy ways to fit school participation into families' distinct timetables.

•Redefine "parent involvement"

Move the conception of parental involvement beyond just classroom volunteerism. Eat breakfast or lunch with your child. Serve on a committee. Encourage families and make them welcome to walk their children to school; to linger and socialize after school. School events are opportunities for involvement that show the kids that the community cares.

•Intentionally promote diversity

Schools have parent committees such as School Community Councils, PTO's, Home Room Moms, etc. Make diversity a priority. Press for diversity and the creativity that it brings. Recruit. Be intentional in seeking a wide variety of parents for participation. Consider gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status, language, and neighborhood(s) as representations of diversity.

•Go informal

Face to face conversations on the sidewalks build relationships. Walk home with kids in the neighborhoods to stimulate personal interest and build connections. Recognize and celebrate people in the school at a fundamental person to person level.

•Provide "just in time and wanna know" information

Find out what it is that parents want to know and match the method of delivering it to the time and place that works for the families. Highlight parent-home communications as a key responsibility of all school staff.