

SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL TRAINING

MODULE 2

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Objectives:

1. Learn effective strategies for involving parents in the school community.
2. Define the categories of parent involvement and identify the categories most important for student achievement.
3. Share best practices in parent involvement.
4. Learn what parents want from their child's school.
5. Learn principles of effective parent involvement.
6. Select specific involvement strategies, identify activities, and set a timeline.

JUST LIKE ME

1. I am glad to be here today.
2. I am a parent of a school-age child.
3. I am an educator in a school.
4. I have found educators to be supportive of families.
5. I feel welcome in my child's school.
6. I am a member of a School Advisory Council.
7. Lunch was my favorite subject.
8. The best three months of the year are June, July and August.
9. I share open and honest information with parents.
10. As a parent, I attend all parent-teacher conferences for my child.
11. I am a member of PAT/PTO/PTSA.
12. I receive information from my child's school
13. I return parent phone calls within 24 hours.
14. Our principal has coffee with parents once a month.
15. The secretary in our school smiles and greets parents immediately upon their arrival in the office.
16. I volunteer in my child's school.
17. Teachers and school staff smile and speak to visitors when they walk down the halls.
18. I have found parents to be supportive of educators.
19. Parents are welcome in our school.

TEN TRUTHS OF PARENT INVOLVEMENT

- All parents have hopes and goals for their children.
They differ in how they support their children's efforts to achieve those goals.
- The home is one of several spheres that simultaneously influences a child.
The school must work with other spheres for the child's benefit, not push them apart.
- The parent is the central contributor to a child's education.
Schools can either co-opt that role or recognize the potential of the parent.
- Parent involvement must be a legitimate element of education.
It deserves equal emphasis with elements such as program improvement and evaluation.
- Parent involvement is a process, not a program of activities.
It requires ongoing energy and effort.
- Parent involvement requires a vision, policy, and framework.
A consensus of understanding is important.
- Parents' interaction with their own children is the cornerstone of involvement.
A program must recognize the value, diversity, and difficulty of this role.
- Most barriers to parent involvement are found within school practices.
They are not found within parents.
- Any parent can be "hard to reach."
Parents must be identified and approached individually; they are not defined by gender, ethnicity, family situation, education, or income.
- Successful parent involvement nurtures relationships and partnerships.
It strengthens bonds between home and school, parent and educator, parent and child, school and community.

CHECKLIST FOR IMPROVING PARENT INVOLVEMENT

(Answer Yes or No)

- ____ 1. There is a place in the building for parents to exchange ideas, share information, and to focus on educational issues.
- ____ 2. The office has a friendly, informal atmosphere.
- ____ 3. The school staff views parents as valuable resources.
- ____ 4. Efforts are made to involve culturally and linguistically diverse parents.
- ____ 5. Most communication between teachers and parents is timely and consistent.
- ____ 6. The atmosphere in the school is not bureaucratic.
- ____ 7. There are clearly defined policies regarding parent involvement in the school.
- ____ 8. There is a school-wide homework policy in place.
- ____ 9. There is an inservice program for staff that addresses parent involvement.
- ____ 10. There is an inservice program for the School Board that addresses parent involvement.
- ____ 11. Training programs are available for parents in the language in which they feel most comfortable.
- ____ 12. Parents feel empowered to make decisions in the school.
- ____ 13. Families are a priority in the school.
- ____ 14. Businesses in the community are involved in the school.
- ____ 15. Community involvement is apparent in the school.
- ____ 16. Parents are consulted about their children's thinking and behavior.
- ____ 17. Parents routinely work in classrooms with children on learning activities.
- ____ 18. Parents in the school community are advocates for children's rights.
- ____ 19. Parents are notified promptly about their children's problems in the language in which they feel most comfortable.
- ____ 20. The school staff is aware of and addresses cultural and language barriers.

ACTION PLAN FOR IMPROVING PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Objective: _____

Activities/Strategies:	School Site Person Responsible	Start Date	End Date