

School-Level Inventory Starting Points: Family, School, and Community Partnerships

This survey may be used to assess school-wide progress in strengthening partnerships between school personnel and the school's families and community members. It is suggested that the survey be used at different points in the school year to assess progress in the six areas of parent involvement identified by the work of Dr. Joyce Epstein and PTA's National Standards for Family-School Partnerships. This inventory may be modified for use in planning and evaluation within specific grade levels and school communities.

Rating Scale	
Frequently	Occurs in most classes or grade levels. Receives substantive time and emphasis. A highly prevalent component of the school's parental involvement plan.
Sometimes	Occurs in some classes or grade levels. Receives minimal or modest time and emphasis. Not a prevalent component of the school's parental involvement plan.
Never	Strategy does not occur at the school or occurs in isolation.



WELCOMING ALL FAMILIES INTO THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

"All" families includes culturally, linguistically, and economically diverse families, and families with English Learner students and/or students with disabilities.

Our School:	Frequently	Sometimes	Never
a. The school has standards of welcoming behavior that apply to all staff, including office staff, teachers, bus drivers, security, custodians, cafeteria staff, etc.			
b. The school climate reflects a welcoming tone and respect for all families, regardless of culture, ethnicity, language or disability. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signs by the school entrance clearly guide visitors where to check in. The school campus and entrance to the building is inviting with a sign/banner/bulletin board welcoming parents. ADA requirements are met. The culture and language of the community is clearly reflected. There are designated parking areas and parents are thoroughly informed of parking arrangements when visiting the school. 			
c. A Mission Statement and/or policy on parent involvement is posted in the languages of the families that guides them to more information about opportunities to get involved with school programs.			
d. A Family Area is located in an easily accessible area of the school and is designed as a gathering place where families, school staff, students, and community members are welcomed and supported. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It supports special events and features like clothing banks, lending libraries, health fairs, parenting workshops, etc. The family center information matches the developmental levels of the students, e.g. high schools connect parents with other parent centers at workforce solutions centers, and institutions of higher education. 			



Our School:	Frequently	Sometimes	Never
e. There are signs located outside each classroom door noting grade level/course title, and teacher's name. Student work is displayed throughout the school. The work also includes a description of the purpose.			
f. Positive connections with families and communities are made outside of the school walls by collaborating with chapter houses, community centers, local businesses, libraries, restaurants, etc.			
g. Parents are surveyed regarding their interests, talents, and availability to volunteer. Follow up communication and coordination is managed (background checks, volunteer policies and procedures, volunteer training, and matching skills and interest to school needs.			



COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY

Families and school staff engage in regular, two-way, meaningful communication about student learning.

Our School:		Frequently	Sometimes	Never
a. Conducts parent-teacher conferences with every parent at least once a year. In high schools with large numbers of students, events are planned to meet with groups of parents.				
b. Provides translators to assist families as needed.				
c. Provides clear information about report cards and how grades are earned.				
d. Provides clear information about testing requirements as well as school and student results.				
e. Has established two-way channels for communication from home to school and from school to home.				
f. Has an automated phone system for delivering important messages or collecting attendance information.				
g. Provides clear information about selecting courses, programs, and activities.				
h. Sends folders of student work home weekly or monthly for parent review and comment.				
i. Sends home positive messages or makes phone calls to parents about students on a regular basis.				
j. Notifies families of a student's academic or behavior problems. Teachers have easy access to telephones, e-mail, contact information, and are encouraged to communicate with parents during or after school.				
k. Provides parents with the contact information of the school, principal, teachers, and counselors (at school or after school hours).				
l. Has a homework hotline for students and families to hear daily assignments and messages.				



Our School:		Frequently	Sometimes	Never
m. Conducts an annual survey for families to share information and concerns about students' needs and perceptions of school programs and processes.				
Our School Newsletter/Website Includes:				
n. Recognition of students, families, and community members as well as student work and accomplishments.				
o. Information in the language(s) of the community.				
p. A calendar of school events.				
q. Student activity information.				
r. Information about curriculum, assessments, and standards-based instruction.				
s. Information regarding volunteer involvement (when and how to volunteer).				
t. School governance information (how the school is run, site council, etc.).				
u. A column to address parents' questions.				
Other:				



SUPPORTING STUDENT SUCCESS

The school fosters a culture of caring and shared responsibility for student success.

Our School:	Frequently	Sometimes	Never
a. Provides learning resources for students and families through the website, workshop opportunities, and outreach to all parents, including those with limited contact information or availability.			
b. Provides family-friendly information to families on grade level, goals towards graduation, New Mexico's Common Core State Standards and student progress.			
c. Provides information to families on how to monitor and discuss schoolwork and testing with their children.			
d. Provides information on how to assist students with skills that they need to improve.			
e. Has a regular schedule of interactive homework that requires students to demonstrate and discuss what they are learning with a family member.			
f. Asks parents to listen to their child read or to read aloud with their child as age-appropriate.			
g. Assists families in helping students to set academic goals, select courses and programs, plan for college, and next levels of schooling (i.e. The Next Step Plan) and/or work.			
h. Provides summer learning packets to help students sustain academic skills.			



Our School:	Frequently	Sometimes	Never
i. Provides professional development and planning opportunities related to family engagement and developing partnerships for student success.			
j. Parent-teacher-student conferences or student-led conferences are carefully planned and accommodate parents' schedules and transportation needs. Concern for student is the focus of teacher-parent interaction.			
k. Partners with organizations that provide programs for after school and out-of-school time and shares useful information with families.			



SPEAKING UP FOR EVERY CHILD

All students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.

Our School:	Frequently	Sometimes	Never
a. Helps families understand how the school and district operates.			
b. Helps families understand their rights and responsibilities under federal and state laws.			
c. Develops and shares resources for families to help them navigate the educational system.			
d. Has policies and procedures in place to quickly help resolve problems and conflict involving families.			
e. Helps families develop capacity to be effective advocates for their children and the whole student population.			
f. Includes families in discussions about planning for the future of the school.			
g. Implements policies and procedures that encourage smooth transitions between and within schools.			
h. Engages families in civic advocacy (i.e. partnering with other educational advocates) for student achievement.			



SHARING LEADERSHIP

Families as participants in school decisions and developing as parent and community leaders.

Our School:	Frequently	Sometimes	Never
a. Involves parents in selecting school staff (leadership team).			
b. Has a parent involvement policy and an action team to develop a goal oriented program with practices for all six types of involvement.			
c. Has a Title I and/or Indian Education Parent Advisory Team, PTA, or other parent organization.			
d. Invites parents to be on the school's advisory council, improvement team, or other committees.			
e. Asks involved parents to make contact with parents who are less involved to share information and opportunities.			
f. Provides information on school or local elections for school representatives.			



Our School:	Frequently	Sometimes	Never
g. Develops formal networks to link all families with their parent representatives.			
h. Includes parent representatives in professional development opportunities around school-wide programs.			
i. Involves parents in revising school/district curricula, developing policies, and participation in required parent advisory teams.			
j. Uses e-mail and quick surveys to obtain parents' input and ideas on school policy.			



COLLABORATING WITH COMMUNITY

Families and school staff collaborate with community to provide each other services, opportunities and support for student success.

Our School:	Frequently	Sometimes	Never
a. Provides a community resource directory for parents and students with information on community agencies, programs, and services.			
b. Provides information on community activities that link to learning skills and talents, including summer programs for students.			
c. Works with local businesses, industries, and community organizations on programs to enhance student skills.			
d. Offers after school programs for students, with support from community businesses, agencies, or volunteers.			
e. Sponsors intergenerational programs with local senior citizen groups.			
f. Provides family services through partnerships with school counseling, health, recreation, job training, and other agencies.			
g. Organizes service learning projects for the community, students, families, and schools.			
h. Building is open for use by the community after school hours.			
Other:			

Adapted from Dr. Joyce Epstein, et al, 2002 & PTA National Standards for Family-School Partnerships 2016



Summary of Strengths and Needs

- Ratings of “frequently” indicate that the activity or approach is strong.
- Ratings of “sometimes” or “never” indicate that the activity is not yet part of the school’s program or needs improvement.

The results provide information on the strength of current practices and insights about future directions or needed improvements in your school’s parental and community involvement partnership program. Use the chart below to begin identifying areas of strength, need, and action plans for improvement. Consider current initiatives as well as short- and long-term goals.

Choose one or two of the six areas to explore further in the Framework as you develop an **Action Plan**

Standards for Family-School Partnerships	What are we doing well?	How could we improve?	Family Engagement Strategies
Welcoming All Families Into the School Community 			
Communicating Effectively 			
Supporting Student Success 			
Speaking Up for Every Child 			
Sharing Leadership 			
Collaborating with Community 			

