

PARENTING

Help all families establish home environments to support children as students



Suggestions for home conditions that support learning at each grade level

Workshops, videotapes, phone messages on parenting

Parent education and other courses or training for parents

Family support programs to assist with health, nutrition, financial education, etc

Home visits at transition points to help families understand schools and help schools understand families

PARENTING:
SAMPLE
PRACTICES

PARENTING: *CHALLENGES & REDEFINITIONS*

Challenges:

Provide info to all families who want or need it, not just to the few who can attend workshops or meetings

Enable families to share information about culture, background, and children's talents and needs

Make sure that all information is clear, usable and linked to children's success in school

Redefinition:

"workshop" means more than a meeting held at school; also may mean making information available in a variety of forms that can be reviewed anywhere, anytime

Students

- Awareness of family supervision & respect for parents
- Positive personal qualities, habits, beliefs, and values, as taught by the family
- Balance between time spent on chores, activities, and homework
- Good/improved attendance
- Awareness of importance of school

Parents

- Understanding of and confidence about parenting
- Awareness of own and others' challenges in parenting
- Feeling of support from school and other parents

Teachers

- Understanding of families' backgrounds, concerns, needs, goals, etc
- Respect for families' strengths and efforts
- Understanding of student diversity
- Awareness of own skill to share info on child development

PARENTING: *EXPECTED RESULTS*

COMMUNICATING

Design effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communication about school programs and their children's progress



Conferences with every parent at least once a year, with follow-ups as needed

Language translators assist families, as needed

Weekly or monthly folders of student work sent home for review and comments

Parent-student pickup of report cards, with conferences

Regular schedule of useful notices, memos, phone calls, newsletters, information on the school website, etc

Clear information on choosing schools or courses, programs, and activities within schools

Clear information on all school policies, programs, reforms, and transitions

Information for parents on Internet safety

COMMUNICATING: *SAMPLE PRACTICES*

COMMUNICATING: *CHALLENGES & REDEFINITIONS*

Challenges:

Review the readability, clarity, form, and frequency of all memos, notices, and other print and nonprint communications

Consider parents who do not speak English well, do not read well, or need large type

Review the quality of major communications

Establish clear two-way channels for communications from home to school and from school to home

Redefinition:

"Communications about school programs and student progress" to mean: two-way, three-way, and many-way channels of communication that connect schools, families, students, and the community

Students

- Awareness of own progress and of actions needed to maintain or improve grades
- Understanding of school policies on behavior, attendance, and other areas of conduct
- Informed decisions about courses and programs
- Awareness of own role in partnerships, serving as courier/communicator/broker

Parents

- Understanding of school programs and policies
- Monitoring and awareness of student progress
- Effective responses to student problems
- Interactions with teachers and eased communications with school and teachers

Teachers

- Increased diversity and use of communications with families and awareness of own ability to communicate clearly
- Appreciation and use of parent network for communications
- Increased ability to elicit and understand family views on children's programs and progress

COMMUNICATING: *EXPECTED RESULTS*

VOLUNTEERING

Recruit and organize
parent help and support



School and classroom volunteer programs to help teachers, administrators, students, and other parents

Parent room or family center for volunteer work, meetings, resources for families

Annual postcard survey to identify all available talents, times, and locations of volunteers

Class parent, telephone tree, or other structures to provide all families with needed information

Parent patrols or other activities to aid safety and operation of school programs

VOLUNTEERING: *SAMPLE PRACTICES*

VOLUNTEERING: *CHALLENGES & REDEFINITIONS*

Challenges:

Recruit volunteers widely so that ALL families know that their time and talents are welcome

Make flexible schedules for volunteers, assemblies, and events to enable employed parents to participate

Organize volunteer work; provide training; match time and talent with school, teacher, and student needs; and recognize efforts so that participants are productive

Redefinition:

"Volunteer" to mean anyone who supports school programs and students' activities in any way, at any place, and at any time – not just during the school day and at the school building – and those who are audiences for student events, sports, activities, and performances

Students

- Skill in communicating with adults
- Increased learning of skills for which students receive tutoring or targeted attention from volunteers
- Awareness of many skills, talents, occupations, and contributions of parents and other volunteers

Parents

- Understanding of teacher's job, increased comfort in school, and carryover of school activities at home
- Self-confidence about ability to work in school and with children, or to take steps to improve
- Awareness that families are welcome and valued at school

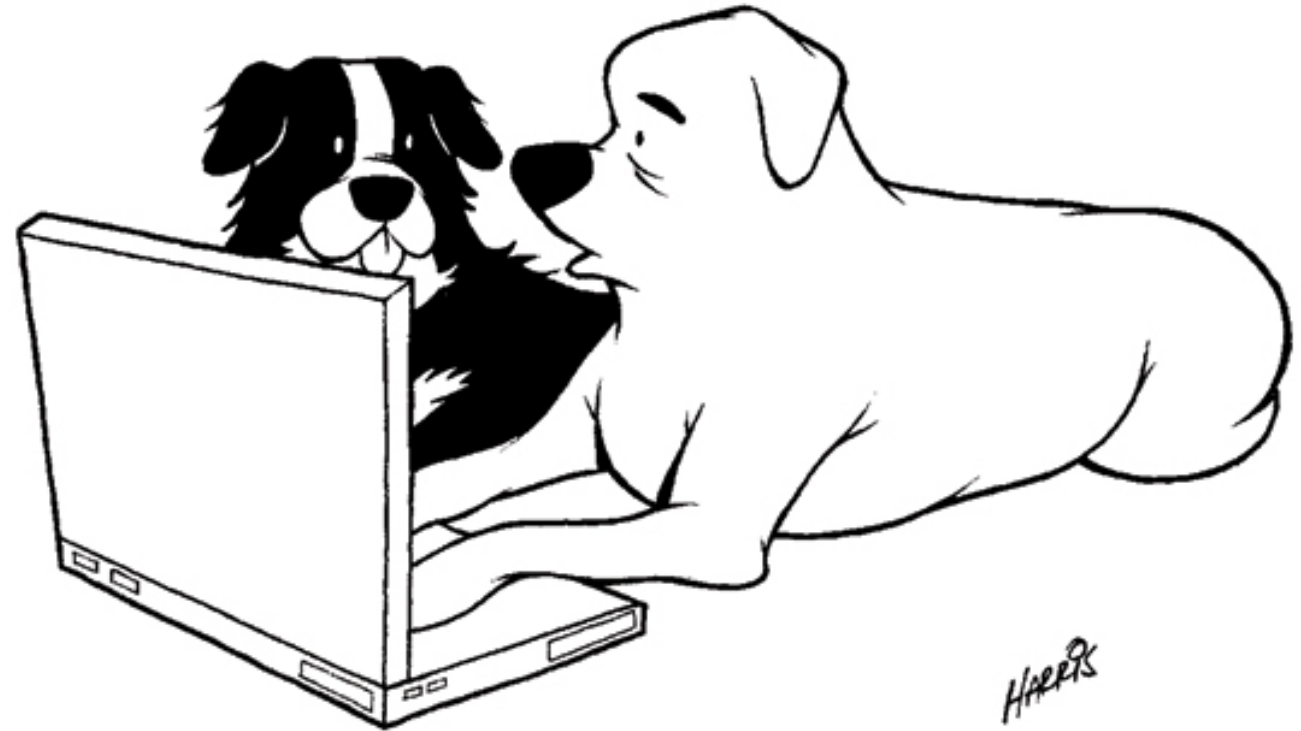
Teachers

- Readiness to involve families in new ways, including those who do not volunteer at school
- Awareness of parent talents and interests in school and children
- Greater individual attention to students, with help from volunteers

VOLUNTEERING: *EXPECTED RESULTS*

LEARNING AT HOME

Provide information and ideas to families about how to help students at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions, and planning



“And then I just hit delete. I haven’t actually eaten any homework for years.”

Information for families on knowledge and skills required for students in all subjects at each grade

Information on homework policies and how to monitor/discuss schoolwork at home

Information on how to assist students to improve skills on various class and school assignments

Regular schedule of homework that requires students to discuss and interact with families on what they are learning in class

Calendars with activities for parents and students to do at home or in the community

Family math, science, and reading activities at school

Summer learning packets or activities

Family participation in setting student goals each year and in planning for college or work

LEARNING AT HOME: *SAMPLE PRACTICES*

LEARNING AT HOME: *CHALLENGES & REDEFINITIONS*

Challenges:

Design & organize a regular schedule of interactive homework that gives *students* responsibility for discussing learning with families

Coordinate family-linked homework activities, if students have several teachers

Involve families with their children in all important curriculum-related decisions

Provide timely information to students and families on credits required for graduation, credits earned, and steps for planning post-secondary ed

Redefinition:

"Homework" to mean not only work done alone, but also interactive activities shared with others at home or in the community, linking schoolwork to real life

"Help" at home to mean encouraging, listening, reacting, praising, guiding, monitoring, and discussing – not "teaching" school subjects

Students

- Gains in skills, abilities, and test scores linked to homework and classwork
- Homework completion
- Positive attitude toward schoolwork
- View of parent as more similar to teacher, and home as more similar to school
- Self-concept of ability as learner

Parents

- Knowledge of how to support, encourage, and help student at home
- Discussions of school, classwork, and homework
- Understanding of instructional program each year and of what child is learning in each subject
- Appreciation of teaching skills
- Awareness of child as a learner

Teachers

- Better design of homework assignments
- Respect of family time
- Recognition of equal helpfulness of diverse families
- Satisfaction with family involvement and support

LEARNING AT HOME: *EXPECTED RESULTS*

DECISION-MAKING

Include parents in school decisions, developing parent leaders and representatives



Active PTA/PTO or other parent organizations, advisory councils, or committees for parent leadership and participation

Independent advocacy groups to lobby and work for school reform and improvements

District level councils and committees for family and community involvement

Information on school or local elections for school representatives

Networks to link all families with parent representatives

**DECISION-
MAKING:
*SAMPLE
PRACTICES***

DECISION-MAKING: *CHALLENGES & REDEFINITIONS*

Challenges:

Include parent leaders from all racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, and other groups in the school

Offer training to enable leaders to serve as representatives of other families, with input from and return of information to all parents

Include students (along with parents) in decision-making groups

Redefinition:

"Decision-making" to mean a process of partnership, of shared views and actions toward shared goals, not a power struggle between conflicting ideas

"Parent leader" to mean a real representative, with opportunities and support to hear from and communicate with other families

Students

- Awareness of representation of families in school decisions
- Understanding that student rights are protected
- Specific benefits linked to policies enacted by parent organization and experienced by students

Parents

- Knowledge of how to support, encourage, and help student at home
- Discussions of school, classwork, and homework
- Understanding of instructional program each year and of what child is learning in each subject
- Appreciation of teaching skills
- Awareness of child as a learner

Teachers

- Awareness of parent perspectives as a factor in policy development and decisions
- View of equal status of family representatives on committees and in leadership roles

LEARNING AT HOME: *EXPECTED RESULTS*

COLLABORATING WITH THE COMMUNITY

Identify and integrate resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning and development



Information for students and families on community health, cultural, recreational, social support, and other programs and services

Information on community activities that link to learning skills and talents, including summer programs for students

Service integration through partnerships involving school; civic, counseling, cultural, health, recreation, and other organizations and agencies; and businesses

Service to the community by students, families, and schools

Participation of alumni in school programs for students and as mentors for planning for college and work

COLLABORATING WITH THE COMMUNITY: *SAMPLE PRACTICES*

COLLABORATING WITH THE COMMUNITY: *CHALLENGES & REDEFINITIONS*

Challenges:

Solve turf problems of responsibilities, funds, staff, and locations for collaborative activities

Inform families of community programs for students, such as mentoring, tutoring, and business partnerships

Assure equity of opportunities for students and families to participate in community programs or to obtain services

Match community contributions with school goals; integrate child and family services with education

Redefinition:

"Community" to mean not only the neighborhoods where students' homes and schools are located but also neighborhoods that influence student learning and development

"Community" rated not only by low or high SES qualities but also by strengths and talents to support students, families, and schools

"Community" means all who are interested in and affected by the quality of education, not just families with children in the schools

Students

- Increased skills and talents through enriched curricular and extracurricular experiences
- Awareness of careers and options for future education and work
- Specific benefits linked to programs, services, resources, and opportunities that connect students with community

Parents

- Knowledge and use of local resources by family and child to increase skills and talents or to obtain needed services
- Interactions with other families in community activities
- Awareness of school's role in the community and of community's contributions to the school

Teachers

- Awareness of community resources to enrich curriculum and instruction
- Openness to and skill in using mentors, business partners, community volunteers, and others to assist students and augment teaching practice
- Ability to make knowledgeable, helpful referrals of children and families to needed services

COLLABORATING WITH THE COMMUNITY: *EXPECTED RESULTS*