



# RESOURCES FOR SCHOOLS & DISTRICTS

## Resources for Schools & Districts

The Parent Engagement Committee thanks you for your ongoing commitment to promoting the success of Michigan's youth. Research demonstrates that **engaging parents and family** in their child's education significantly improves academic achievement and aspirations.

Perhaps you have witnessed some of these benefits in your school:

- literacy improvements of a kindergarten student whose grandfather reads to him daily.
- the development of sound decision-making skills in an eighth grader with a caring mother who encourages responsible independence.
- the continuation to post-secondary education of a high school junior whose older cousin assists with college and scholarship applications.

The benefits can be further improved when you, as educators and school professionals, collaborate with parents to maximize their ability to support their child's education.

This Toolkit is intended to support that partnership and continue to maximize your record of educational achievement. In this section you will find strategies for:

- developing your parent engagement plan.
- enhancing and sustaining your current efforts.
- addressing specific barriers to parent engagement.
- best practices and tools you can download, customize and utilize to support your work.
- links to an extensive list of resources.

We hope you find this information helpful as you supplement your school's existing parent engagement efforts and promote student achievement through parent-school collaboration.

Parent Engagement Committee, 2011  
Michigan Department of Education

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## Developing Your Program

### Part I

#### Overview

Developing a parent engagement policy or plan does not have to be a complex activity. There are many ways and tools to accomplish the task. However the plan you ultimately develop should be a true reflection of your school's/district's commitment to collaborate with all parents and families to increase the academic achievement and success of all children.

In developing your school's or district's plan consider these six critical steps:

1. **Evaluate your current status.** Evaluate where you are today relative to your parent engagement efforts, programs and activities. How well are we doing? By getting a sense of where you are today and where you would like to be in the future, will help you to develop a vision for parent engagement.
2. **Develop a statement of purpose.** The statement of purpose articulates your school's commitment to and a vision for parent engagement.
3. **Formulate Goals and Strategies.** The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) recommends that schools and districts base their decisions on scientifically-based research and address the NCLB/ESEA requirements. Your goals and strategies should include activities that meet the specific needs of your school and parent community.

In addition when formulating goals and strategies ensure that you are taking your school improvement process into consideration so that both plan whether separated or combined clearly outline comprehensive goals and strategies for parent engagement.

4. **Action Steps/responsibilities.** Establish a year-long schedule for how the plan will be accomplished, with action steps, timelines and people responsible.
5. **Review your performance.** At the end of the year it is important to obtain feedback regarding the parent engagement plan both from an internal and external perspective – parents and community.
6. **Evaluate your parent engagement plan.** Examine your student achievement results to determine if and how the parent engagement plan positively impacted student achievement.

## Strategy

One possible strategy is to begin by conducting a self-assessment that would provide information from various levels and departments of your school or district. Consider the following:

Where Are We Regarding:	How Do We Start?	How Do We Use The Information We Obtain?
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Communication to and from parents</li> <li>2. Parents as learning partners</li> <li>3. Parent Volunteering levels of participation</li> <li>4. Schools being resources for parents</li> <li>5. Parents as partners in decision making</li> <li>6. Policies and process to formally involve parents</li> <li>7. Parents perspectives about us in all these areas</li> <li>8. Students perspectives about us in all these areas</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conduct comprehensive staff assessment/survey</li> <li>2. Conduct parent only survey</li> <li>3. Conduct a student only survey</li> <li>4. Conduct focus groups that include staff, student and parents</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Understand where you are</li> <li>2. Establish priorities to begin your plan development process</li> <li>3. Guide district to achieve goals</li> </ol>

## Tools

### Sample Self-Assessment Surveys

1. Parent Engagement Staff Survey - Customizable
2. Assessing Existing Parent Involvement – A checklist for different levels of involvement Page 33-41, from first toolkit
3. [PDF] Parent Involvement in Every School "P-I-E-S" Manual, pages 91-93  
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