Welcoming Environments: Is Your School Family-Friendly?
Agenda

➤ Why
- Pre-Session Assessment
- Core Beliefs

➤ What
- National PTA Standards for Family-School Partnerships

➤ How
- Georgia’s Family-Friendly Partnership Schools
How Family-Friendly Is Your School?

Please complete Column 1.

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<tr>
<td><strong>How Family-Friendly Is Your School?</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Part of the Georgia Family-Friendly Partnership School Initiative</td>
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<tr>
<td>A partnership between Georgia Department of Education and Georgia Parental Information and Resource Center (GA PIRC)</td>
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Before viewing the Georgia Virtual Family-Friendly Partnership Schools, take a minute to complete this self-assessment. How family-friendly is your school? In column one place a check mark beside the items you feel represent your school. Then, after viewing the Georgia Virtual Family-Friendly Partnership Schools review your choices. Do you still think your school is family-friendly in those areas? Now using column two place an X beside the items you would like to improve or implement in your school.

1. The school is easy to find within the community and the front entrance of the building can be easily identified.
2. The front of the school depicts a welcoming environment that naturally makes families and visitors feel accepted and at ease.
3. The school provides various guest badges upon sign in representing either a parent, a volunteer, or a visitor.
4. The front office staff is friendly and helpful. They assist and recognize visitors immediately, as well as answer the phone and treat visitors politely.
Pre-Session Assessment

- What does your school look like?
- Where are there areas of welcoming environments?
- Where are there areas for improvement?
Core Beliefs

- Parents have dreams for their children and want the best for them.
- All parents have the capacity to support their children’s learning.
- Parents and school staff should be equal partners.
- Responsibility for building partnerships between school and home rests primarily with school staff, especially school leaders.

Why Welcoming Environments?

Welcoming environments provide parents with a reciprocal relationship where not only do they feel that they belong to the school, but also that the school belongs to them.

- Henderson, Mapp, Johnson, and Davies (2007)
PTA’s National Standards for Family-School Partnerships

The focus is not what schools should do to engage parents—it is what parents, schools, and communities can do together to support student success.
Welcoming All Families into the School Community

Families are active participants in the life of the school, and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to school staff, and to what students are learning and doing in class.
Georgia’s Systems of Continuous Improvement

http://www.gadoe.org/School-Improvement/Federal-Programs/Pages/default.aspx
Georgia’s Family-Friendly Partnership School Initiative
Previous Award Winning Schools
Where to Start: Data Based Decision Making

Parent Survey

Family - Friendly School Parent Survey
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)

For the following questions, please circle the answer that you agree with the most:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
<th>Does Not Apply</th>
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<tr>
<td>I feel welcome and accepted at my child’s school.</td>
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<td>I enjoy visiting my child’s school.</td>
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<td>The school has parking spaces for parents.</td>
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<td>I am able to find my way easily around the school.</td>
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<td>The school has opportunities that allow me to meet and speak with the staff at my child’s school.</td>
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<td>My child’s principal and assistant principal are available and easy to approach.</td>
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<td>I am comfortable going to the front office when visiting my child’s school.</td>
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<td>The school’s front office staff is nice, polite, and helpful.</td>
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<td>The school has a translator for non-English speaking families when needed.</td>
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<td>The school provides written materials in languages other than English for non-English speaking families.</td>
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It’s at partnerships.gadoe.org

Georgia's Family-Friendly Partnership School Initiative

Family-Friendly Partnership School Awards
2017 WINNERS AND FINALISTS ANNOUNCED
Click here to learn who they are.

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 ultimately has a positive impact on student achievement!
It’s at 
partnerships.gadoe.org

What Are Georgia’s Virtual Family-Friendly Partnership Schools?

To help schools, families, and communities work together in creating a Family-Friendly Partnership School, the Georgia Department of Education created Georgia’s Virtual Family-Friendly Partnership Schools. Georgia’s Virtual Family-Friendly Partnership Schools takes viewers on a virtual journey of an elementary and a middle-high school to show what makes a school family-friendly.

The intended audience includes educational leaders, school staff, parents, school, parent, or community organizations, and local business partners. Click on the handout materials on this webpage as a supplemental tool for building family-friendly schools.

To view Georgia’s Virtual Family-Friendly Partnership Schools and begin your virtual tours, please click on the button below to download the program to your computer.

If you have trouble downloading the program to your computer, contact your Information Technology Specialist. You may also contact Jason Clay at jclay@doe.k12.ga.us.
Virtual Tour

Small Group Work

Handouts

- Winners and Finalists
- 2016 Georgia Family-Friendly Partnership Schools Awards Booklet
- Welcoming Environments Overview Powerpoint
- Workshop Handout
- Pre-Session Self Assessment
- Parent Survey - English
- Parent Survey - Spanish
- Parent Survey for Virtual Schools - English
- Parent Survey for Virtual Schools - Spanish
- Walk-Through Exercise
- Elementary Scenarios
- Middle-High Scenarios

- Elementary Scenarios
- Middle-High Scenarios

Scenarios—Small Groups

- Form small groups of 2-3 people.

- Read the scenario.

- Discuss with your small group what are some changes that can be made to improve the welcoming environment.

- Be prepared to summarize what your group discussed.
Walk-Through Exercise

- Invite members of the school staff, the community, and other parents to walk through the school together using the handout.

- [http://partnerships.gadoe.org](http://partnerships.gadoe.org)

Handouts

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Questions