

How to Build and Maintain Meaningful Partnerships with Parents

Presenter,
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(Morrow)



- Let's Define Partnership
- Why Should Schools Partner with Parents?

Interactive
Activity

Turn to Your Neighbor and
Discuss the definition.....the
question.....
Jot down ideas generated by
you and your partners.

Characteristics of Successful Partnerships

1. **Supportive**- For a partnership to be successful each member needs to feel a sense of support and optimism about the collaboration. When partnerships are supportive they are infused with hope. What sustains motivation is the belief that with partnership things can only get better.
2. **Rewarding**- Each member in a partnership must see the reward involved in coming together. In successful partnerships rewards are based solely on each partner's worth and significance to the bigger picture.
3. **Morale**- It is essential for each partner to be completely in touch with the emotional state of the other partners, and always seek to raise it. Exceptional collaborations create an environment of positive morale. Each contributing person must be open and honest with all others regarding behaviors that aren't working for the group, including their own, if it is bringing down the morale of the partnership.
4. **Protective**- Partnerships thrive when members feel protected within the partnership. The partners feel reassured they are in an environment that will not let them fail. Each member is aware that any threat to the security of their partnership undermines progress. Insecurity must be addressed openly so the proper changes can be put into place. The solutions made must be handled via discussion between partners and must serve to benefit all members.
5. **Catalyst**- Exceptional partnerships act as a catalyst for each member to grow and succeed. It provides the space for each member to generate their own innovative ideas. Whenever a partnership suppresses the creative energy of its members and is rigid, it kills the spirit of innovation. This is why it is said that rigid structures collapse first. Wherever creativity flourishes there must flexibility.

<https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/247407>

Some Advantages of Partnering with Parents

- Parents years of knowledge regarding their children's interests, likes and dislikes to table.
- Parents spend on average much more time with their children than we do or will. They are the experts when it comes to understanding their child's learning style.
- Parents can provide the support we will need to effectively educate their child.



Some Advantages of Partnering with Parents

- Educators have years of experience working with a variety of students with multiple learning styles.
- Educators have spent many years studying the research and understanding the research behind student achievement.
- Teachers can provide the educational support that is based on research and professional experience to effectively educate their child.

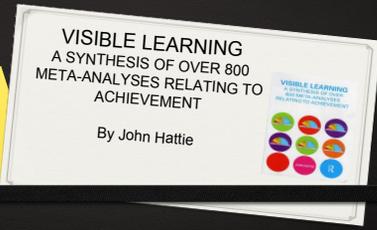


Partnership with Parents and Schools Must Be Mutually Beneficial to be Meaningful to Both Sides to Maintain Longevity



The Data Supports Partnering with Parents: Educators can Share Evidenced Based Best Practices regarding Parent Involvement

<https://visible-learning.org/nv03/visible-hattie-ranking-alize-hattie-ranking-interactive-2009-2-01-2015.html>



A look at what the data says about Parent Involvement.

<https://visible-learning.org/john-hattie/>



Which Types of Parental Involvement Yields the Greatest Impact on Student Achievement

- Parental Participation
- Supportive Parenting
- Homework Supervision
- Participation in School Activities
- Communication with School Teachers
- Monitoring School Progress
- Providing Structure in Home
- Controlling and Disciplining Parental Style



[Poll Everywhere](#)

Parent Involvement Matters!



Excerpt from, 8 Pearls of Wisdom A Parenting Guide: Empowering Children is the Way to Go!

Introduction

For the past thirty years I have worked with students in a variety of capacities; as a volunteer at the YMCA, a youth director and coordinator in church, a substitute teacher, permanent teacher, assistant principal, and principal. In all of these capacities, I have worked with students from diverse racial, ethnic, religious and socio-economic backgrounds and one fact I have learned is at the core of every child is a desire to learn and achieve a modicum of success. No child is innately "lazy."

During my early years of teaching, I held this belief that it was my duty to save these children because they would probably never meet another teacher or adult like me again. Yes, back then I was young, idealistic—and a little embarrassed to say somewhat arrogant in a way—I thought in my early years of teaching. I was like other educators who mistakenly believed that parents of children with behavior issues could not possibly be interested in a child's educational success. How could they be if the child is coming to school giving all of his teachers and other staff members such a hard time? Therefore, I believed it was up to me with the help of a few other teachers who held the same standards and expectations as I did to educate and teach students appropriate and acceptable behavior.

I operated out of this misguided belief my first seven years of teaching. It was not until I began my tenure as a teacher in Moreno Valley, a school for at-risk students, that I began to change how I viewed parents of children with behavioral issues. Students with poor attendance, low academic achievement, and behavioral issues were recommended by school counselors to attend the community day school.

I immediately learned a great deal from the parents and students at Bayside Community Day School. First off, I learned parents of students with a history of low grades, poor attendance, and problematic behavior, do not want to be reminded daily by teachers of their child's shortcomings. Trust me when I tell you this, they already know, and they are just as much at a loss on how to handle the child's behavior problems as you are.



8 Pearls of Wisdom Excerpt (Cont)

During my first week as a new teacher, I decided I would contact every one of my students' parents to introduce myself and acknowledge something positive about their child that I noticed during our interaction. I will always remember how happy and relieved those parents were to hear from their child's teacher with positive things to say as opposed to the usual negative reports. Many of the phone calls began like this:

Parent: Hello (dryly stated).

Me: Hello (upbeat and cheerful, the goal was for them to hear my smile), this is Ms. Morrow from Bayside

Community Day School. I am "student's name" history teacher.

Parent: (uncomfortable pause followed by) Uh huh or yeah.

Me: I am calling to introduce myself and tell you what a pleasure it was to meet your son/daughter today. I especially appreciated his/her helpfulness, attentiveness, politeness, etc.

Parent: (perking up) Really?? Thank you for calling I always get phone calls telling me what my child did wrong.

Me: You can look forward to receiving many more positive phone calls, and if necessary you will get a phone call from me asking for your support on something specific regarding your son/daughter.

From that point on, the parents were much more responsive to my phone calls. I made it a point of duty to call parents as often as I could with positive things their children were doing therefore when I had to make the call for something less positive it was well received. Parents would say, "Ms. Morrow I know he/she must have done something wrong if you're calling me." One student reported to me, "My mom said, I know Ms. Morrow is not lying because she called me when you were doing well, so I know if she called me to tell me what you did she is telling me the truth." While working with parents of students labeled by years of documented at-risk behaviors, deadbeat parents became capable, supportive, and caring when they were included in their child's educational journey. Seeing this transformation by empowerment then inspired me all the more to incorporate parent outreach as part of my teaching philosophy.



I could not fully accomplish the outcomes needed alone. I needed the parents and they needed to feel included by me to truly support the child.

Over the next fifteen years as a classroom teacher and school administrator, I made parent outreach a larger and larger component of my work with students. I began to see the students' parents and the school as partners, and I strove to promote a positive working relationship with my students' parents. During parent conferences, special education meetings, expulsion hearings, and school attendance meetings I would reinforce that their child's success is dependent on all of us working together as a team for the child. Of course, there will be a few angry parents that cannot hear the hope or the purpose while venting their rage. However, that is when I realized I needed to not react and allow my ego to get in the way of what is best for the child. Essentially, my inner battle to create hope is why I have been known to revisit conversations once the parent has had time to process what is happening and they are less hostile.

Transformational conversations are really a series: an entire episode in worst cases, of many unsuccessful conversations leading up to breakthrough and transformational change.

Results are dramatic. The most underperforming students rise to the top when they break to the pressure of parental caring that they change. When the child's ego gains attention from negative behavior, attention is redirected just as successful with positive praise. I discovered this powerful process working as assistant principal at Apple Valley High School in a seminar at Southern California school district. My reputation for working with parents, students, and staff led to my promotion as principal of a K-12 Alternative School of Choice in Apple Valley, California. Finally, I hoped I would be able to implement my vision of creating a Parent Empowerment Center for families of students identified as at risk of not graduating from high school. The Center would be a place to educate, support, empower, inspire and transform the way parents interacted with their children, children's teachers, administrators, and school district officials.



8 Pearls of Wisdom
Excerpt (Con't)

In the spring of 2015, as principal with support from the hard work and dedication of staff, students, and parent volunteers, we held the grand opening ceremony of the Parent Empowerment Center. The following year during our WASC (Western Association of Schools and Colleges) visit the team charged with extending or denying our accreditation did not only extend it, but commended us on having such a meaningful and powerful center for parents. It was the pinnacle of success from parent empowerment ideals I had developed over the past two decades of growing to believe this was the critical secret key to success with students where nothing else seemed to work.

On the heels of the success of the Parent Empowerment Center and after presenting to several parent groups in the greater Los Angeles area, I was asked to write a book sharing "my precious pearls" or in other words, the valuable lessons I have learned throughout my years as an educator. A book with the sole purpose of providing insight and advice to parents, students, and educators.

So, listening to the cry for an explanation of how to empower parents, I created this book: "8 Empowering Pearls of Wisdom that Provides Guidance and Support to Parents and Children in the Area of Academics." I hope you gain as much from reading it as I have gained from digging to the depths of my love for empowering the hopeless with hope in writing it.



8 Pearls of Wisdom
Excerpt (Con't)

Our words matter. They can promote collaboration or noncooperation. Below are a few suggestive phrases to promote an equity based partnership with parents:

- I need your help with "Johnny", what would you suggest I do to get him interested in learning?
- Will you please share some of Susie's interests I think I may be able to use them to engage her in the lesson.
- What types of discipline strategies work on little Joey at home? I'm wondering if I can use some of your strategies at school?

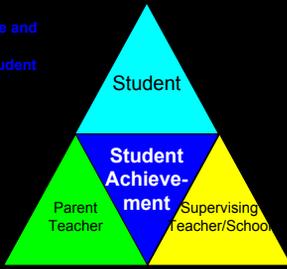


- Emily is having difficulty with the work and staying on task with her assignments, let's work together to come up with a solution that will help Emily achieve some success?
- Hello, would you be available to meet with me to share ideas on the best way to address "Sarah's" recent difficulties in class?

Please note, these are just a few phrases we can begin use to build a partnership with our parents. It is important for us to value their expertise as their parent and seek their assistance instead of pushing our ideas on them.

Parent Partnership= Shared Desired Outcome

Each one has a role and responsibility to ensure the student achieves both academically and socially.



The Role of the Student

- Set high expectations and work everyday towards meeting them.
- Remember Learning is a Journey not a Destination
- Actively participate in work assignments, projects, social activities, and field trips. Learning is Fun and we want you to have fun! However, you must participate in your learning to enjoy it!
- Meet with the Supervising teacher weekly to complete tests, share learning experiences and submit completed work.
- Complete the assigned work by the due date.
- Ask questions. Practice. Experiment. Fail Often. Learn from your Failures.
- No one is Perfect! We are all on a journey to becoming Lifelong Learners!!



Role of the Parent

- Positively Encourage and Engage students on topics they are interested in.
- Model behavior consistent with behaviors students are expected to practice at school (remember children do as they see doing not as we say)
- Set High Expectations for your child and encourage them to attain them.
- Work with the student on a daily basis. Meet weekly with the Supervising Teacher and the student.
- Make sure all assignments for that week are turned in and that they have materials needed to complete assignments for the following week.
- Attend and participate in workshops, activities and/or group outings when possible.
- Ask questions. No one person knows everything and our #1 Goal is that our student succeeds!



Role of the Supervising Teacher

- Encourage, Engage and Expose students and parents to activities, places and people that will help to students on their journey to becoming Lifelong Learners.
- Meet with the parent and student weekly/monthly to review academic lessons and social skills.
- Invite and/or facilitate workshops, fieldtrips and enrichment activities for students and parents.
- Model Teaching Strategies for Parents.
- Provide Assessments, Data and remediation for students. Explain the why behind and interpret for parents their students data/results.
- Listen to parents and students to determine how their child's interests can be used inspire learning.
- Provide opportunities for the students to build on the 4 C's (Critical Thinking Skills, Creativity, Communication and Collaboration.
- Share information that may increase student achievement.
- Express Praise, Gratitude and Appreciate for the work parents are doing to encourage "our" students.



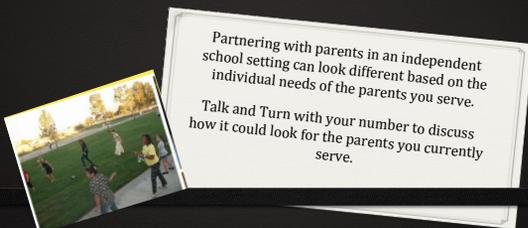
Sample Phrases if a Parent's Response is, "I don't know what to do?"

Sometimes parents are unsure what to do. When that happens as teachers we must try to refrain from offering advice that can be perceived as orders rather than suggestions.

- Share a personal experience for example if you are a parent, you can share any relevant experiences with your own children.
- If you are not a parent, you can share relevant experiences with previous students, nieces, nephews, etc. Anything that will create a bond over a shared similar experience.
- Suggest to the parent you all meet so that the two of you can brainstorm ideas. This is most effective since parents feel they are part of the process. If the child is old enough they should also be included in the process as well.
- We all want to feel as though we are contributing rather than just being told what to do. As educators we can suggest strategies or methods in which research supports has yields the largest gains in student achievement.
- Remember, the ultimate goal is to develop a lifelong learner who is achieving academically and socially.



What Can a Partnership with Parents in an Independent Study School Setting Look Like?



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A Parenting Guide
KIMBERLY A. MORROW, M.ED.

Last Words

California Consortium for Independent Study

We'd love to hear from you!

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