



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.

Ideas for Implementation

1. Provide parents with the knowledge and resources they need to become leaders and advocates for their children's education. This means educating them about test score interpretation, understanding the Criterion-Referenced Competency Test (CRCT), and Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS). You can then build parent capacity by using your new parent leaders to recruit and train other parent leaders based on what they've learned from you.
2. Ensure parents understand that they are wanted and needed to be a part of all school committees and councils (not just the ones that are designated or designed for parents). Give them concrete, meaningful tasks to complete as part of the group. Seek to have parent representatives that are reflective of the school community and work to address family involvement barriers related to diversity, race, income and culture.
3. Create opportunities for parents to dialogue with you and provide their input without apprehension. The school could create an online option that's an extension of the school's website that allows parents to provide feedback and suggestions to the school. The postings could remain confidential instead of having a public viewing or discussion forum. This would prevent the possibility of inappropriate material being displayed. This resource would give parents another avenue to express themselves and have input, thus empowering them.
4. Seek out parent ideas routinely on current and prospective school programs that effect students and their families. Inform parents about how they can support the school improvement plan, involve parents in focus groups or community cafes around your district's Comprehensive LEA Implementation Plan (CLIP).
5. Involve parents in action research. Do not limit your efforts to asking parents their opinions, but give them a chance to actually be a key part of the process. Allow them to observe classes to provide first-hand feedback on a new curriculum initiative, examine various textbooks that are up for adoption, or allow them to visit a school in another district to learn about new programs for implementation.

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6. Hold group trainings for all members of the school's councils and committees inclusive of the parent representatives. Cover topics such as facilitation skills, brain-storming, and ways to communicate effectively. Explain how the school, parent, and community representatives all are partners in this important work and allow time to ensure the parents feel comfortable and understand their role.
7. Ensure transparency of information to all parents. Discuss the school's scores on state tests, regardless of the outcomes, and describe ways in which the school plans to improve (with seeking parent input of course!) Make sure parents are aware of the good and not so good information the school has to share. Then, do not be afraid to ask for parents to help! Make them part of the solution.
8. Allow parents to speak at various meetings, functions, and events within and outside of the school. Have parents share their stories of engagement at a community philanthropic event, share an inspiration at a school board meeting, or give opening remarks at a school assembly.

Reference:

National Parent Teacher Association (PTA). (2009). *PTA National Standards for Family-School Partnerships: An Implementation Guide*. Retrieved from <http://www.pta.org/2757.asp>

Your Ideas for Implementation
