

## Ohio School Boards Association Capital Conference and Trade Show

November 13 – 16, 2011

Greater Columbus Convention Center  
Columbus, Ohio

# Involving parents in student achievement

## Student achievement

Monday, November 14, 2011

2:00 p.m.

D 131

Gloria Cazan, president, Ohio PTA

Lisa Mack, president-elect, Ohio PTA

### **Paperless Board Meetings**

OSBA is working for you to provide the means for paperless board meetings.

BoardDocs is an innovative system that saves districts times and money. BoardDocs enables school boards to enhance communication among the administration, the public and the board through online, paperless board meetings.

Developed for school boards, this e-governance solution provides a means of immediately publishing and revising agenda items, support documents, policies and procedures via the Internet.

For more information contact Amanda Finney at (614) 540-4000 or (800) 589-OSBA. More information can also be found at [www.boarddocs.com](http://www.boarddocs.com).

Please complete an online conference evaluation either during or after the event at:  
<http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/CC11Evaluation>

### **OSBA Mission**

*OSBA leads the way to educational excellence by serving Ohio's public school board members and the diverse districts they represent through superior service and creative solutions.*

### **Ohio School Boards Association**

8050 North High Street, Suite 100  
Columbus OH 43235-6481  
(614) 540-4000 fax (614) 540-4100  
[www.osba-ohio.org](http://www.osba-ohio.org)

# 10

## 10 Truths About Parent Involvement

**The research is clear and convincing:** Regardless of income or background, when parents are involved, students are more likely to earn higher grades and test scores, enroll in higher-level programs, attend school regularly, have better social skills, show improved behavior, graduate, and go on to postsecondary education. Here are 10 more truths about parent involvement.

1. All parents have hopes and goals for their children.
2. Parents differ in their abilities and/or resources to help their children reach those goals.
3. The parent is the central contributor to a child's education.
4. Parent involvement must be seen as a legitimate element of education and deserves equal emphasis with elements such as school improvement and evaluation.
5. Parent involvement is an ongoing process, not a series of events.
6. Parent involvement requires a shared vision, policy, and framework for planning programs and practices that are connected to student learning.
7. Many barriers to parent involvement are found within school practices, attitudes, and assumptions.
8. Successful parent involvement programs help families guide their children's learning from preschool through high school.
9. Families from diverse backgrounds have their own set of norms and experiences that often influence their relationship with schools.
10. Parents are more likely to become involved when:
  - They understand that they *should* be involved.
  - They feel *capable* of making a contribution.
  - They feel *invited* by the school and their children.

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## 10 Things Parents Wish Schools/Teachers Would Do

1. Build children's self-esteem by using praise generously and avoiding ridicule and negative public criticism.
2. Get to know each child's needs, interests, and special talents, as well as the way each child learns best.
3. Communicate often and openly with parents, contacting them early about academic or behavioral problems and being candid, rather than defensive, when discussing these problems.
4. Regularly assign homework that helps children learn, and advise parents how they can work with their children on this homework.
5. Set high academic standards, expecting all children to learn and helping them do so.
6. Care about children, since children learn best when taught by warm, friendly, caring, and enthusiastic teachers.
7. Treat all children fairly and do not play favorites.
8. Enforce a positive discipline code based on clear and fair rules that are established at the beginning of each school year; reinforce positive behavior rather than punish negative behavior.
9. Vary teaching methods and make learning fun.
10. Encourage parent participation by reaching out to involve parents in their children's education, showing them how they can help their children at home, and remembering that parents want to work with teachers to help their children do their best.

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## 10 Things Schools/Teachers Wish Parents Would Do

1. Establish a daily family routine, including healthy eating and sleeping habits.
2. Build their child's self-esteem by expressing interest in the child's schoolwork and affirming the child's worth through positive messages.
3. Communicate openly with the school and contact the school when they are aware of issues concerning their child's school success.
4. Set high and realistic standards for their child.
5. Check on homework regularly and ask questions about their child's work.
6. Read or talk with their child. Connect everyday experiences to what is being learned in school.
7. Express high but realistic expectations for their child.
8. Use community learning opportunities. Expose their child to the library, museums, the theater, concerts, etc. Encourage their child to join clubs, scouts, after-school sports or fine arts, and other community programs.
9. Monitor out-of-school activities and set expectations for appropriate behavior.
10. Model learning at home by playing games, reading newspapers or magazines, and discussing current events.

## National Standards, Goals, and Indicators for Family-School Partnerships

### **Standard 1—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.

**Goal 1: Creating a Welcoming Climate:** When families walk into the building, do they feel the school is inviting and is a place where they “belong”?

- ❖ Developing personal relationships
- ❖ Creating a family-friendly atmosphere
- ❖ Providing opportunities for volunteering

**Goal 2: Building a Respectful, Inclusive School Community:** Do the school’s policies and programs reflect, respect, and value the diversity of the families in the community?

- ❖ Respecting all families
- ❖ Removing economic obstacles to participation
- ❖ Ensuring accessible programming

### **Standard 2—Communicating Effectively**

Families and school staff engage in regular, two-way, meaningful communication about student learning.

**Goal 1: Sharing Information Between School and Families:** Does the school keep all families informed about important issues and events and make it easy for families to communicate with teachers?

- ❖ Using multiple communication paths
- ❖ Surveying families to identify issues and concerns
- ❖ Having access to the principal
- ❖ Providing information on current issues
- ❖ Facilitating connections among families

## National Standards, Goals, and Indicators for Family-School Partnerships, continued

### **Standard 3—Supporting Student Success**

Families and school staff continuously collaborate to support students' learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.

**Goal 1: Sharing Information About Student Progress:** Do families know and understand how well their children are succeeding in school and how well the entire school is progressing?

- ❖ Ensuring parent-teacher communication about student progress
- ❖ Linking student work to academic standards
- ❖ Using standardized test results to increase achievement
- ❖ Sharing school progress

**Goal 2: Supporting Learning by Engaging Families:** Are families active participants in their children's learning at home and at school?

- ❖ Engaging families in classroom learning
- ❖ Developing family ability to strengthen learning at home
- ❖ Promoting after-school learning

### **Standard 4—Speaking Up for Every Child**

Families are empowered to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.

**Goal 1: Understanding How the School System Works:** Do parents know how the local school and district operate and how to raise questions or concerns about school and district programs, policies, and activities? Do they understand their rights and responsibilities under federal and state law as well as local ordinances and policies?

- ❖ Understanding how the school and district operate
- ❖ Understanding rights and responsibilities under federal and state laws
- ❖ Learning about resources
- ❖ Resolving problems and conflicts

**Goal 2: Empowering Families to Support Their Own and Other Children's Success in School:**

Are parents prepared to monitor students' progress and guide them toward their goals through high school graduation, postsecondary education, and a career?

- ❖ Developing families' capacity to be effective advocates
- ❖ Planning for the future
- ❖ Smoothing transitions
- ❖ Engaging in civic advocacy for student achievement

## National Standards, Goals, and Indicators for Family-School Partnerships, continued

### 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.

**Goal 1: Strengthening the Family's Voice in Shared Decision Making:** Are all families full partners in making decisions that affect their children at school and in the community?

- ❖ Having a voice in all decisions that affect children
- ❖ Addressing equity issues
- ❖ Developing parent leadership

**Goal 2: Building Families' Social and Political Connections:** Do families have a strong, broad-based organization that offers regular opportunities to develop relationships and raise concerns with school leaders, public officials, and business and community leaders?

- ❖ Connecting families to local officials
- ❖ Developing an effective parent involvement organization that represents all families

### Standard 6—Collaborating with Community

Families and school staff collaborate with community members to connect students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

**Goal 1: Connecting the School with Community Resources:** Do parent and school leaders work closely with community organizations, businesses, and institutions of higher education to strengthen the school, make resources available to students, school staff, and families, and build a family-friendly community?

- ❖ Linking to community resources
- ❖ Organizing support from community partners
- ❖ Turning the school into a hub of community life
- ❖ Partnering with community groups to strengthen families and support student success

# The Power of Partnerships Family Survey

Dear Families,

The best way to make sure every student in our school succeeds is to build a strong partnership between families, the school, and the community. The survey below gives you the opportunity to tell us what our school is doing well to support this partnership and what we can do better.

If you would like to help tally and analyze the results, please let us know.

—The Family Involvement Action Team

<Provide the names and contact information of the team members here.>

## Welcoming All Families into the School Community

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. When I walk into the school, I feel the school is inviting and that this is a place where parents “belong.”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The school’s policies and programs reflect, respect, and value the diversity of the families in the community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Students at the school are treated fairly no matter what their race or cultural background.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I feel welcome at PTA/parent group meetings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Communicating Effectively

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5. The school keeps all families informed about important issues and events.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. The school makes it easy for families to communicate with teachers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. The school communicates with families in multiple ways (e.g., e-mail, phone, website).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. I can talk to the school principal when I need to.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. My child’s teacher communicates with me on a regular basis.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. It’s easy to get a translator if I need one.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



## The Power of Partnerships Family Survey, continued

### Supporting Student Success

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
11. My child's teacher keeps me well informed about how my child is doing in school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. I understand the academic standards my child is supposed to meet and how the curriculum is linked to those standards.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. My child's teacher and the school give me useful information about how to improve my child's progress.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. All students are challenged to do their best.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Speaking Up for Every Child

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
15. If the school can't help me, they will connect me to someone who can.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. I understand the rules and requirements for student dress, language, and behavior.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. The school keeps me informed of my rights under federal and state laws and policies and helps me exercise those rights as needed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. I feel empowered to advocate for my own child's and other children's success in school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Sharing Power

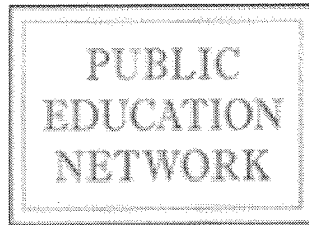
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
19. The school consults with me and other families before making important decisions (e.g., changes in curriculum, school policies, dress code).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. The school provides opportunities for families to develop relationships and raise concerns with school leaders, public officials, and business and community leaders.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Collaborating with Community

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
21. The school connects students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and community improvement initiatives.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments \_\_\_\_\_

Your name (optional) \_\_\_\_\_



## Parental Involvement Lessons Learned From NCLB

- Lesson #10: Parents, teachers and principals working in partnership is the key to quality public schools. But often educators don't see the value, OR they lack the expertise in how to involve parents.
- Lesson #9: Providing data is not sufficient in improving schools. Parents and the community must ACT on that data.
- Lesson #8: For NCLB to work, parental involvement must become an integral part of the instructional program...a district priority. Parents must own reform.
- Lesson #7: Many state departments of education and school districts are not implementing the parental involvement provisions of NCLB.
- Lesson #6: Schools, without parent involvement, can change a district. Levels of student performance will NOT rise dramatically without parental involvement.
- Lesson #5: For many people at the building level, it really is all about the schedule and course offerings; not about involving parents.
- Lesson #4: Many educators' desire and plan for real change, but "systems" and "laws" get in the way.
- Lesson #3: It is more difficult to sustain authentic community engagement than it is to initiate it.
- Lesson #2: For this work to succeed, it really is all about *relationships...at every level...at every step.*
- Lesson #1: The bottom line: we can write all of the parental involvement provisions, but if they are not implemented and enforceable, they will not succeed.

# Seven Ways to Build Families' Social Networks and Political Skills

1. Give families information about how the education system and local government work. Take families on field trips to district offices and school board meetings.
2. Keep voter registration forms and information about local government agencies in the school office or family center. For a middle or high school, develop a student-run voter registration drive.
3. During campaign season, invite candidates running for school board and other local offices to speak to families at the school. Work with families to develop an agenda for the meeting so that their concerns will be addressed.
4. Encourage families to lobby local officials about needed funding for community facilities, after-school programs, or better law enforcement,
5. Invite local banks and businesses to talk with families about their services, loan programs, and employment opportunities.
6. Involve families in action research. Ask them to develop and conduct surveys of other families and investigate problems in the community.
7. Make it easy for parents to meet and discuss concerns with the principal, talk to teachers, and guidance counselors, and examine their children's school records.