How Family - Friendly Is Your School?

Part of the Georgia Family - Friendly Partnership School Initiative

A partnership between Georgia Department of Education and Georgia Parental Information and Resource Center (GA PIRC)

Why Create A Family - Friendly Partnership School?

According to the book *Beyond the Bake Sale: The Essential Guide for Family-School Partnerships* by Anne Henderson, Karen Mapp, Vivian Johnson, and Don Davies *(2007)* welcoming environments provide parents with a reciprocal relationship where not only do they feel that they belong to the school, but the school belongs to them. Therefore, this sense of belonging motivates parents to be more active in their children's education, which in turn has a positive impact on student achievement!

Welcoming Environments:

- Make students want to learn!
- Make parents want to attend school functions and volunteer!
- Make school staff enjoy their jobs!
- Make community members want to invest in the school!
- Improves customer service and parent-school communications!
- **Make the school a place of trust, safety, and resources to students, parents, and the community at large.**

How Do You Make Your School Family - Friendly?

Remember change takes time especially when it comes to changing school climate, but with persistence and patience it can be done! Follow these key steps to get the job done:

1. Complete the self-assessment and view the Georgia Virtual Family-Friendly Partnership Schools with key school staff. What are your thoughts? What does your school look like? Where are there areas for improvement?
2. Complete the Family - Friendly Partnership School Walk-Through and send the Family - Friendly Partnership School Survey to your parents. Examine the responses. Tackle the high priority areas of need first. Take it one step at a time, do not attempt to do it all at once!
3. Begin to build or strengthen relationships with your parents and community. Changes in school culture can not happen with school staff alone. Relationships and buy-in from everyone is essential. Invite key parent leaders and community members to participate in a committee meeting to tackle the work that needs to be done.
4. Over time you will begin to see results! Celebrate success and take pride in the fact that your school is Family - Friendly!

All Rights Reserved