Resource 4

Family Involvement Ideas: Communication

Use the following checklist of ideas to determine those you can incorporate into your family involvement program.

☐ I know strategies for getting parents to attend meetings at school such as making sure they know they’re genuinely invited. A personal invitation often makes a difference in the effort to attend.

☐ I establish friendly contact with parents early in the year.

☐ I don’t wait until it’s too late to tell parents about potential or serious problems. Early contact helps.

☐ I focus on the strengths of students and families.

☐ I know how to deal with angry parents by separating the parent from the argument.

☐ I use active listening. I don’t get angry. I look for areas of agreement.

☐ I provide a short parent newsletter regularly.

☐ I use short surveys to identify family attitudes about the school and classroom.

☐ I send “quick notes” home on the day something happens.

☐ I put up “Welcome” signs in every language spoken by the students and parents at my school.

☐ I use voice mail or e-mail to keep parents up-to-date on such things as homework and school activities.

☐ I make sure any automated voice messages are easy to use and do not frustrate parents.

☐ I ask parents to fill out a “Contact Sheet” with their home and work addresses and phone numbers as well as the best times to be contacted.

☐ I use refrigerator notes and tell students to share them with their families.

☐ I understand that a key reason for parent non-involvement is lack of information. One memo won’t do.

☐ I try letters, notes, signs, calls, the newspaper, radio and TV.

☐ I share experiences I have had with my own children to break down barriers, get me out of my “role” and help parents see me as a parent too.

☐ I arrange to have announcements made on local radio stations in the native languages of parents.

☐ I send announcements to the tribal newspaper or tribal/chapter house meetings.