Parental Involvement

Charlis E. Powell, PhD
Director of “Learning for Success”

St. Pius X High School
What is Parental Involvement?

• Parental involvement is defined as having an awareness of and involvement in schoolwork, understanding of the interaction between parenting skills and student success in school, and a commitment to consistent communication with educators about student progress.

• “Parents” includes all primary caregivers.
Research

Joyce Epstein, a leading researcher in the field of parental involvement, identified and studied multiple measures of parental involvement (Epstein, 1995; Epstein, Sanders, Simon, Salinas, Jansorn, & Van Voorhis, 2002).

- The research on parental involvement in the education of young adolescents addresses parents' activities in support of learning at home, in school, and in the community.

- As a result of their research, Epstein and her colleagues developed a framework of six types of involvement with associated activities, challenges, and expected results.
Six Types of Parental Involvement

Building upon the Six Types of Parental Involvement identified by Dr. Epstein, of the Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships at Johns Hopkins University, National PTA created standards of excellence:

• Parenting
  - Activities are designed to help families understand young adolescent development, acquire developmentally appropriate parenting skills, set home conditions to support learning at each grade level, and help schools obtain information about students.

• Collaborating with the Community
  - Activities acknowledge and bring together all community entities with a vested interest in the education of young adolescents.
Six Types of Parental Involvement

• Communicating
  - Activities focus on keeping parents informed through such things as web pages, notices, memos, report cards, conferences about student work and school functions.

• Volunteering
  - Activities incorporate strategies to improve volunteer recruiting, training, and scheduling.
Six Types of Parental Involvement

• Learning at Home
  - Activities allow coordination of schoolwork with work at home (e.g., goal setting, interactive homework).

• Decision Making
  - Activities are designed to solicit the voice of parents in decisions about school policies and practices.
Where Do Children Spend Their Time?

- School age children spend 70% of their waking hours, including weekends and holidays, outside of school.

- While time spent at school takes up much of a child’s day, they still have time for parent-child activities.
When Parents Should Get Involved

• The sooner a parent becomes actively involved in their child’s educational activities, the greater the benefits.
• The most effective form of parental involvement are those which engage parents in working directly with their children on learning activities at home.
IMPACT

• 86% of the general public believes that support from parents is the most important way to improve the schools.

(I agree!)
IMPACT

• The more parents participate in schooling, in a sustained way, at every level — in advocacy, decision-making, fundraisers, boosters, volunteers, etc. — the better for student achievement
Decades of research show that when parents are involved students have:

- Higher grades
- Higher test scores
- Better self-esteem
- Higher graduation rates
- Increased motivation
- Lower rates of suspension
- Decreased use of drugs and alcohol
- Fewer instances of violent behavior
Why is Parental Involvement Important?

• In study after study, researchers discover how important it is for parents to be actively involved in their child’s education.
  - When parents are involved in their children’s education at home, they do better in school.
  - When parents are involved in school children go farther in school.
Why is Parental Involvement Important?

• The family makes critical contributions to student achievement from preschool through high school.

• A home environment that encourages learning is more important to student achievement than income, education level or cultural background.
Why is Parental Involvement Important?

- When children and parents talk regularly about school, children perform better academically.
- The earlier the parent involvement begins in a child’s educational process, the more powerful the effects.
- **But it is never too late to get involved!**
Why is Parental Involvement Important?

• Positive results of parental involvement include:
  - Improved student achievement
  - Reduced absenteeism
  - Improved behavior
  - Restored confidence among parents in their children’s schooling
How Can Parents Get Involved?

• Read with your child – like a book-club
  - Read the same books at the same time
  - Discuss the books with your child

• Check homework every night

• Discuss your child’s progress with teachers

• Participate in school events, activities, and parent groups

• Work with your child to set challenging academic personal standards
How Can Parents Get Involved?

• Asking about specific subjects, projects, activities, etc. is more effective than the general question, "How was school today?"
• Volunteer at school.
• Attend school events.
• Look over the homework & Time Tracker daily.
• Check the school website regularly.
• Provide space for homework with supplies handy.
Send a Clear Message to Your Child

• Ask your child about school (something specific) everyday.
  - That sends your child the clear message that their schoolwork is important to you.
  - That sends your child the clear message that you expect them to do well in school.
Parent & Family Involvement

• Some parents and families are able to be involved in their child’s education in many ways.
• Others may only have time for one or two activities.
• Whatever your level of involvement, do it consistently and stick with it because you will make an important difference in your child’s life.
Expectations and Achievement

- Parents of high-achieving students set high standards for their children’s educational activities.

- Parents’ beliefs about what is important, necessary and permissible directly impact their children’s academic success.
Stay Involved

- Be seen at school
- Know your child’s teachers
- Email your child’s teachers
- Ask the teacher if you can do something to help out.
  - Encourage your child to email their teachers about assignments, grades, etc.
Stay Involved

• Don’t forget:
  - You are still the parent - (they aren’t grown yet!)
    • You are the boss
    • You set the rules
    • You are to be respected by your child

• Remember:
  - Speak positively about your child’s school and teachers!