



**Mathematics, Science, and
Technology Education
Partnership**

IRG Section V

Parent Leadership Institute

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Mathematics, Science and
Technology Partnership

Overview of the Parent Leadership Institute

The Parent Leadership Institute was established to increase the level of parental involvement in the ten middle schools in the Mathematics, Science and Technology Partnership. It featured six training sessions that were designed to address the role of parents as partners and advocates in their children's education. The curriculum is based on the six national standards for parent involvement developed by the National PTA and linked to the work of Joyce L. Epstein of Johns Hopkins University.

It is an undeniable fact that parent involvement is a clear indicator of student success. Research shows that when parents are actively and meaningfully engaged in the education of their children, higher attendance and achievement rates are attained. Students also display more positive attitudes towards school, more self confidence, and fewer behavior problems. Without a doubt, students do better regardless of income level, race or ethnicity, or parents' education level. Studies show the impact of involved parents on middle and high school students: smoother transitions, better work, higher grades, increased college admissions, and more feasible plans for the future. Parents that are disconnected from their children's schools are more likely to have students that experience failure, lose interest in school, and, eventually, drop out. With these findings from over thirty years of research, it seems most reasonable to make parent involvement a priority in any serious and organized effort that is focused on improving student outcomes at any level of schooling. Investments by school staff in recognizing, encouraging, and valuing the contributions of parents can generate significant benefits for all school based constituents.

In view of the compelling evidence for parent involvement, the Parent Leadership Institute sought to prepare a core group of parent representatives from the ten middle schools in the partnership for positions of leadership in their individual schools. The purpose of the leadership role was to increase and enhance the level of parental involvement in the ten middle schools. A review of the literature indicates that parents are, in many ways, more effective in reaching other parents than school staff. Their ability to relate to other parents with common or similar needs can be a viable source for strengthening the home-school connection. Parent leaders can provide a support and outreach mechanism for parents who are disengaged or feel alienated from their children's school. In order for parent leaders to serve as change agents and advocates for their own and for all children's education, they must develop the decision-making and problem-solving skills that facilitate the maintenance of a school environment that promotes trust, cooperation, and respect among all major stakeholders. Towards this end, the goals of the institute were to:

- develop well-informed parent leaders who are aware of policies, practices, legislation, and school data that affect their children's education;
- sensitize parent leaders to the diversity that exists in schools with parents from different backgrounds;
- organize parent leaders' efforts at parent outreach with the use of nationally recognized strategies and approaches; and
- mobilize parent leaders to collaborate with community-based organizations and institutions.

In preparation for the opening of the Parent Leadership Institute, the ten MSTP middle schools were visited in November and December, 2004. In consultations with principals and guidance staff, it was determined that parents of at-risk students and non English speaking parents were not engaged in school events and activities. Lack of parental involvement was seen as a barrier to learning and student achievement. All schools were receptive to the leadership institute model and recommended parents for inclusion in the training program. Principals were interested in the establishment of parent resource centers in their schools, collaborations with faith – based organizations in their communities, and staff training on communicating effectively with parents.

As a result of the school visitations, 132 parents were contacted for enrollment in the Institute. Sixty - six parents registered and six training sessions were scheduled. The leaders of the Institute were Renee Young Ph.D., MSTP Parent Outreach Coordinator and Frederick Hill, Ph.D., Parent Trainer.

SCHEDULE AND CONTENT OF TRAINING MEETINGS

Saturday, January 22, 2005 Hofstra University 9am – 12pm

There were 35 parents in attendance. An impending snow storm affected the turnout. At all meetings CSTEP students provide child care and refreshments are served. Parents were reimbursed for travel expenses.

The objectives of the first meeting were:

By the conclusion of this workshop, participants will be able to

1. Define parent involvement;
2. Identify at least three ways that parents should be involved in their schools;
3. Describe at least three ways that parent involvement has a positive effect on student achievement, and
4. Identify at least three guiding principles of parent involvement.

Parents received a copy of “How to Double Your Child’s Grades from Kindergarten to College” and a homework assignment: completion of an official documents survey by school staff.

Saturday, February 26, 2005 Hofstra University 8:30am - 12pm

There were 45 parents and 20 children attending. Parent leaders must be informed so that they can assist other parents. As a result, a portion of each meeting was devoted to educating parents about an issue that affects their children. Test scores are an enormous issue, so a math teacher/assistant principal was invited to review the grade 8 state math test with both parents and children. While Dr. Hill worked with the parents during the second half of the morning, the teacher worked with the 7th and 8th graders on part 1 of the test in another location. In addition to the presentation of test strategies, the objectives of the second meeting were:

By the conclusion of this workshop, participants will be able to-

1. Describe at least three existing parent involvement programs in their respective middle schools;
2. Assess the potential impact existing parent involvement programs might have on student achievement; and
3. Develop a process for communicating to “back home” parents and school officials the potential usefulness of existing parent involvement programs.

The parents worked in their school groups on a case study that focused on sharing the results of the official documents survey. The parents received a homework assignment: completion of a decision – making/ community partnership questionnaire. As a whole, the parents bonded, shared contact information, and began to function as a team.

Saturday, March 19, 2005 Hofstra University 8:30am – 12pm

Forty-three parents attended. The guest speaker’s address focused on independent school placement, college bound programs, and scholarships and grants.

The objectives for the third meeting were:

By the conclusion of this workshop, participants will be able to –

1. Describe at least three laws, regulations or school policies that mandate parent involvement in decision – making in public schools;

2. Describe how parent involvement in decision – making might impact school achievement;
3. Assess the potential impact on student achievement of existing vehicles for parent involvement in decision – making; and
4. Outline a process for aligning existing vehicles for parent involvement in decision – making with the requirements of law, regulation, and school policy.

The homework assignment was: obtain a copy of your public school district’s plan for participation in school – based planning and shared decision - making and complete the questionnaire on parent involvement in school governance #100.11 regulation.

Saturday, April 2, 2005 Hofstra University 8:30am – 12pm

A special training session was held for parents and students on part 2 of the grade 8 state math test. Parents and students worked together under the leadership of the math teacher who conducted the first session on February 26th. Fifty –six parents and twenty- five students attended. The parents were very engaged in this session. Many were observing their children perform in an academic setting for the first time. They were intrigued by their children’s responses and expressed an interest in having additional sessions.

Saturday, April 30, 2005 MSTP Show- Me Conference Marriott Hotel 8:30am – 12:30pm
Forty parents attended. In addition to the leadership workshop, many attended the afternoon workshops that focused on math instruction and community services.

The objectives for the fourth meeting were:

By the conclusion of this workshop, the participants will be able to –

1. Describe how parent involvement in decision- making might impact student achievement;
2. Identify an educational issue that parents agree should be the subject of cooperative planning and shared decision- making at the building level;
3. Adopt an approach to managing conflict that is compatible with the district’s compliance with Regulation #100.11; and
4. Identify at least two ways that participants can improve their “back home” teamwork.
Parents worked in groups to engage in problem solving activities. Conflict management styles were presented. Parents worked in groups on a case study and identified the management styles of members in their group. The homework assignment was the completion of the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Management Questionnaire.

Saturday, May 21, 2005 Stony Brook University 8:30am – 12pm

Thirty – six parents attended. The objectives of the fifth meeting were:

By the conclusion of this workshop, participants will be able to –

1. Describe how parent involvement in decision – making could impact student achievement;
2. Adopt an approach to managing conflict that is compatible with the district’s compliance with Regulation #100.11;
3. Design a Parent Involvement- School Compact for Learning; and
4. Identify at least two ways that participants can improve their “back- home” teamwork.
The parents scored their conflict style questionnaire to determine their conflict management style. They also worked on their Compact for Learning designs which they completed as homework assignments.

Saturday, June 4, 2005 Stony Brook University 8:30am – 12pm

The objectives of the sixth meeting were:

By the conclusion of this workshop, participants will be able to –

1. Identify the eight step approach to developing a parent involvement program;
2. Identify the six national standards for parent involvement; and
3. Describe at least ten strategies from a set of fifty strategies that will improve parent involvement.

Saturday, June 18, 2005 Stony Brook University 8:30am – 12pm

This was the final meeting of the 2004-2005 series of training workshops. A discussion of plans for the coming school year; an experiential exercise in program evaluation; identification of the correlates of effective schools; and a graduation ceremony occurred.

The parents were eager to spearhead parent involvement programs in their schools. Towards that end, the implementation stage, Phase 2 of the MSTP Parent Leadership Institute, was planned for the 2005-2006 school year. The trained parent leaders will serve as turnkey trainers to involve new parents in the process. They will also work with designated school staff to implement a plan for increased parent involvement. The trained parent leaders will target the group of hard - to - reach parents in each school. Evaluative tools will be used to determine the effectiveness of the institute. Growth in parental involvement will be documented by attendance records completed at school conferences and other events. Parent surveys and questionnaires will be used to identify parental interests and attitudes. The change in the target population's (hard - to - reach parents) level of involvement will be the most important indicator of success of the institute.

YEAR 2005-2006 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

In its second year of operation, the Institute began training a second wave of parent leaders in October, 2005. Recruited from nine of the ten districts, the new parent leaders were expected to attend five of the six training sessions. Child care, refreshments, and mileage reimbursement for travel were provided. The following outlines the learning objectives of the workshops.

Saturday, October 29, 2005, 8:30am – 12:00pm Hofstra University

There were 52 parents in attendance at our first meeting. The objectives were: By the conclusion of this workshop, participants will be able to-

1. State a definition of parental involvement,
2. Identify at least three (3) types of parental involvement programs that have a positive effect on student achievement,
3. Identify at least three (3) ways that parents can be involved in their schools, and
4. Identify at least three (3) guiding principles of effective Learning-At-Home parental involvement programs.

The parents received a homework assignment that included a survey of parental access to school documents.

Saturday, December 3, 2005, 8:30am – 12:00pm Stony Brook University

There were 81 parents in attendance. The objectives were: By the conclusion of this workshop, participants will be able to-

1. Describe at least three (3) Parental Involvement Programs that are associated with students' academic success,
2. Interpret the results of a School-to-Home Communications Official Document survey,
3. Identify at least two (2) ways that Title I regulations encourage school-to-home communications, and
4. Develop a process for strengthening existing school-to-home communications parental involvement programs "back home."

Saturday, January 7, 2006, 8:30am - 12:00pm Hofstra University

There were 113 parents in attendance. The objectives were: By the conclusion of this workshop, the participants will be able to-

1. Identify at least three (3) ways to describe face-to-face communications with, for example, another parent, a teacher, a school administrator/supervisor or a child/student,
2. Identify at least two (2) ways to communicate to another person, "You are OK or Not OK,"
3. Analyze at least one (1) typical face-to-face communication situation and recommend at least one (1) way interaction that can be improved, and
4. Begin to revise a personal life-plan or "script" to improve face-to-face communication "back home."

Saturday, February 18, 2006, 8:30am - 12:00pm Stony Brook University

There were 104 parents in attendance. The objectives were: By the conclusion of this workshop, the participants will be able to-

1. Analyze at least one (1) Cross-Ego-State transaction and recommended way it can be made complementary,
2. Identify at least one (1) law or regulation that mandates parent involvement in shared decision-making in public schools, and
3. Identify at least one (1) way Transactional Analysis (TA) can enhance parent involvement in shared decision-making in compliance with requirements of a law and/or a regulation.

Saturday, March 4, 2006, 8:30am – 12:00pm Hofstra University

There were 103 parents in attendance. The objectives of the workshop were: By the conclusion of this workshop, the participants will be able to-

1. Analyze the February 18th profile of face-to-face communication transaction with local officials,
2. Identify at least one (1) way face-to-face communication transaction with local officials can be made complementary,
3. Identify two (2) successes and two (2) obstacles to teamwork among potential site-based shared decision-makers, and
4. Identify one (1) personal strength that could contribute to the effectiveness of PA/PTA committees and/or School Councils/Leadership Teams “back home.”

The parents engaged in role-playing and acted out the positions of various members of school boards and leadership teams.

In addition, a grade 8 teacher conducted a science class for grade 8 students in preparation for the New York State Grade 8 Science Test.

Saturday, April 1, 2006, 8:30am - 12:00pm Stony Brook University

There were 95 parents in attendance. The Assistant Superintendent of Longwood School District presented pertinent information concerning the state math standards and closing the achievement gap in the districts (Part1).

The objective was: By the conclusion of this workshop, the participants will be able to-
Complete a team membership self-perception inventory (Part 2).

Saturday, May 6, 2006, 8:30am - 12:00pm Hofstra University

There were 57 parents in attendance at this final meeting which was a make-up session.

The objectives were: By the conclusion of the workshop, the participants will be able to-

1. Identify at least five (5) hallmarks of effective parental involvement programs,
2. Identify at least five (5) barriers to effective parental involvement programs,
3. Identify the eight (8) step approach to increasing parental involvement,
4. Identify the six (6) national standards for parental involvement, and
5. Categorize at least ten (10) parent involvement strategies according to the six national standards.

In addition, a science lesson was conducted by staff of the Brookhaven National Laboratory. The children of the parents attending the workshop participated in excellent, hands-on lessons on magnets and the refraction of light.

On Saturday, June 10, 2006 at Hofstra University, 70 parents graduated. They joined the parent leadership groups in each of the nine middle schools that participated in the program.

During the 2005 -2006 Year, while the new parents were being trained, the 43 graduates of 2005 received additional training. Thirty-seven remained active and participated in the MSTP retreat held on September 24, 2005 at Brookhaven National Laboratory. The parent leaders led lunchtime, team building activities with the conference participants. "Finding Common Ground" was the theme of the team building activity.

As the year progressed, the focus was on increasing the involvement of the hard-to-reach parents by having the parent leaders and school personnel implement the eight step approach to parent involvement. The steps were introduced to guidance personnel and parents at evaluation meetings in June, 2005. At each training meeting of the graduates from October, 2005 through May, 2006, the eight steps were highlighted.

1. Organize an action team. The parent leaders and guidance staff were encouraged to set up subcommittees of existing teams to implement the eight step approach. In many instances, it became more feasible to add parents to the CSST in each school rather than create new teams or subcommittees. The issue was resolved by having a parent leadership representative join the CSST.
2. Examine current practice. Each team was asked to distribute parent surveys developed by the National PTA or written by the team. They could be mailed or distributed at school events, etc. Translations into Spanish were also expected. A timetable for their distribution and collection should coincide with monthly or special school wide events. To maximize the return of the surveys, a reward system was suggested. Students would receive rewards for returning surveys completed by their parents. The purpose of the surveys was to determine the attitudes, interests and concerns of parents and staff, so that parent involvement plans could be devised with input from all constituencies. Seven of the ten schools distributed and collected surveys. The results showed that parents were most likely to attend open houses and parent teacher conferences. Those venues received the highest ratings from parents. Parents were most interested in attending sessions on career choices, high school and college options. They were also most likely to attend workshops on bullying and gang prevention. They were interested in testing programs and homework help. Parents reported that they would find a homework hotline, resource center in the school, a website, and a parent support group most helpful. They preferred evening meetings rather than Saturday or morning meetings. Parents indicated that they receive most of their information about school from their children. Recommendations for next year included distributing the surveys at the first open house, condensing the survey to one page, keeping them available at the front or security desk, and continuing the reward system for students.

3. Develop a written policy. The teams were encouraged to develop policies based on their district's policies. Many teams were unable to obtain the district policy. To facilitate the process of writing a policy, a policy template was given to each guidance counselor or social worker and parent leader.
4. Develop a plan. The guidance personnel received sample plans with the expectation that they and the parent leaders would use the results of the surveys to inform the parent involvement plans. The six national standards for parent involvement should be reflected in the plans. Since no school had an existing plan and only three districts shared the district plans with their schools, developing plans was a work in progress in all ten middle schools.
5. Implement the plan. While each school did not have a plan to work from, many had ongoing activities that were successful in reaching some of the hard-to-reach parents. Longwood had a very effective high school and college awareness night that drew 49 of their hard-to-reach parents. They used the P.A.C.T. program that focuses on careers and postsecondary education. Wyandanch reported that larger numbers of parents were attending parent friendly events, such as, "We Love Our Parents" night. William Paca indicated that more parents than usual were coming out for events, such as, "Cooking with Science" night. Hempstead's middle school had a large turnout for a parent meeting that was conducted entirely in Spanish. A local newspaper covered the event and the parents gave it glowing reviews. Similarly, other schools reported an increase in parent participation at affairs that had a fun theme or targeted specific populations of parents.
The bond between home and school generally grows stronger when schools can articulate plans that have an underlying rationale, a cohesive structure, and a reflection of parental interests, needs, and concerns.
6. Secure support. Each school was encouraged to set up an advisory board of business and community leaders, clergy, school staff, and parents. The boards serve as consultative and supportive entities that focus on providing a problem-solving mechanism to confront the issues facing students and families.
7. Provide training. Staff and parents must receive training and support on how to work together. Team-building opportunities must be an integral part of the plan. Parents and staff must come together in stress-free venues, so the barriers between the two groups can be removed. Schools should plan activities in which parents and staff can develop relationships. Teams are encouraged, for example, to plan shopping trips to malls and outings to family-oriented destinations.
8. Evaluate and revise. There must be ongoing monitoring of the process to find out what works and what doesn't work. Ineffective strategies should be discarded. The parent involvement plan must be a "living" document that is constantly being revisited and revised. Each school should conduct its own internal evaluation of the process each year. The biggest challenge during the 2005-2006 year was balancing the workload of guidance staff with the amount of time that is needed to implement a successful parent involvement program. A recommendation to address this concern is the assignment of parent coordinators to the ten middle schools.

YEAR 2006-2007 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

In its third year of operation, the Institute focused on developing effective action teams in each of the ten middle schools for the purpose of achieving the five goals that informed the Implementation Plan for 2006-2007. The trained parent leaders who graduated from the Institute in 2005 and 2006 were scheduled to work with school personnel in reaching the targeted hard-to-reach parent population.

Goal 1: To develop well-informed parent leaders who are aware of policies, practices, legislation, and school data that affect their children's education

- 1.1 To conduct a series of monthly parent leader meetings to enhance parent leaders' knowledge of educational practices, regulations, requirements, and opportunities
- 1.2 To organize an action team in each middle school that includes teachers, pupil support personnel, and parents
- 1.3 To review or develop a parent involvement policy and plan

Goal 2: To enhance the ability of informed parent leaders to collaborate with school and district personnel to achieve mutually desirable goals

- 2.1 To communicate with superintendents of schools to inform them about the Parent Leadership Program and gain their support
- 2.2 To develop parent leaders' skills in negotiating and diplomacy
- 2.3 To sensitize parent leaders to the diversity that exists in schools with parents from different backgrounds

Goal 3: To organize parent leaders' efforts at parent outreach with the use of nationally recognized strategies and approaches

- 3.1 To involve hard-to-reach parents in their children's education in order to improve their performance and attitude toward learning
- 3.2 To distribute a parent survey to the entire parent body at each of the Project's schools
- 3.3 To collect and analyze results and present findings to staff

Goal 4: To mobilize parent leaders to collaborate with community-based organizations and institutions

- 4.1 To establish links to Community Based Organizations
- 4.2 To establish links with Houses of Worships in the community

Goal 5: To enhance mathematical understanding of middle school students in participating schools

- 5.1: To implement strategies for parents to support student learning
- 5.2: To improve student performance in math-intensive areas of science and technology courses

BENCHMARKS (GOAL 1): Monthly Parent Leadership Institute meetings (action team meetings) were convened. An action team including teachers, pupil support personnel and parents was established in each middle school. The parent involvement policy for each school was available for review.

FINDINGS, 2006-2007:

Action teams were established in 10 middle schools. In some schools, depending upon the level of parent activity, teams held meetings more than once a month, while other teams met every other month. In two schools, the action teams did not function on a regular basis. A total of 65 action team meetings were held.

At the team meetings, parents were given information about current educational policies and regulations (NCLB); in addition, they were apprised of New York State Regents and local meetings.

IMPLICATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS for 2007-2008:

Most of the parents who serve on the action teams are employed. As a result, they were not available to meet during the day which was the preferred meeting time of staff comprising the teams. Meeting on Saturday, a convenient day for working parents, was problematic for some staff. Therefore, in some districts, parents were not fully integrated into the teams. A solution may be reached if all members are willing to meet at 7:30 or 8:00 a.m. if schedules permit this arrangement.

In addition to training in educational policies, etc, action team members need more team building experiences. While some teams functioned as a cohesive unit, other groups required constant support and structure. Emphasis must also be placed on learning how to develop and maintain a budget.

To address the issue of parental involvement in formulating policies and plans, a model policy and plan were presented to the parent leaders. However, the overriding issue is the implementation of the policy. Since the policy and plan are mandated by law, they are on file. However, they are not "living" documents; the challenge for action teams is to advocate for the implementation of the policy and plan of the school/district.

BENCHMARKS (GOAL 2): Letter sent to superintendent of schools outlining the parent program and its goals. Meetings held with principals of each of the project schools. Review or develop a parent involvement policy and plan that includes a focus on diversity.

FINDINGS: MSTP Parent Outreach Coordinator presented the program to superintendents or their designees at the March, 2006 MSTP superintendents' meeting. For the purposes of collaboration and support, the Coordinator and parent leaders met with: the four middle school principals and the high school principal in Brentwood; the middle school principal, the superintendent, and assistant superintendent in Roosevelt; the middle school principal and assistant superintendent in Amityville; the middle school principals in Hempstead and in Wyandanch; the two middle school principals in Uniondale. The parent leaders developed positive relationships with school supervisors. One example of the results of an effective collaboration was the May 7 celebration that the Wyandanch Middle School held for an action team member and parent leader who was honored for her work by the principal, the superintendent, and the president of the school board.

The multicultural aspect of GOAL 2 was evident in the composition of the action teams; the teams reflected the diversity that exists in the schools. Team members were African American, Caucasian, and Latino. The Spanish-speaking members of the teams facilitated the outreach to hard-to-reach parents who did not speak English. For example, the Hispanic parent on the Roosevelt action team called all the Spanish-speaking parents before an event, encouraging them to attend the workshops. As a result of this personal contact, the Hispanic parent population attended in large numbers. In addition, the integrated teams fostered communication among the groups; parents were very interested in discovering different cultural nuances that impact parent involvement.

IMPLICATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS for 2007-2008:

Parent leaders need access to membership on district committees that are part of the governance structure. They need to have opportunities to influence district policies that relate to family engagement and empowerment.

Parent leaders need to advocate for sensitivity and diversity training for district, school staff, and parents. While many of the districts serve large minority populations, there is no evidence of the inclusion of culturally relevant pedagogy in the schools.

BENCHMARK (GOAL 3): A list of hard-to-reach parents has been compiled at each of the Project schools. Parents on the list have been contacted. A minimum of three activities has been conducted to engage the hard-to-reach parents. Fifty percent of the hard-to-reach parents attended at least one of the activities. Survey results have been analyzed for each school. Survey findings were presented to the staff in each school.

FINDINGS:

The Parent Leadership Institute used the Roosevelt Middle School as its pilot study, since historically it lacked any consistent level of parent involvement, and the entire parent population was characterized as hard-to-reach (at any given event, only 1 to 6 parents attended). The action team planned 4 curriculum workshops for the year. Strategies, such as, mailings, community wide publicity, incentives and rewards for students and parents, and telephone calls were used to stimulate parent interest in the events. There were 193 parents in attendance at the four workshops. This level of parent participation was unprecedented in Roosevelt at the middle school level.

In most of the districts, the hard-to-reach parents were identified as parents of students who consistently score in levels 1 and 2 on tests in reading/math. For example, parents in that category were called by action team members in preparation for the Math Workshop held in Brentwood. Of the 240 parents targeted for that event, 30% attended. Of that number, only 3 indicated that they had attended previous curriculum workshops scheduled for parents. While the target of 50% was not attained, 30% was a beginning that the action team can build upon. The Spanish-speaking parents were very pleased with the event, especially with their workshops that were conducted entirely in Spanish.

The MSTP parent survey was condensed (one page), so that it would be less time consuming to complete. The new form was piloted in Brentwood and Amityville. The results were used to plan events. After some additional tweaking, the action teams received the new form (English and Spanish).

Each school had more than three activities for parents. In addition to the activities sponsored by the action teams, the members supported the school's initiatives by reaching out to parents, encouraging them to attend. Most of the schools reported an increase in the number of parents attending school functions.

IMPLICATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS for 2007-2008:

The action teams will continue to use the strategies that were most effective in involving their hard-to-reach parents. The teams will narrow the focus of the targeted population (for example, target parents of Level 1 students only), so they can work more intensively with a specific group of parents. Opportunities for sharing successful approaches across the districts will be increased. Action teams will explore ways of motivating school staff to acknowledge the results of parent surveys, and consider using the information reported by the surveys to influence their behavior.

BENCHMARK (GOAL 4): Community-based and faith-based organizations in the school communities have been identified.

FINDINGS: The parent leaders interfaced with over 20 community-based organizations in Uniondale and 25 in Brentwood to deliver services to parents. The agencies participating in the Family Resource Fairs in Uniondale and the Family Awareness Day in Brentwood were a direct result of the parents' efforts. They personally contacted agencies and faith-based organizations to provide tutorial and after school learning support programs to students in their schools. They offered their own services to hard-to-reach parents in an attempt to bridge the gap between the disenfranchised and school staff. They established ongoing relationships with many community groups who continue to participate in school-based affairs. In Riverhead, a local church and the local branch of the Urban League worked with the action team to increase parent involvement. In Amityville, a consortium of churches pledged support to increase family involvement. In Roosevelt, a local church extended a welcome to all students seeking after school homework assistance.

Parent leaders contacted food establishments, seeking donations for events. They advertised the events by obtaining permission from local stores, libraries, post offices, etc. to post flyers and signs in windows and on walls. They honed their outreach and people skills to advance their mission to engage families in school functions.

IMPLICATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS for 2007-2008:

The action teams will continue their linkages with community based organizations for the purpose of providing services to hard-to-reach parents and their children. An advisory board of representatives from civic, educational, and faith-based institutions will be created to extend and support the work of the action teams.

BENCHMARK (GOAL 5): Training is provided in parent attitude, the home environment, study skills, homework, and learning experiences, note-taking skills, helping children prepare for tests, memory and thinking skills, and teaching reading skills. Parents advocate developing quiet spaces for students to study in their homes.

FINDINGS: The action teams sponsored more than 20 parent workshops during 2006-2007. In addition to training in curriculum, parents received strategies to support their children's learning at home. Parent friendly materials were distributed to participants after each meeting with information on how to best use the books.

IMPLICATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS for 2007-2008:

The action teams will continue to focus on family education, so that parents can effectively support their children's learning and, ultimately, increase their achievement levels. Towards that end, emphasis will be placed on math, science and technology through the scheduling of workshops for parents and students, the distribution of materials (books, CD's, etc.), and family excursions to math and science museums/institutions.

CONCLUSIONS:

For project year, 2007-2008, the Parent Leadership Institute, through the work of its action teams, will again focus on the five goals and benchmarks outlined above. Parent leaders will continue to receive training in best practices for parental involvement programs. Since 2006-2007 was the first year of implementation, the action teams now have a body of work to which they can refer; they know what worked and what didn't work in their individual schools. As a result, they can proceed with confidence and a broadened knowledge base in their efforts to empower families. However, while the relationship between parental involvement and student achievement is undisputed, the biggest challenge still remains: convincing school and district personnel to make parental involvement a genuine priority.

YEAR 2007-2008 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

In year five, to achieve the five goals stated above, the implementation plan focused on a specific group of low performing students. Based on the results of the 2007 Grade 6 New York State Math Tests, students in performance levels 1 and 2 were identified. They and their parents were encouraged to participate in a series of six workshops in preparation for the 2008 Grade 7 New York State Math Test. The workshop model of Family Math involved parents and students working together to solve math problems and, thereby, increase parental involvement and student achievement. In addition, parents, students and teachers were asked to complete surveys at the onset and at the end of the workshops. It was anticipated that through the use of pre and post surveys, the impact of concentrated math instruction on parent, teacher, and student attitudes towards math and parent involvement would be determined.

The following outlines the steps that were taken to establish Family Workshops in the ten MSTP middle schools:

1. Parent Outreach Coordinator and principal, guidance counselor/ social worker meet on the implementation plan at each of the ten middle schools. October and November, 2007
2. Identify ten to twenty parents and students in grade 7, (performance levels 1 and 2) willing to commit to attending six math workshops at each school. November, 2007
3. Identify one math teacher in each school willing to conduct the six workshops; identify translators for Spanish speaking participants (Teachers will be compensated). November, 2007
4. Conduct training session with selected teachers on the use of the 2007 New York State Grade 7 Math Test. December, 2007
5. Determine dates and times (weekends or evenings), schedule workshops, prepare materials, and notify parents. Schedule workshops to accommodate the needs of the individual schools and parents. December, 2007
6. Conduct six workshops with the focus on instructional strategies for the New York State Math Tests and parent involvement. Time will be allotted at each workshop for parent involvement topics. January - March, 2008
7. Administer pre-survey at first meeting (January), post-survey at the last session (March) to parents, students, and teachers.
8. Evaluate results of the surveys. Notify all constituents of the findings. May, 2008

A total of 29 parents and 30 students participated in the Family Workshops that were held in four schools. Math teachers in most of the other project schools were unavailable to teach the workshops in the evening or on Saturday. The feedback from the surveys indicated that the workshops were viewed most favorably by parents, students, and teachers. All participants wanted the workshops to continue next year.

Parent comments on the post survey included:

“I remembered what I forgot and learned what I didn’t know.”

“I really learned a lot. I wish this was around when I was a child.”

“Now that I understand what he is doing, I will spend more time helping my child with math.”

“We know what problems face our children.”

"It's a great idea, all parents should be involved."

"Now that I understand the problems, I can spend more time helping her and less time looking things up on the computer."

"I will be able to ask more pointed questions."

"I think much better about math. Please do it every year. I want to learn. Let me know about the next one."

"This is a great program. My daughter's confidence increased as she became more comfortable with the concepts reviewed."

"Get more parents involved."

"Have more classes, start a little earlier and be scheduled on the weekend more."

"I now know the subject and could help."

"We can always appreciate updates."

"It is very interesting to share and to see that other parents are interested in supporting their children in math."

"I needed to learn math to help my child."

Student comments on the post survey included:

"I understand negative scientific notation."

"I have understood everything I didn't."

"Before I was having trouble, now lots work has been cleared up."

"I understand division more."

"Now I can do better on hard problems."

"Questions were explained better by my teacher in this workshop."

"I still don't like math that much but I need it in my life."

"I am starting to actually enjoy it then before."

"I like math more than I use to."

"Since the first day of school I disliked math, but now I enjoy."

"I hated math but now math is starting to be a little fun."

"My feelings about math have changed a little but not a lot."

"The workshops help me a lot on what I'm stuck on."

"You should do it to all the grades."

"You should continue the workshops because they work."

"I thought I would never learn math, but I think I can."

"I actually kind of like math now."

Teacher comments on the post survey included:

"Parents learned things differently in school and this workshop gave them an idea of what their children are learning now."

"Many parents really do not understand math, therefore, they can not help their children."

"I feel even more strongly that to improve student achievement, parent involvement is crucial."

"Parents now will not only ask me for help, but they will push their children to ask for assistance."

"Parents are interested in knowing and experiencing what their children go through."

"Many if not all were excited to see and practice a different approach to math."

"I feel that the parents are now more comfortable asking questions and inquiring about their child's status in school."

“The more that parents get involved with their children, the more their children have an opportunity to succeed.”

“Parents were very pleased with the outcome of the workshops.”

Since staffing was an issue in implementing Family Math in most of the ten MSTP middle schools, the recommendation for next year is to train parents to conduct test preparation math workshops to students and their parents. Many of the parents who participated in the workshops were excited about learning instructional strategies; their enthusiasm and thirst for knowledge can be utilized in the Family Workshop series during the 2008-2009 year.

In addition to the 22 Family Math Workshops that occurred, five Parent Leadership Institute meetings were held from October, 2007 through May, 2008 to continue to train the parent leaders who graduated from the Institute in 2005 and 2006. The topics covered included: Title 1 Regulations; The New York State Grade 8 Science Test (parent leaders conducted science experiments); “How to Talk to Your Child about Sex”; School Boards and School Finances (presentation by the Nassau County Comptroller); and “How to Prepare You and Your Child for College.”

YEAR 2008-2009 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN: THE FAMILY MATH PROJECT

The year 2008-2009 plan will focus on the development of a Family Math Project for the parents and students in the ten MSTP school districts. Since sufficient numbers of teachers were not available to teach the Family Math Workshops in 2008, The Parent Leadership Institute will form a cadre of parents who are willing to be trained to teach test preparation in math for grades 6, 7, and 8 to families in the Nassau and Suffolk school districts that have participated in MSTP for the last six years. The Family Math Project will be extended to two additional grades due to the overwhelming interest of the parents, who participated in the Family Math Workshops for Grade 7 in January through March, 2008. The staff of the Family Math Project will include the MSTP Institute's parent outreach coordinator, four MSTP math teachers, two pupil support personnel, fifteen CSTEP students, and parents.

The group of 20 to 25 parents, recruited by Institute members in June, 2008, will be asked to attend three hour, monthly, Saturday training sessions from September through December, 2008. Attendance at these sessions is a prerequisite for participation in the Project. The training sites will be either at Hofstra or Stony Brook University. MSTP CSTEP students will also be recruited to attend these sessions and assist in teaching parents and students at the Family Math Workshops.

The training sessions will be conducted by selected MSTP math teachers (4) who will use the New York State Math Tests, Grades 6, 7, and 8 as the workshop curriculum. Additional parent friendly math materials will be incorporated into the lessons. The teachers will show the parents and CSTEP students how to deliver math instruction in an interactive manner with the use of concrete examples, high levels of student participation, hands-on delivery, probing and prompting, and modeling behavior. Active learning will be the key strategy. Using the attendees as their audience, parents and CSTEP students will demonstrate mini math lessons during the training sessions. After the training is completed, the pupil support personnel, parent outreach coordinator, and teachers will organize the trained parents into turnkey trainer groups based on their level of proficiency, school district, and evening or weekend availability. The groups will continue to receive support from the teachers and the coordinator throughout the Project.

During the period of training, pupil support personnel (2), parent leaders, and outreach coordinator will reach out to students and families to enroll them in Family Math Workshops. The parents and their students will be organized into groups reflecting grades, 6, 7, and 8, as needed. A series of six to eight, three hour Family Math Workshops will begin in January and end in March, 2009. The scheduling of the workshops will vary according to the needs of the enrollees and the availability of the parent trainers. The 2007 and 2008 New York State Math Tests, Grades 6, 7, and 8 will be used for instruction. The Family Math Workshops will be led by the turnkey parent trainers, CSTEP students, and supervised by the Family Math teachers. The locations of the workshops will vary; schools, public libraries, community centers, and churches will comprise the venues for the project. The attendees will receive materials for use at home with their children. The Project will culminate in a June, 2009 closing ceremony.

The expectation is that after the Project has ended, the trained parents will continue to use their expertise to help parents and students in their communities increase their achievement in math.

**THE FOLLOWING PAGES CONTAIN HANDOUTS THAT WERE GIVEN TO
PARENTS AND SCHOOL STAFF**

THE NATIONAL STANDARDS for PARENT INVOLVEMENT PROGRAMS

STANDARD I: COMMUNICATING

Communication between home and school is regular, two-way, and meaningful.

STANDARD II: PARENTING

Parenting skills are promoted and supported.

STANDARD III: STUDENT LEARNING

Parents play an integral role in assisting student learning.

STANDARD IV: VOLUNTEERING

Parents are welcome in the school and their support and assistance are sought.

STANDARD V: SCHOOL DECISION MAKING and ADVOCACY

Parents are full partners in the decisions that affect children and families.

STANDARD VI: COLLABORATING with COMMUNITY

Community resources are used to strengthen schools, families, and student learning.

Source: National PTA. (2004). **National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement: An Implementation Guide for School Communities**. Chicago: Author

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

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APPENDIX

BUILDING BETTER BRIDGES BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL

50 IDEAS FOR PARENT INVOLVEMENT

1. Create a parent friendly environment. Display welcome signs, decorations, and material that invite parents to be a part of the life of the school. Set up a parent room or a corner with basic amenities. Make sure friendly faces interact with parents in the main office or front desk.
2. Issue a parent handbook with the school's policies and practices.
3. Distribute a monthly calendar of events.
4. Publish a newsletter with a map of the school. Include a Dear Abby type column or a question and answer section for parents. Make sure the school's web page has items for parents.
5. Print all correspondence to parents in their native language.
6. Have translators or interpreters available at parent meetings. Invest (\$1000) in STENOMASK. It is a device (Talk System) that will translate for parents. It is sold by Talk, Inc. in Roswell, Georgia.
7. Hold meetings in am and pm and on weekends to accommodate working parents. Some of the meetings can take place in community centers, housing developments, local libraries, and civic organizations.
8. Open a parent resource center or mobile center if there is no space in your school. The mobile center can be operated in conjunction with other schools in your area and travel to schools at specified times of the week and month. Provide information on parent education, food banks, clothing exchanges, housing opportunities, and health referrals. Publish a social service directory so parents can have access to resources in the community and elsewhere.
9. Conduct a parent book club, lending library, and toy lending library. Provide information on developmentally appropriate equipment and material for children.
10. Have parents help organize health fairs, mini Olympics, or field days.
11. Survey parents to identify their special skills, talents, and interests. Perhaps they can not be present, but they can provide service in other ways. For example, parents with sewing skills can sew all the costumes for a school performance.
12. Involve parents in rites of passage programs for students. Parents will enjoy participating in programs, for example, that teach their daughters how to cook and sew.

Lessons in grooming and etiquette are also popular and attract large numbers of participants.

13. Demonstrate that you value your parents' contributions by honoring them at parent appreciation luncheons and parent of the month assemblies or at PTA meetings. Don't forget to validate the support of parents who cannot attend your meetings, but make sure that their children follow the school's rules and are always prepared for school.
14. Hold Mother/Daughter workshops or luncheons and Father/Son events. Be mindful of special parenting groups in your school. Plan events for single parents, grandparents, foster parents, etc.
15. Survey your students' religious affiliations. Reach out to their religious leaders for assistance in reaching parents. Ask them for their support in contacting parents and increasing their involvement in school.
16. Use a point system for parent involvement activities. Assign a point value to every meeting that parents attend. These points can be converted to rewards for parents after a certain number has been attained or they can be added to points that the children earn for attendance, behavior, and completed class work and homework.
17. Start a Family History Project. It can culminate in the opening of a Family Museum. Family History quilts can be made on each grade. Stories from the past can be recorded by parents.
18. Have teachers use roving journals in their classrooms. The teacher writes the first letter and parents respond as the journal goes home to different parents over the course of the term. Teacher can also institute daily journals in which students write about their school day and parents read and sign them each night.
19. Open a parent leadership institute. Train parents in leadership, advocacy, and how to reach out to other parents. As parents become informed and empowered, you will build an infrastructure that will sustain your parent involvement program even when parent leaders and staff leave the school.
20. Train staff on the parent involvement process. Role play positive interactions between parents and teachers. Teach them how to ask difficult questions without finger-pointing and blaming. Teach them how to effectively communicate with all parents.
21. Ask parents to invite other parents to meetings. Give a prize to the parent who arrives with the largest group of parents. Don't rely on fliers. Call parents. Make personal contact. Extend personal invitations to hard to reach parents. However, remember that the best invitation is the enthusiasm of their child for the event.

22. Organize a bowling team, aerobics class, or shopping trips to outlet centers. These events will provide an opportunity for staff and parents to interact in informal ways and reduce the stress and the mistrust that often exist between home and school.
23. Hold curriculum workshops and test preparation meetings. Have parents visit classrooms and observe lessons. Give them material that they can use at home with their children.
24. Organize a food co-op. Parents who join will receive meats, fruits, and vegetables for as little as \$15 a month. Parents donate their time to package the food.
25. Hold parenting skills workshops on developmental milestones, behavior management, and sex education, etc.
26. Organize a parent buddy system. Pair an active parent with a hard to reach parent. The two will stay in contact and develop a relationship that will facilitate the home and school connection. This system is especially effective with parents who are new to the school.
27. Elicit the support of senior citizens. Establish a connection with the local senior citizen center for intergenerational alliances. Plan events that involve parents and seniors. Seniors can also serve as tutors and mentors for your students.
28. At the beginning of each school year, invite parents in to learn about the curriculum goals and objectives for the term or year. Display these goals and objectives prominently in the building. Mail them home to those parents who did not attend. Follow up meetings with thank you letters to the parents who did attend and we missed you letters to those who did not attend.
29. Send videos of school programs and services to parents who do not attend meetings. Develop a lending video library of math skills and other curriculum areas or buy commercial instructional videos for your lending library.
30. Hold a parent career day or week during which parents address students about their careers.
31. Develop a hotline for events, assignments due, homework help, etc.
32. Hold youth and parent forums to discuss timely issues.
33. Have staff contact parents for positive reasons. Use Happy Grams and Good News postcards.
34. Reach out to Nickelodeon's BIG HELP to sponsor parent and student events.
35. Develop family kits around a theme with games, videos, materials for parents to interact with their children on a specific topic.

36. Sponsor a school wide beautification project involving parents. An expected outcome will be parents developing feelings of ownership, pride, and collaboration.
37. Provide child care for meetings and transportation, if necessary.
38. Have parents organize an alumni day or week with social, recreational, and educational activities.
39. Make sure parents serve on all governance and school improvement committees and represent the diversity of your school.
40. Raffle computers, tickets to shows, gift certificates to local restaurants, and other prizes at your meetings.
41. Do not send report cards home with students. Have parents attend open school nights to receive them. Let the students conduct parent teacher night.
42. Have parents operate a homework help or tutorial program in the evenings and on weekends. Hold curriculum fairs and geography bees. Parents can organize the activities and serve as scorekeepers.
43. Hold regular rap sessions for parents. A “second cup of coffee” hour is a relaxed way for parents to get together and talk about their concerns. A teacher or guidance counselor can facilitate the session.
44. Have parents organize Saturday trips for students. They can research destinations and costs. A pamphlet describing interesting sites for families to visit on weekends can be printed.
45. Encourage parents to put on plays, dance a thons, bike a thons, etc.
46. Ask parents to assist teachers in classrooms, provide clerical assistance in the office, monitor students in lunchrooms, hallways and yards and accompany classes on trips. However, make sure that parents are aware of school policies and practices and all legal issues are taken into consideration.
47. Organize school advisory boards with representatives from local businesses, social service agencies, libraries, law enforcement, chamber of commerce, hospitals, neighborhood associations, religious organizations, civic groups, sororities, fraternities, city and county agencies, universities, school boards, etc. to assist the school in supporting families and increasing parent involvement. The advisory board members can provide human and financial resources.
48. Help parents encourage their children, help them with time management, provide a place for them to work, and prioritize academics over recreation.

49. Schedule home visits for parents who do not respond to conventional means of communication.

50. Don't play the blame game. Blaming parents for a perceived lack of involvement will not miraculously produce the desired results. The lack of physical presence at school does not necessarily mean a lack of motivation or interest. Schools must offer several levels of involvement. Parents will then "buy in" to the school at their own level of comfort and as their own circumstances dictate.

National PTA. (2000). **Building Successful Partnerships**. Chicago: Author.

Vopat, J.(1998). *More Than Bake Sales*. York, ME: Stenhouse.

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DEVELOPING A PARENT INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM: AN EIGHT STEP APPROACH

- 1. Organize an action team.** Establish a permanent committee or task force. Its membership must include teachers, administrators, parents, community members and students.
- 2. Examine current practice.** Review the status of parent involvement in your school. Use feedback from parent and staff surveys to obtain a clear picture of your school's commitment to parent involvement.
- 3. Develop a written policy.** The policy should establish the vision, the mission, and foundation for the school's plan.
- 4. Develop a plan.** Identify priority issues, set goals, and plan strategies for full participation of parents. Identify funding sources.
- 5. Implement the plan.** Assign roles, create a timetable, identify materials and human resources needed. Who is going to do what and when are they going to do it?
- 6. Secure support.** Make sure that all the major stakeholders are aware of the policy and the plan. Allow sufficient time for response and reaction.
- 7. Provide training.** Make sure that constituents have numerous opportunities to become knowledgeable of and interact with issues covered in the policy and plan. Train staff on how to work together to implement the plan.
- 8. Evaluate and revise.** Develop monitoring tools. Find out what worked and what did not work. Conduct annual evaluations. Parent involvement is a process of continual renewal and requires a commitment to long term success.

Source: National PTA. (2004). National Standards for Parent / Family Involvement: An Implementation Guide for School Communities. Chicago: Author

MSTP PARENT SURVEY

We need your help in planning programs for our parents. The importance of parent involvement can not be emphasized enough. Please take a few minutes to complete this survey so we can find out your views on certain activities.

1. Please check the types of workshops that you would attend:

- Helping with homework Improving reading skills
 Helping your child learn about career choices
 Improving math skills State tests and what they mean
Other topics for workshops _____

2. Please check the types of parenting workshops you would attend:

- Helping your child say NO to drugs
 Explaining HIV/AIDS and how to protect your child
 Gang prevention: recognizing gang symbols and activities
 Teaching children tolerance and to respect differences
 Danger Awareness in Internet Use
 Preventing and responding to bullying
 Child nutrition and encouraging healthy eating habits
 Child and youth development
 Education Laws/Parents' Rights
 Educational Resources available in the community
 Other topics of interest to you _____

3. Check the kinds of resources/services you would like to see in school:

- Homework hotline Parent resource center
 Parent support group School website
 Family use of gym, school library E-mail listserv for parents
Other _____

4. What activities listed below are of interest to you:

- Parent/Student/ Teacher Dinners Conflict Resolution Retreats
 Computer Education courses Mother /Daughter Events
 Father/Son Nights, etc Family Sports Activities
Other _____

5. What should be the focus or topic of our **next** workshop or activity:

6. I do not always participate in school activities because _____

Thank you for completing this survey*

Adapted from the National PTA Parent Survey

FAMILY FRIENDLY SCHOOLS

Schools that are responsive to the needs of parents have the following characteristics:

1. There is a written parent involvement policy and plan on file and available for review.
2. Report cards, newsletters, policies, procedures, and handbooks are available in languages that the parents speak and understand.
3. Information about school events is available via media.
4. The school uses websites, voice mail, and I-800 numbers to communicate with parents.
5. The school environment welcomes parents; the office staff is friendly and helpful.
6. The school has a parent center or family room with information posted for easy access by parents.
7. Child care is provided at meetings and other school events.
8. Parents are involved in the governance structure of the school; they serve on school leadership teams and committees.
9. Parents may easily visit or observe classrooms.
10. There is a parent coordinator on staff or a staff member is assigned to work with parents.
11. The school sponsors social events to encourage parents and staff to get to know one another.
12. Principal is available to meet with parents.
13. There are ongoing activities that inform parents about the the educational programs in the school.
14. Parents are notified right away if their children fall behind; they are kept informed about the test results of their children.
15. Parents are included in the selection process for a new principal.
16. Parents are involved in solving discipline problems.
17. There are opportunities for parents to volunteer.
18. The school has partnerships with local businesses.
19. There is evidence that the school recognizes the various cultures represented in the school.
20. There is a feeling of unity in the school coupled with positive interactions between staff and parents.
21. The school offers workshops to help parents help their children.
22. School wide data (annual school report, test scores, etc.) are distributed to parents.
23. There is an active parent body. (PTA, PTO, etc.).
24. The school has linkages with community groups to offer social services to families.
25. Guest speakers on timely topics of interest to parents are invited to conduct parent meetings.

HALLMARKS OF EFFECTIVE PARENT INVOLVEMENT PROGRAMS

1. Home visits
2. Parents treated as partners
3. Training and guidance for staff
4. Videos and CAI
5. Parents feel comfortable with staff and listen to and use the suggestions offered.
6. Parents receive frequent and effective communication.
7. Parents respond to assistance with their child's schoolwork
8. Parents are valued and supported.
9. Parents are encouraged to have high expectations for their children.
10. Parents are helped to create learning environments at home.
11. Parents are informed and empowered.
12. Equal relationships exist.
13. Collaborative problem-solving takes place.
14. There is regular self-evaluation.
15. There is open discussion of conflict.
16. All stakeholders buy into the program.

BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE PARENT INVOLVEMENT PROGRAMS

1. Parents work one or two jobs and do not have time to attend school functions.
2. Parents do not feel comfortable in school due to negative experiences that they had as students.
3. Parents feel unwelcome or intimidated by school staff.
4. Parents may feel inadequate because they are unfamiliar with the school system.
5. They may have physical disabilities.
6. There may be language or cultural differences.
7. Parents may be under economic stress.
8. They may lack child care or transportation.
9. They may see contact with school as trouble.
10. Parents with poor skills may feel ashamed.
11. Parents are generally not drawn to school activities that they perceive as peripheral to what really matters: the education of their children.

FOUR BASIC QUESTIONS THAT PARENTS USUALLY ASK

1. What is my child supposed to be learning in school?
2. How can I help my child meet the standards?
3. How do I know if my child is meeting the standards?
4. How do I know if these standards are right for my child?

Always assume that parents want their children to succeed in school and want to help their children succeed. Don't concentrate on what parents know or on what they don't know, but on what parents can come to know.

