Working Together:
School-Family-Community Partnerships

A Survey for Assessing
School Level Family and Community Partnerships

This survey may be used to assess schoolwide progress in strengthening partnerships between school personnel and the school's families and community members. It is suggested that the survey be used at different points in the school year to assess progress in the six areas of parent involvement identified by the work of Dr. Joyce Epstein and the PTA's National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs. The survey may be modified for use in planning and evaluation within specific school communities.

Rating Scale	
Frequently	Occurs in most classes or grade levels. Receives substantive time and emphasis. A highly prevalent component of the school's parental involvement plan.
Sometimes	Occurs in some classes or grade levels. Receives minimal or modest time and emphasis. Not a prevalent component of the school's parental involvement plan.
Never	Strategy does not occur at the school or occurs in isolation.

1. IMPROVING COMMUNICATION
Communicate effectively with all families in the community.

Our School:	Frequently	Sometimes	Never
a. Conducts parent-teacher conferences with every parent at least once a year. In high schools with large numbers of students, events are planned to meet with groups of parents.			
b. Provides translators to assist families as needed.			
c. Provides clear information about report cards and how grades are earned.			
d. Provides clear information about state testing expectations as well as school and student results.			
e. Has established two-way channels for communication from home to school and from school to home.			
f. Has an automated phone system for delivering important messages or collecting attendance information.			
g. Provides clear information about selecting courses, programs, and activities.			
h. Sends folders of student work home weekly or monthly for parent review and comment.			
i. Sends home positive messages or makes phone calls to parents about students on a regular basis.			

		Frequently	Sometimes	Never
j.	Notifies families of a student's academic or behavior problems. Teachers have easy access to telephones, e-mail, contact information, and are encouraged to communicate with parents during or after school.			
k.	Provides parents with the contact information of the school, principal, teachers, and counselors (at school or at home).			
l.	Has a homework hotline for students and families to hear daily assignments and messages.			
m.	Conducts an annual survey for families to share information and concerns about students' needs and perceptions of school programs and processes.			
	Our School Newsletter/Website Includes:	Frequently	Sometimes	Never
n.	Recognition of students, families, and community members as well as student work and accomplishments.			
o.	A calendar of school events.			
p.	Student activity information.			
q.	Information about curriculum, assessments, and standards-based instruction.			
r.	Information regarding volunteer involvement (when and how to volunteer).			
s.	School governance information (how the school is run, site council, etc.).			
t.	A column to address parents' questions.			
	Other:			

2. PROMOTING POSITIVE PARENTING

Assist all families with parenting skills and in creating a home environment that support children as students.

Our School:		Frequently	Sometimes	Never
a.	Sponsors parent education workshops and other courses or training for parents.			
b.	Respects the different cultures represented in our student population.			
c.	Provides families with information on child or adolescent development.			
d.	Provides families with strategies that support learning at home.			
e.	Has a lending library with books, video, learning kits, etc.			
f.	Asks families for information about children's goals, strengths and talents.			
g.	Sponsors home visiting programs or neighborhood meetings to help families understand schools and to help schools understand families.			
	Other:			

3. ENHANCING STUDENT LEARNING

Provide information to families about how to help students at home with their homework and other curriculum-related activities and decisions.

Our School:	Frequently	Sometimes	Never
a. Provides Websites and learning resources for students and families.			
b. Provides family-friendly information to families on New Mexico's Content Standards and Benchmarks.			
c. Provides information to families on how to monitor and discuss schoolwork with their child.			
d. Provides information on how to assist students with skills that they need to improve.			
e. Has a regular schedule of interactive homework that requires students to demonstrate and discuss what they are learning with a family member.			
f. Asks parents to listen to their child read or to read aloud with their child.			
g. Provides calendars with daily or weekly activities for families to do at home and in the community.			
h. Assists families in helping students to set academic goals, select courses and programs and plan for college, their next level of schooling (i.e. middle school and high school) or work.			
i. Provides summer learning packets to help students sustain school skills.			
Other:			

4. INCREASING VOLUNTEERISM

Organize volunteers to support the school and its students.

Our School:	Frequently	Sometimes	Never
a. Conducts an annual survey to identify interests, talents, and availability of volunteers and needs of school staff.			
b. Provides initial and ongoing training to our volunteers.			
c. Provides a parent room or family center for volunteers or family members to work, meet, and access relevant resources.			
d. Provides ways for families to be involved at home or in the community if they cannot volunteer at school.			
e. Recognizes volunteers for their time and efforts.			
f. Schedules plays, concerts, games, and other events at different times of the day and evening so that all parents can attend.			
We encourage families and the community to be involved by:	Frequently	Sometimes	Never
g. Assisting in the classroom (e.g., tutoring, grading papers).			
h. Helping with events and planning.			
i. Giving talks (e.g., careers, hobbies, etc.).			
j. Checking attendance.			
k. Monitoring halls, working in the library, cafeteria or other areas.			
l. Leading clubs or activities.			
Other:			

5. SUPPORTING DECISION MAKING AND ADVOCACY

Include families as participants in school decisions and develop parent and community leaders.

Our School:	Frequently	Sometimes	Never
a. Involves parents in selecting school staff (leadership team).			
b. Has a parent involvement policy and an action team to develop a goal oriented program with practices for all six types of involvement.			
c. Has an active PTA, or other parent organization.			
d. Invites parents to be on the school's advisory council, improvement team, or other committees.			
e. Asks involved parents to make contact with parents who are less involved and represent their ideas.			
f. Provides information on school or local elections for school representatives.			
g. Develops formal networks to link all families with their parent representatives.			
h. Includes parent representatives in professional development opportunities around schoolwide programs.			
i. Involves parents in revising school/district curricula, developing policies, and participation in required parent advisory teams.			
j. Uses e-mail and quick surveys to obtain parents' input and ideas on school policy.			

6. COLLABORATING WITH THE COMMUNITY

Coordinate resources and services from the community for families, students, and schools and provide services to the community.

Our School:	Frequently	Sometimes	Never
a. Provides a community resource directory for parents and students with information on community agencies, programs, and services.			
b. Provides information on community activities that link to learning skills and talents, including summer programs for students.			
c. Works with local businesses, industries, and community organizations on programs to enhance student skills.			
d. Offers after school programs for students, with support from community businesses, agencies, or volunteers.			
e. Sponsors intergenerational programs with local senior citizen groups.			
f. Provides family services through partnerships with school counseling, health, recreation, job training, and other agencies.			
g. Organizes service learning projects for the community, students, families, and schools.			
h. Building is open for use by the community after school hours.			
Other:			

Adapted from Dr. Joyce Epstein, et al, 2002

Summary of Strengths and Needs

- Ratings of "frequently" indicate that the activity or approach is strong.
- Ratings of "sometimes" or "never" indicate that the activity is not yet part of the school's program or needs improvement.

The results provide information on the strength of current practices and insights about future directions or needed improvements in your school's parental and community involvement partnership program. Use the chart below to begin identifying areas of strength, need, and plans for improvement. Consider current initiatives as well as short- and long-term goals.

Areas of Strength	Areas in Need of Improvement	Plans for Improvement