

How Family /Parent friendly is your P&F

Cheat sheet: Developing Relationships

Research: Parents tell us that feeling welcome and being treated with respect is the number one key to their connection with their child's school .Through trustful relationships parents are far more likely to become engaged and stay engaged. Henderson et al 2007

Steps to develop trusting relationships

- Provide a welcoming process that develops a sense of belonging .e.g. beginning of year welcome, welcome new families throughout the year, encourage welcoming practises every day in the playground, friendly signs around the school, no parent cliques in the playground
- Welcome and include all parents to activities, events, make sure access to information is available to all (who is our community)? Reach out to all
- Honour all levels of involvement and participation (not just P&F prescribed participation)e.g. Just One Thing Program
- Connect with parents through a focus on their children's learning and wellbeing. Provide opportunities for parents to learn how to be engaged in their child's learning. Support initiatives that promote wellbeing e.g. Kids matter
- Getting to know you: provide opportunities for families to provide interesting information about themselves, ask families about themselves and their children, find out what their interests are and what they would like to learn more about
- Smaller is better: class level activities, book clubs, small group conversations
- A parent centre: Is there an area of the school for family/parent activities and information
- Make sure a diverse group of families are involved in committees and leadership positions. The P&F or parent body should reflect the school's diversity.
- Hold activities and events at convenient and varying times for families (know your community)
- Organise whole family events. Ask parents to be greeters welcoming families to events
- Survey families to get their ideas and opinions about activities and programs. Families are involved in planning how they would like to be engaged at the school. Use surveys and focus groups to build engagement
- Offer workshops in areas of leadership, school improvement and other topics suggested by parents
- Recognise, learn about and affirm all cultures in your school. Activities and events honour all cultures
- Run interesting effective meetings, using group processes, identifying common goals, resolving conflict and developing an action plan
- Think about how will you support the school and work with families at improving student achievement and wellbeing (align activities to your schools SIP goals) Find out how families and school staff can work together to improve achievement. What are parents interested in doing and learning about, what supports do they need
- Provide parents with accessible information about your goals, processes and welcome them to become involved

Questions for setting goals

- ✓ **What is the P&Fs vision of working closely with parents?**

- ✓ **How will the P&F be parent friendly?**

- ✓ **How will the P&F build personal relationships with parents?**

- ✓ **How will the P&F honour families/parents contributions and build on their strengths?**

- ✓ **How will the P&F work with parents to improve student achievement and wellbeing?**

- ✓ **How will the P&F help and support families to be engaged in learning and wellbeing?**

**Diocesan
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