

The Parent Educator

A Newsletter for Parent Educators Throughout the State of Arkansas

Parental Involvement Plan ACT 603 The Law

By September 1, 2003, each public school district and each public school, in collaboration with parents, shall establish a parental involvement program plan. **The parental involvement program in each school shall;**

- ◆ Involve parents of students at all grade levels in a variety of roles. (6-15-1602.b.1)
- ◆ Be comprehensive and coordinated in nature. (6-15-1602.b.2)
- ◆ Recognize that communication between home and school should be regular, two-way, and meaningful. (6-15-1602.b.3)

The school shall prepare family kits which consist of:

- ◆ The school's parental involvement program. (6-15-1602.b.3.Bi)
- ◆ The recommended role of the parent, student, teacher, and school. (6-15-1602.b.3.Bii)
- ◆ Ways for the parents to become

involved in the school and his or her child's education. (6-15-1602.b.3.B.iii)

- ◆ Activities planned throughout the school year to encourage parental involvement. (6-15-1602.b.3.B.iv)
- ◆ A description of the system which allows parents and teachers to communicate in a **regular**, two way, and meaningful manner. (6-15-1602.b.3.Bv)

The school shall:

- ◆ Encourage communication with parents by scheduling **no less than two** parent-teacher conferences per year. (6-15-1602.b.3.C)
- ◆ Plan and engage in other activities determined by the school to be beneficial to encourage communication with parents. (6-15-1602.b.3.D)
- ◆ Purchase parenting books, magazines, and other informative materials regarding responsible parenting through the school library, advertise the current selection,

and give parents an opportunity to borrow the materials for review. (6-15-1602.b.4.Bii)

- ◆ Create parent centers. (6-15-1602.b.4.Biii)
- ◆ Plan and engage in other activities determined by the school to

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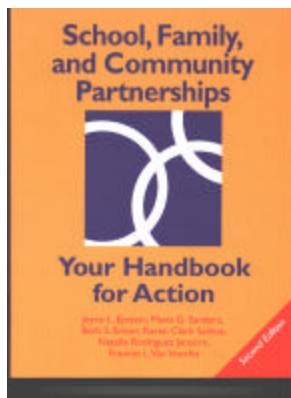
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Book Spotlight



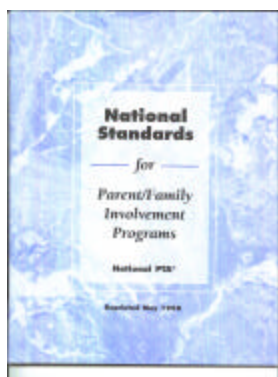
This research-based framework of six types of involvement guides state and district leaders, school principals, teachers, parents, and community partners to form Action Teams for Partnerships-dynamic groups that plan, implement, evaluate, and continually improve family and community involvement for students success. You'll learn how to *Involve the community in school, family, and community partnerships. *Organize more effective Action Teams for Partnerships. * Strengthen partnership programs in middle and high schools. *Implement interactive homework for students to show and share with their families. *Organize successful volunteers in the middle grades. *Conduct state and district leadership activities to help schools develop partnership programs.

Author Joyce Epstein ISBN#0761976663 price **\$34.95**



Based on interviews with local PTA leaders, teachers, principals and experts from across the country, this innovative resource is based on the six standards that make up the National PTA's National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs: *Communicating, Parenting, Student Learning, Volunteering, School Decision Making and Advocacy, and Collaborating with the Community.

Author National PTA
ISBN#187963970X price **\$18.95**



The National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs and their quality indicators are research based and grounded in both sound philosophy and practical experience. The purpose for the standards is threefold: * To promote meaningful parent and family participation, *To raise awareness regarding the components of effective programs, *To provide guidelines for schools that wish to improve their programs.
Author: National PTA **\$2.00**

Continue from page 1

be beneficial to promoting and supporting responsible parenting. (6-15-1602.b.4.B.iv)

- ◆ Schedule regular “Parent Make the Difference” evenings where parents are given a report on the state of the school and an overview of: (6-15-1602.b.5.B.i)
 - * What students will be learning?
 - * How students will be as-



sessed?

- * What parents should expect for their child’s education?
- * How parents can assist and make a difference in their child’s education?
- ◆ Not have any school, policies or procedures that would discourage a parent from visiting the school, specifically including: (6-15-1602.b.6.Bi)
 - * Policies requiring parents to pick-up their child outside the school building.
 - * Policies prohibiting the parents from visiting a child’s classroom during school events.
- ◆ Publish a volunteer resource book, listing the interests and availability of volunteers for school staff members’ use, specifically including: (6-15-1602.b.6.Bii)
 - * Survey parents regarding their interests, so volun-

teer work will be meaningful.

* Determine how frequently a volunteer would like to participate, including the option for those who are available to help at home.

* Use the resource book to help match school needs with volunteer interests.

- ◆ Frequently publish the school’s process for resolving parental concerns, including how to define the problem, who to approach first, and how to develop solutions. (6-15-1602.b.6.Biii)
- ◆ Engage in other activities that the school determines will encourage parents to participate as full partners in the decision that affect their child and family. (6-15-1602.b.6.Biv)
- ◆ Contact alumni from the school to create an alumni advisory commission to provide advice and guidance for school improvement.
- ◆ Develop paycheck size cards with tips for how parents can foster



their child’s success and contact employers about including the cards with employee paychecks.

- ◆ Designate one certified staff member that is willing to serve as a parent facilitator to organize meaningful training for staff and



parents promoting and encouraging a welcoming atmosphere to parental involvement in the school and to undertake efforts to ensure that parental participation is recognized as an asset to the school.

By September 1, 2003, the State Board of Education’s Standards of Accreditation of Arkansas Public School shall require no less than two hours of professional development opportunities for teachers, which may be included in the 30 hours of professional development required as of January 1, 2003, designed to enhance understanding of parental involvement. (Administrators must also have 2 hours of professional development which is in addition to their 30 hours.)

Staff development shall consist of:

- ◆ Effective parent involvement strategies.
- ◆ The importance of administrative leadership in setting expectations and creating a climate conducive to parental participation.

CAROLINE WHO ADPATED THIS??? IT was in the front of your binder

Why Nation

The National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs and their quality indicators are research based and grounded in both sound philosophy and practical experience. The purpose for the standards is threefold:

- To promote meaningful parent and family participation
- To raise awareness regarding the components of effective programs
- To provide guidelines for schools that wish to improve their programs

The program standards are guidelines for leaders of institutions with programs serving parents and families. Therefore, the intended audience includes principals, administrators, educators, and parents who are in positions to influence and improve parent involvement programs. When the standards are used as guidelines, they can direct leaders as they move from discussion to action in developing dynamic programs to improve student achievement through parent involvement. As with any effective long-term reform, the overall integration and implementation of standards should be based on local needs and circumstances.

The National PTA will regularly review and revise the standards to ensure that they are dynamic and responsive to future demographic trends and research. Future versions will be shaped through collaboration with other groups working on standards for teacher preparation, core academic content, and other related school reform initiatives.

Here are the following National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs

Standard I: Communicating—Communication between home and school is regular, two-way, and meaningful.

Standard II: Parenting—Parenting skills are promoted and supported.

Standard III: Student Learning—Parents play an integral role in assisting student learning.

Standard IV: Volunteering—Parents are welcome in the school, and their support and assistance are sought.

Standard V: School Decision Making and Advocacy—Parents are full partners in the decisions that affect children and families.

Standard VI: Collaborating with Community—Community resources are used to strengthen schools, families, and student learning.

Over 30 years' research has proven beyond dispute the positive connection between parent involvement and student success. Effectively engaging parents and families in the education of their children has the potential to be far more transformational than any other type of education reform.

1 Standards?

Parent and Family Involvement and Student Success

- When parents are involved, students achieve more, regardless of socioeconomic status, ethnic/racial background, or the parents' education level.
- The more extensive the parent involvement, the higher the student achievement.
- When parents are involved in their students' education, those students have higher grades and test scores, better attendance, and complete homework more consistently.
- When parents are involved, students exhibit more positive attitudes and behavior.
- Students whose parents are involved in their lives have higher graduation rates and greater enrollment rates in post-secondary education.
- Different types of parent/family involvement produce different gains. To have long-lasting gains for students, parent involvement activities must be well-planned, inclusive, and comprehensive.
- Educators hold higher expectations of students whose parents collaborate with the teacher. They also hold higher opinions of those parents.
- In programs that are designed to involve parents in full partnerships, student achievement for disadvantaged children not only improves, it can reach levels that are standard for middle-class children. In addition, the children who are farthest behind make the greatest gains.
- Children from diverse cultural backgrounds tend to do better when parents and professionals collaborate to bridge the gap between the culture at home and the learning institution.
- Student behaviors, such as alcohol use, violence, and antisocial behavior decrease as parent involvement increases.
- Students are more likely to fall behind in academic performance if their parents do not participate in school events, develop a working relationship with their child's educators, or keep up with what is happening in their child's school.
- The benefits of involving parents are not confined to the early years; there are significant gains at all ages and grade levels.
- Junior and senior high school students whose parents remain involved, make better transitions, maintain the quality of their work, and develop realistic plans for their future. Students whose parents are not involved, on the other hand, are more likely to drop out of school.
- The most accurate predictor of a student's achievement in school is not income or social status, but the extent to which that student's family is able to (1) create a home environment that encourages learning; (2) communicate high, yet reasonable, expectations for their children's achievement and future careers; and (3) become involved in their children's education at school and in the community.

Parent and Family Involvement and School Quality

- Schools that work well with families have improved teacher morale and higher ratings of teachers by parents.
- Schools where parents are involved have more support from families and better reputations in the community.
- School programs that involve parents outperform identical programs without parent and family involvement.
- Schools where children are failing improve dramatically when parents are enabled to become effective partners in their child's education.
- The school's practices to inform and involve parents are stronger determinants of whether inner-city parents will be involved with their children's education than are parent education, family size, marital status, and even student grade level.

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Parents as Partners by Ida Collier

No Child Left Behind legislation and Arkansas Act 603 have specific provisions for including parents in education. Research has shown when parents are actively involved in their child's education the results are improved student achievement and better schools.



Although the research indicates improved results with involved parents, all parents are not active partners due to various reasons. Dr. James Comer, Yale University, states, "Parents often felt dejected, distrustful and angry at schools (1988)". Dr. Comer started the Comer Process in 1968 using what he called the School Development Program, which includes parents as partners. Dr. Comer has worked with the difficult to reach, the naysayers and the actively involved parents. He has found parents to be a viable solution in improving student performance by working through the roadblocks parents have established.

To work more effectively with parents we must empathize with all they have to do outside of the education arena. Parents have schedules like teachers and administrators. Parents provide the necessary provisions for their children and manage the day-to-day upkeep on these same provisions. Parents can be included in the educational process, but schools must also recognize and understand parental responsibilities. Specifically, educational institutions must be creative and flexible in planning parent activities during the school calendar. Parents need advance notice of meetings, activities and information regarding how this particular activity may positively influence their child.

Advocating and connecting children to resources is also a parental responsibility. Selecting the right school for their child is a major issue for parents. Under No Child Left Behind, parents have more options for their student when schools are not able to meet the educational needs of students. No Child Left Behind specifically states that it is the schools responsibility to build parent capacity for involvement around school issues. Increasing parent understanding regarding state standards, state assessments, and effectively monitoring student progress are examples of the types of capacity building goals districts and schools can provide for parent involvement.

Getting parental attention and keeping it is one of the most challenging dilemmas in current parent involvement. Suggestions in the law include developing a parent involvement plan and to invite parents to participate in the development of these plans.

Including parents in the planning stages will help districts and schools have a realistic idea of what parent need and what types of support they need.

Getting parents in motion will entail asking parents what things are most important to them as far as raising responsible students. These things could include but not limited to household management, educational opportunities, financial planning, communication skills, decision-making and self-development for parents. Affording these types of opportunities for parents will allow them to be leaders that are more effective and have more energy to be involved. Parents can be partners and leaders in their involvement roles.

Districts and schools are encouraged to provide clear expectations regarding what they want for parents. Districts and schools must also provide qualified personnel who believe parents are capable and valuable. Not all parents will be on the same skill level on every task the school may have. Parents will need supportive environments in which to take risks in the school. Parents will need feedback on the success or re-direction of certain goals they may have for the school or for their particular student. Parents must have a voice in the process of educating their most valuable asset.

School personnel will team with parents to become effective partners by listening, checking the parental commitment, and building confidence for involvement. If the motivation of the parent or the confidence of the parent is low, the likelihood of involvement is low. Parent facilitators and coordinators will have the challenge of familiarizing parents with what students should know, state standards, student performance, how to monitor effective progress, how to deal with conflict, discipline, communication skills for improved student achievement.

There is a bonus in having well informed and motivated parents. The districts and schools will have vested parents who have the interest of the community.

Ida Collier is with the Center for Effective Parenting, Little Rock

The evidence is now beyond dispute. When parents are involved in their children's education at home their children do better in school.

Henderson and Berla

1. Give positive feedback and show appreciation for teachers and the principal.
2. Approach interactions with a positive attitude and an open mind.
3. Listen to others' viewpoints.
4. Share your child's strengths, talents, and interests with your child's teachers.
5. Share expectations and set goals together for your child.
6. Make appointments as needed to discuss your child's progress or concerns.
7. Attend parent-teacher conferences with specific questions you want to ask.
8. Indicate the best way to give you information (phone, e-mail, notes, etc.).
9. Understand and reinforce school rules and expectations at home.
10. Participate in informal opportunities to talk with and get to know school staff and educators.
11. Address concerns or questions honestly, openly, and early on.
12. Attend PTA or parent meetings regularly.
13. Read classroom and/or school newsletters.
14. Visit your school's web page.
15. Know school staff's extensions and office hours.
16. Read and know your school's handbook.
17. Request that information be available in all relevant languages.
18. Share your family's culture, values, and parenting practices with your child's school.

19. Share your perceptions with educators and school staff of how parents are treated.
20. Work with school staff and educators to revise and improve perceptions and school climate.
21. Meet your child's friends and get to know their parents.
22. Contact your school for information on family programs and resources.
23. Help establish a parent center at school and use its resources.
24. Help create a toy/book lending library and visit it regularly.
25. Assist in developing parent support programs/groups and attend

50 Ways For Parents To Be Involved In Their Child's Education

- them.
26. Attend workshops or seminars on various parenting topics.
27. Participate in parenting classes on child development, expectations, discipline, etc.
28. Attend parent fairs and other events especially for parents and families.
29. Start a parent book club to discuss current publications.
30. Help create and/or contribute to a school newsletter on parenting.
31. Assist in creating and/or offer your services to before- and after-school programs.
32. Build a child file with medical records, pictures, fingerprints, etc.
33. Make donations and/or offer to work at clothing drives or swaps, food co-ops, etc.

34. Ask teachers or counselors about how to talk with your children about tough topics.
35. Discuss your child's school day and homework daily.
36. Learn your child's strengths and weaknesses in different areas of school.
37. Provide a quiet, well-lighted place with basic school supplies for studying/homework.
38. Help your children break down projects into smaller, more manageable steps.
39. Develop a consistent daily routine and time for studying and homework.
40. Provide encouragement and approval for effort and schoolwork.
41. Share your interests, hobbies, and talents with your children.
42. Provide children with books, magazines, and so forth, and develop a night-time reading routine.
43. View selected TV programs together and then review and discuss them.
44. Make family trips to the library, zoo, museum, or park a fun learning experience.
45. Talk with your child's teacher on creating home learning games and activities.
46. Complete interactive homework assignments with your child.
47. Attend meetings on learning expectations, assessment, and grading procedures.
48. Help set goals and develop a personalized education plan for your child.
49. Participate in activities that help you understand school technology.
50. Help plan and attend family nights on improving study habits, doing homework, etc.

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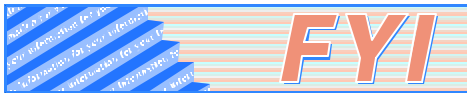
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www.parenting-ed.org



— Important Web Sites —

Websites for Parent Educators

Center for the Improvement of Early Reading and Achievement
www.ciera.org

U.S. Department of Education Publications
www.ed.gov

National PTA
www.pta.org

Public Broadcasting Service
www.pbs.org

Cnn's Interactive Learning Resources for teaching
www.literacynet.org

National Institute for Literacy
www.nifl.gov

New York University Child Study Center
www.AboutOurKids.org

American Federation of Teachers
www.aft.org

Time for Kids-Parents-Teachers
www.timeforteachers.com

Family Literacy Special Collection
www.literacy.kent.edu/midwest/familylit/index.html

National Mental Health and Education Center
www.naspcenter.org

National Education Association
www.new.org

National Educational Service
www.nesonline.com

Center for Effective Parenting
www.parenting-ed.org

What's Coming In The Next Issue

- ◆ **Tools For Implementing Parent Involvement Act 603**
- ◆ **Epstein's Six Types of Involvement**
- ◆ **50 More Ways For Parents To Be Involved In Their Child's Education**

