

ABC “Hypothetical” Elementary School

*Starting Points Survey: An Inventory of Present Practices of
School-Family-Community Partnerships (adapted from Joyce Epstein, 1997)*

Parent Responses from January, 2002 - compiled March, 2002

The total number of responses in each rating scale are summarized in the table.

Rating Scale: * = *very well implemented for all parents*
 + = *good start with many families*
 - = *needs improvement*

PARENTING

Basic Responsibilities of Families. Assist families with parenting skills and setting home conditions to support children as students, and assist schools to understand families.

Evaluate your current practices:	*	+	-
We sponsor parent education workshops and other courses or training for parents.	4	11	8
We provide families with information on child or adolescent development.	2	9	13
We provide families with information on developing home conditions that support learning.	2	17	5
We lend families books or tapes on parenting or videotapes of parent workshops.	1	7	13
We ask families for information about children's goals, strengths, and talents.	7	12	5
We sponsor home visiting programs or neighborhood meetings to help families understand schools and to help schools understand families.	2	8	14

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COMMUNICATING

Basic Responsibilities of Schools. Conduct effective communications from school to home and from home to school about school programs and children's progress.

Evaluate your current practices:	*	+	-
We have formal conferences with every parent at least once a year.	21	3	
We provide language translators to assist families as needed.	5	9	7
We provide clear information about report cards and how grades are earned.	13	9	2
Parents (guardians) receive their children's report cards.	12	9	2
Our school newsletter includes:			
a calendar of school events	14	10	
student activity information	12	11	1
curriculum program information (what kids are learning this quarter)	12	6	7
school volunteer involvement (when and how to volunteer)	17	7	
school governance information (how the school is run, site council, etc.)	9	6	11
samples of student writing and artwork	5	4	14
a column to address parents' questions	3	10	11
recognition of students, families, & community members	13	10	4
We provide clear information about selecting courses, programs, and activities in this school.	8	7	9
We send home folders of student work weekly or monthly for parent review and comments.	10	8	7
Staff members send home positive messages about students on a regular basis.	7	8	11
We notify families of students having academic or behavior problems.	6	8	10
Teachers have easy access to telephones to communicate with parents during or after school.	4	6	9
Parents have the telephone numbers of the school, principal, teachers, and counselors (at school or at home).	10	7	7
We have a homework hotline for students and families to hear daily assignments and messages.	2	2	16
We conduct an annual survey for families to share information and concerns about students' needs and reactions to school programs.	3	5	13

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VOLUNTEERING

Involvement at and for the School. Organize volunteers and audiences to support the school and students.

Evaluate your current practices:	*	+	-
We conduct an annual survey to identify interests, talents, and availability of volunteers.	15	8	2
We have a parent room or family center for volunteer work, meetings, and resources for families.	15	6	2
We encourage families and the community to be involved at school by:			
assisting in the classroom (e.g., tutoring, grading papers)	20	4	
helping on trips or at parties	19	5	
giving talks (e.g., careers, hobbies, etc.)	10	9	5
checking attendance	10	10	3
monitoring halls, or working in the library, cafeteria, or other areas	16	8	
leading clubs or activities	15	8	1
We provide ways for families to be involved at home or in the community if they cannot volunteer at school.	11	7	5
We have a program to recognize our volunteers.	11	8	2
We schedule plays, concerts, games, and other events at different times of the day or evening so that all parents can attend some activities.	10	12	2

LEARNING AT HOME

Involvement in Academic Activities. Involve families with their children in homework and other curriculum-related activities and decisions.

Evaluate your current practices:	*	+	-
We provide information to families on required skills in all subjects.	8	14	2
We provide info to families on how to monitor & discuss schoolwork at home.	7	8	9
We provide info on how to assist students with skills that they need to improve.	6	9	9
We have a regular schedule of interactive homework that requires students to demonstrate and discuss what they are learning with a family member.	8	11	5
We ask parents to listen to their child read or to read aloud with their child.	22	2	
We provide calendars with daily or weekly activities for families to do at home and in the community.	9	6	9
We help families help students set academic goals, select courses and programs, and plan for college or work or their next school (i.e. middle school).	5	7	9

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DECISION MAKING

Participation and Leadership. Include families as participants in school decisions, and develop parent leaders and representatives.

Evaluate your current practices:	*	+	-
We have an active PTA, PTO, or other parent organization.	21	3	
Parents are represented on the school's advisory council, improvement team, or other committees. (Site Council and Leadership Team)	15	7	2
We have an Action Team for School, Family, and Community Partnerships to develop a program with practices for all six types of involvement.	Y	E	S!
We provide information on school or local elections for school representatives.	6	13	4
We develop formal networks to link all families with their parent representatives.	4	8	9,4?
We involve parents in selecting school staff.	1	3	10,3?
We involve parents in revising school/district curricula.	1	9	12,2?

COLLABORATING WITH COMMUNITY

Coordinate resources and services from the community for families, students, and the school, and provide services to the community.

Evaluate your current practices:	*	+	-
We provide a community resource directory for parents and students with information on community agencies, programs, and services.	4	7	10,2?
We provide information on community activities that link to learning skills and talents, including summer programs for students.	3	12	7,2?
We work with local businesses, industries, and community organizations on programs to enhance student skills.	5	8	10
We offer after-school programs for students, with support from community businesses, agencies, or volunteers.	6	10	7
We sponsor intergenerational programs with local senior citizen groups.	8	7	8,1?
We provide "one-stop" shopping for family services through partnerships of school counseling, health, recreation, job training, and other agencies.	3	6	9,3?
We organize service to the community by students, families, and schools.	6	9	6,1?
We include alumni in school programs for students.	4	2	13,4?
Our school building is open for use by the community after school hours.	3	8	8,5?

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