

Measure of School, Family, and Community Partnerships

Karen Clark Salinas, Joyce L. Epstein, & Mavis G. Sanders, Johns Hopkins University,
Deborah Davis & Inge Aldersbaes, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

This instrument helps assess whether your school is involving parents, community members, and students in meaningful ways. The measure is based on the framework of six types of involvement and focuses on how well activities are meeting challenges to involve more – or all – families in their children’s education.

At this time, your school may conduct all, some, or none of the activities or approaches listed. Not every activity is appropriate at every grade level. Not every activity should be conducted often – some may be implemented once or twice each year. In a goal-oriented partnership program, activities will be selected and outlined in detail in your One-Year Action Plan for Partnerships to help reach specific school improvement goals.

Your school may implement other activities for each type of involvement. These should be added on the blank lines and rated to account for the major partnership practices that your school conducts.

Directions: Use the scoring rubric below to rate your school on the six types of involvement. As you review each item, circle the response that comes closest to describing how the activity is implemented at your school.

Scoring Rubric:

- 1 – Never:** Strategy does not happen at our school.
- 2 – Rarely:** Conducted in one or two classes or with a few families.
Not emphasized in this school’s partnership program.
- 3 – Sometimes:** Conducted in a few classes or with some families.
Receives minimal emphasis in this school’s partnership program across the grades. Quality of Implementation needs to improve.
- 4 – Often:** Conducted in many, but not all, classes, or with many, but not all, families. Given substantial emphasis in this school’s partnership program across the grades. Quality of implementation is high; only minor changes are needed.
- 5 – Frequently:** Occurs in most or all classes and grade levels, with most or all families. An important part of this school’s partnership program. Quality of implementation is excellent.

The *Measure* is designed to be discussed and completed annually or every other year by an Action Team for Partnerships (ATP) to assess program progress. The results not only indicate the scope and quality of involvement activities, but also suggest new directions and needed improvements for the next One-Year Action Plan for Partnerships.

I. PARENTING: Help all families understand child and adolescent development and establish home environments to support children as students. Help schools understand families' backgrounds, cultures, and goals for students.

Our School:	Rating				
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Frequently
1. Conducts workshops or provides information for parents on child or adolescent development.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Provides information to all families who want or who need it, not just to the few who can attend workshops or meetings at the school building.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Produces information for families that is clear, usable, and linked to children's success in school.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Asks families for information about children's goals, strengths, and talents.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Sponsors home visiting programs or neighborhood meetings to help families understand schools and to help schools understand families.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Provides families with age-appropriate information on developing home conditions or environments that support learning.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Respects the different cultures represented in our student population.	1	2	3	4	5
Other Type 1-Parenting activities: _____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5

II. COMMUNICATING: Conduct effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communications about school programs and children’s progress.

Our School:	Rating				
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Frequently
1. Reviews the readability, clarity, form, and frequency of all memos, notices, and other print and non-print communications.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Develops communications with parents who do not speak or read English well, or need large type.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Provides written communication in the language of the parents and provides translators as needed.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Has clear two-way channels for communications from home to school and from school to home.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Conducts a formal conference with every parent at least once a year.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Conducts an annual survey for families to share information and concerns about student needs, reactions to school programs, and satisfaction with their involvement in school and at home.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Conducts an orientation for new parents.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Sends home folders of student work weekly or monthly for parent review and comment.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Provides clear information about the curriculum, state tests, school and student results, and report cards.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Contacts families of students having academic or behavior problems.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Teachers, counselors, and administrators use e-mail and the school website to communicate with parents, including information on Internet safety	1	2	3	4	5
12. Trains teachers, staff, and principals on the value and utility of family involvement and ways to build positive ties between school and home.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Builds policies that encourage all teachers to communicate frequently with parents about the curriculum, expectations for homework, and how parents can help.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Produces a regular school newsletter with up-to-date information about the school, special events, organizations, meetings, and parenting tips.	1	2	3	4	5
Other Type 2-Communicating activities: _____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5

III. VOLUNTEERING: Recruit and organize parents to support the school and students.

Our School:	Rating				
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Frequently
1. Conducts annual surveys to identify interests, talents, and availability of parent volunteers to match their skills and talents with school and classroom needs.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Provides a parent or family room for volunteers and family members to meet and work, and to access resources about parenting, tutoring, and related topics	1	2	3	4	5
3. Creates flexible volunteering opportunities and schedules, enabling employed parents to participate.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Schedules special events at different times of the day and evening so that all families can attend as audiences.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Reduces barriers to parent participation by providing transportation and child care, and by addressing the needs of English language learners.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Trains volunteers so they use their time productively.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Recognizes volunteers for their time and efforts.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Encourages families and the community to be involved with the school in various ways (e.g., assist in classrooms, monitor halls, lead talks or activities, serve as audiences)	1	2	3	4	5
Other Type 3-Volunteering activities: _____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5

IV. LEARNING AT HOME: Provide information to families on how to help students with homework, other curriculum-related activities, course decisions, and future plans.

Our School:	Rating				
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Frequently
1. Provides information to families on how to monitor and discuss schoolwork at home.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Provides information to families on required skills in major subjects.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Provides specific information to parents on how to assist students with skills that they need to improve.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Asks parents to focus on reading, listen to children read, or read aloud with their child.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Assists families in helping students set academic goals and select courses and programs.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Provides information and ideas for families to talk with students about college, careers, postsecondary plans.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Schedules regular interactive homework that requires students to demonstrate and discuss what they are learning with a family member.	1	2	3	4	5
Other Type 4-Learning at Home activities: _____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5

V. DECISION MAKING: Include parents in school decisions and develop parent leaders and representatives.

Our School:	Rating				
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Frequently
1. Has an active PTA, PTO, or other parent organization.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Includes parent representatives on the school's council, improvement team, or other committees.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Has parents represented on district-level advisory council and committees.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Involves parents in organized, ongoing, and timely ways in planning and improving school programs.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Involves parents in reviewing school and district curricula.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Recruits parent leaders for committees from all racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, and other groups in the school.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Develops formal social networks to link all families with their parent representatives.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Includes students (with parents) in decision-making groups.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Deals with conflict openly and respectfully.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Guides parent representatives to contact parents who are less involved for their ideas.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Develops the school's plan and program of family and community involvement with input from educators, parents, and others.	1	2	3	4	5
Other Type 5-Decision Making activities: _____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5

VI. COLLABORATING WITH THE COMMUNITY: Coordinate resources and services from the community for families, students, and the school, and provide services to the community.

Our School:	Rating				
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Frequently
1. Provides a resource directory for parents and students on community agencies, services, and programs.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Involves families in locating and using community resources.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Works with local businesses, industries, libraries, parks, museums, and other organizations on programs to enhance student skills and learning.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Provides "one-stop shop" at the school for family services through partnerships of school, counseling, health, recreation, job training and other agencies.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Offers afterschool programs for students with support from community businesses, agencies, and volunteers.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Solves turf problems of responsibilities, funds, staff, and locations for collaborative activities to occur.	1	2	3	4	5
Other Type 6-Collaborating With the Community activities: _____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5

REFLECTIONS

Review the ratings of activities for all six types of involvement. Discuss the following questions and consider ways to improve the school's program of family and community involvement in the next One-Year Action Plan for Partnerships.

A. What major factors contributed to the success of your school's family and community involvement efforts this year?

B. What major factors limited the success of your school's family and community involvement efforts this year?

C. What are your school's major goals for improving its program of school, family, and community partnerships in the next year or two?