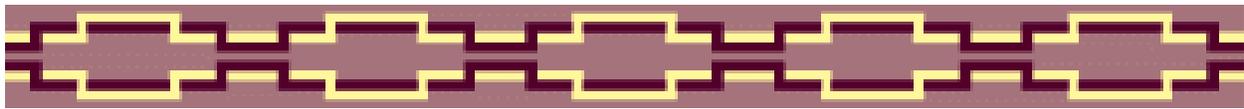


# Parent and School Leadership for Education

Da'nis4'h4g77 - Olt'1'gi Nidaalnishiigii 47 Ihoo'aah BiNa'nit'a'7 At'1



The Resource Guide for Family Involvement in Din4 Education  
The Office of Din4 Culture, Language and Community Services  
Department of Din4 Education  
Window Rock, Arizona



# Parent and School Leadership for Education

Da'nis4'h4g77 - Olt'1'gi Nidaalnishiigii 47 Ihoo'aah BiNa'nit'a'7 At'1



**PARENTS KNOW THE ANSWERS, JUST ASK THE PARENTS**

“My children as you journey throughout life from generation to generation; do not forget your language, your culture, and your way of life. That identifies who you are.” Navajo Chief By Manuelito



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## FORWARD

The parent involvement project began in most urban public schools and merged into the Bureau of Indian Affairs schools in the late 1980 as a way of involving parents more intentionally in their children's education.

Since 1994, thousands of parents and teachers have participated in Parent Involvement Projects in a wide variety of locations—urban, suburban, rural, big city, small town, elementary, middle, and high school, community centers, and teacher training and parent leadership institutes. The experiences have affirmed many of the principles that originally guided and have helped schools develop new ways to connecting school and home—all for the benefit of children making gains in academically. Some of these are included in this document.

In 1996, the U.S. Department of Education recognized parents as first teachers' national models as part of President Clinton's "American Reads." Hillary Rodman-Clinton published her book, "It Takes the Whole Community to Raise A Child" based on how the children in Africa were raised. Traditional Navajo child bearing and child rearing practices stemmed off our clanship and kinship society that encouraged clan sisters to live together in one camp reflecting matriarchal society. It is the responsibilities of the clan sisters and uncles to raise the clan children to display appropriate attitudes and behaviors. Each adult member of the clan society emphasizes the clan values and life principles and held the children to the system's teaching. Within each clan society there are predominate medicine persons the clan would utilized. Navajo clan society system of child rearing is similar to Africa.

Thirty years of research shows the inclusion of parental assistance both at home and at school helps students perform well in school and are most likely to do well in all areas of academic. The goals for parental involvement in the educational setting are clear: Increasing parental involvement, building bridges between parents and teachers, improving parental skills and partnering with the whole family. Formal educational emphasizes western habits, attitude and expectations outside a close family relationship atmosphere. Navajo clan society provides experiences under close family unit, "clan-based" child rearing methods most of the early years of development. The experiences provide common expectation, re-enforcement, and teaching style that mold our children with acceptable characters. It is our hope to create close community-school partnership that will mold our children with good characters and with intellectual minds.

In Beloit Wisconsin, parents met biweekly in workshop where they discuss the literacy work being focused on during the school day and develop a home "application" that they can use to work with their children at home. The parents used journal writing, writing about personal experiences and interviews to improve writing skills. The project was able to document its impact through data on attendance, referrals, and performance on state-testing performances. By the end of the first year of the project, parent involvement had increased 128%. In the Hi Mount Elementary School, Wisconsin, Milwaukee found 66% reduction in school suspensions for children of project parents and an 82% reduction in behavioral problem referrals. Tardiness reports for children whose parents were involved in the project declined almost 400% (Clinton 1996, p.25)



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## INTRODUCTION

We believe and make the following statement: Effective parent involvement makes a positive difference in the educational success of children. It is extremely important for young *Din4* children in the twenty-first century, because a large number of children come home after a long day at school to empty homes, cold sandwiches, or leftovers because both parents work to make “ends” meet and are too busy to make time to participate in parent involvement activities. Or, in many homes, children are under the care of older siblings, few with uncles, aunts, and grandparents, and/or being raised by single parents in the contemporary society.

We believe and support the following statement: Children will learn under ANY circumstances. They enter the living world with capabilities to understand what is amusing, so they laugh, walk and talk by age one. Our elders know babies retain most stimulating experiences they experience with tasting, hearing, feeling, seeing and smelling of their environment. In knowing this traditional oral storytelling, singing and actively playing with children formed our Navajo shoe, string and stick games and mothers entertaining their children while engaged in work: Weaving, riding, and grinding corn songs.

Although many urban public schools are known for implementing successful parent involvement, many schools struggle to involve families effectively. Despite the enormous amount of parent involvement material available parents and schools still have difficulty putting the theory into practice. **Why?**

A brief visualization: When you think about “parent involvement” in your school what kinds of things come to mind? What kinds of things are happening with parents? Where do you see this involvement happening?

It is the hope of Department of *Din4* Education to expand the definition of “Parent Involvement” to the next level where parents gain “ownership” for the education of their children. **Parent – School Leadership for Education: *Da'nis4'h4g77 - Olt'1'gi Ndaalnish7g77 Da'ahiltsood*** is about helping parents to be educational parents and join the education staff in their local schools as: tutors, mentors, culture educators, historians, storytellers. Parents should display proper nurturing and leadership in child development and growth. Information presented in this document is to be used as resources. DODE will bring the work of the local school Parent/Teacher Association-Parent-Teacher Leadership for Education Committee, Parent Advisory Committee and Parent Involvement, parent coordinators, and the school liaisons under one umbrella.

The Parents and School Leadership Resource book is presented in four folds: Methods that Matter; How parent program can operate efficiently and effectively way; and Resources: Samples of Procedures, Bylaws, Election of Officers, and 4. Sample of checklist for self-checking, survey forms, Plan of Action forms and etc.



## **PARENT - SCHOOL LEADERSHIP FOR EDUCATION**



## **VISION STATEMENT**

"Parents and School in Partnership Nurtures Life-Long *Ihoo'aa D00 NaNitiin*"



## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of Parent - School Leadership for Education is to rekindle *H0zh==ji Ihoo'aah d00 Nanitiin* within each home and school utilizing positive learning and teaching experiences as the corner stones of developing meaningful life-long virtues: *Nits1h1kees*, *Nahat'1*, *&in1*, and *Sihasin*; fundamental bases for obtaining and implementing *T'11 h0ijit'44go y1'ah't'eego jiin1*.



## **BELIEFS**

Parents being the child's first and most influential teachers:

- Believe all *Din4* children have capabilities to be successful learners;
- Support strengthening partnership with school, parent, and community for the sake of the children;
- Form the Navajo Nation Parent - School Leadership for Education Organization to make a statement;
- Believe that quality education for *Din4* children has to reflect home, family, history and display cultural relevancy; and
- Is vital to the Navajo Nation's democracy and future in America.



## OBJECTIVES

- To support and speak on behalf of children and youth in the schools;
- To support and speak on behalf of students before government agencies and other organizations that make decisions affecting students;
- To assist parents and caregivers in developing skills they need to raise and protect their children;
- To encourage parent and public involvement in the public, contract, grant, bureau and parochial schools of the Navajo Nation's effort to promote working:
  - To promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, community and place of worship.
  - To raise the standards of home life for children.
  - To secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth.
  - To strengthen relation between the home and the school, that parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the education of *Din4* children and youth.
- To develop between educators and the general public such united efforts as will secure for all children and youth the highest advantages in physical, mental, social, and spiritual education;
- To increase involvement of families in their children's education;
- To provide purpose, tools, and direction to parents and their children to achieve success in life; and
- To produce knowledgeable and committed parents and caregivers who actively support school and community efforts to benefit their children and encourage other families to do the same.



## PURPOSE

*Din* elder guardians believe and teach that children are valuable resources and are the people of the next generation. Therefore, they believe “a wealthy person” is one with a many children. For over two centuries parents stood by helplessly and watched educational institutions provide “surface” education to their children. Many question the teaching of the schools from observing the children lacking “character,” “motivation,” “aspiration,” and “spirituality”. Grandparents, more verbal, are asking, “What are the schools doing with our children? Many do not have respect for others or themselves and are unable to perform a simple job related skills after fourteen years of schooling.”

Learning institutions provide literate learning based on western style and values. Navajo values are basically “character values.” Navajo Nation Department of *Din* Education, Education Committee of the Navajo Nation and Navajo Nation Board of Education, the local school and board oversee the teaching institutions from a broad prospectus agree our children need to learn well in both areas. Most of our students need more support than others to achieve academically and develop good character.

Furthermore, the fact that parent/family participation in children’s growth and learning results in bringing up healthy *Din* children has been the core of traditional *Din* teaching; it is essential for school to demonstrate democracy and citizenship that parent-guardians participate in the governing of schools and fundamental to produce a healthy system of formal education.

Parents have legal rights to nurture mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual balance development of their children. However development is much greater than just improving student achievement academically, but to produce strong characters sustaining the future generation of the *Din*. One way this can happen is when *Din* language/culture is integrated more into state standards aligned academic content core of studies through Culture Thematic Units. Method and activities draws parents, grandparents, and clan families into the schools. Cultural knowledge is shared with confidence and pride by parents, students, and grandparents , therefore, strengthening connections between home and school.

In 1994, Comprehensive School Reform Program (CSRP) recognized the need for parents to partner with the school and made funds available for any school wishing to implement the CSRP. The year 2000 Grant encouraged inclusion of culture and language of minority students. Recently, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation made provision for schools to partner with parents in effort to close the achievement gap between academically inclined students with academically underachieved students (which may mean “unmotivated” students). For thirty years, many studies reflect that students perform better when taught in bilingual and bicultural classrooms across the country. In 1984, the Navajo Nation Council legislated Title 10 emphasizing the utilization of the *Din* language and culture in the formal education setting. Furthermore, in 2006, Navajo Nation council legislated several amendments to Title 10 that created Navajo Nation Board of Education, Superintendent of Schools position, and included a strong position on parental involvement program into **ALL** schools.



## DESCRIPTIONS

We begin with brief descriptions of models:

The first model is from The National Parent Teacher Association, providing six standards for parental involvement in schools. The standards are based on the work of Dr. Joyce Epstein at the Johns Hopkins University (contact information is provided in the resources section). The standards have become useful and adopted at the state and national level.

The second model is *Educational Achievement Services, Inc. Ten Module Core Curriculum For Families* by Consuelo Castillo-Kichbusch, Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army (Retired). She has worked positively for Hispanic-Latino communities and is based her curriculum on the importance of home-base values and principles.

Thirdly, *Ten Important Facts About No Child Left Behind* have been summarized and presented in parent friendly.

Lastly, Navajo Nation Parent – School Leadership for Education development from the *Din4* traditional leadership perspectives notes elements that contributes to sustaining a healthy home; including, viewing, and referring to the spiritual content as “traditional,” a century old philosophy for a Way of Life values.

Following this section are procedures, examples and forms to design local units [individual school] and forming a working relation with district or agency level parental involvement (regional council) for support, designing training and educational workshops for parents.



## METHODS THAT MATTER

The National Parent Teacher Association provides six standards for parental involvement in schools. These standards are based on the work of Dr. Joyce Epstein at the Johns Hopkins University. After many years of working with parents and school and figuring out what works, she highlights and emphasizes:

### Six Standards For Parental Involvement in Schools

- **Communication:** Communication between home and school is regular, two-way, and meaningful. Communicate with families about school programs and student progress through effective school-to-home and home-to-school communications.
- **Parenting:** Parenting skills are promoted and supported. Assist young families with parenting skill, understanding child and adolescent development, and setting home conditions that support children as students at each age and grade level. \*Assist schools in understanding extended clan family relations.
- **Student Learning:** Parents play an integral role in assisting student learning. Involve families with their children in learning activities at home, including homework and other curriculum-related activities and decisions. \*Adopt cultural integrated curriculum encouraging “oral storytelling,” “interviewing grandparents.”
- **Volunteering:** Parents are welcome in the school, and their support and assistance are sought. Improve recruitment, training, work, and schedules to involve families as volunteers and audiences at the school or in other locations to support students and school programs. \*Cultural Thematic celebration provides opportunities for parent to share their expertise in the school setting.
- **School Decision Making and Advocacy:** Parents are full partners in the decisions that affect children, home, and families. \*Include families as participants in school decisions, governance, and advocacy through Parent Teacher Association (PTA), Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), Parent Advisory Committee (PAC), school councils committee, action teams, booster club, and other parent organizations.
- **Collaborating with Community:** Community resources are used to strengthen school, families, and student learning. \*Coordinate community resources and services: Foster Grandparents, Social Services, or Department of Behavioral Health Services (DBHS).

*\*Applicable with ALL schools serving Navajo students and communities.*

Next worth noting is: *Educational Achievement Services, Inc. promotes Ten Module Core Curriculum For Families* by Consuelo Castillo-Kichbusch, Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army (Retired). The program includes the following modules for Family Leadership Institute. The Family Leadership Institute core curriculum for parents and caregivers consists of ten (10) instructional modules. The ten core curriculum modules are simple to follow. When trained, parents will have gained experiences that can actually inspire other parents to become involved in parent leadership development.



## **Ten Module Core Curriculum for Families: Where Success Begins**

### ***01. Home: Where Leadership Begins***

This module defines leadership and its styles. It establishes a clear foundation for leadership by examining leadership activities in the home, school, social activity ceremony, and church. Each participant is able to identify his or her own leadership style and preference. The module explains the concept of servant leadership and outlines a methodology to achieve servant leader status within the family and community. Relevant case studies from the diverse home settings are introduced and discussed. Various activities bring forth a clear understanding of leadership in everyday life. Additionally, participants discuss the value of literacy as the basis for success in America and begin a personal journal to record and reflect on their developing understand of how they can lead their children to succeed in school and in life. Our own Navajo *hane'* portrays home is where leadership begins.

### ***02. Self-Identity: Past, Present, and Future***

The module identifies the historical roots of participants and takes them on an exploration of self- discovery through small and large group activities. Participants define self-identify, explore self-esteem and self-worth, and examine how each affects themselves and relationships within their families. Through a carefully guided facilitation, participants come to understand the effect of their own identity and personal behavior on the success and well-being of their children. Lessons may include knowing the Navajo clan system, kinship relationship, history and origin of clans that portrays capabilities and potentials of people of clans.

### ***03. Living in Two-Worlds: Cultural and Generational Perspective***

Living in two cultures can bring on tremendous stress, miscommunication, and conflict. This module attempts to mend the broken bonds of understanding between parents and children. Cultural pride and traditions are highlighted as well as pressures their children face in their day-to-day lives. Specific attention is given to understand critical challenges such as drug and alcohol abuse, gang membership, teenage pregnancy, teenage depression, teenage

suicide, and other relevant issues. This module typically is an “eye-opener” for parents and provides great motivation for acquiring the leadership skills and perspectives to help their children achieve success in a different culture and different generation than their own.

#### ***04. Storytelling and Journaling: Valuing Literacy through Family History***

The value of family places on literacy and the enjoyment of reading have a profound effect on the ability of children to acquire the reading skills essential to success. This module places literacy in the context of family and cultural history by first highlighting the role of traditional storytelling within the respective culture. Participants then compile *Hane*’, short oral history, games, and song telling stories to be recorded, transcribed, and analyzed by the participants for the values and leadership lessons contained therein. Examples of specific leadership traits are examined to illustrate that the concept of leadership is not at all foreign to their experience. Participants refine the journaling techniques they have practiced in the previous modules. A compilation of *Hane*’, games, songs, and/or histories from local community can be assembled into book over time and presented to the school library.

#### ***05. Education: The Key to a Better Future***

This module focuses on the essential role of education in the economic, social, and the intellectual well being of children. Using straight facts and solid statistics as well as a holistic, family-centric approach, participants come to see and value education as the key to the future. Educational institutions and the general educational process in the United States are explained and demystified. Participants come to understand and believe that a college education for their children is not only desirable but is actually attainable.

#### ***06. College Field Trip: What Does Success Look Like?***

This module moves from the classroom to the “field” and takes participants on campus to visit a local community college, technical institute, or a four-year university. Parents tour classrooms, libraries, dining areas, and dormitory facilities and meet with professors and administrators. The goal is to demystify the college experience. A highlight of the day is a roundtable discussion with first and or second generation students who tell their personal stories of overcoming barriers to being admitted to college, developing the study skills necessary to maintain their grades, financing their education, and other practical considerations of attending college. At the conclusion of the module, participants come to realize that a college education for their children is an ambitious but imminently obtainable and desirable family goal.

#### ***07. Improving Family/School Relationships: Partnership for Success***

This module stresses that forging a strong and positive relationship with the school administration and teachers is a necessary ingredient for the academic success of children. Participants discuss what prevents their involvement in school activities. Issues such as cultural, social, educational, and legal barriers are analyzed and demystified. Strategies for

building relationships with teachers, staff, and administrators are addressed in detail. Participants complete the module with an understanding of how they can and why they must become advocates for their children in the educational process.

### ***08. Facing Challenges at Home: Coping Strategies for Success***

In this module the participants identify the obstacles and behaviors that keep them from achieving personal and family goals. The module focuses on the origins of conflict within families and strategies by which they can be addressed. Concepts such as conflict resolution, personal responsibility, mediation, two-way communication, respect, hurting words, cycles of conflict, and the value of establishing mutual goals and outcomes are discussed. This presentation is introspective and gently guides the audience in productive self-assessment.

### ***09. Creating A Family Action Plan: Roadmap to Success***

In a world where there is constant change and that requires making tough decisions that impact our lives, it is necessary to have clear goals to provide purpose and direction for action. Just as business enterprises use the strategic planning process to develop their vision, missions, goals, and objectives, this module helps participating families engage in their own life planning process in regards to supporting their children to achieve success in school and in life. Participants examine their current situation and are guided in envisioning alternative scenarios for it in the future. They define their goals and develop a focused statement of purpose to evaluate and refine personal activities, especially in relation to supporting the success of their children. The product of this module is an individualized in the “Family Action Plan” for moving the family forward as a crucible of leadership and a model for the family’s children.

### ***10. Celebrating Family Academic Excellence: Success as a Way of Life***

This important concluding module—the culmination of the course—features members of the participating families making presentations to the local school board and/or other education administrators. The presentations may highlight PTA / PIC / PAC or PTLE’s mission statements and action plans to bring forth the leadership potential of their children. The presentations summarize what the participants want to do to support their children to achieve academic success and success in life, and what they expect the school district and/or local school to do as well.

For instance: A document on Parent – School Leadership for Education *hane’* prepared and refined in previous modules be given by the participants to the school/community library partly as validation of the family leadership experience. It, also, should be a written proof of the value of local *Din4* history as a topic worthy of preservation. Emotional and uplifting, these presentations generate serious dialogue and team building between parents, teachers, counselors, administrators, and students.

**Note:** The school district Parent Coordinators should adopt the idea of inviting community resource speakers and presenters to the school as an added value. These speakers bring to the family leadership institute the wealth of resources available within the local community but which typically are unfamiliar to the institute's participants. Topics can include: cultural knowledge, health and hygiene services, family counseling services, financial counseling, immigration issues, emergency food pantries, drug and other substance abuse prevention, utility services, educational opportunities, vocational training opportunities, and a host of similarly appropriate topics. Document: video recording, pictures, and writing project will be history in the making.



## **NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND**

### **Ten Important Facts About No Child Left Behind**

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) became law in 2002 with the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). NCLB calls for improved student achievement. It helps schools improve instruction and offers important opportunities for parents to be involved with the schools.

#### **No Child Left Behind....**

- Give schools more money for the education of American children.
- Make certain that schools are held accountable for results. It focuses on the bright potential of each child and the school's responsibility for making sure that each child is learning.
- Give states and cities more control and more flexibility to use resources where they are needed most. Principals and administrators will spend less time filling out forms and more time helping your child learn.
- Require school report cards so that parents can see which schools are succeeding and why. This information can be used by parents, teachers, principals, and elected leaders so schools can improve.
- Focus on teaching methods that have been proven to work. There will be no more experimenting on children with educational fads.
- Provide funding that helps teachers learn to be better teachers.

- Provide more than \$1 billion to help children learn to read. Call Parents Reaching Out for information on how you can help your child learn to read.
- Provide the opportunity for parents to transfer children to another public school if the state says the school your child attends needs to improve.
- Provide eligible children with free tutoring if the state says their school needs to improve.
- Require state to test students every year in grades three through eight in reading and math. In August 2005, students will be required to be tested in science. Students are required to be tested once in high school. These tests allow parents teachers and school administrators to know how well each child is learning and when he or she needs extra help.

**NOTE:** No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requires that all schools receiving Title I dollars in every school district in America to have a written *parent involvement policy* which should be developed jointly with and agreed upon by parents and educators. It must be distributed to parents and educators of children participating in Title I programs. It must ensure that successful strategies that encourage and sustain active parent involvement are in place in every school.

***Every school receiving Title I is required to:***

1. Develop with parents a written *parent involvement policy* that is then distributed to parents and made available to the local community.
2. Hold an annual meeting of parents to inform them of the policy and their right to be involved. The meeting must be scheduled at a time convenient for families.
3. Offer flexible parent involvement meetings. Schools may use Title I money to provide childcare, transportation, or home visits.
4. Involve parents in an organized and ongoing way in the planning, review, and improvement of school programs.
5. Develop with parents a school-parent agreement that outlines actions to be taken to improve individual student academic achievement.
6. Increase opportunities for parent involvement in the school by helping parents understand academic content standards. Schools must also provide opportunities for parents to learn about state academic achievement standards and assessments.
7. Provide materials and training for parents, teachers, pupil services personnel, and other staff to foster greater parent involvement.

8. Integrate activities with other school programs, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Head Start, English as a Second Language (ESL), and others.

## **What No Child Left Behind Says About Public School Choice**

One of the big changes that No Child Left Behind (NCLB) provides for families is called Public School Choice. Parents may take their child out of a low performing school or an unsafe school and transfer him/her to a different school. Public School Choice applies to any school that receives Title I funds from the federal government. Ask your school principal if your child's school receives Title I funds.

### ***Here is how school choice applies for schools in need of improvement:***

1. The law says that a school is determined to be “in need of improvement” if it has failed to meet state standards for two years in a row.

#### **For instance:**

Student's achievement is measured by standardized tests. In 2003-04, New Mexico began using Criterion Referenced Tests (CRT) based on New Mexico state content standards /benchmarks. High school students must take the NM High School Competency Exam.

New Mexico used a formula to determine how the scores should be progressing. This is called “adequate yearly progress” (AYP).

If a school's scores are NOT high enough, then the school has failed to make AYP. Schools who fail to meet AYP two years in a row are “in need of improvement.”

2. Districts must notify all parents if their school is “in need of improvement.” The information should be in a language that the parents understand.
3. School Choice applies to parents of all children, including children with disabilities, attending school “in need of improvement.”
4. The district must provide the choice of at least 2 schools that have met the state goals for achievement. Parents can select one of those schools for their child to attend and the district will pay for transportation to the new school.
5. NCLB says that if there are no other schools in the district that can accept your child, then the district has to try to make cooperating agreements with nearby districts that do have eligible schools. Even if there are no schools close enough your school must notify you if it is on New Mexico's list of schools in need of improvement.

6. School choice is available on the first day of the next school year after a school is determined to be “in need of improvement.” Parents must be informed of choice options before the beginning of that school year.

## **Here are the answers to questions parents ask about school choice:**

1. If I decide to move my child into another school, how long can s/he stay in that new school? Your child can stay in the new school as long as you choose through the highest grade offered in that school. The district will pay for transportation as long as your child’s original school remains in improvement status. If the original school makes adequate yearly progress, the district won’t provide free transportation to the new school, but your child can still stay in that school. You will then be responsible for transportation to that school.
2. What if my child’s school is the only one in our district or the next nearest school is too far away? The law says that if there are no other schools in the district that can accept your child, then the district has to try to make cooperating agreements with nearby districts that do have eligible schools. If there are no schools nearby, your school must still notify you if it is “in need of improvement.”
3. What information should I get from the eligible schools to help me make an informed decision? Visit the school. Visit with other parents who have children attending the school. Ask yourself “Do I feel welcomed in this school?” Here are some questions you can ask the principal of a school that you are considering for your child:
  - How do you deal with students who are having trouble in school?
  - How do students score in reading, math and other subjects?
  - How has achievement changed in this school over the last few years?
  - Tell me about your school’s reading and math programs.
  - What percentage of your teachers is highly qualified? Ask to see their qualifications.
  - How will you help my child prepare for college?

**The Right Question:** We need good information to make informed decisions that will help our child succeed. The best way to get information is to ask questions and listen to the answers. Asking “the right question” will help get specific information and may help to open discussions about possibilities. **Closed-ended** questions get a yes or no answer. (Does this school have monthly meetings for parents?) **Open-ended** questions create discussions. (How does your reading program help readers that are struggling?)

## **What No Child Left Behind Says About School and District Report Cards.**

Parents have a right to know about their children's progress in school each year. Report cards are used to show what a child does well and where improvement is needed. Under the **No Child Left Behind (NCLB)** schools districts must now distribute a report on how every school and the district as a whole are performing. Parents and school staff can use these new school and district report cards as tools to improve outcomes for every child.

### ***No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requires public schools to be accountable.***

1. Each fall, school districts must send out a report showing how each school and the district has performed.
2. Reports must clearly explain results in these areas:
  - a. Reading and math achievement from statewide assessments.
  - b. Subgroup results must include: race, ethnicity, and gender. English language proficiency, migrant status, disability status and low income status.
  - c. Science assessments must be in place by the school year 2007-2008.
  - d. Graduation rates
  - e. Percentage of teachers who are highly qualified.
3. Schools should hold parent meetings to explain the reports and to help parents understand their children's individual test results.

### ***What a parent can do:***

1. Make sure you receive a report. If you don't receive a report, talk to your principal or PTA/PTO/PTLE leader.
2. Review the report. If you do not understand everything in the report, ask for explanations.
3. Ask the principal to schedule a meeting to explain the results. This meeting would also be a good time for the principal and other staff to show parents how to interpret their child's individual test results.
4. Ask about the Educational Plan for Student Success (EPSS). Every school in your state must have an EPSS plan. Look for ways it addresses the information from the school and district report cards.

## **What No Child Left Behind Says About Supplemental Educational Services**

One of the provisions of No Child Left Behind that is important for parents to know about is called Supplemental Educational Services. This is extra, outside help for students who attend Title I Schools. Ask you school principal if your child’s school receives Title I funds.

Supplemental educational services must be offered to parents at the district’s expense in the second year after a school has been determined to be “in need of improvement.”

- All eligible families are offered these services. Priority for this additional help is given to low-income parents.
- The district provides money for parents to choose the provider of these extra services from a list approved by the public education department.
- The supplemental educational services provide extra help in reading, language arts or math and must not take place during school hours.
- These services can take place before or after school or on weekends. Services may include tutoring, extra classes, or special programs offered by providers in the community

### **Here are answers to questions parents ask about Supplemental Educational Services:**

#### ***How will I know if my child is eligible for these supplemental services?***

If your child attends a Title I school that is “in need of improvement,” supplemental services must be offered in the second year of this rating. As soon as your child becomes eligible for this extra help, the district should notify you and provide a list of organizations and tutors who have been approved by the state as providers.

You are free to choose any provider on the list and your school district will pay for the services to provide to your child. Churches, nonprofit organizations, private tutors, for-profit companies, and others may be on the list.

#### ***How can I learn more about the providers on the list so that I’ll be able to decide which one I want to work with my child?***

The list you receive from the school district should include information about these providers, such as their qualifications to provide the specific services and their past results. Before you choose a provider, it would be a good idea for you to talk to a few of them. Ask questions about how they will help your child. Find out how they teach the subjects that your child needs the most help with in order to be successful in school.

***How will I know if these services are helping my child?***

When you have chosen the provider you want to work with your child, you will meet with them to set some goals for your child. You will also discuss how you will be sure the goals have been met and set a timeline for getting it done.

***Will providers on the list also know how to work with students with disabilities?***

Students with disabilities must have the same access to extra services as students without disabilities. The state must be sure to include on the list of providers those who can adequately help students who need extra accommodations.

***What if my district doesn't give me this information?***

You can request information about Supplemental Educational Services offered under NCLB from you school principal or the superintendent's office.

**What No Child Left Behind Says  
About Your School District's Parent Involvement Policy**

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) became law in 2002 with the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). NCLB requires all school districts that receive Title I funds to have a written Title I parent involvement policy developed with and approved by parents of participating Title I children. This policy must be evaluated each year. It must explain how the district will involve parents in developing its Title I plan and how parents will be informed about ways they can be included in decision making for the program.

***What can parents do?***

Call your school superintendent's office to get a copy of your district's Title I parent involvement policy. Find out.

***How were parents involved in developing, approving, and reviewing the policy?***

NCLB says the policy must be developed jointly with parents, agreed on with parents, and distributed to parents in a language that they can understand.

Parents must be involved in an annual review policy to determine how effective it has been in increasing the participation of parents. Results are used to identify and plan strategies to correct barriers to parental participation.

***Does the policy explain how parents, including those with limited English proficiency, will be involved in school review and improvement?***

NCLB says that districts must state how parents will be involved in addressing academic issues for schools “in need of improvement.”

***How will the district help Title I schools engage parents in activities to improve student achievement?***

NCLB says that districts will look at how the schools are involving parents and will provide technical assistance to schools “in need of improvement” in carrying out parental involvement activities and plans.

***What does the policy require schools to do?***

The law says that schools “in need of improvement” must have school improvement plans that include ways to effectively involve parents in the schools.

***Does the policy apply only to Title I school, or to all schools in the district?***

The law says that the policy has to apply to Title I schools but parents can push to ensure that all schools are covered.

## **Get the Facts About Your District’s Parent Involvement Policy**

***How does the district connect with parent plans in programs for young children, such as Head Start, Parents as Teachers, and Even Start?***

The law says that districts must coordinate and integrate Title I parent involvement strategies with other programs for young children in the district.

***What is the district doing to build partnerships with organizations (e.g., local education funds, Boys and Girls clubs, YMCA and YWCAs, the Urban League, etc.) and businesses in activities that involve parents?***

Parent involvement has always been an integral part of Title I. Under the new law, one of the new purposes of Title I is to ensure that funds are used to promote parent involvement. Parents should take full advantage of the opportunities for involvement that the law provides.

The law requires Title I schools to ensure that each parent involvement policy statement be written together with parents, school staff, and school district personnel. This requirement enables parents to sit at the table with school administrators and other educators and write a parent involvement statement. This statement should address how the school, in partnership with parents, will promote the social, emotional, and academic growth of children. Parents are now required to be a part of the discussion about how schools will help all children meet the state's academic performance standards.

***Does the district parent involvement policy clearly explain how the district will work with schools t:***

- Explain state standards and annual test results to parents;
- Let parents know how they can be involved in the school;
- Help parents work together with teachers to make sure students making progress;
- Provide materials, information and other resources to help parents with home learning activities; and
- Find out from parents what is the best way to reach out to all parents so they can be involved as equal partners.

## **What No Child Left Behind Says About School-Parent Compacts**

No Child Left Behind Act requires every school that receives Title I funds to have a school-parent compact (agreement). It must be developed with and approved by parents of participating Title I children. It must describe how educators and parents will work together to improve student achievement. It should also state the specific responsibilities of parents, school staff and students. Ask your school principal if your child's school receives Title I funds.

***What can parents do?***

Ask to see your school's parent compact. Make sure it covers what is needed to help children served by Title I to achieve state standards. The compact should tell how...

***School will help Title I students learn.***

- Will children get extra help as soon as they need it? What kind of help will they receive?
- Is the goal of this help to make sure they catch up fully with their classmates?
- How will the school provide teachers with training and new resources to help students?
- How will the school ensure that it provides high-quality curriculum and instruction to all students?

***Teachers will inform parents about their children's progress and show families how to help their child at home.***

- At home activities might include providing a good space to study and do homework or making sure students attend school regularly.
- The law says that elementary schools must hold parent teacher conferences at least once a year. Teachers must make frequent progress reports to parents.

***Parents and teachers will work together.***

- The law says that parents must have reasonable access to staff.
- Parents should have opportunities to take part in class activities, observe their child's classroom, and volunteer in meaningful ways.

***Communication is the key to building effective partnership.***

**Under No Child Left Behind,  
Title I schools are required to:**

- Conduct an annual meeting for Title I parents to inform them about the policy, their rights under Title I, and how they can be involved in the planning, review, and improvement of Title I programs.
- Provide parents with timely information about Title I school programs, school curriculum, assessment used by the school to measure student achievement, and proficiency levels students are expected to meet.
- Respond quickly to parent requests for opportunities to meet regularly and participate in decisions about the education of their children.
- Seek parent comments about the effectiveness of the Title I program. If parents are dissatisfied with the school's Title I program plans, these comments are to be included in the report to the school district.
- Inform parents of the existence and purpose of Parental Information and Resource Centers (PIRC) to provide training, information, and support to parents and those who work with parents, districts, and schools. National PTA offers a set of researched based guidelines as a foundation for district policies and school-parent compacts.

## **What No Child Left Behind Say About Teacher/Paraprofessional Qualifications**

No Child Left Behind says that schools and district must provide parents in Title I schools with certain information about the qualifications of teachers and paraprofessionals who work with your child. Ask your school principal if your child's school receives Title I funds.

### ***Parents have a RIGHT to Know...***

At the beginning of each school year, the district must notify all parents of students in Title I schools that they may request information about their child's teachers. Parents have to right to know:

- Whether the teacher meets state qualifications for the grade or subject that he or she teaches.
- Whether the teacher has been certified under an alternate or provisional (temporary) program, rather than through a regular college or university teacher certification process.
- The teacher's major in college, what degrees he/she has earned, and in what subject area/s.
- Whether paraprofessionals provide any services to their child and, if so, their qualifications.
- In addition, every Title I school must notify parents if their child has been assigned or has been taught for more than 4 weeks in a row by a teacher who has not met "highly qualified" standards.

### ***Teacher Qualifications***

The law says that starting in the 2002-2003 school year all teachers who teach academic subjects; hired in Title I programs must be highly qualified. This means they must have the following:

- A bachelor's degree;
- Be certified to teach in the state;
- Have passed a state test on their knowledge of the subjects they teach and their teaching skills (reading, writing, mathematics at elementary school levels);
- Teachers who teach academic subjects who are hired before the 2002-2003 school year must be highly qualified by June 2006;
- Middle and high school teachers must either;
- Pass a state test in the subject they teach or have either college or graduate level course work equal to a college degree in the subject or advanced certification.

## **What No Child Left Behind Says About Programs For English Language Learners**

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) says that parents of children who are learning to speak English and who are in schools that receive Title III funds for children who have “limited English proficiently (LEP)” must be told if their child has been placed in an English language instruction program. Parents have the right to “opt out” of this placement and choose another method or program of instruction.

Parents must be notified of the following:

1. Reasons why their child has been identified as Limited English Proficient (LEP) and why their child has been placed in a LEP program.
2. The child’s level of English proficiency, including how the level was determined and how well the child is doing academically.
3. The method of teaching that will be used in the program, including other program options other than the student’s current placement.
4. How the program will meet the child’s educational strengths/needs.
5. How the program will help the child learn English and succeed in school.
6. The requirements the child must meet to leave the program, including when that will happen and when graduation from high school is expected.
7. How the program will meet objectives of an individualized education plan (IEP) for a child with a disability.
8. Parents of children who have “limited English Proficiency” must be informed by the district, in writing, about their rights which include the parents’ right to:
  - Have their child immediately removed from a language instruction program, if they request it.
  - Decide not to enroll their child in such a program, or to choose another program or method of instruction, if available.
  - Be informed of ways the district will help them select the best program for their child.

*\*The district must notify parents of children in a Title III LEP program if the program has failed to help their child make progress on annual tests. Notice must be provided within 30 days after failure occurs.*

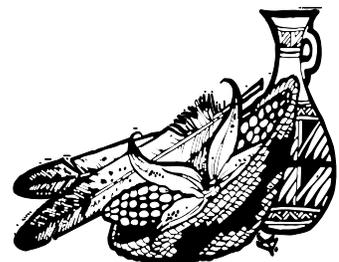
# ATTITUDES

Words can never adequately convey the incredible impact of our attitude toward life. The longer I live, the more convinced I become that life is 10 percent what happens to us and 90 percent how we respond to it.

I believe the single most significant decision I can make on a day-to-day basis in my choice of attitude. It is more important than my past, my education, my check, my successes or failures, fame or pain, what other people think of me or say about my circumstances, or my position.

Attitude keeps me going or cripples my progress. It alone fuels my fire or assaults my hope. When my attitudes are right, there's no barrier too high, no valley too deep, no dream too extreme, no challenge too great for me.

By Charles R. Swindoll



## Traditional Indian Values vs. Non Indian values

### Traditional Indian Values

Cooperation  
Group emphasis "we"  
Consensus  
Modesty  
Passive  
Patience  
Extended Family Orientation  
Generosity/ Sharing  
Non Materialistic  
Work for Current Need  
Time Always with Us  
Measured Time Unimportant  
Orientation to Present  
Non Interference  
Listening  
Non Verbal  
Pragmatic  
Informal Courtesy  
Respect for Aging  
Self Directed Humor (Clown)  
Harmony with Nature  
Spiritual/Mystical  
Religion as a Way of Life  
Indirect Criticism  
Shaming  
Extended Family Important  
Human Being Most Needy  
No Direct Eye Contact  
Spiritually Integrated Life

### Non Indian Values

Competition  
Individual Emphasis "I"  
Majority Rule  
Self Attention  
Active  
Aggressiveness  
Nuclear Family Orientation  
Saving  
Materialistic  
Work for The sake of Work  
Use Every Minute  
Time/Schedules Very Important  
Orientation to Future  
Interference  
Speaking  
Verbal  
Theoretical  
Formal Politeness  
Desire for youthfulness  
Other-Directed Humor (Roast)  
Conquest Over Nature  
Skeptical  
Religion as a Segment of Life  
Direct Criticism  
Guilt  
Nuclear Family Important  
Human Being Above Creation  
Direct Eye Contact  
Political Efforts to Separate



## TEN TRUTHS OF PARENT INVOLVEMENT

01. All parents have hopes and goals for their children.  
They differ in how they support their children's efforts to achieve those goals.
02. Home is one of several spheres that simultaneously influence a child.  
The school must work with other spheres for the child's benefit, not push them apart.
03. The parent is the central contributor to a child's education.  
Schools can either co-opt that role or recognize the potential of the parent.
04. Parent involvement must be a legitimate element of education.  
It deserves equal emphasis with elements such as program improvement and evaluation.
05. Parent involvement is a process, not a program of activities.  
It requires ongoing energy and effort.
06. Parent involvement requires a vision, a policy, and a framework.  
A consensus of understanding is important.
07. Parents' interaction with their own children is the cornerstone of parent involvement. A program must recognize the value, diversity, and difficulty of this role.
08. Most barriers to parent involvement are found within school practices.  
They are not found within parents.
09. Any parent can be "hard to reach." Parent must be identified and approached individually; they are not defined by gender, ethnicity, family situation, education, or income.
10. Successful parent involvement nurtures relationships and partnerships.  
It strengthens bonds between home and school, parent and educator, parent and child, school and community.

The National Community Education Association, 1996, developed these "truths" to guide schools in their parent involvement efforts.

# *Din4* Perspectives on Parental Leadership



Everything in the environment reacts to one another to "move." *Ni'asdz11n* reacts to light, air, and moisture provided from *Yadijhi* above. She bears plants, fruits, and pollen in her response. Pollen from various plants mixes and responds to one another to produce fruits, similar for the human species. Mothers respond to the loving care of their mates, the Fathers. Children are the fruits of their affection. The observation is scientific.



## *Din4* Perspectives on Parental Leadership

Since 1868, a century and half old Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) motility and transformation movement has transformed the *Din4* Way of the clan society rearing and raising our children over the years. The belief ‘*that children are children of time*’ and are responsibilities of clan society to rear and mold so they possess strong characters, positive personalities and motivated to enjoy life has but diminished to “*A[ki’d11n 47 kO’t’44go a’dahjil88 nid3,*” a historical reference. It is up to us to rekindle and make it “alive” for our children.

*Din4* elders and medicine people recall the traditional demonstration of leadership in the *hane’* of Changing Woman, *Asdz11n Nad[eehi-Yoo[gai Asdz11n*. They recalled her entering the physical living world long ago and demonstrating for the Five Fingered People how children should be nurtured and cared for so that they become healthy people to reproduce. First Woman and First Man volunteered to be the guardian for *Asdz11n Nad[eehi* at the very early age. The Holy Ones, other living beings, assisted by gathering edible plants, roots, fruits, and leaves and fed her. Others entertained, played, and planned growth celebration events for her. Everyone played a distinct role in molding and physically caring for her. When *Asdz11n Nad[eehi* became of age to marry; everyone attended displaying “ownership.” She was a daughter; a grandchild; and *awee’* to everyone.

Soon after her passages into womanhood, *Asdz11n Nad[eehi-Yoo[gai Asdz11ni* gave birth to twin sons, *Naayeenisghani* and *To’bajishchinii*. *Haashch’44y11[ti’7, Haashch’44ishzhini, Haashch’4’awaan, N4’aashj’i’7 Asdz11n* and their mother reared, cared and molded the Twins. Again, the group demonstrated “ownership” for the health, safety, and appropriate character development of the Twins. *Haashch’44y11[ti’7* engaged them in activities developing strong healthy consciousness. *Haashch’44ishzhini* engaged them in activities developing strong emotional control and endurance. *Haashch’e’awaan* engaged them in activities developing the importance of being humble and being a member of a large family. *N4’aashj’i’7 Asdz11n* played the role of a loving and understanding grandmother. The Twins developed balance between aggression, a need to question, bravery, persistence, assertion, and to honor those deserving it. For a century prior to exposure to western-eastern culture, the People strived through difficult times and reared generation after generation of strong and healthy children through this belief and practice.

It is told that leadership is also identified for women and men at *Haj’ne7*, the place of emergence, when the Holy People placed certain constellations in the sky. First Man placed the male revolver, bigger dipper, Ursa Major, in the northeastern sky directly across the Cassiopeia, the female revolver, and placed their fire hearth between them, the North Star, Polaris. As the constellation rotates around Polaris throughout the year, the earth surface people observed the process for growth from spring, summer, fall and winter. Their observance tells them spring, begins new life, *Ha’n7s3*, when Cassiopeia is visible in the northern-eastern sky in early April evening sky and emerges into the summer moons, *Anoohs44[*, continuous growth. Fall begins when Ursa Major replaces Cassiopeia in early October sky, *Nin7s3*, maturity and harvesting activities as well as winter ceremonies begins, *S3*, reaching old age. The constellation pattern depicts distinct roles and responsibilities of male, female and children.

The pattern is understood to demonstrate the importance of knowing proper roles and responsibilities of female and male. Women have the capabilities of bringing new life into the world. Their major role is to mother and to nurture the mental, physical, and spiritual development of her young ones along with grandmothers, aunts, and older siblings. They provide securities for little ones to grow healthy, safely, and in a risk free environment as they nurture the total child. When the child is older and becomes capable to performing small tasks around the home, father, grandfather, and uncles provide a positive environment with enriched activities promoting development of self identity, self respect, self concept, being responsible, and having compassion for the living world and for things that are considered sacred to the family.

The corner stones for *Din4* Way of Life are place within the four directions. It is the responsibility of the guardians to unlock the understanding of *Nits1h1kees*, *Nahat'1*, *&in1*, and *Sihasin* and apply the concepts to teaching the children *T'11h0ij7't'44go Y1'ah't'eego jin1 dooleef*. *Nits1h1kees* refers to forming the ability to reason, to become cognitive, to gain intellect and thereby, apply that to organizing, projecting, and planning, *Nahat'1*. This field is applying the ability to maneuver a concept to operation and doing. *in1* is applying *all* to demonstrate self-sufficient and the ability to survive on your own. *Sihasin* is appreciating *all* that life has taught you. *T'11h0ij7't'44go Y1'ah't'eego jin1 dooleef* is referring to "successful living for one to achieve however way he/she chooses to do so".

Traditional interpretation of all *Hane'* is that the roles of the woman and male in child rearing and development are on "equal" terms. The woman nurtures the embryo in her womb and gives birth to the infant. She continues to nurture the small child out of the cradle board with her songs, stories, and games. Everyone in the home becomes a teacher when the child becomes mobile, learning to walk and talk and understand. The woman's role is to nurture the tender development: mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually as the child grows from her womb to cradleboard, to home, and to outside environment. The male's role is, also, to nurture the child from the home and to outside activity depending on the gender of the child. His role and involvement intensifies after the child leaves the cradleboard. He spends more time with the child. As he works, sings, tells stories, talks, and plays with the child. The father is as much involved in the mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual development of child as the mother. Grandparents, uncles and aunts are included. In fact, the child is the child of the matriarchal society. The whole clan should feel obligated, responsive, and willing to be apart of the 'total' development of the child. The work of the family is then reflected in the child's attitude and behavior as he/she matures. The roles of parents and the extended family members are understood through the creation story, the story of Changing Woman, the story of the Twins, the story of grandmother spider, the story of sun, moon, and the stars, and, most of all, in the holistic formation of the mountains creating a home and the time process visible in the day, night, and seasons.

Understanding the traditional *Hane'*, we come to know that "*Children are indeed Children of Time*" and we have the responsibility to nurture them holistically so they become the people of the next generation and to the generation after that as time has recorded the existence of the *Din4* from beginning of time.



## **Facts About the Effects of Parent Involvement:**

- Families provide the primary learning environment.
- Children's education improves student achievement.
- Involvement is most effective when it is comprehensive, supportive, long lasting, and well planned.
- The benefits of parent involvement are not limited to early childhood or the elementary level; there are continuing positive effects through high school and college.
- Involve parents in supporting their children's education at home is not enough. Parents must be involved at all levels in the schools to ensure the quality of schools as institutions serving the children to be appropriate.
- Children from low-income and culturally and racially diverse families have the most to gain when schools involve parents. The extent of parent involvement in a child's education is more important to student success than family income or education.
- We cannot look at the school and the home in isolation from one another; families and schools need to collaborate to help children adjust to the world of school. This is particularly critical for children from families with different cultural and language backgrounds.



## Components in Parent Involvement Project

Parents of **ALL** schools stand behind a distinctive brand of parental-family involvement. The Navajo Nation Department of *Din4* Education believes parents and communities are owners of their schools and supports partnership in developing and using these traits for meaningful parent involvement:

**Equal Partners** - *Azh4'4 d00 Am1, Am1 s1ni, Acheii, An1I7 t'aa a'Itsoi nanitiin* (father, mother, maternal grandmother, grandfather, paternal grandparents all are teachers) and should equally and actively engaged partners with communities and schools, not passive, external constituents of their public education system. Actively participate. The effort is best compared to *Nits1h1kees Aln44h* (thinking process) around the family meal in a large *hooghan* (home) setting.

**Proactive Problem-Solvers** - *Azh4'4 d00 Am1, Am1 s1n7, Acheii, An1I7* should move beyond reactive, help-only-when-asked mode to identify problems and bring their talents and ideas to the school policy table, not just the homework table or a fundraising activity. Take "ownership" of your school and the education of your children. The effort is *Nahat'1 Aln44h* (planning).

**Effective Decision-Makers** - *Azh4'4 d00 Am1, Am1 s1n7, Acheii, An1I7* should be available resources and ideas to work with educators to define and analyze issues and find solutions in *Nahat'1 Aln44h*. This is to sustain the Navajo culture, language, and way of life for the future of our children.

**Standard Raisers** - *Azh4'4 d00 Am1, Am1 s1n7, Acheii, An1I7* should challenge mediocrity at every level in schools by setting high standards (state and Navajo Nation Department of *Din4* Education) and help students and educators meet the standards. We have Navajo teachers that have not learned their culture and do not speak the Navajo language. Parents and elders are the teachers in both Navajo and English.

**Mentors to Other Parents and Teachers** - *Azh4'4 d00 Am1, Am1 s1n7, Acheii, An1I7* should pave the way for ongoing and significant involvement at all levels of the school by creating welcome spaces and meaningful roles for more parents to become involve in the school setting, *&in1 Aln44h* (application process).

**Committed to Diversity in Action** - *Azh4'4 d00 Am1, Am1 s1n7, Acheii, An1I7* crosses racial, cultural, and socioeconomic lines to develop partnerships among parents that are needed to effectively promote the best education for all students, *&in1 Aln44h*.

**Think Nationally and Act Locally** - *Azh4'4 d00 Am1, Am1 s1n7, Acheii, An1I7* as parents-guardians work as part of a national effort and share resources and ideas with other parents across the nation, *Sih1sin bilnits1h1kees* (assessment process).

**Community Advocates** - *Azh4'4 d00 Am1, Am1 s1n7, Acheii, An1I7* should answer a civic duty to help make all schools effective for all children and be strong anchors of their communities, *Sih1sin bilnits1h1kees*.



## The *Din4* Essential Components

Parent coordinators, parent liaisons, educators, school administrators and school board members have identified four essential components that should be part of every parent involvement effort. To be effective, parents, principals, and teachers should participate in:

**Component 01.** *Nits1h1kees & 'doln7i/*' – Getting People Involved

**Component 02.** *Nahat1 & 'doln7i/* – Sustaining Involvement

**Component 03.** *lin1 B1yat'7 & 'do[n7i/* – Building Leadership

**Component 04.** *Sihodinzin b1hol= dooleef* – Reflecting Efforts

Each component is by itself critical and takes special consideration, to all the components need to be addressed for your parent involvement program to be effective and sustaining. The components are not meant to be tackled in a linear fashion or be mutually exclusive. Your parent involvement program, no matter where it is in its development, should include aspects of all four components.

You will find many published guidelines or steps for starting and maintaining parent involvement programs, including the National Parent Teacher Association's (PTA) National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs and Joyce Epstein's "Six" Types of Parent Involvement: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with community. These steps are very useful and are emphasized at the state and national level.

Whether you, as a team, choose one of these processes or none at all, the Essential Components - *Nits1h1kees & 'doln7i/* - Getting parent involved; *ahat1 & 'doln7i/* - Sustaining parent involvement; *lin1 B1yat'7 & 'do[n7i/* - Building parent leadership; and *Sihodinzin b1hol= dooleef* – should be continuous threads woven into any parent involvement activity.

The next sections contain some practical tips on working with each of these *Din4* Essential Components for building effective parent involvement.



## Component 01. *Nits1h1kees & 'doln7i'* Getting People Involved

Traditional concept and understanding in placing tangible object in place for life to journey is recited in songs and prayers coinciding with the four cardinal directions of which the sacred life *hooghan* is build and exists today. *Nits1h1kess* is the first step in life progression following the Sun's Pathway of Life (*Hozh00jii*) for everyone in the home.

1. Begin with a meeting of teachers, administrators, department heads, parent coordinator, culture and language teachers, school board members, and parent liaison. Discuss the possibilities of creating Parent and School Leadership for Education Committee.
2. Decide on administering a short survey to be given to the academic and support services school staff, parents, and school board. (Sample of survey forms included in the appendix section)
3. Identify a room where Parent Committee will meet and find resources. Supply the room with necessary material and equipment to conduct planning meetings: calendar, bulletin board, chairs, table, filing cabinets, paper, pens, tape, computer, etc. Schedule a meeting with school staff, one with the parents, and a joint meeting to share the survey information.
4. Share the students' reading, math, and language statistics at various grade levels in graphs and compare to show where the students are functioning in those areas.
5. Define the tasks of Parent and School Leadership for Education Committee. Identify officers for the committee. Identify roles and responsibilities for the group and begin viewing samples of bylaws.
6. Generate a list of resources and identify areas where consultants will be helpful. Identify concerned, enthused, and eager parents and send out invitations to attend. Make personal contact to recruit members to the committee.
  - a. Provide refreshments and evening entertainment by students.
  - b. Generate a list of purposes for forming the committee.
  - c. Identify standing committees to work on various areas: soliciting funds, creating bylaws, identifying consultants, forming culture advisory group, etc.
7. Define name of the group, identify purpose, set goals, and begin forming Action Plan.
8. Collect data on members. Brain storm and listen to voices of the parents and voices of the teachers on parent projects that will focus on family history, culture, way of life, and necessary training, or workshops for development.

9. Set expectations high, dream the impossible, plan to move mountains - meaning it is not impossible to organize and write a proposal to obtain funds to run an effective parental involvement-parental leadership program.

## **Five Guiding Principles for Parent/School Leadership for Education**

1. Parents are not only their child's first teachers, but are also on ongoing teachers and influence lifelong habits.
2. Parents have important knowledge about their child's likes, dislikes, needs, and problems that the school may not be aware of. They may have ideas for improving the child's school.
3. Parents and teachers share the same goal: the academic success of children and to mold the children to become life-long learners.
4. Parents and teachers share the objectives when it comes to the education of children. They can increase each other's understanding and enrich the learning of children.
5. Parents and teachers in culture/language, math, writing and reading workshops not only builds a sense of community but also renews an enthusiasm for learning and self-development.
6. Strong parent involvement is not a question of 'Should we' but rather a question of 'How should we?'

The following pages outlines procedures in getting started in the Navajo perspectives.

) *hoo'aah Bibee Haz'1anii B1 Bik'eh ! hoolyaa /Din4 Education Guidelines*  
*Hooghan d00 ) Ita'j9' Ahina'anish /Home and School Working Together*

) *hoo'aah Bibee Haz'1anii B1 Bik'eh ! hoolyaa / Din4 Education Guidelines.*

*Hooghan d00 ) Ita'ji' ! hilna'anish /Home and School Working Together*

*Ba'1[ch7n7 7l7inii binahat'a' t'11 1yis7 7l9igo b1 bi[ Olta'go binahj8' y4ego b7d47t'i' d00 1d7id44lt'i' dooleef.* The primary responsibility of the parent and community is to participate actively in developing, planning, and evaluating the educational programs and activities of the school. Parental and community participation in the planning process will be used to strengthen their children's education.

### *Binda'doonish /Duties*

*Ba'1[ch7n7 7l7inii d00 O[ta'7 t'11 b7* the parents and school personnel will coordinate the development of the school / community working relations policies for the school.

*Hooghand00 ) Ita'j8' ! hi[na'anish Bibee haz'1anii hadeiididool77]*  
Form the By Laws, Mission and Vision statement for school / community relations policies.

) *[ta'7 d00 ba'1[ch7n7 7l7inii Ohoo'aah bindii'a' atah hadeiididool77].* The school, parents, and the community will participate in the development of the school philosophy, By Laws, Mission /Vision statement and goals.

) *[ta'7 d00 ba'1[ch7n7 7l7inii 47 Din4 Be'iina' d00 Saad Hooly44[ b7na'niltin atah hadeiididool77].* The school, parents, and the community will participate in the development of the school's *Din4* Way of Life and Language program.

) *[ta'7 d00 ba'1[ch7n7 7l7inii, O[ta'7 bik'i' ad4est'99'doo7g7 bibee haz'1anii atah hadeiididool77].* The school, parents, and the community will participate in the development of the student, parent, and employees' code of conduct policies.

*Ba'1[ch7n7 7l7inii d00 O[ta'gi naalnish Ohoo'aahigi binaanish ayosin7g7 ahij 77shj1n7 77'98 dooleef.* The parents, community and school personnel will communicate information about school activities, programs and issues.

) *[ta'7 y7hool'aah7g7 d00 binaanish 1y0sin7g7 ba'1[ch7n7 7l7inii [ahd00 yinaha'11 d00 yinaalnish dooleef].* The students, staff, parents and the community will be directly involved in the educational programs and activities of the school.

### *N1k'22s /Monitoring and Evaluation*

) *Ita'7 t'11 b7d00 ba'1[ch7n7 7l7inii d00 Olta'gi naalnishi Hooghand00 Olta'j8'A[hi[na'anish bibee haz'1anii d00 Olta'7 bik'i'ad4est'99 bibee haz'1anii atah n7n47k'2s dooleef].* There will be an annual review and evaluation of the School / Community relations policies and student, parents and school personnel conduct by a committee consisting of students, parents, community members, and school personnel.



## Component 02. *Nahat1* & *'doln7il* Sustaining Involvement

Traditional *Din4* leadership is an expression of the unity of values placed within the four cardinal directions. *Nahat'1* is placed within the southern direction within the sky-blue day when various type of work is performed implementing life skills to journey life's pathway. Developing enthusiasm for work, habits, and creativity is to enjoy life.

In the *Din4* communities, spirituality and services to the community are the most basic qualities against which effective leaders are judged. In traditional *Din4* culture, spirituality is a core element of leadership. Leaders are chosen for character, knowledge, experience, and commitment to a community. Individuals do not seek leadership or exercise power by commanding authority over others. Leaders are chosen by consensus, based on the skills, knowledge, experience, and commitment needed by a community at any given time.

Leaders historically have not been self-selected but carefully nurtured and nourished by the clan society. Potential leaders are taught that from early in their youth. A community belief was that after a selection of a leader, observation, preparation, participation, communication validates a person's ability to lead. Who better knows the needs and who from their own people could best serve their current and future needs if they rear one of their own to lead. This is compatible with those who enter the field of community leaders at the local level.

Basic key principles to consider when developing partnerships for common goals is to remember:

- Valuing one another is to **respect**;
- Valuing and strengthening one another is to **listen**;
- Valuing is build **trust** through participation (not words only);
- Valuing is building **relationship**;
- Valuing is to recognize and respect *Din4* styles of **communication, acceptance, and participate** defining working with/or working for others.



## Identify and list the *Din4* cultural strengths:

### **Elders and Oral Tradition**

Elders were the ‘libraries’ of knowledge, historians, and traditionalists. The traditional way of life was not explained, but lived and included a way of understanding the rest of the world by being engaged in activities. In the traditional way younger folks did not question the elders and over time learned what they needed to know through observation and listening. This is difficult in contemporary times because the needs and voices of youth are different than the era from which our elders gained their wisdoms.

### **Non-Interference**

Communication styles are strongly influenced by this and silence is valued to a point of demonstrating full understanding and feeling confident enough to participate. Observation and non-competition interactions are the norm that leads to misunderstanding in instances where the dominated culture values direct aggressive leadership styles. Encourage everyone to participate.

### **Family and Kinship**

Traditionally the relationships of family, clans/kinship, tribes, and land base held the framework for one’s sense of self. Today we see remnants of the extended family system in various styles. Children are born to a particular clan society and are reared by clan families. Parents, grandparents, uncles, and aunts may demonstrate ownership.

### **Leadership**

Effective leadership in *Din4* communities takes into account that leadership is shared by many and not sought by the individual, but by the community. Leadership is not administered by command or authority, but by example and through consensus. Elders are thought to be leaders, spokespersons, or clan caretakers because of their wisdom and experience. They are leaders of their clan society.

### **Geographic Ties**

Early history tells us that clan families moved with their herd of sheep for better and more abundant forage and by doing this summer and winter residences were identified. Furthermore, spring and fall home-grazing sites were established. In contemporary times, the practice identifies the clan family’s “customary use” areas. Navajo people identify with certain areas of their “customary use” and are passed down to children and grandchildren. This creates stability of community-school membership. The same people are active in more than one committee in the community.

### **Spirituality**

*Din4* view of the world and existence is in dramatic form of beautiful colors, designs, patterns, rhythms, poems, and prose and are found in stories, songs, games, ceremonies, and ways of life. The people understand ‘self-appreciation’ is to ‘discipline’ your self.

**) hoo'aah Bindii'a' B1 Bik'eh ! hoolyaa**

Formulating By Laws Guidelines

**) hoo'aah Bindii'a'**

School Philosophies, By Laws, Mission, Vision and Belief Statement

**) hoo'aah Bindii'a' / School Philosophies, By Laws, Mission, Vision and Belief Statement**

**) hoo'aah Bindii'a' B1 K'eh ! hoolyaa** / Develop the By Laws, Mission, Vision and Belief Statement

**) hoo'aah bindii'1 hadiln4h7g7 baa hwiin7'88h** / An initial planning meeting will be held to develop the By Laws, Mission and Vision Statement

**T'11 a[ts0 Din4 bi Ohoo'aah b7dad47'i'7g7 bida'doolnih.** / the community people will be notified of the planning and development of the By Laws, Mission and Vision Statement and Belief Statement of the School / Teacher Leadership for Education.

**Yinidadoolnish7g7 a[k44' ni'ahidoo'ni].** / A committee representing all parties will be formed.

**Hadiln4h7gi 1t'4ego b44h0zin doolee[.** / An outline of the content of the By Laws, Mission or Vision, Belief statement will be developed by the committee.

**Hadiln44h** / Planning, coordinating, communicating, collaborating, and development.

**) Ita' Bi') hoo'aah Bindii'a' hadidooln7[.** / By Laws, Mission, Vision and Belief Statements will be developed.

**! da'dool77g7 b44h0zin doolee[. D77 a[k44' daasdoh7g7 da'atahgo a[k44'ni'ahidoo'ni]. : Ota'7, ba'1lch7n7 77inii, ) Ita'gi naalnishi d00 Olta'binaag00 k44hat'7nii.** / The committee will consist of students, parents, school personnel and other community members.

**A[k44'ni'ah7'nil7g7 Ohoo'aah bindii'a' hadeididoo77[ Din4 b7ni'bee[ft'ehh7gi 1t4ego.** /Committee will plan, develop, and evaluate the By Laws, Mission, Vision and Belief statements in accordance with the consensus of the parents, school staff and the community.

**) Ita'7 d7igi at'4ego Ohoo[ '32 doolee[.** / The expected outcome will be as follows:

<b>Bee nabidi'nitin7g7 47:</b>	/	With the knowledge everyone concerned will:
<b>Yee nits4kees doolee[</b>	/	Develop cognitive skills
<b>Yee 1da1nahat'1a doolee[</b>	/	Develop ability to plan
<b>Yee 1k'inidid1a doolee[</b>	/	Develop self sufficiency
<b>Yee 1t4e doolee[</b>	/	Develop self determination
<b>Yee 1di[nid]98 doolee[</b>	/	Develop self respect
<b>Yee k'en7dzin doolee[</b>	/	Develop appropriate social skills
<b>Yee na'nitin doolee[</b>	/	Develop ability to teach other.

### Bee L3 Aleeh / Approval step

) *hoo'aah bindii'a' bee l3 adoolee[* / Approval of By Laws, Mission, Vision and Belief Statement.

*A[tsog hadilyaago, Olta'7 d00 ba'1lch7n7 7198niigi d00 o[ta'gi naalnishii d00 binaad66'bi[ n47d0oltah 1adi7inda yee [1'7 doolee[.* / Upon completion, the By Laws, Mission, Vision and Belief statement will be thoroughly reviewed by students, parents, school personnel, and community members before it is presented to the School board for final approval.

*! adi 7inda bee [1'7 asdl9'7g7 Olta'binanit'a'7 yee l3 da'doo[ee[.* / After initial approval by the community, the By Laws, Mission, Vision and Belief statement will be presented to the school Board for final approval.

*Binahj8'nanitin h0l=- y1'1t'4ehgo bee da'doonish biniy4 da, baa ah44hwiid7n0odz88[.* After the By Laws, Mission, Vision, and Belief Statement has been approved by the board, the community may wish to extend their appreciation.

### Bee Da'doonish / Implementation

) *hoo'aah bindii'a' bee da'doonish* / Implement the By Laws, Mission, Vision and Belief Statement

) *hoo'aah bindii'a' 47 t'11 altso b7dad44t'i'7g7 bi[ 7shj1n7 adooln77[.* Everyone should be familiar with the By Laws, Mission, Vision and Belief Statements.

) *hoo'aah bindii'a' hadilyaa7g7 t'11 hooghand00 Olta'j7 d00 ak'ee'22 hodees'1ago t'1a a[tsog00 binahj8 anoot'77l doolee[.* The By Laws, Mission, Vision and Belief Statement is to be used in daily interaction and instruction in the school, the home, and the community.

*T'11 a[ahj8' Ohoo'aah bindii'a' benahj8' oonish7g7 7shj1n7 oolzin doolee[.* The working of the By Laws, Mission, Vision and Belief Statement are to be apparent in daily interaction of the school personnel, the home, and the community.

### N1k'22s / Monitoring and Evaluation

) *hoo'aah b7ndii'a' n7dook'2s.* / The By Laws, Mission, Vision and Belief Statement will be monitored and evaluated and updated on an annual basis.

*Hazh0'0 binahji' nid'anish biniy4 b1'Olta'7 d00 t'11 1kwe'4 nin11dishj77 t'11 nih1h1h11 bik'eh ahil n7day0ltah doolee[.* / Before the beginning of the school year, the By Laws, Mission, Vision and Belief Statements will be thoroughly reviewed. At the beginning of the school year, the committee will orient the school staff to ensure that the school abides by the statements.

*D99' n7n1h1h1ahgo h11hidooln77[ d00 bee l3 n1'1d[eeh doolee[.* / In addition to the annual review, the committee will re-evaluate the school philosophy every four years, making revisions as needed.



### Component 03. *lin1 B1'yat'7 & do[n7i]* Implementing Leadership skills

*Am1 d00 Azhe'e' Naat'11ni Nid[9]*, Parent leadership is the key to family involvement in schools. The value of *lin1* is placed within the yellow-evening twilight to the west along with roles and responsibilities of parenting. In implementing the value of *lin1*, a child is required to demonstrate the use of kinship with his/her primary and extended family members. *Ach47* and *Amasan7* dictate the clan requirements.

Along with parent and grandparent leadership comes a feeling of clan “ownership,” therefore, workshop agendas that truly reflect the interests and concerns of parents and grandparents, program longevity, and the intellectual and emotional resources of the larger community will be motivating. Parent leaders can significantly increase family involvement in any school; they can launch parent involvement workshops, help plan special community-school events, and make positive contributions to the general learning climate of the school. Many parents find another parent’s voice authoritative, and parent leaders who are knowledgeable about curriculum can be especially helpful in explaining classroom practice and gaining other parents’ support. Beyond the individual classroom and school, parent leadership is crucial to maintain funding, develop other parent leaders, and institutionalize the family-school connection.

Parent liaison, parent coordinator, bilingual/bicultural teacher, and school principal meet to initiate plans for local PTLE units. The same group initiates plans for district or regional PTLE council where plans for parental educational and leadership workshops, training, and conferences will take place. In trying to build district-level parent leadership, there are barriers at every turn: shortage of funds, lack of space, very little participation, and/or high rates of mobility. These are, however, the same barriers that exist at the classroom level, so we decided to approach parental education and leadership development the same way; through workshops where participants have ownership of their agenda.

Leadership workshops will use the same kind of methodology as other parent project workshops, focusing on developing speaking, writing and reading skills and doing community building activities: group working, and developing ownership of the task by all participants. A designated meeting room; journals; calendars; note pad; pens, or tote bags may give parents a good start. To motivate parents and to display good selection of recommended books, PTLE units can begin or end meetings by sharing read-aloud favorites, high interest books or poems written in the Navajo or English language



## Component IV. *Sihasin B1hol= dooleef* Reviewing / Reflecting

Best Practice questions have significant impact because they can guide planning and implementation of effective parent involvement. For each parent involvement activity or practice plan, apply the suggested questions. Use your answers to assess whether that activity or practice contributes to effective parent involvement. They are questions to guide planning and implementation.

### **How does the practice:**

1. Demonstrate the attitude that parents are owners of the schools? How does it improve the working relationships with teachers, administrators, policymakers and the community members?
2. Yield new skills for parents that help improve schools and boost student achievement?
3. Provide opportunities for the effective involvement of all parents, especially those not typically at the decision-making table?
4. Bring about district level action that benefits all children?
5. Affect student performance directly or indirectly?
6. Affect the practice of teachers, principals or superintendent directly or indirectly?
7. Improve the process of inclusive decision-making directly or indirectly?
8. Build confidence and inspire hope in public education?

Some schools value parent involvement by providing numerous opportunities for parents to interact with each other, with teachers, and with students. Your child's school can provide ideas on how to participate. One important way you can become involved in your child's schooling is to exercise any choices available in the selection of course work, programs, or even schools. Many schools are moving toward "school-based" management," in which administrators share the responsibilities for operating schools with teachers, students, parents, and community members. You can become involved in committees that govern your child's school or join the local PTA (parent-teacher association).



## **The Guiding Principles of: Parent-Teacher Leadership For Education Projects**

- Leadership is accomplished by “doers” rather than by “talkers.”
- Leadership may be provided in numerous ways.
- Parent leaders can effectively train other parents to be leaders.
- Leadership principles demonstrate that generally it is not productive to separate parents from teachers—and this includes leadership training as well.

The project may begin with Local Units (PTA, PAC, PIC, or PTLE) coordinated by parent liaisons, parent coordinators, parent involvement coordinators, and/or chairpersons of the recognized parent organization. The group should organize, adopt the committee bylaws and begin meeting monthly. The parent coordinators explain the goals and benefits of parent leadership. Each school identifies a team of five people, ideally, with a mix of parents and teachers as well as the school’s Parent Coordinator (if there is one). Each team participant may commit to two different kinds of monthly meetings. The first may be with the three to five other school teams (Regional Council) and focus on leadership issues and strategies for implementing school-specific Parent Involvement Projects. The second meeting would be at the individual school site and would serve to inform the rest of the school community about the project. Through grants, a school or an organization maybe able to offer participants stipends as a way of acknowledging substantial time and work on the Parent-Teacher Leadership for Education project. Three activities need to be accomplished in order for the project to be successful.

Regional Council is make up three to five schools’ parent representatives meeting with three to five parent coordinators, school’s liaisons, school board members and community. The group should begin to organize with elected officers, an adoption of their bylaws and procedures. The group may meet once a month and advance to eventually once a quarter. This planning group is to focus on educational training for parents. Planned parent summaries; regional conferences, field trips to universities, and etc. Some of the benefits are:

- Build relationships between parents and teachers should lead to building relationships between schools to schools.
- Support Local Units in their feeling that they have something valuable to contribute on a larger scale.
- Achieve meaningful and relevant results.

# Empowering Values of the Diné Individual

## Hózhqoqjłk'ehgo Nanitin (Blessing Way Teachings)

**Há áhwiinít'í**  
*Be generous and kind.*

**K'ézhnidzin**  
*Acknowledging and respecting kinship and clanship.*

**Hane'zhdindzin**  
*Seek traditional knowledge and traditions.*

**Hwił (hol) ilí**  
*Respecting Values.*

**áda hozhdłzin**  
*Respecting the sacred nature of the self.*

**Hazaad baa áhojilyá**  
*Having reverence and care of speech.*

**Hazhó'ó ajítsts'áá'**  
*Being a careful listener.*

**Ahééh jinízin**  
*Being appreciative and thankful.*

**Hanitsékees k'ézdongo ájósin**  
*Having a balance perspective and mind.*

**Há hózhq**  
*Showing positive feelings toward others.*

**Dloh hodichí yá'átéhígí hazhó'ó bee yájiłti'**  
*Expression of appropriate and proper sense of humor.*

**ádił jídlí**  
*Maintaining strong reverence of the self.*

**Hanaanish ájłfinii bízhneedłí**  
*Maintaining enthusiasm and motivation for one's work.*

**Hanaanish baa hááh jinízin**  
*Protect and care for one's work.*

## Naayée'eeek'ehgo Nanitin (Protection Way Teachings)

**Doo hwil hóyéeda**  
*Never be lazy.*

**Doo ádahozhdeeláa da**  
*Never be impatient.*

**Doo t'áadoole'é bich'í' ni' jíłłi da**  
*Do not be hesitant.*

**Doo hání jizh'áa da**  
*Never be easily hurt.*

**Doo ák'e' jidłfi da**  
*Never be overly emotional.*

**Doo ni' na'áhozhdiilté da**  
*Do not be overly reluctant.*

**Doo adááh yájiłti' da**  
*Never be overly argumentative.*

**Dadłłzinii jidłsin**  
*Respect the sacred.*

**Doo t'áadoole'é áde' ájilnéeh da**  
*Do not overburden the self.*

**ázhdiłt'is**  
*Have self discipline and be prepared for challenges.*

**Na'ádízhnítaah**  
*Asserting the potential.*

**Doo yázhnízin da**  
*Do not be shy.*

**Doo njichxq' da**  
*Do not get mad.*

**Doo ách'í' ni'jodłfi da**  
*Do not carry around expectations of negative circumstances.*

In order to accommodate the language and role differentials, begin Parent-Teacher Leadership for Education projects by involving several school teams at local level to work through problem solving project. The project of Parent Teacher Leadership for Education is to set goals, and know how often the group will meet for leadership training. To begin building a sense of educational community ownership, the groups may list other issues such as: “Building Trust,” “Identifying the Barriers,” “Communication between Parents and Teachers,” “Defining Parent Leadership Project,” “Defining Parental Involvement,” “What it Means to be a Leader,” “Time Management,” “Being Assertive with Grace,” and hosting parent conferences.



## Parent Projects

### A **WORKSHOP** Approach to Parent Involvement

Parental involvement strengthens the link between home and school. To achieve this goal parents need to be introduced to the revitalized classroom. Using a workshop/process model, parents become involved with their children’s classroom activities and support their children’s education. The workshops ensure participant ownership of a program’s overall agenda while providing long-term structures for support and continued development.

Prior to calling the first official meeting of Local Unit PTLE or Regional PTLE Council, parents and teachers should have designed an **Action Plan** including the follow items but not limited to:

01. Provide a framework for implementing ways to get parents involved and informed;
02. Identify objective to connect parents with progressive education and changes in today’s classroom;
03. Complete source-book for teachers and principals that provides materials for conducting parent workshops in writing, reading, self-esteem, and community-building;
04. Provides a detailed description of what the workshop approach is and how it functions;  
and
05. Include reproducible workshop handouts in easy reading and understanding formats.

# Bridges Between Home And School



Home values and life principles are essential for all *Diné* youth to know and demonstrate in daily life. Demonstration of proper family values: respect, responsible, cherish, and recognition of leadership among relatives.

Traditional Family Values are being:

Respectful,  
Responsible,  
Compassionate,  
Honorable, and  
Honest.

Being formally educated in the eastern/western culture may reflect:

Reading;  
Writing;  
Speaking the English language;  
Being assertive;  
Having a financial plan;  
Having money in the bank;  
Owning a home and having two cars;  
Being independent at old age;  
Being self sufficient:





## BRIDGES TO SCHOOL

For some children, starting school is an adventure full of inconsistencies and contradictions between the world of home and a new world of expectation and strangers. For a parent, a child's first days of school recall a mixture of memories and bring up a host of concerns for the child's success. If a teacher, principal or superintendent is a foreigner, unaware of the local *Din4* culture and way of life, then it is a must they acculturated into the *Din4* Way of Life before working with Navajo children and family.

For a principal, unaware of the *Din4* culture and Way of Life, the new school year presents many delicate decisions and tests his/her skills at meeting the needs of a tentative children and questioning parents. Aware that he/she needs to gain a better understanding of the experiences that school offers its children, parents, community members, and staff as they begin the new school year. One principal spent three months, researching, observing, and recording what he/she sees and hear. These written, taped, and remembered notes became *The Bridge to School*, an imaginative reconstruction of several months in the life of a school.

One principal writes, "We cannot ask small children to make sense of the world of school unless we have stepped into it with them. We need to get down to their eye level and wonder what it is that we see. We need to listen to the voices and words that children hear as if they are a foreign language. We need to feel fears and joys that are lost to us or that we may never have known."

Another principal met the parents in front of the school at least twice monthly and/or invited them to coffee as they drop off the students at school.

Several schools designed and adopted *Din4* Cultural Theme for each month the students are at the school. For instance, for the month of August the culture and language teacher concentrated on the theme: Clanship and Kinship. Written information and suggested activities on clan system and use of kinship was provided to the regular content teachers. Each classroom planned activities to be demonstrated at the Clan Celebration Night. Kindergarten and first grade students learned clan songs and used kinship terminology. Second and Third grade students researched and devised charts for extended clans groups. Fourth and fifth grade students researched and devised genealogy charts. Each day of the week a selected clan group ran errand, picked up attendance slip or made announcement over the intercom. Sixth and seventh grade students wrote poems about various clans groups and devised power point presentation. Various clan groups demonstrated clan skills they are noted for. The power point presentation provided information on the significance of the clan names, origin, poems and stories on the extended clans. The kindergarten sang their songs. The celebration concluded with a song and dance event. The students designed and send out written invitations to their parents and family members to the celebration. The community members viewed the power point presentation and ate a traditional meal.

The following is a list of suggested monthly culture themes for schools to integrate into the academic curriculum aligned with the state standards. Using culture themes encourages group participation and presentation that strengthened various States outlined standards.

**Samples of Culture Themes**

August	Clans, Kinship, <i>Hooghan</i> , School, Community Helpers
September	<i>Hweeldi</i> , Chapters, Agencies, NN Government
October	Basket, Constellation, Seasons, Weather, Directions
November	Traditional Foods, Basket, Pots, Cooking Tools, Hunting and Preserving Foods
December	Winter <i>Hane'</i> , Wild Animals, Games
January	Sweat lodge, Female Puberty, Songs, Games,
February	Roles of Grandparents, Fathers and Uncles, Leadership, <i>A'yoo'o'ni</i> (love), Birds of Prey (eagles, hawks, etc.)
March	Earth Day (types of land), Trees, Medicine Plants
April	Local Birds (eggs), Frogs, Salamanders, Toads, Reptiles
May	Mothers, Babies, Cradle Board, First Laugh, Sacred Names

Culture Committee for each school should set up its annual culture thematic units to be taught. These can be varied from year to year as well as for grade levels: elementary, middle school, jr. high and sr. high. It is up to the committee to choose how many culture topics are adequate for the school to integrate. It is, also, optional for each classroom to integrate cultural information into an area of concentration such as: Planets and Stars, Leadership, Solid Waste, Recycling, land management, rocks and minerals, economic and/or Water Cycle. Each has cultural information (*hane'*), games, songs, arts, crafts, and stories.

Using culture themes and integrating state standards, contents, and material requires effort, time and lots of creativity but it is doable. Schools with culture and language teachers should be able to design monthly thematic units and provide a grade for each month. Elementary, mid schools and Jr. High should be able to integrate culture activities aligned with required state language, reading, math, science, social studies and technology standards. To work with culture integration, schools should create a Culture Committee with a membership of parents, teachers, and/or practitioners of Navajo medicine. This group can meet monthly to advise and assist with appropriate activities the students can do, or this could be one of the duties for the Parental Involvement committee. Each month, the committee can disburse information on the theme and an invitation to parents to participate by helping students with a class project, research writing, taking pictures, constructing a song for a project, helping with preparation of traditional foods, displaying cooking techniques, moccasin making, storytelling, and etc. The activities draw community elders and parents into the school because it tabs into their area of expertise.



## Structures for Best Practice Classrooms

Harvey Daniels and Marilyn Bizar identify six basic teaching structures that will make a classroom more active, experiential, collaborative, democratic, and cognitive, while simultaneously meeting the emerging standards of “Best Practice” across subject areas and through the grades, 1 through 6. Included in the list are other methods best for native children.

01. **Integrative Units** - extending thematic, interdisciplinary inquiries co-planned with students, drawing on knowledge and skills from across the curriculum. Example: *Din4* Culture, Clan and Kinship, *Din4* Games and *Hane'*, *Hweeldi* (the Long Walk), Early European Contact, Constellations, and *Naat'11nii*, etc.
02. **Small Group Activities** - structuring, collaborative pairs, groups, and teams that decentralize the classroom and individualize the curriculum for children to do research, complete interviews, record, and construct teaching tools.
03. **Representing-to-learn** - engaging ideas through writing and art; exploring genres and media of expression as ways of investigating, remembering, and applying information.
04. **Classroom workshop** - applying the studio-apprenticeship method with teacher modeling, coaching, student choice, responsibility, and exhibition.
05. **Authentic experiences** - curriculum-centered ways of bringing life into school and students into the community for research and service.
06. **Reflective assessment** - nurturing student reflection, goal-setting, and self-assessment; widening the evaluative roles and repertoires of teachers and parents.
07. **Inquiry Based Learning** – teaching and learning on the base of questioning, investigation or examination of facts or evidence.
08. **Active Participation**-actively involve, in motion, normal power of body or mind in motion to teach and to learn.
09. **Student Center Learning**-expanding learning from students' questioning, investigation and/or examination of facts.



## What is Parent Involvement?

*Parent involvement-for what?* What do you want and need for parents and families: Do you just want to attend a few meetings to observe or to find out what is happening and how you can help in educating your children? Does that include helping or working in the school building? Do you think that involves making decisions on school policy, budget issues, curriculum content, viewing testing instrument, or hiring and evaluating teachers? The questions help define parent involvement and determine what you want to get out of participation.

As individuals share their definitions of parent involvement, they may name different kinds of activities ranging from helping their children with homework to participating in parent-teacher conferences to doing volunteer work at school to attending special school events to being elected to the school Site-Based Management Council, Cultural Advisory Committee, Booster Club, Science-Math Fair Committee or simply volunteering, to taking part in workshops, recruiting and providing a ride to others to the meeting. Others response may be assisting in the classroom: listening to children read, aide a student with computer work, sewing a costume, painting scenery for a school play, participate in workshops on child development, or monitoring the playground.

**Suggested Game:** Holding onto the end of a large spool of purple twine; throw the spool across the room; to another person calling the name of the person to catch the toss twine. The person catching the toss, in turn hold onto the twine and toss the spool diagonally across the circle and call out the name of the next person to catch the toss. And so until the twine, which crisscrosses the circle like a purple spider web. Purpose: To learn one another's name. If people can't learn each other's name, they can't accomplish their goals together. Ask the people to think about the ways each one is connected to the group; the crossed lengths of purple twine provide a visual metaphor of how a community starts to form. The activity can expand into calling out the clan kinship relationship terminology of the person to catch the twine to strengthen the use of clan kinship relationship amongst the group.



## Barriers To Parent Involvement

What could be the barriers to parent involvement? We recommend that the school survey its parents to find the community-based barriers to parent involvement. Southwest Education Development Laboratory (SEDL) has been conducting long-term research related to parent involvement, parent involvement programs, and parent involvement networks. SEDL publishes excellent and concise research summaries such as its *10 Truths of Parent Involvement*. Truth number 7 is “Most barriers to Parent Involvement are found within the school practices. They are not found within parents.” However, there are the Excuses, Excuses, Excuses and Excuses.

## Examples Of Excuses:

- ✓ I have to work during school times.
- ✓ It's the teacher's job to teach my child; why do I need to be there, too?
- ✓ I feel like I'm in the way, so I just stay away.
- ✓ I don't want to fight with the teachers...I'll only make things worse for my child.
- ✓ I don't have a ride to the school.
- ✓ My child's doing great in school.
- ✓ I don't understand what they are telling me.
- ✓ I don't know what questions to ask the teachers.
- ✓ I'll take care of my child at home.
- ✓ My child gets embarrassed when I go to the school.
- ✓ I don't feel comfortable in school...never did.
- ✓ The teachers and school know what's best for my child.
- ✓ The school takes care of my child.
- ✓ I don't have the time to go to the school.

If you've used excuses such as these for staying away from school, start becoming involved by getting to know more about your school, your child's teachers, and your child's classroom. How? Visit the classroom, attend conferences and open houses, or volunteer to help. Everyone has something to offer. Find out what type of cultural theme the school is celebrating for a particular month and attend. You are an expert in your culture. You may have a song, story, game and/or craft to share with the teacher, school and children. Your presence will make some students very proud. You will be doing something "special" that only you can do. There is no one in this whole wide world that will contribute a talent like yours to motivate students' learning.



## Inhibiting Factors

Why don't many minority and low-income parents become involved in their child's education? Freedman et al. (1989) identified five factors that inhibit the involvement of some parents:

1. School practices that do not accommodate the diversity of families served
2. Parent involvement events and opportunities are scheduled at times that are inconvenient for working parents.
3. Communications to parents are written in languages that are not appropriate for all families.
4. Parents are not given information or materials they can use at home to support their children's learning.
5. School staffs consciously or unconsciously convey the attitude that uninvolved families do not care about education and have little to contribute when they do participate.

### **Time and childcare constraints:**

- Working parents may have trouble attending school events held during the school day.
- Parents may have child care responsibilities that prevent them from participating in school programs.

### **Negative experiences with schools:**

- Parents whose own school experiences were unsuccessful or stressful may be uncomfortable at school.
- Young parents who are dropouts may be reluctant to re-enter the school setting.

### **School's lack of support for cultural diversity:**

- Minority parents, low-income parents, and parents who are not comfortable speaking the school language may not want to become actively involved with schools that don't value diversity.
- Parents who receive communications in English only may feel disrespected by the school.

- People who have experienced discrimination may feel alienated from all public institutions.

### **The primary basic needs require all their efforts:**

- Some families suffer extreme economic stress and must focus ALL their efforts on food, clothing, and housing in order to survive.
- Not all parents are angels. All are individuals—accept the real person in front of you. Be prepared to work where each one is. The way they were treated in the past, and the way the present is bearing down on them make some parents appear negative. Get past that all with your acceptance and sincerity, (Peterson, 1980).

## **National PTA: New Standards to Bolster Parent Involvement in Education**

The six factors identified by the National PTA are:

- Regular, two-way, meaningful communication between home and school;
- Promotion and support of parenting skills;
- Active parent participation in student learning;
- Parents as welcome volunteer partners in schools;
- Parents as full partners in school decisions that affect children and families; and
- Outreach to the community for resources to strengthen schools.

When parents are involved in their children’s education, both children and parents are likely to benefit. Researchers report that parent participation in their children’s schooling frequently:

- Enhances children’s self-esteem;
- Improves children’s academic achievement;
- Improves parent-child relationships;
- Helps parents develop positive attitudes towards school; and
- And a better understanding of the schooling process.

## Ways to Involve Parents

One kind of parental involvement is school-based, includes participating in parent-teacher conferences, school functions, receiving and responding to written communications from the teacher. Parents can also serve as school volunteers for the library and lunchroom, or as classroom aides. In one survey, almost all teachers reported talking with children's parents – either in person, or on open school nights—and sending notices home (Becker & Epstein, 1982). These methods, along with requests for parents to review and sign homework, were most frequently used to involve parents.

Another kind of involvement is home-based and focuses on activities that parents can do with their children at home or on the teacher's visit to the child's home. However, few teachers involve parents through home-based activities, partly because of the amount of time involved in developing activities or visiting and partly because of the difficulty of coordinating parents' and teachers' schedules.

Parent can participate in their children's school by joining Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) or Parent Teacher Organizations (PTOs) and getting involved in decision-making about the educational services their children receive. Almost all schools have a PTA or PTO, but often only a small number of parents are active in these groups.

## Ways to Reach Parents

Some programs aim to reach parents who do not usually participate in their children's education. Such programs provide flexible scheduling for school events and parent-teacher conferences, inform parents about what their children are learning, and help parents create a supportive environment for children's learning at home.

Many schools have responded to the needs of working parents by scheduling conferences in the evening as well as during the day, and by scheduling school events at different times of the day throughout the year.

It is important for teachers to keep the lines of communication open: regular newsletter, notes, phone calls and/or home visit. If teachers accustom parents to receiving regular calls just for keeping in touch, it is easier to discuss problems when they occur.

Teachers need to consider families' lifestyles and cultural backgrounds when planning home activities. For example, although television viewing is a pastime for most children and adults, they do not often watch shows together. Teachers can suggest appropriate programs and send home questions for families to discuss. This discussion can be carried over into class.

Busy parents can include sharing with their children: preparing a meal, shopping, walking, and setting aside a time just to talk. Teacher can suggest a book for parent and children to read and provide questions to be discussed.



## Educator Assumptions

The San Diego City Schools (1991) identified educator's assumptions that tend either to limit or to support home-school collaboration. They also came up with positive assumptions to replace the negative ones. How can parents help teachers shed their negative assumptions about the uninvolved parent?

### Negative:

### Positive:

... That hinder collaboration	... That facilitate collaboration
Parents who do not attend school events do not care about their children's success in school.	Not all parents can come to school or feel comfortable about it. That does not mean they do not care.
Parents who are illiterate, non English speaking, or unemployed can not help their children.	All families have strengths and skills they can contribute to their children's school success.
Parents from different ethnic and racial groups do not understand how to help their children.	Parents from different ethnic and racial groups may have alternative and important ways of supporting their children.
It is up to parents to find out what is going on in school.	Schools have a responsibility to reach out to all parents.
Parent Involvement is not worth the educator's effort.	Parent Involvement pays off in improved student achievement, promote school effectiveness, and increased parent and community support for education.



## **What makes some parent programs more successful than other?**

### **Successful Parent Programs:**

- Emphasize the strengths of parents and let them know their strengths are valued.
- Help parents identify things they are capable of doing well.
- Emphasize the belief that parents have both the ability and willingness to expand and improve their parenting strategies and techniques.
- Value and ask for parents' perspectives regarding their children to help them solve problems.
- Recognize that parent-child relationships differ from teacher-child relationships. Good programs plan activities and provide resources that make the most of these relationships.
- Ensure that the process for, efforts toward, and activities promoting parent involvement are viewed from the perspective of parents rather than staff.
- Recognize and believe that parents really care about their children.
- Make clear the reasons parents are asked to participate and the ways parents can best work with their children, (Becher, 1984).

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## Overcoming Obstacles

What can schools do to overcome obstacles to parent attendance and participation? Share these with your school from U.S. Dept. of Health, Education, and Welfare (1980) *A Handbook for Involving Parents in Head Start*, Washington, D.C., Administration for Children, Youth, and Families.

### **Obstacles:**                      **Ideas for overcoming them:**

meeting times Inconvenient	Send home a brief questionnaire in the parents' language asking when they can attend meetings, etc.
Lack of transportation	Arrange car pools and walk pools; provide bus or information about public transportation; arrange for other transportation.
Lack of babysitters	Provide nursery or arrange to car pool children to where a sitter is available.
Feeling of personal inadequacy	Arrange informal social events at which parents and staff can become better acquainted. Do not discount anything parents say. Acknowledge parental shyness; remind staff that they are there in a consulting capacity.
Inexperienced chairpersons	Conduct training, coach chairpersons, let them observe well-run meetings, provide good agendas to guide them through a meeting.
Lack opportunity to participate at meeting	Ask questions, encourage parents to express their viewpoints; remind staff that they are there in a consulting capacity.
Meeting seem to accomplish nothing	Research topic before meeting; close the meeting on a positive note. If issue cannot be resolved, research the topic further and present findings at next meeting or by memo; involve other members in getting more information. Write "job description" for the group, clearly stating purpose, authority, responsibilities, and communications.
Feeling unwelcome	Brief the staff on ways to put parents at ease (comment on something positive child has said or done), compliment parent on something they've said or done at culture thematic celebrations. Serve refreshments.
Having overwhelming personal problems	Arrange personal calls or home visits to permit parents to speak openly about their problems. If appropriate, try to help parents resolve their problems. Arrange "educational workshops" on problem area/s/ for all parents.



## Valuing Parents

In reality, both home and school have the same goal. They both have the interest of the child at heart. Disagreements usually occur in the means of getting something done. It is helpful for parents to keep in mind that the school's general goals are the same as their-better education for the children, (Peterson, 1982).

Real school reform occurs when schools recognize the value of parents in educating children. Below are some parent roles that impact school change.

### **Parents as partners:**

Parents move from being a child's primary educators to one where the educator role is shared with others. Much of the parent's role at this stage relates to the legal responsibility to enroll the child in school. Parents register their children and ensure that they are properly dressed, get to school on time, and attend daily. They provide necessary supplies and obtain required vaccinations and medical exams. Other parent responsibilities focus on various types of home-school communication. In addition, parents have certain rights, including access to school records, due process in discipline, and involvement in decisions about special program placement and school policies.

### **Parents as collaborators and problem-solvers:**

Parents can encourage and reward satisfactory academic achievements, show interest in the child's school day, and enforce policies about bedtime, TV, and homework. Parents can also provide enrichment activities that reinforce school learning, including reading to children, trips to the library and museum, and other home and community learning activities. If children are having problems at school, negotiation between home and school may be required.

### **Parents as audience:**

Parents provide the audience at many activities designed to draw them into the school: open houses, back to school nights, athletic events, concerts, culture thematic celebration, and assemblies. A major purpose of such events is to provide parents with direct, personal information about the school; children usually feel good when they see their parents in the audience.

### **Parents as supports:**

As volunteers, parents can help in their own child's classroom or in other classrooms, work in the library, tutor special needs children, make attendance calls, or share their expertise in enrichment programs and contribute to culture thematic celebrations. Other ways to become involved are through parent teacher organizations, parent education programs, and parent support networks.

### **Parents as advisors and co-decision makers:**

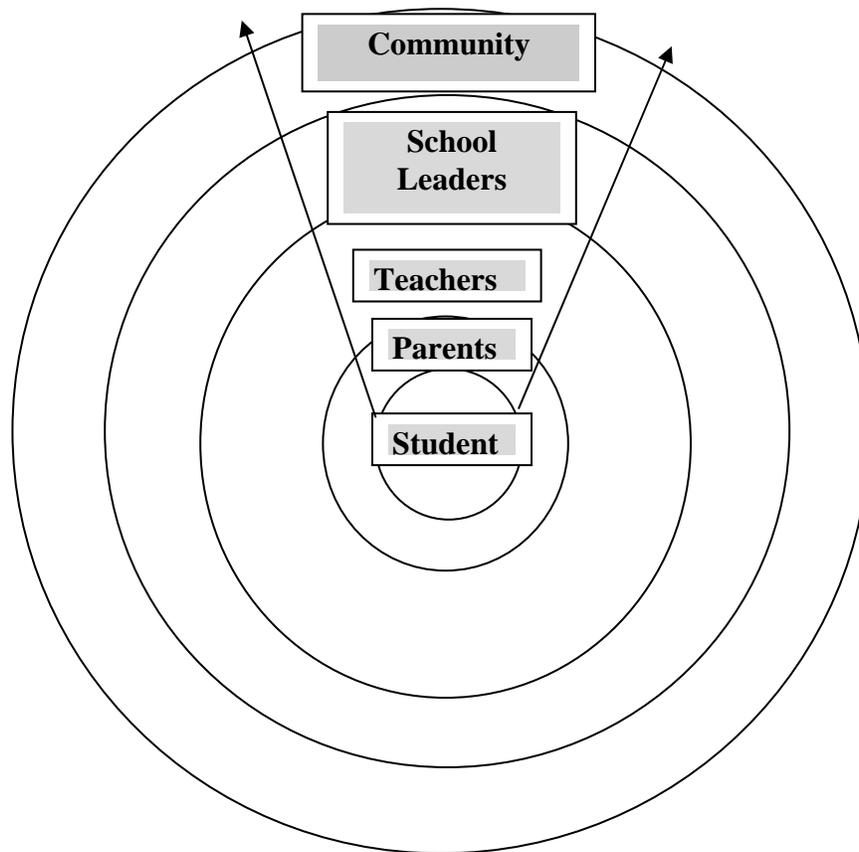
This role is usually accomplished through parent advisory groups that work on solutions to various problems and issues facing the school. Other possibilities include serving on elected school governing boards and councils.

## New Approaches

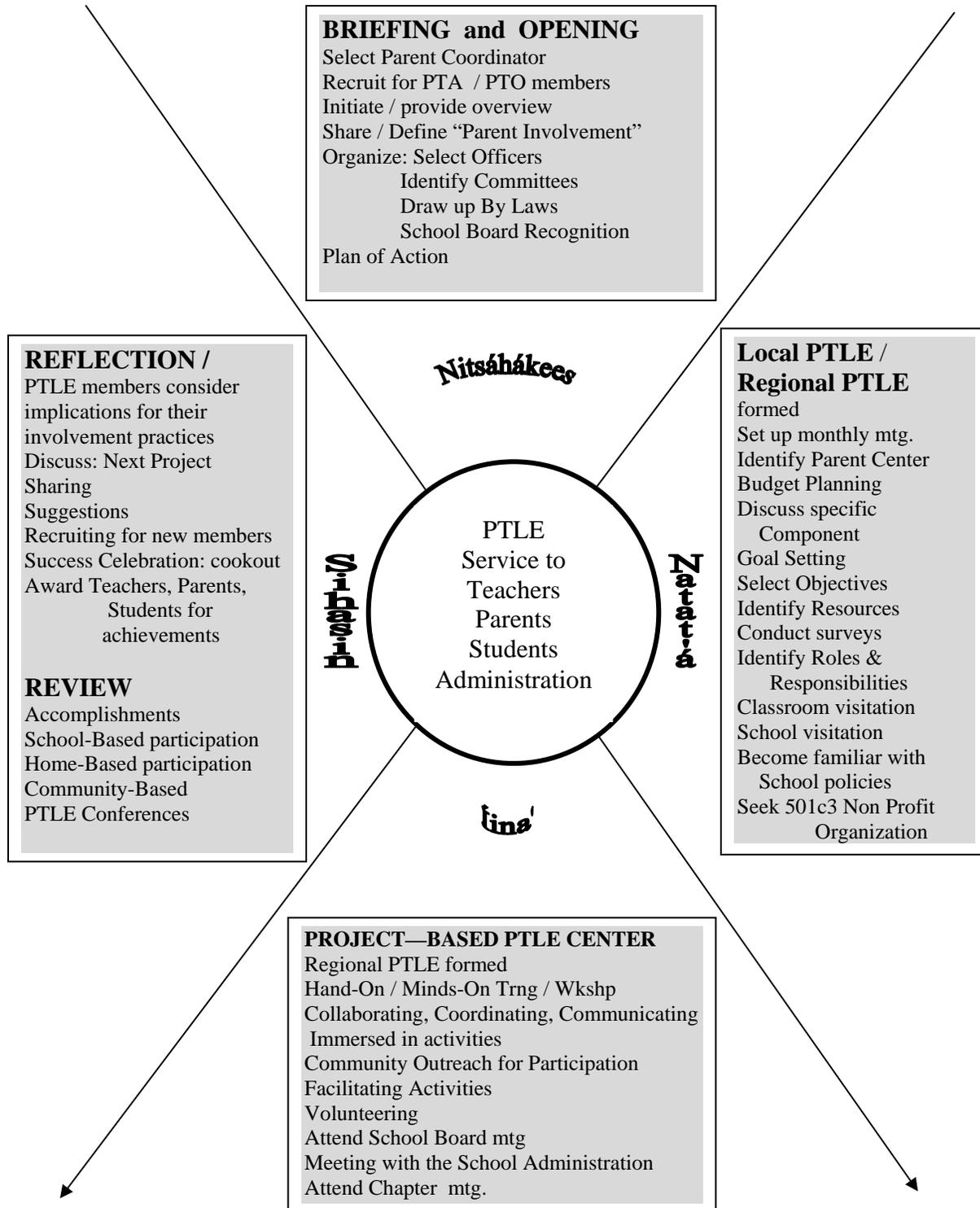
Schools must be willing to experiment with new approaches to home-school interaction...and be willing to restructure in ways that address families' needs for flexible time frames, childcare, and transportation. School may need to adopt an expanded definition of their mission and collaborate with other community service providers in providing educational services to parents whose life circumstances prevent them from being as involved as they may want to be...if some parents are not going into the school, the school may need to go where the parents are and provide them with incentives and the support to become involved, (Freedman et al., 1989). Incentives may be as simple as receiving a ticket and depositing it back into a drawing container with names and address for a quarterly or annual drawing for something that is valued by native people.

### SYSTEMS THINKING

*Baa nts1h1kees, Baa Nahat'1, Iin1 d00 Sihasin Ho|=*



# Din4 Four Directional System Model for Growth Process





## Activities to Overcoming Barriers

One of the most common barriers is staying in our own “comfort zone.” We sit with people we know each time we come to a meeting and never learn something new about another person. Elders will sit together. Younger parents will sit together. Working with other people requires bonding and getting to know one another. These activities will help people come into the circle forming a group that will work together. It works with students and it should work with adults as well.

### **Activity One:**

Assign people by colored name tags when they come in to register for a meeting. They are to sit with people of the same assigned color. This activity seats five people together that do not know one another well. The assignment is, after being seated, introduce yourself to the person on your left and find three unusual things you have in common with this person. Then introduce your partner to the rest of the people at the table by sharing one of the three things you found you have in common. Continue until everyone has been introduced. This game can be played a number of times or each time new members come to the meeting.

### **Activity Two:**

Prepare cutout of Mr. Potato Head. Each group should receive a package of the cutouts. The group members will be blindfolded will try to put the cutout together on the surface of the table within five minutes. The group will refer to use the names of the people at their group to draw attention to placing the facial cutouts at the right location. Other material may be used, such as puzzle pieces. After ten minutes, view the construction of Mr. Potato Heads and ask each group to say something they learned from the doing the activity together. These should be recorded on chart papers. This game can be played when members bring their children to the meeting with them. Instant of blindfolding, people could try putting the puzzle together without speaking a word.

### **Activity Three:**

Each team (forming the team using the color code registration technique) should have an assignment to observe the school, students, and staff. One team may be assigned to make a fifteen-minute video of their school for parents who want to know more about a particular school. (This can be an assignment of one or two team.) The groups should meet to talk about making and showing the video recording. After showing the videos at one of the PTA meetings, they will open for discussion and comparison. Each individual should have an opportunity to clarify what is really important about the school, as well as, support crucial leadership skills, such as public presentation.

### **Activity Four:**

Divide the group into two groups of teachers/administrator and parents/community members. Pass out rubber circles, about one foot in diameter, to each person. The circles to represent stepping stones and are to be used to cross a river stepping only on the rubber circles. The two groups start at opposite ends of a room, any room such as in the library, in the chapter house,

dinning area, a large room. Identify a spot where the group will converge to cross the river, build a bridge. This might be a table or a row of chairs, which they have to cross single file. This sounds simple, but movement over the “bridge” requires planning and experimentation-not to mention a sense of balance and physical support from the person in front and behind. Movement across the “bridge” involves balance and physical support.

**Discussion:**

Provide time for discussion, returning to sitting in a circle. Although plans were made, crossing the many rivers “tables” was nothing like the way the plans reflected. There would definitely be a lot of support. The game represented what the people want to accomplish together and the “barrier” or “barriers” existing. Each person would say a word or phrase to describe what she/he learned from the experience. Conclude with each person putting the palm of the right hand down and the palm of the left hand up and connect the circle by holding hands signifying no one is above anyone or below anyone. People are equal as they work for the well-being of children.

**Assignment:**

In small group, everyone compile common barriers to parent involvement: transportation, lack of money, negative feelings, time, weather conditions, not having productive things for parents and families to do and etc.

**Total Group:**

The first group to successfully get on the other side does not have to bring any refreshment for the next meeting (unless they want to). The rest have to bring enough to feed the members at the next meeting.



**Becoming A Leader?**

Leadership doesn’t happen just because someone says so. How does one get from not being involved in school or just coming to parent conferences to actually being really involved in the school activities and being a parent leader? Define: What does *Leader* mean? What does a *leader* do to earn the title *Leader*? Record responses and share: listener, motivator, visionary, sense of direction, doer, delegator, commitment, responsible, assertive, grant writer, and a fundraiser.

Matter of fact, some people may note there are people that would rather have other people be the “doers” while they assist where they can or observe and give suggestions. People aren’t leaders, *Na’t’11nii*, all the time. Leadership is often situational and when someone asks, ‘How would you like to lead this or that?’ It doesn’t mean forever. That seems important to lessen the pressure around the term “parent involvement leader.” However, in *Din4* Way, every

parent is a leader in the home. Parents are in charge running their home. They are the decision makers, bread-winners, and supply the necessities for the family.

### **Activity One:**

The group form groups of three: They are given a large sheet of paper and asked to list activities and attitudes that assist in developing leaders. Each member shares experiences. For example, Some people gain recognition as leaders through opposition, something that is bothersome, and they decided to do something about it. Through the process, they found they enjoy being an advocate for parents. How a person advocates is important. So are a welcoming personality, attitude and atmosphere. This activity can be video taped to share with others not in attendance or to review for discussion. Many members can be spotted to lead a group in discussion and they would be appointed to lead assignments. Most people will participate in small group activities rather than in large assemblies.

### **Activity Two:**

After the use of small group discussions resume back to a whole group assembly. A spokesperson for the small group would share their list to generate descriptions of leadership. Before going into small group discussion, remember to review the rules for discussion: Be good a listener. Be respectful. Allow everyone to participate. Stay on the topic for discussion. This activity may lead to assemble a Leadership Tool Kit-various resources that can be used in the operation, repair, and fine-tuning of individual school projects.

### **The Tool Kit may include:**

- ✓ Names and phone numbers of all leadership project participants
- ✓ A list of community-building activities
- ✓ An outline of a workshop format, a workshop checklist, and a sample letter to parents
- ✓ Blank sign-in attendance forms for participants, with spaces for name, address, home, and work telephone numbers
- ✓ Parent Project budget and outline forms
- ✓ Parent Project Outline: Goals of Project, Date, Time, How and What and Evaluation
- ✓ A sign that says: Don't Forget to Take a Break
- ✓ A reminder of recurrent elements of Parent Projects
- ✓ Copies of the invitations
- ✓ A copy of publication booklet
- ✓ A journal
- ✓ A copy of the videotape made
- ✓ A list of favorite Read-Aloud

## Help members focus on the importance of communication through games.

### Game One:

Everyone standing will form a circle. Give the directions for the game. Pretend you are in a rainstorm consists of five sounds the players are to make: (a). Rubbing the palms of hands together; (b). Snapping fingers making clicking sounds; (c). Tapping both feet on the floor; (d). Tapping fingertips on the shoulders of the person standing in front and (e). Slapping both knees with opened hands. Everyone close their eyes and listen. Trainer would initiate a sound and the person to his right would repeat it, and so the sound would go around the circle. When the sound returned to the leader, he/she would begin the next one.

**Discussion:** Trainer leads in discussion on the importance of listening and how it is an essential component of communication and leadership.

After playing “Rainstorm”, the school teams may want to finalize their plans to increase family involvement in their respective school. Leadership, after all, is a process of doing, not talking about doing. The object is for each school team to design and implement a project that would connect families and schools in a meaningful, relevant ways. In order to help schools realize their plans, each school team should ask the school for a small allocation, \$1,000 to \$5,000 with which to leverage other funds and resources. The team needs to budget the money using Budget and Project Outline to help facilitate each school team’s planning process.



## Keys to Successful Parental Involvement

**Question from the Field:** *How can a school achieve high levels of parental and community involvement?*

The following **Keys to Success** were compiled and written by the Nation Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education (NCPPIE). They are based on information from actual school programs.

- Assess family’s needs and interests about ways of working with the schools.
- Set clear and measurable objectives based on parent and community input to help foster a sense of cooperation and communication between families, communities, and schools;
- Hire and train a parent/family liaison to directly contact parents and coordinate family activities. The liaison should be bilingual, as needed, and sensitive to the needs of family and the community, including the non-English speaking community;

- Develop multiple outreach mechanisms to inform families, businesses, and the community about family involvement policies and programs through newsletters, slide shows, videotapes, and local newspapers;
- Recognize the important of a community's historic, ethnic, linguistic, or cultural resources in generating interest in family involvement;
- Use creative forms of communication between educators and families that are personal, goal oriented, and make optimal use of new communication technologies;
- Mobilize parents/families as volunteers in the school assisting with instructional tasks, meal service, and administrative office functions. Family members might also act as invited classroom speakers and volunteer tutors;
- Provide staff development for teachers and administrators to enable them to work effectively with families and with each other as partners in the educational process;
- Ensure access to information about nutrition, healthcare, services for individuals with disabilities, and support provided by schools or community agencies;
- Schedule programs and activities flexibly to reach diverse family groups; and
- Evaluate the effectiveness of family involvement programs and activities on a regular basis.

NCPIC is dedicated to developing relationships between schools and families. The coalition's members include the major education associations and advocacy groups in this country.



## In the Community

Getting teachers and administrators out of the school building and into the community may be how some parents are reached. Some examples of activities away from the school follow. Does your school use any of these? Do you involve other parents by hosting or suggesting these?

- Hold coffee breaks with groups of parents in their homes or other non school settings (church centers, community centers, neighborhood cafes, local community meeting place or chapters).
- Ask principals, the superintendent, and school board members to take two hours one Saturday a month, on a rotating basis, to make themselves available to parents at a local site such as a community meeting building.
- Ask staff members to share good news with parents by phone, note, school newsletter, or invitation to come to achievement celebrations.
- Ask community leaders to help you communicate with the parents you want to reach by asking to be on the community township meeting agendas.
- Offer programs that address neighborhood needs; these may not always be school oriented, but they help you meet other parents (social services, Dept. of Behavioral Health, Head Start centers, Community Health Services and Representatives, senior centers, and/or public safety for the community).
- Provide school representatives (or offer to be one) who are fluent in the language of ethnic group; offer English language and parenting skills classes for adults in locations near their homes.
- Hold parent-teacher conferences in the neighborhood for example at churches, local community center, or youth centers, where parents can come together easily, (Davis, 1988).



## Participating in Parent-Teacher Conferences

Most schools ask parents to attend Parent-Teacher conferences at least twice throughout the school year. This is common with all schools serving the Navajo children. Most conferences are held with the teacher providing academic performance information to the parents and the parents sitting patiently listening without asking a question. A conference could be limited to a one-way communication between parents and teacher. The reasons for parent-teacher conference are numerous but may include:

- Discussing students academic progress
- Examining the need for referrals to special programs
- Speaking about student behavior in class or on the playground
- Inviting family members to volunteer time, special skills, or materials for classroom projects.
- Offering opportunities for parents to ask questions related to their child's educational plans
- Providing opportunities to help parents understand class goals, strategies, methods of assessment, and requirements for graduation

# CHILDREN LEARN WHAT THEY LIVE

If a child lives with criticism,  
He learns to condemn.  
If a child lives with hostility,  
He learns to fight.  
If a child lives with ridicule,  
He learns to be shy.  
If a child lives with shame,  
He learns to feel guilty.  
If a child lives with tolerance,  
He learns to be patient.  
If a child lives with encouragement,  
He learns confidence.  
If a child lives with praise,  
He learns to appreciate.  
If a child lives with fairness,  
He learns justice.  
If a child lives with security,  
He learns to have faith.  
If a child lives with approval,  
He learns to like himself.  
If a child lives with acceptance and friendship,  
He learns to find love in the world.



*Dorothy Lawe Holt*

Furnished by: Farmington Municipal Schools  
Office of Bilingual & Indian Education Programs  
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## Parent Questions for Teachers

This section includes lists of question parents might ask teachers during parent/teacher conferences or meetings. Many teachers support open-door policies inviting parents to call them at school or even at home if they have questions. This list may serve as a helpful guide for developing other questions parents may have for principals, counselors, or teachers in special education.

- Is my child doing as well as he/she should in school?
- Is my child working up to his/her ability?
- Is my child performing at, above, or below grade level in reading and math? Other subjects?
- Do you group children for reading and math? If so, what group is my child in? How are children selected for each group?
- What are my child's strengths and weaknesses in major subject areas?
- What tests will my child take this year? What is the purpose of the tests? How will they be used?
- What do you take into account when deciding grades?
- Does my child need special help in any subject? Where can I get such help?
- What will my child be learning in math? In reading?
- How can I help develop an instructional plan for my child? How can I help my child at home?
- Are there regular homework assignments? How much time should be spent on homework?
- What schedule does my child have during the school day?
- Does my child get along with other children? With you?
- Does my child respect the rights and properties of others?
- Does my child show any behavior, such as squinting, being tired, showing irritability that may indicate a need for medical or emotional assessment?
- Are there any discipline problems with my child?
- What suggestions do you have for us that would help our child?

# Setting up Local and Regional Parent/Teacher Leadership for Education Council



“Without a strong loom, strong yarn, dyed and spun just right, correct tools for doing the job, and a determination, the end product is going to be unacceptable.”  
Weaver. (Marie Nez Attakai, personal communication, 1989)



## **Setting up Regional and Local Parent/Teacher Leadership for Education Committee**

### **Local Unit**

A local PTA Unit is self-governing. Each local association carries out the Parent-Teacher Leadership for Education mission, vision, belief and goals by planning programs objectives and activities for all children and youth to meet community needs at the school, home, and in the community. Individuals from local community can volunteer, be appointed or elected from the chapter (local township) setting. They can be recommended by the school/teachers to represent their children on the committee. Term of office depends on the council By Law. On school governance issues, the Local Unit is to work with the local School Board through proper procedures as outlined in the Bylaws. The Local Unit will make recommendations to the local School Board in written form on major issues in school governance and policies. Parent coordinators, liaisons, parental involvement chairperson/s represent the Local Unit to the Regional Council. Regional Council made up of three schools coming together for planning parent trainings, workshop and conferences. This can be a school district consisting of Family And Child Education (FACE), Head Start, elementary, middle, junior, and senior high school.

### **Membership**

Consists of individuals on the committee roster.

### **Bylaws**

Must be kept up-to-date with the provision of the state PTA and Parent/Teacher Leadership for Education, Navajo Nation.

### **Voting Body**

Defined in the local Parent/Teacher Leadership for Education bylaws, the voting body usually consists of the committee officers, standing committee chairs, and the members of the PTA.

### **Meeting**

Provide information, inspiration, and instruction for local members. General meetings are open to the community while the privileges of introducing motions and voting are limited to the members.

### **Term of Office**

Specified in the committee bylaws.

# Navajo Nation PTLE Regional Council

A Navajo Nation PTLE Council is a group of at least three to five local PTLE units organized for the purpose of planning educational conferences, leadership training and coordinating the efforts of local PTLE committee. The Local Unit council president, president of standing committee and/or other designated representatives and parent coordinators, liaisons, parental involvement and appointed representative will serve on the Regional Council. The Regional NN PTLE Council will provide inspiration, information, and instruction to members representing the local PTLE committee. The duties of the Regional Council are to plan regional activities for parental workshops, training, summaries, and develop leadership capabilities. Navajo Nation DODE in conjunction with agency school board, will provide support, consultation, and assistance in initial setup.

## NNPTLE Regional Council:

- Includes three to five local PTLE committee officers, Parent Liaison, Parent Coordinator, Bilingual Program Manager, etc., within a geographical (e.g., school district, BIA schools, contract-grant) that wish to belong to the Council;
- Serves as a conference body for planning workshops, training, and conferences;
- Provides workshops, leadership training, information, and programs; and
- Coordinates programs and projects of NN PTLE member units.

## Membership

Consists of local units, coordinators, liaisons, parental involvement coordinators, and officers. Individual memberships are welcome but will not entertain a motion, second or to vote on issues.

## Bylaws

Must be kept up-to-date with the provisions of the National and State PTA Bylaws.

## Voting Body

Define in the NN PTLE Council Bylaws, the voting body usually consists of the council officers and committee chairs, the president of the member PTAs or their alternates and/or specific number of accredited delegates or alternates from each local PTA.

## Delegates (and Alternates)

Composed delegation will consist of experienced, capable, local unit members and include some leaders not currently officers, some returning delegate's, and some new delegates. They should participate in discussion, report back verbally at the next local unit meeting, and

file a written report with the secretary. They should keep a procedure book for the guidance of future council delegates.

## **NN PTLE Council Meetings**

Meetings should not merely duplicate local PTLE/PTA meetings, it should provide information, inspiration, and instruction for local leaders. Council meetings are open to all members of local units belonging to the council, while limiting the privileges of introducing motions and voting to the voting body as defined in the council bylaws.

### **What will NN PTLE Council do?**

#### ***Strengthen Local Units by giving offices / committee chairs opportunities to:***

- Compare methods to work and coordinate their efforts;
- Receive and give suggestions on procedures; and
- Provide special programs or meeting time to share accomplishments.

#### ***Develop leadership by:***

- Channeling information from State and National PTA to local PTLE leaders;
- Conducting workshops on leadership and goal setting;
- Setting up training for officers and committee chair;
- Using region teams for additional training; and
- Stressing the importance of sending dues, officer's lists, insurance premiums, reports or any information requested to the state PTA office by required deadlines.

#### ***Give Service to the local school community by:***

- Cooperating to improve the quality of life of children and youth; and
- Uniting in common projects that interest the community. Examples include cooperating with child abuse centers, drug education, youth activities, and suicide prevention programs, coping with teenage pregnancy programs; and participating in contributions to clothing banks. (National and state priorities are guidelines when cooperating with other agencies or organizations.)

## **Regional Office**

Regional Office may be referred to the NN Department of *Din4* Education with a Regional Director of Parental Involvement. It will oversee and assist all Regional Councils across the agencies. Regional Office Director will service as geographical division of the state designated similar to the state PTA Board to carry on state work effectively. Many public schools' PTA organizations are utilizing the state PTA Bylaws and Standing Rules as governance for the organization and adhere to work within the region.

## **A Region:**

- Is a geographical division of the state PTA;
- Includes all local Units within the region;
- Promotes work of state and National PTA;
- Helps organize local units and regional councils;
- Strengthens local units and councils;
- Channels information between state PTA, local PTLE units and councils;
- Provides conferences, workshops, programs and leadership training; and
- Is represented on the state board of managers by the region director.

The region leader is referred to as the Region Director. The Region Director acts as a liaison working to integrate Regional Council and Local Unit work with state and national plans and activities. State PTA bylaws require directors to attend all state meetings and participate on commissions and/or special committees as appointed or elected.

## **Duties of the Region Director include the following:**

- Communication to provide and support for local PTLE units;
- Organize the region plan of work and budget;
- Assist and organize new PTLE/PTA units;
- Present PTLE/PTA work to non-Congress groups and promote interest in PTA;
- Arrange region conferences and training opportunities for units; and
- Promote and assist in organization of PTLE Councils.



*“Before weaving, a weaver knows what her designs will look like when she is finished. She gathers her material accordance to her designs.” Basket Weaver Jane Yazzie, Dilkon.Az.*



## LOCAL NN PTLE UNIT/ PTA STRUCTURE

The president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer are elected by the association to lead the local NN PTLE committee and to represent its members. Generally accepted parliamentary practice provides for only one person to be elected to serve in any office.

The elected leaders are not in dictatorial roles but provide facilitation. They lead and represent the members democratically. All officers are responsible for fulfilling specific duties as outlined in the local PTLE bylaws. The local organization, including all officers and committee chairs, is responsible for the actions of the association. Each officer has individual duties and responsibilities, some written, others unwritten. All members must work together to assure that the overall responsibilities for the association are fulfilled.

Communication between all levels (officers, committee chairs, and general members) of the association is vital to the local PTLE's efficiency and effectiveness. Information from all levels should be shared in a timely fashion. To facilitate the communication process a bulletin board, bookcase, cabinet, and/or a file should be set up for all publications, and mail. Many PTA publications could be of interest to all members, as well as, a public relations strategy for increasing membership. PTA publications are reproducible. Take advantage of these communications!

### Local NN PTLE Board

**To maintain an efficient and effective association each officer and committee chair should:**

- Use the mission and objectives of NN PTLE/PTA as a guide to all planned activities;
- Maintain procedure books that are passed on to incoming officers and committee chairs;
- Study appropriate materials available and distributed by national and state PTA;
- Prepare plans of work to be submitted at appropriate meetings;
- Welcome **ALL** members so they feel part of the PTLE/PTA;
- Attend appropriate leadership training sessions offered by the regional council or state PTA;
- Keep all members informed, distributing jobs to a variety of members; and
- Understand fiduciary responsibilities of the association.

The local PTLE board assumes the responsibility for conducting the business of the local association. Business activities (outlined on the next page) that are conducted in a professional and timely fashion assist in creating an effective association and one that is considered IN GOOD STANDING by Navajo Nation Department of *Din4* Education, state, and National PTA.

## **The Local PTLE/PTA Board Responsibilities to the State and National PTA Charter**

- Provide a current OFFICERS LIST to the NN PTLE / state PTA Office for filing. Officers' list should be sent as soon as elections are complete and no later than May 31. Any change in an officer's position, address, and/or phone should be sent immediately so mailings are made appropriately.
- Keep current with INSURANCE PREMIUMS. Liability and bonding insurance is provided by state PTA at a group rate. Premiums must be paid by May 31.
- Submit the portion of National and state PTA MEMBERSHIP DUES, MEMBERSHIP LISTS. The membership report form must be in the state PTA office November 1. A second mailing with additional member names may be sent by January 15th and final membership submittal must be received by March 1.
- Up date LOCAL PTLE/PTA at least every three years. Bylaws must be approved by the local unit membership at a general meeting and then sent to NN PTLE/PTA state office for approval by the state bylaws committee.

## **Planning the PTLE/PTA Year**

Developing an annual plan provides a way for the association to move through the year efficiently and effectively. Planning included the entire local PTLE/ PTA Board and may extend to other members. A plan for the year should be written and shared with the board, school administrator, and staff (school staff should be included throughout the planning process). Pre-planning is very important to establish income and expenses for the year. The Budget Committee should use the written plan in developing the Budget. Planning should include a mechanism for continuous evaluation to measure the PTLE / PTA successes.

### **Developing a Plan**

1. Determine the purpose of PTLE /PTA in your school. (Remember to use the PTLE / PTA Mission and Objects as a guide.)
2. Review past and current activities for the PTLE / PTA. (Did past activities meet the needs of the association?)
3. List all available resources for the PTLE /PTA (funding, membership, local assistance from other organizations, agencies, and facilities).

4. Gather input from parents, teachers, and administrators on school and community needs, to provide a guide in planning programs / projects for the year.
5. List the types of activities for consideration.
6. Prioritize ideas and select the top two or three that best meet the board's goals.
7. Develop a calendar for activities and assign committee responsibilities.
8. Evaluate the year's activities for next year's plan.



## Successful Boards

### Boards succeed when they:

- Elect an effective nominating committee. Decisions made by the nominating committee will largely determine who will lead the group in future years. This committee should be well organized, have a time schedule and plan working procedures.
- Assist members with a good understanding of: the association, its operations, and the role and responsibilities for individual positions. This occurs when the nominating committee accurately interprets future responsibilities to potential board members.
- Develop planned rotation. Local PTLE / PTA grow stronger when consistently recruiting new members and leaders. Despite dedication on the part of members who serve continuous terms, the same people may make the association “closed corporation.” Rotation prevents the ingrown possessiveness sometimes found on self-perpetuating boards.
- Assure established standing committees have goals and implement an action plan that benefit the association.
- Plan and implement orientation for new and old members. Deliberate Thought is given to the matter of integrating new board members. Experienced board members need an annual update on the association's work and accomplishments. All board members, new and experienced, need a chance to step back and reflect on future plans in an atmosphere that allows no interruptions.
- Establish and assure process for self-evaluation is in place. The Board conducts an annual evaluation of all goals and actions taken by the association. The results of this annual process should be passed on to the incoming board for incorporation into the long-range planning process.

- Plan long-range financial and service delivery. A three-to-five-year-plan for the association is recommended. This introduces the concepts of planned growth and management by objectives.



## Local NN PTLE / PTA Officers

The following sections will discuss some of the responsibilities of officers most common to a local organization. It is important that officers understand their specific roles as well as the roles performed by other officers so a checks and balances system is in place to make sure all needs are met.

### President

The president is elected by the local PTLE /PTA members to direct the affairs of the association in cooperation with other members of the executive board (regional council) where applicable.

#### **The President is responsible for the following:**

- Presides as “chair” of the meeting following the established agenda;
- Maintains a fair and impartial position at all times;
- Studies information and material secured from predecessors;
- Delegates responsibility and gives those delegated the opportunity to do the job, offering assistance when needed;
- Serves as ex-officio member on all committees (except nominating) as designated by the bylaws;
- Protects member privacy by not allowing distribution of membership lists to outside interests;
- Signs all orders and vouchers (requests for funds); and
- Assures the incoming president receives all materials and training to facilitate a smooth transition of leadership.

The president should include all members in the processes and activities conducted by the PTLE / PTA, as appropriate. Communication is Key to an effective association and to accomplish effective communication a president should:

- Meet with the principal to discuss activities and plans for the year on an ongoing basis (all PTLE /PTA activities carried out on school grounds and during school hours must be approved by the building administrator);
- Coordinate the calendar for PTLE / PTA and the school;
- Schedule meetings of the NN PTLE Regional Council;
- Distribute materials from the local PTLE / PTA packet and all mailings to the appropriate officers and committee chairs;

- Consult with officers and committee chairs before each meeting so all details of the meeting are ready as planned (This duty may be delegated to a vice-president or a committee chair in charge of the program.);
- Call for required reports at specified times in accordance with specified procedures; and
- Attend (or designate an alternate) and provide a report on all meetings called by the council, region, and state.

The role of the president during general and executive committee meetings has been discussed, however, the following should be observed by the president:

- Recognize a member who has not previously spoken to the question in preference to one who has already spoken.
- Take NO part in any discussion while presiding, REFRAIN from expressing a personal opinion on questions before the group and AVOID personal bias when giving information to the association.
- Call upon the vice-president to preside when wishing to speak to a motion; the president then has all the privileges of a member, addresses the officer temporarily presiding as the chair in the same manner as any other member. The president returns to the position of meeting chair only after the vote has been announced.
- State each motion clearly after it has been seconded before allowing for discussion.
- Vote, when voting is by ballot, if he/she so chooses; in all other cases, may cast a vote to create or break a tie if the result is in the interest of the association.
- Declare the result of every vote taken.

## **Vice President**

The vice-president may be called upon at any time to assume, temporarily, the place of the president and should therefore make thorough study of the president's duties and responsibilities and be familiar with the work of the association. In the event of the president's resignation, the vice-president assumes all duties until the position is filled in accordance with the bylaws.

### **The Vice-President is responsible for:**

- Performing specific duties as provided for in the Bylaws;
- Assuming responsibility for duties designated by the president; and
- Representing the president in his/her absence or upon request.

## **Secretary**

The secretary is responsible for keeping an accurate record of the proceedings of association meetings. These records will be the history of the PTLE / PTA. Promptness, accuracy, and knowledge of the objects and policies are very important to the job, as well as sincere desire to help the president conduct a business-like meeting.

Meeting minutes should be accurate and as brief as possible. Business transacted should be recorded in the order presented. Personal opinion and details of debate or discussion are not included. Action taken (motions) by the assembly, not what is said by the members, should be recorded. It is highly recommended that minutes be written legibly in permanent ink or typed and signed by the secretary.

**The Secretary's duties are as follows:**

- Record minutes of PTLE / PTA meeting with special attention given to motions (recorded exactly as stated) and action taken;
- Secure official permanent PTLE / PTA records, including all originals of approved minutes (should be kept in a locked filing cabinet, preferably at the school); and
- Maintain a copy of current Bylaws, standing rules, and membership list.

The secretary may also be given the responsibility for maintaining all PTLE / PTA correspondence including incoming as well as outgoing communications to and from members. This may include notifications for all meetings. It is common for a local PTLE / PTA to designate these responsibilities to a corresponding secretary. Membership and executive meetings can include business that requires a need for special materials.

It is the responsibility of the secretary to have these items available as needed:

- Minutes of previous meeting;
- Copies of previous treasurer's report;
- List of unfinished business to be discussed;
- Agenda;
- Current Bylaws and standing rules;
- Copy of Robert's Rule of Order;
- Current membership list;
- List of committee chairmen; and
- Materials for note/minute taking.

## **Treasurer**

The local PTLE /PTA Treasurer should be fully aware of the duties, responsibilities and magnitude of this most important position. They need to learn all the details that help to make an effective treasurer and attend any training sessions or schools to benefit from available information.

It is recommended that he/she meet with the former treasurer and read as much as possible to be familiar with the duties. An excellent publication is the *Annual Resource of the PTA's* available from National PTA. Be familiar with your local PTLE /PTA Bylaws,

specifically as to how they pertain to the treasurer’s duties. Information provided in this resource book should further assist in understanding your duties.

**Responsibilities of the Treasurer include:**

- Insist the books be reviewed according to the Bylaws before assuming any duties;
- Have three signatures on file at the bank including treasurer, president, and one other officer as an alternate (no two check signers should be from the same household);
- Require two signatures on every check;
- Receive all money from persons delegated to collect or to raise funds in a local PTLE / PTA activity and provide a written receipt for those funds;
- Deposit all money in the name of the local PTLE / PTA association in a bank account as approved by the Board.
- Maintain an accurate record of all receipts and disbursements;
- Obtain authorization from the board before writing a check or spending money;
- Remit, by check, all authorized bills and statements as prescribed in the Bylaws;
- Submit a written financial statement at each board meeting and at each general membership meeting;
- Chair the Budget Committee and prepare the annual Budget as prescribed by the Bylaws;
- Report income and expenses as compared to budget;
- Prepare an Annual Report, to be used in the review of the PTLE /PTA books and records; and
- Refuse to ever SIGN A BLANK CHECK.



**Local NN PTLE /PTA Board**

Committees are the working machinery of the PTLE / PTA; they plan and promote the activities on the unit. Committees are designated in two ways: (a) Standing Committee – conduct business year round; and (b) Special Committee – conduct business as needed and dissolve when business is complete. A Committee begins with a plan of work to be carried out during the year that includes goals, action steps, timeline, and an evaluation for each activity. A committee consists of three or more persons who have been appointed or elected on the basis of their qualifications. A definite purpose is established for each committee and committee actions are at all times subject to the control and direction of the association. Since all committees have power to do only that which they are instructed to do, they should receive such instruction from the group by which they have been created.

<b>Committees found basic to a PTA, include, but are not limited to:</b>			
Bylaws	Budget	Reflections	Health and Welfare
Historian	Hospitality	Legislation	Membership
Newsletter	Nominating	Programs	Public Relations
Cultural	History/Government		

Committee chairs are responsible for the actions and activities of the association including planning, communicating and receiving board/membership approval.

### **Committee Chair's responsibilities include:**

- Providing notice of all meetings to all committee members including the president, if considered an ex officio member;
- Working closely with other committee chairs. Where possible, combining efforts so duplication will be avoided and programs and projects will be strengthened by new ideas and staffing;
- Preparing committee reports for executive committee and/or general membership meetings; and
- Receiving approval prior to taking any action (including the distribution of public notices).

### **Budget Committee**

The budget committee chair (treasurer as designated in Bylaws) must submit a budget to the general membership for approval. The budget committee may meet at various times during the year to determine if budget changes are necessary. Budget changes may only be made by amendment at a general membership meeting. It is recommended that notice of such pending action be given to the general membership prior to the meeting date.

### **Nominating Committee**

Persons serving on the nominating committee should be knowledgeable about PTLE /PTA and, especially, the local unit association when seeking nominees. The committee composition and selection process should be outlined by the local unit bylaws. The committee should elect a chairperson. The importance of having qualified persons to serve on the nominating committee cannot be over-emphasized as they will select the next leaders for the association. Local unit bylaws should state this is the only committee the president does not serve on in any capacity. Important information regarding the nominating committee includes:

- Nominating members to committees must be by members of the local unit;
- Selecting any individual to serve as officer should be a member of the local unit and nominated by the nominating committee (as designated by the bylaws);
- Selecting qualified person to office should include willingness to serve, dedication to PTLE / PTA goals, leadership and/or facilitation skills, and sufficient time to devote to the job;
- Consenting by the nominee should be given;
- Discussing should be frank and kept strictly CONFIDENTIAL, even after the officers has been elected; and
- Signing a written report should be done by the secretary and the president.

The nominating committee must report to the general membership the slate of eligible candidates for each office at the meeting designated by local unit bylaws. Following the presentation of nominees by the committee, nomination may be made from the floor by PTLE / PTA members as provided for by the bylaws. The nominating committee is dissolved following the election.

## **Procedure Books**

ALL officers and committee chairs should maintain a procedure book that contains general information regarding PTLE / PTA as well as specific information on the roles and responsibilities of their position on the board. Procedure books provide insight into duties of the board members. Not all activities outlined in the book may stay the same for each role played by a particular chair; however, if activities are similar, information provided may help facilitate the job so that it does not need to be recreated. Procedure books are passed to the president upon completion of all duties. The outgoing president then passes all information to the incoming president for continued use. It is beneficial to keep all procedure books in a designated location at the school site for easy access.

It is very important that the board officers and members have up-dated procedure book, and brought to the meeting for reference.

### **Procedure Book include:**

- Bylaws (local unit, Regional Council, state and National) and Standing Rules of the local unit
- Annual Resource of the Navajo Nation PTLE / PTA
- Officers list (Name, address, and phone numbers)
- Membership list (Name, address, and phone numbers)
- State PTA Insurance information
- Job Descriptions
- Local Unit Goals
- Meeting Agendas
- Minutes from all meetings
- Approved Budget
- Treasurer Reports
- Committee Report, Plan of Actions, etc.
- Annual Calendar
- Suggestions / recommendations from previous committee chair
- Motion forms
- Reports from previous committee chairs
- Parliamentary procedure guidelines for meeting



## OPERATIONS

### Bylaws

The Bylaws of any organization serve as a contract among the members providing specific rules for governing the organization. Bylaws are the rules the local unit must follow. All officers should be familiar with the local unit bylaws so the association functions as required. Any member has a right to view the association's bylaws. By following this set of rules, an association can alleviate many problems and concerns that could occur during the year. Bylaws provide the following important information:

Structure of the local unit board:

- Information on required meeting dates (may include how meeting notification is given);
- Formation of the nominating committee;
- Specification on how and when to conduct elections;
- Dates for the fiscal year; and
- Requirements of a quorum for conducting business.

When questions arise regarding the association, always check with the association bylaws. If the question is about bylaws, contact the NN PTLE / PTA Department of Din4 Education, PO Box 670, Window Rock, Arizona 86515. This resource booklet requires the local unit to decide how they wish to function and may refer to the state and national bylaws.

### Conducting Meetings

When all is said and done, there is far more 'said' than done. A meeting is only as good as the **ACTION** that results from it.

The NN PTLE / PTA meeting can be the best way to provide information to the membership but they can also be an effective way to drive them away. **WHY?** A meeting conducted in a timely organized fashion in which members feel something was accomplished will keep members coming back. A disorganized, out-of-control meeting, in which lengthy debate and/or dialog occur and no action results, will keep members from returning.

What does a well-organized meeting look like? A well-organized meeting has a pre-planned agenda that is adhered to. That means members stay on track and follow the agenda when participating in a meeting.

**SAMPLE AGENDA  
LOCAL UNIT GENERAL MEETING  
DATE, TIME, AND PLACE**

**1) CALL TO ORDER**

The President stands, taps the gavel once, and calls the meeting to order.  
“The .....meeting will please come to order.”

**2) THOUGHT FOR THE DAY / PRAYER**

Pledge of Allegiance, Flag ceremony, a Poem; a Song, or an Inspirational Message (optional).

**3) INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBERS AND GUEST**

**4) MINUTES**

(“Approved as submitted” or “Approved as corrected”)

Reading / Approval of minutes. *“The Secretary will read the minutes of the previous meeting.”* Secretary stands, addresses the Chair, and reads the minutes, unless they have been posted or distributed. Minutes are not voted on by the membership. *“Are there any corrections?”* *“The minutes stand Approved”* or *“The minutes stand approved as corrected.”*

**5) TREASURER** (Accepted and filed for review)

No motion is needed for adoption of report unless report is reviewed. No vote to approve the Treasurer’s report is necessary unless it is a review report. Review reports must be voted on and accepted.

*“We will have the Treasurer report.”*

*“Are there any questions?”*

*“The report will be filed for review.”*

**6) REPORTS** (Includes request for action in form of a motion to accept)

a) **CORRESPONDENCE** (Correspondence may be brought up under committee reports or new business as appropriate) Correspondence is read by the president or the secretary and is acted on as read, if action is required. *“Are there any correspondence?”*

b) **EXECUTIVE REPORT** (Regional Council)

A summary report (not the minutes) is read for the information of the members. *“We will hear the report of the executive committee by the secretary.”* *“You have heard the recommendation. Is there any discussion?”* Recommendations should be voted upon one at a time, the secretary moving the adoption of each one. Follow the steps of a motion.

**c) COMMITTEE REPORTS**

President calls for the report of the committee. *“We will hear the report of the \_\_\_\_\_ committee given by Mr./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_.”* The person making the report moves the adoption of any recommendation. *“Are there any questions regarding the report?”* *“If not, the report will be filed.”* Or Committee Chair: *“The committee recommends and I move that \_\_\_\_\_ (motion is read, NO SECOND is needed)”* If no recommendation is made, no motion is needed. The Committee chair need not recognized if there is no report from the follow:

**MEMBER**  
**LEGISLATIVE**  
**CULTURE**  
**ACTIVITY** (Parent Sponsored School Activities)  
**FUNDRAISING** (Ways and Means)

7) **UNFINISHED BUSINESS** (*“We will consider \_\_\_\_\_ that was not completed at the last meeting.”* Minutes of the previous meeting will indicate any unfinished business. Unfinished business to be discussed at length should be preceded by a motion and a second from the floor to be brought for discussion.

- A. (List unfinished business)
- B. (List unfinished business)
- C. (List unfinished business)

8) **NEW BUSINESS** (*“Is there any new business?”*) A committee chair or members may bring new business before the association. New business discussed at length should be preceded by a motion and with a second from the floor.

- A. (List new business item)
- B. (List new business item)
- C. (List new business item)

**9) ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*“Are there any announcement?”*

Date of the next meeting, important activities, social time; following the meeting, is announced. Announcements may be solicited from the membership.

**10) PROGRAM** (may occur at any point in the program if necessary)

*“The program will be presented by Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ Program Chair.”*

President introduces Program chair who presents the Program.

**11) ADJOURNMENT / Prayer**

*“Are there any further business to come before the meeting?”*

No motion is necessary to adjourn. Rap gavel once. *“The meeting is adjourned.”*

## Meeting Minutes

The official record of all meetings is referred to as *the minutes*. According to the Internal Revenue Services (IRS), minutes need to be a permanent file and kept forever. All officers should have copies of the minutes in their procedure books. The originals and copy should be kept in a secure file at the school, if possible. Minutes **MUST** be in order to prove that action has taken funds expended in accordance with the Bylaws and approved Budget. A printed Treasurer's report should be attached to the minutes. The minutes should also include a sign-in sheet to record attendance. **Remember, if it is not in the minutes, it did not happen.**

## Nominations and Elections

Follow Local Unit Bylaw, the procedure for presenting nominations and conducting elections is outlined below.

### Nominations

- Secretary reads the Bylaws section pertaining to election.
- Nominating committee report is given by nominating committee chair.
- Presiding chair restates slate of nominees.
- Presiding chair calls for nominations for each office from the floor (“*so and so...has been nominated for the office of president. Are there further nominations for the office of presidents?*”).
- Presiding chair asks, “*Are there further nominations for any of these offices?*” Pause. “*Hearing none, the chair declares the nominations closed.*” (Nominations do not require a second, but confirmation that the nominees from the floor meet all qualifications in bylaws is necessary.)

### Elections

1. Chair restates list of nominees.
2. When there is but one candidate for any office, election may be by voice vote, unless prohibited by the bylaws.
3. Chair announces who was elected.

### Ballot Vote

If there is more than one nominee for an office, or if bylaws require it, vote must be by ballot with a report from an election committee or selected tellers (3-5 persons count the ballots) listing:

1. Number of votes cast;
2. Number of votes necessary by election; and
3. Number of votes received by each candidate.

## Parliamentary Procedure for Successful Meetings

Parliamentary law is an orderly set of rules for conducting meetings of organized groups for the purpose of accomplishing their goals fairly.

### Benefits of Parliamentary Procedure

- Justice and courtesy for all.
- Maintenance of Order.
- Consideration of one thing at a time.
- Each member to provide input.
- Rule of the majority.
- Rights of the minority.

### Eight Steps to a Motion

<p><b>1. Obtain the floor</b> <i>(Only members legally qualified to make motions, discuss, and vote.)</i></p> <p><b>2. Chair recognizes member.</b></p> <p><b>3. Making the motions.</b></p> <p><b>4. Seconding the motion.</b></p> <p><b>5. Stating the motion.</b></p> <p><b>6. Debate and Discussion</b></p> <p><b>7. Vote</b> <i>(Secretary will count the votes)</i></p> <p><b>8. Announcing the Vote.</b></p>	<p><b>Member:</b> “Madam or Mister Chair...”</p> <p><b>Chair:</b> “Member is recognized by the Chair.”</p> <p><b>Member:</b> “I move the _____”</p> <p><b>2<sup>nd</sup> Member:</b> “I second the motion.”</p> <p><b>Chair:</b> “There being no second, the motion is not before the assembly.” OR</p> <p><b>Chair:</b> “It has been moved and seconded that..”</p> <p><b>Chair:</b> “Is there any discussion?”</p> <p><b>Chair:</b> ”The motion is ...All in favor say ‘Aye’. (pause) Those opposed say ‘Nay’. The ‘Ayes’ have it. The motion is carried and we will...” OR “The Nays have it and the motion is defeated.”</p>
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### Amendments to a Motion

Before the vote is taken on a motion, it may be amended by inserting, adding, striking out words and inserting a statement replacing, or substituting one paragraph or another motion for the original. **Member:** “ I amend the motion by ....” **Or** “I amend the motion to read...”



## FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

### Checklist For Starting the Year

1. Review the annual resource manual, handbook, bylaws, and previous records.
2. Be sure books are reviewed before new treasurer accepts them.
3. Prepare and submit for approval an operating budget.
4. Establish (if needed) a checking account and file new signature cards with the bank.
5. Confirm that PTA has a federal employer identification number (EIN).

### Budget

Every PTA must have a budget that has been approved by its general membership before expending funds. The treasurer and the executive board prepare, approve, and recommend the proposed budget to the general membership for approval. They, also, recommend where the funds will be kept and who will be authorized to sign the checks. Remember, your budget must be approved by the generally membership before the executive board can spend money.

In preparing the budget, it is important to first determine your PTA goals. Then the budget will reflect your goals and you will not end up raising money just to raise money.

After you have determined the potential revenue and projected expenses, draft a proposed budget that reflects your findings. Remember fund raising is not a primary function of the PTA committee. Fundraising should be carried out as PTA work, for a purpose. Always keep this in mind as you prepare the budget.

Once drafted, the budget must be presented to the general membership for approval. The budget should be presented in such a way as to allow for discussion and amendment of any section. A majority vote is needed to approve the budget.

### Developing the Budget

- Review last year's budget. Eliminate items no longer needed.
- Examine the previous year's annual report. Determine how well the budget met the needs of the association. Were adequate funds budgeted?
- Study previous year's minutes for recommendations or actions that would affect the budget. Incorporated these into the new budget.
- Discuss goals and projects for the year. Anticipate new expenses.
- Anticipate revenue for the year. Discuss "carried over" or "beginning balance," plus potential income. (Remember to include a sufficient amount for start up to be carried over to next year.) Determine sources of revenue.

Since the proposed budget is only an estimate of planned expenditures for the year, it may be necessary to amend it from time to time. When there is an additional expenses or a

change in an allotted amount, the budget may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the general membership. Prior notice should be given; it may be amended by a majority vote.

## **Bank Account/s**

Every PTA should have a checking account for local unit funds. There are usually several choices available locally and the Local Unit should seek the best available account and fee schedule. Usually the treasurer makes a recommendation on where the funds will be kept and the votes on that recommendation. The board should also vote on who will be authorized to sign checks. This information should be entered into the minutes.

The local unit may choose to open an interest earning account. Investing surplus funds in this manner is responsible and prudent money management. These interest earnings do not affect either the nonprofit or the tax-exempt status of the local unit.

## **Handling Money**

The purpose of a review is to certify the accuracy of the books and records of the treasurer. It also assures the membership that the association's resources and funds are being managed in a businesslike manner. Bylaws state when a review should be made and reported to the membership. Financial records should always be reviewed before they are given to the new treasurer. For more information, refer to the Annual Resource of the PTAs.

## **Financial Books and Records**

The treasurer is responsible for maintaining the books and records of the PTA. The books include a checkbook, deposit slips, check register, and a ledger that shows income (and the purpose). There are ready-made books available which should suit your needs.

### **FINANCIAL BOOKS and RECORDS include:**

- Local Unit Bylaws
- Permanent IRS information
- Bank account information (location, account number, and a copy of signature cards)
- Copy of the review report
- Approved budget
- Meeting minutes (proof of board authorization for expenditures)
- Expense vouchers with actual receipts attached to verify expenditures
- Expense book that shows source of income
- Current membership roster
- File that includes the last three years' budgets and general correspondence; the last six years' cash receipts and bank deposits, invoices, and statement; and the last ten years' review reports.

## **PRINCIPLES OF PTA/PAC/PTLE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

- Have budget approved by general membership before spending funds.
- Give a written financial report at all (Board and general membership) PTA meetings.
- Require two signatures on all checks.
- Pay, as authorized, all expenses by check. Never use cash.
- Get receipts for every expense. Require receipts for reimbursement of expenses.
- Refrain from ever signing a blank check.
- Do not ever deposit association funds in a personal account, in a school building account or in the account of another organization.
- Write a receipt when receiving money.
- Have procedures for counting moneys that include two people counting and signing a receipt documenting the amount.
- Deposit all funds in a timely fashion into an authorized PTA bank account.
- Keep all receipts and invoices on file.
- Keep all copies of minutes with references to expenditures of funds.
- Reconcile monthly bank statements immediately upon receiving them.
- Use the correct remittance forms to send National and state PTA membership dues before the deadlines.
- Have books and records reviewed annually (see the Annual Resource Manual for sample).

## **Bonding**

All officers of state local unit PTAs should be bonded. Bonding insures standard accounting procedures must be in place.

### **Accounting Procedures For Bonding**

- No blank check should be signed.
- All checks must have dual signatures.
- Monthly back reconciliation must be done and checked by another Officer of the unit.

### **Reconciling the Bank Statement**

Reconciling the bank statement involves verifying the checks and deposits for the month and checking to make sure the balance in your register (after taking into account outstanding checks and deposits) equals that of the bank statement. Most bank statements have forms on the back that guide you through the process. If the bank has made an error, notify them immediately for correction. Another officer of the PTA must check the reconciliation.

### **Treasurer's Reports**

The treasurer is responsible for preparing financial reports. A report, showing income and expenses since the last report, should be given at each executive committee and general membership meeting. In addition, the treasurer should prepare a monthly report that itemizes receipts and disbursements by budget category and compares the actual to the budgeted amount. Financial reports are attached to the minutes and filed for review. For an example of a financial statement, see Annual Resource of the PTA's Money Matters.

#### **CHECKLIST FOR THE TREASURER'S REPORT**

##### **The financial report should show:**

- Balance of funds on hand at the date of the treasurer's previous report;
- List of receipts, in detail, and with total;
- List of all disbursements, itemized and totaled;
- Balance of funds on hand at the date of the current report; and
- Receipts and disbursements itemized to show the amount received or spent in each budget category. (Total per category should be compared to budgeted amount.)

### **ACTION TAKEN ON THE TREASURER'S REPORT**

The treasurer's report is "... *filed for review.*" A motion is not to approve the financial report. Action will be taken on the review report.

IRS Form 990 (or IRS Form 990EZ) is an information return for tax-exempt organizations. If a local unit has gross receipts of less than \$25,000 for the fiscal year, complete the top of the form indicating that the local unit's income was less than \$25,000. Sign the return and mail to IRS prior to the due date. Send a copy of Form 990 to the state PTA office. If the fiscal year is July 01 – June 30, the complete form must be mailed to IRS by November 15, each year. (If the fiscal year is different, Form 990 must be mailed by the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the 5<sup>th</sup> month after the end of the accounting period.) Form 990EZ may be used by any organization whose gross receipts are between \$25,000 and \$100,000 and whose total assets were less than \$25,000.

### **HELPFUL INFORMATION FROM THE IRS**

Form 990 to 990EZ and instructions  
Schedule A for Form 990 and instructions  
Form 990T, Exempt organization Business Income Tax Return  
Form 2758, Application for Extension of Time to File  
Publication 557, Tax-Exempt Status for Your Organization  
Publication 598, Tax of Unrelated Business Income of Exempt Organizations  
Publication 1391, Deductibility of Payments Made to Charities Conducting Fund-Raising Events

The IRS web site {HYPERLINK <http://www.irs.gov>} has access to these and other resources. Go to {HYPERLINK <http://www.irs.gov/forms-pubs/forms.html>} to download forms for current and past years which may be printed on your home computer

## **Unrelated Business Income**

Income generated by a tax-exempt organization must relate to the organization's tax-exempt purpose if that income is to be free from federal income tax. If the PTA made more than \$1,000 in unrelated income, during the fiscal year, the Local Unit may have to pay taxes on it. Form 990-T must also be filed. A Local Unit may have unrelated income if operating an ongoing, regular business and paying people to operate the business or selling advertising in any of the Unit's publications; however, most PTAs will not have unrelated income.

## **Insurance**

State PTA maintains liability and bonding insurance for all Local Unit PTAs. Liability coverage insures against lawsuits made by anyone against PTA as a result of bodily injury and property damage when negligent. Each PTLE / PTA has a liability limit of \$1,000,000. The policy protects volunteers while acting on PTA business.

For example: Bodily injury to a third party who slips and falls on or off your “premises” during a meeting or fund-raising event, coverage is triggered when the fall is a result of your (PTA / PTLE employee or volunteer) negligence.

The liability insurance is NOT to be offered as medical coverage for a personal mishap to a volunteer. This coverage applies when PTLE / PTA member/s/ is negligent and helped to cause the accident. If a volunteer was to fall as a result of their own negligence, then their own medical insurance needs to cover their injury.

<b>Your PTA/PTLE is covered for these normal PTLE / PTA fundraising activities:</b>		
Bazaars	Dances	Walk-a-thons
Skating Parties	Movies	Meetings
Dinners	Book Fairs	Parades/Floats
Bake sales	Graduation Parties	Car Washes
After Prom Parties	Dunk Tanks	Pony Rides



## **PTLE / PTA IN THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY**

### **Role of the Principal in PTLE / PTA**

A working partnership between the PTLE / PTA and the school principal is essential if they are to secure the best possible education for the young people. The local PTLE / PTA president and the principal must operate as a team, both understanding their own unique responsibilities and appreciating the other's; both developing rapport within the special constituencies of parents and staff; and both committing themselves to intelligent cooperation in the education of children and youth.

Both parents and principals are often on the fringes of decisions made by school boards, and both seek a greater voice in the governance process. Both should have the opportunity to share their concerns with each other and with policy-making bodies.

PTLE / PTA parents want to cooperate with their principal. However, principals need to understand that parents cannot be truly supportive until they feel they are recognized as working partners and constructive critics. In the case of parents and children with special needs, the law often demands extensive participation. Such a participatory role should be extended to all parents.

As with most partnerships, success depends on the degree of consistency and fairness with which the rules are applied. Common sense and courtesy can make this joint effort work.

At a time when proposed legislation and restricted funding threaten the system of a free public education for children and youth, the PTLE / PTA and the principal must strengthen their alliance. The PTLE / PTA can provide principals a responsible and effective vehicle for educating parents about their schools, to help in performing tasks within the school building, and support for district over rides and bond issues. A partnership should be dedicated between the principal and the PTLE / PTA, and serve to strengthen family life and improve the schools.

Partnership implies mutual understanding and cooperation. The following are some suggestions on how the principal can work with parents:

- Be available to the community on a planned, regular basis, and ask parents to set up appointments to discuss special concerns. Make parents feel welcome and comfortable in school. Help with their problems expeditiously.
- Be sensitive to a family's home life that may affect parent involvement in their children's school. For example, a parent struggling alone to house and feed his/her children may have difficulty focusing on academic problems.
- Encourage parent-teacher conferences at all school levels.
- Look on the PTLE / PTA as a forum for discussion of important issues.

- Do not encourage a “rubber stamp” PTLE / PTA or withdraw your support when there is a reasonable difference of opinion. Seek constructive discussions with parents to develop a framework of confidence in the school and its leadership.
- Work with the PTLE / PTA to develop a plan for the use of volunteers. The plan should tap the skills and resources needed to supplement staff expertise. Reach out into the community for persons with time and talents to share. For example, parents may tutor students; monitor lunchrooms, libraries, and playgrounds; assist classroom teachers with field trips; help with vision and hearing tests; demonstrate arts and crafts; and introduce various careers into the classroom.
- Provide adequate training for volunteers and recognize their efforts.
- Value the contributions of parents beyond their checkbooks. For example, spaghetti suppers should serve a social/fellowship function, not just a fund-raising effort.

### **Role of the Teacher in PTLE / PTA**

Teachers should be invited to be part of the PTLE / PTA. Teachers can be important components of any PTLE / PTA by serving as an officer or committee chair; however, it is most important to involve teachers as members, so they have a voice in PTLE / PTA decisions. Parents should refrain from transferring work or leadership of PTLE / PTA to the shoulders of teachers and administrators.

PTLE / PTA is most effective when it has a strong working relationship with the principal and the teachers. PTLE / PTA leaders should be familiar with organized teacher concerns, know the professional stand on the issues, and be sensitive to the thoughts of local teachers individually.

# Parent-Teacher Leadership for Education

## Checklist for Parent/Family/Teacher Involvement



### Standard I: Communication

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

#### Checklist for Quality Indicators

Always    Frequent    Seldom    None

	Always	Frequent	Seldom	None
Use a variety of communication tools on a regular basis. Seek to facilitate two-way interaction-communication.				
Establish opportunities for parents and educators to share “partnering” information such as student strengths-learning preferences.				
Provide clear information regarding course expectations and offers, student placement, school activities, student services, and optional programs.				
Mail report cards and regular progress reports to parents. Provide support services and follow-up conferences as needed.				
Disseminate information on school reforms, policies, discipline procedures, assessment tools, and school goals, and include parents in any related decision-making process.				
Conduct conferences with parents at least twice a year, with follow-up as needed. These should accommodate the varied schedules of parents, language barriers, and the need for childcare.				
Encourage immediate contact between parents and teachers when concerns arise.				
Distribute student work for parental comment and review on a regular basis.				
Translate communications to assist non-English speaking parents.				
Communicate with parents regarding positive student behavior and achievement, not just regarding misbehavior or failure.				
Provide opportunities for parents to communicate with principals and other administrative staff.				
Promote informal activities at which parents, staff, and community members can interact.				
Provide staff development regarding effective communication techniques and the importance of regular two-way communication between the school and the family.				

# Parent-Teacher Leadership for Education

## Checklist for Parent/Family/Teacher Involvement



### Standard II. Parenting

Parenting Skills are promoted and supported.

#### Checklist for Quality Indicators

	Always	Frequent	Seldom	None
Communicate the importance of positive relationships between parents and their children.				
Link parents to programs and resources within the community that provide support services to families.				
Reach out to all families, not just those who attend parent meeting.				
Establish policies that support and respect family responsibilities, recognizing the variety of parenting traditions and practices within the community's cultural and religious diversity.				
Provide accessible parent/family information and resource center to support parents and families with training, resources, and other services.				
Encourage staff members to demonstrate respect for families and the family's primary role in the rearing of children to become responsible adults.				

# Parent-Teacher Leadership for Education

## Checklist for Parent/Family/Teacher Involvement



### Standard III: Student Learning At Home

Parents play an integral role in assisting student learning.

#### Checklist for Quality Indicators

	Always	Frequent	Seldom	None
Seek and encourage parent participation in decision-making that affects students				
Inform parents of the expectations for students in each subject and at each grade level				
Provide information regarding how parents can foster learning at home, give appropriate assistance, monitor homework, and give feedback to teachers.				
Assign interactive homework on a regular base that will require students to discuss and interact with their parents about what they are learning in class.				
Sponsor workshops or distribute information to assist parents in understanding how students can improve skills, get help when they are learning in class.				
Involve parents in setting student goals each year and in planning for post-secondary education and careers. Encourage the development of a personalized education plan for each student, where parents are full partners.				
Provide opportunities for staff members to learn and share successful approaches to engaging parents in their child's education.				

# Parent-Teacher Leadership for Education

## Checklist for Parent/Family/Teacher Involvement



### Standard IV: Volunteering

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

#### Checklist for Quality Indicators

	Always	Frequent	Seldom	None
Ensure that office staff greetings, signage near the entrances, and any other interaction with parents create a climate in which parents feel valued and welcome.				
Survey parents regarding their interests, talents and availability, then coordinate the parent resources with those that exist within the school and among the faculty.				
Ensure that parents who are unable to volunteer in the school building are given the options for helping in other ways, at home or place of employment.				
Organize an easily accessible program for utilizing parent volunteer, providing amply training on volunteer procedures and school protocol.				
Develop a system for contacting all parents to assist as the year progresses.				
Design opportunities for those with limited time and resources to participate by addressing childcare, transportation, work schedules needs, and so forth.				
Show appreciation for parents' participation and value their diverse contributions.				
Educate and assist staff members in creating an inviting climate and effectively utilizing volunteer resources.				
Ensure that volunteer activities are meaningful and built on volunteer interests and abilities.				

# Parent-Teacher Leadership for Education

## Checklist for Parent/Family/Teacher Involvement



### Standard V: School Decision Making and Advocacy

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

#### Checklist for Quality Indicators

	Always	Frequent	Seldom	None
Provide understandable, accessible, and well-publicized processes for influencing decisions, raising issues or concerns, appealing decisions, resolving problems.				
Encourage the formation of Parent-Teacher Leadership for Education Association or other parent groups to identify and respond to issues of interest to parents.				
Include parents on all decision-making and advisory committees and ensure adequate training for such areas as policy, curriculum, budget, school reform initiatives, safety, and personnel. Where a site governance body exists, give equal representation to parents.				
Provide parents with current information regarding school policies, practices, and both student and school performance data.				
Enable parents to participate as partners when setting school goals, developing or evaluating programs and policies or responding to performance data.				
Encourage and facilitate active parent participation in the decisions that affect students, such as student placement, course selection, and individual personalized education plans.				
Treat parent concerns with respect and demonstrate genuine interest in developing solutions.				
Promote parent participation on school, district, state, and national committees and issues.				
Provide training for staff and parents on collaborative partnership and shared decision making.				

# Parent-Teacher Leadership for Education

## Checklist for Parent/Family/Teacher Involvement



### Standard VI: Collaborating with Community

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

#### Checklist for Quality Indicators

	Always	Frequent	Seldom	None
Distribute information regarding cultural, recreational, academic, health, social, and other resources that serve families within the community.				
Develop partnerships with local business and service groups to advance student learning and assist schools and families.				
Encourage employers to adopt policies and practices that promote and support adult participation in children's education.				
Foster student participation in community services.				
Involve community members in school volunteer programs.				
Disseminate information to the school community, including those without school-age children, regarding school programs and performance.				
Collaborate with community agencies to provide family support services and adult learning opportunities, enabling parents to more fully participate in activities that support education.				
Inform staff members of the resources available in the community and strategies for utilizing those resources.				



## Parent Survey

There are many tools available to help you identify what needs improvement and what is working well. Here is one survey you can give to parents to help assess their strengths and their need for creating and sustaining parent, school, and community partnerships. You may choose to distribute this survey solely to increase parent awareness of how they could be involved in their child's education, and/or as a survey (anonymous) to help you identify what needs to be addressed.

	Yes	No
1. Do you support active learning for your child at home?		
2. Do you have a set routine for study, television, conversation, and bedtime?		
3. Do you have positive communication between family members and your child?		
4. Do you encourage reading, by reading to/with your child or discussing books?		
5. Do you have clear rules/expectations for your child at home and school?		
6. Do you encourage good eating habits?		
7. Do you make sure that your child attends/gets to school on time?		
8. Do you have a mutual respect for school staff and expect that of your child?		
9. Do you call/contact your child's teachers regularly?		
10. Do you respond promptly to communication from the school?		
11. Are you a good role model for your child?		
12. Are you actively involved in activities in your child's classroom?		
13. Are you actively involved in over-all school activities, e.g., PTA or Parent Club?		
14. If you work [outside the home], do you volunteer for outside-school-day activity?		
15. Have you communicated your willingness to serve on school planning group?		
16. Do you know what the curriculum requirements are for your child's grade?		
17. Do you keep up with the over-all lesson plan for your child's subjects?		
18. Do you have high expectations for your child both academically, behaviorally and do you communicate that to your child and the teacher?		
19. Do you utilize your work to promote good community educational goals?		
20. Do you review your child's class work and homework?		



## Teacher Survey

There are many tools available to help you identify what needs improvement and what is working well. Here is one survey you can give to teachers to help them assess their strengths and their needs for creating and sustaining parent, school, and community partnerships. You may choose to distribute this survey to increase teacher awareness, and/or as a survey (anonymous) to help you identify what needs to be addressed.

	Yes	No
1. Do you contact each child's parent(s) by phone, home visit, or e-mail during each grading period?		
2. Do you ensure that cultural/ethnic diversity is respected?		
3. Do you expect the best from each student?		
4. Do you provide a curriculum outline with projected dates for parents?		
5. Do you talk to parents about the learning style of their child?		
6. When you talk to parents, do you discuss positive aspects of their child?		
7. Do you survey parents to know what their talents are?		
8. Do you discuss homework with parents and ensure assignments meaningful?		
9. Do you offer resources to parents (verbal/written) on how to help their child?		
10. Do you find something for each parent to do to contribute to the classroom?		
11. Do you celebrate parent contributions with the class?		
12. Are parents negatively surprised when report cards arrive?		
13. Do parents know the class schedule?		
14. Do parents understand the academic standards and report card procedures?		
15. Do you do environmental scans of unusual behaviors that should be reported to parents (e.g., squinting, unhappiness)?		
16. Do you discuss social behavior and discipline policies with parents?		
17. Do you provide linkages to other services that parents may need?		
18. Do parents feel welcome in you class and know how to contact you?		
19. Do parents know the importance of being involved in their child's learning?		
20. Do you welcome parent suggestions for your class?		



## Principal Survey

Many tools are available to help you identify what needs work and what is working well. Here is one survey you can give to the principal to help him/her assess his/her strengths and his/her needs to creating and sustaining parent, school, and community partnership.

	Yes	No
1. Do you set a positive standard for parent involvement?		
2. Do you balance the need for safety with an open-door policy?		
3. Do you provide training for teachers on getting parental involvement?		
4. Do you communicate the definition of parent involvement?		
5. Do you have parents who meet regularly to address school-wide issues?		
6. Do you set the standard for respect of ethnic/cultural diversity?		
7. Do you communicate the customer service view to your staff and parents?		
8. Do you set high expectations of staff, students, and parents?		
9. Do you have a plan in place to monitor results of school/parent initiatives?		
10. Do you have group meetings with parents to discuss over-all school issues?		
11. Do you ensure that school newsletters or other written communication are family/culturally friendly?		
12. Do staff members know how to assist with accessing resources for non-educational needs for families?		
13. Do you maintain a group of staff and families to address involvement?		
14. Do you know and use individual families' expertise to enhance the school?		
15. Do you involve a variety of parents in school planning committees?		
16. Do you work closely with parent organizations on school-wide issues?		
17. Do you provide training to teachers on involving parents who are inactive?		
18. Do you have parent education available?		
19. Do you utilize involved parents to involve other parents?		
20. Do you utilize parents as trainers in staff development activities?		



## Superintendent/ School Board Survey

There are many tools available to help you identify what needs work and what is working well. Here is one survey you can give to the superintendent or members on the school board to help them assess their strengths and their needs for creating and sustaining parents, school and community partnerships. You may choose to distribute this survey to increase awareness to help you identify what needs to be addressed.

	Yes	No
1. Do you actively support public accountability for school function/use of tax dollars?		
2. Do you have a standing agenda item for meetings that includes meaningful dialogue on parent involvement in school?		
3. Do you provide opportunities for parent organizations to discuss issues with the board?		
4. Do you actively involve a variety of parents in policy-making decisions?		
5. Do you gain input from a variety of parents prior to making policy decisions?		
6. Do you encourage local businesses to address the board about school/community outcomes?		
7. Do you communicate to principals/staff the priority of effective school/parent partnership?		
8. Do you have parents/staff committees that are responsible for formulating, communicating, and evaluating school/parent partnership policies?		
9. Do you communicate to local employers the need for parent involvement?		
10. Do you communicate to local businesses the need for and mutual benefits of community partnerships?		
11. Are the expenditures/budgets of the school district clearly communicated to the public?		
12. Do you actively seek the expertise of community partners and parents?		
13. Do you seek the expertise and support of the teaching staff of the schools?		
14. Do you communicate the need for staff development opportunities and monitor effectiveness of training opportunities?		
15. Do you have a method for continuous community comment?		
16. Do you publicly celebrate successes for the school community?		
17. Do you maintain a cordial and open relationship with the media?		
18. Do you promote, in all venues, the goals of student achievement?		
19. Do you work with principals, teachers, and parents to address sensitive community issues and barriers to success?"		
20. Do you recognize and promote the benefits of diversity?		



## Action Plan for Family Involvement

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

Scope of Plan (overall parent involvement or particular activity):

	<b>GOAL</b> What do you want to see happening?	<b>CHALLENGE</b> What is keeping you from meeting your goal?	<b>ACTION</b> What are you going to do to address your challenges?	<b>IMPLEMENTATION</b> Who's responsible? When should they do it?
Getting People Involved <i>Nits1h1kees idoolnii</i>				
Sustaining Parent Involvement <i>Nahat'1 idoonii</i>				
Building Parent Leadership <i>lin1 Adoolnii</i>				
Evaluating Parent Projects Program <i>Sihasin bi[Nahat'1</i>				

To'tsoni Spring Community School  
Student/Parent/School Compact  
School Year 2005 – 2006

*The purpose of this compact is to create a school-parent relationship to help all children achieve the high academic and social standards, also, our school's goals.*

I, \_\_\_\_\_, a student at \_\_\_\_\_ want to learn;  
therefore, I will do my personal best to:

- Attend school regularly and on time.
- Come to school prepared with supplies.
- Complete and return all assignments and, if I need to, ask for help.
- Respect and cooperate with my classmates, teachers, and other staff.
- Obey all rules of the classes, bus, cafeteria, dormitory, and school.
- Always do my best in my work and in my behavior.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**As a Parent/Guardian, I want my child to achieve; therefore, I will do my personal best to:**

- See that my child is punctual and attends school regularly.
- Stay aware of what my child is learning.
- Provide a quiet place for homework and study area.
- Respect and support my child, the teachers, and the school.
- Attend parent-teacher conferences, workshops, and meetings.
- Set an example for my child by being a lifelong learner myself with positive behavior.

Parent/ Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**As the School, We want students to achieve; therefore, we will do our personal best to provide:**

- Safe and caring environment for learning, while providing a high quality curriculum.
- Parents with reports on their child's progress.
- Instruction in a pleasant learning environment that encourages high academic performance.
- Positive communication between, teacher, parent, student and the community.
- Opportunities for parents to be involved in the school and in their child's education.
- Explanations of the standards students are expected to meet to demonstrate learning progress.

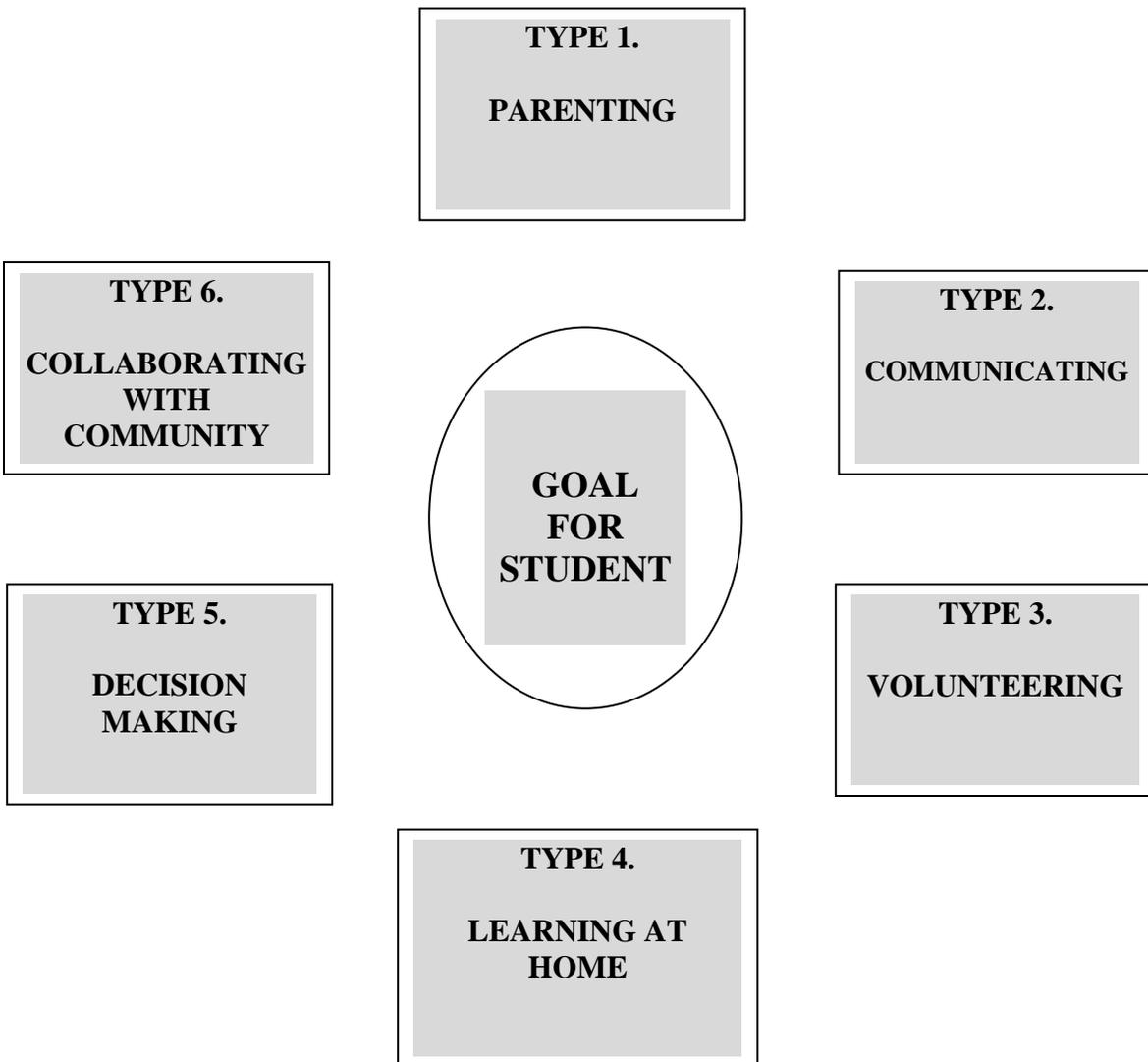
Principal Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Ten Steps to Success in School, Family, and Community Partnerships

- ✓ Create an Action Team for Partnerships
- ✓ Obtain Funds and Official Support
- ✓ Provide training to all members of the Action Team for Partnerships
- ✓ Identify starting points—present strengths and weaknesses
- ✓ Develop a Three-Year Outline and Vision for partnerships
- ✓ Write a One-Year Action Plan
- ✓ Enlist staff, parents, students, and the community to help conduct activities
- ✓ Evaluate implementations and results
- ✓ Conduct annual celebrations and report progress to all participants
- ✓ Continue working toward a comprehensive, ongoing, goal—oriented program of partnerships

## Use the Six Types of Involvement to Reach School Goals for Students

How might a comprehensive goal-oriented partnership program benefit students at your school? Choose one major goal that your school has set for students. Then identify specific partnership



*School, Family, and Community Partnerships* by J.L. Epstein ©2002 Corwin Press, Inc. Photocopying permissible for local school use only practices to support the goals.

## Members of the Action Team for Partnership

How Many?	6-12 members
Who?	2-3 teachers or more 2-3 parents/family members or more representatives may include parent liaison, PTA/PTO officer, parents with children in different grades, families from various neighborhoods 1-2 students (in high school) Principal 1-2 other members (e.g., nurse, counselor, or community members)
Terms?	2-3 years (renewable) At least one member also serves on the school improvement team or school council
Leaders?	Chair or co-chairs are team members who communicate well with educators and families  Other members serve as chairs or co-chairs of committees for each type of involvement or for specific school goals

*All features are flexible to fit school conditions and needs.*

# Action Team for Partnership Structure Goals

**LOCAL SCHOOL COUNCIL**

**ACTION TEAM for PARTNERSHIP**

Committees: Parenting Skills, Volunteer, Communication, Learning at Home Committee members, etc.

Academic  
GOAL 1

Academic  
GOAL 3

Academic  
GOAL 2

Academic  
GOAL 4

# How To Organize Your Action Team For Partnerships

Complete this activity with your team. Review and update periodically.

<p>1. How will your Parent – Teacher Leadership for Education organize its work? [A or B]          A. ___ We will organize our PTLE One-Year Action Plan and Committee based on the six types of involvement. PTLE will have ___ committees, one for each type of involvement.</p> <p>B. ___ We will Organize our PTLE One-Year Action Plan and Committee based on School Improvement Goals. PTLE will have ___ committees to develop family and community involvement for two academic goals, on behavior goal, and for the goal of creating a positive climate for partnership.</p> <p>B1. Which ___ goals will the PTLE committee address to involve student’s family and community in important ways?</p> <p>Goal 1. (Academic: Reading)          _____</p> <p>Goal 2. (Academic: Math)          _____</p> <p>Goal 3. (Nonacademic: Fundraising)          _____</p> <p>Goal 4. (Required: Parenting Skill)          _____</p>	<p>2. Who will be the members and leaders of the PTLE unit?          (There should be 6-12 members of the PTLE.)</p> <p><b>Required:</b></p> <p>Administrators:          _____</p> <hr/> <p>Teachers: (2-3)          _____</p> <hr/> <p>Parents/Family: (2-3)          _____</p> <hr/> <p>Student/s ☺at the HS)          _____</p> <p>Optional:</p> <p>Other school staff          _____</p> <hr/> <p>Community Partners          _____</p> <hr/> <p>Who will be ATP chair or co-chairs?          _____</p> <hr/>
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When will the Parent – Teacher Leadership for Education meet?

(The PTLE should meet at least monthly.)

How Often? \_\_\_\_\_ Day: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

How will information from the PTLE meetings be shared with absent members?  
 \_\_\_\_\_

School Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School Year: \_\_\_\_\_

**End-of-the –Year Evaluation**

This annual report helps Parental Involvement / PAC / PTLE / team discuss and rate the quality of the school partnership program. It also asks the team-committees to consider *how well* activities were implemented and *how to* improve activities in the next school year to meet targeted school improvement goals. The form includes one page of questions on the overall partnership program and a separate page of questions for each goal that was targeted in the *One-Year Action Plan*. If more than four goals were targeted, make copies of the goal page for each additional goal. Evaluation should assist the team / committee with its *One-Year Action Plan* for the following school year.

**Overall Program Evaluation**

*What has changed most in the past year as a result of working in partnership with the school, family, and community? Overall, how would you rate the quality of your school’s program, family and community partnership?*

\_\_\_\_\_ **Weak** / Just Starting: Not well developed and needs a great deal of work

\_\_\_\_\_ **Fair**: Implemented, but needs improvement and expansion

\_\_\_\_\_ **Good**: Well developed, focused on improvement goals, covered all six types of involvement, addressed the needs of most families at most grade levels

\_\_\_\_\_ **Excellent**: Well developed, implemented, focused on school improvement goals, covered all six types of involvement, addressed the needs of all families at all grade levels. Membership has grown.

*Who are the members of the Partnership Team? Mark \* next to the names of members who are leaving the school and who will be replaced by new members.*

**Members for this past year.**

**Positions:**

**Role on the Partnership Team:  
(chair, co-chair, member, etc.)**

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**GOAL 1: ACADEMIC: Which curricular goal for improving student learning and achievement was selected in the One-Year Action Plan?** (Use same form for evaluating Communication, Volunteering, Learning at Home, Decision Making, Collaborating with Community)

(SAMPLE)

**Was Goal 1 reached this year:**  Yes or  No

**Will Goal 1 be continued / expanded in the One-Year Action Plan for next year?**  Yes or  No

(Use same form for additional Goals)

**PROGRESS IN REACHING GOAL 1. ACADEMIC**

Use *Excellent (E)*, *Good (G)*, *Fair (F)* or *Poor (P)* to rate the partnership activities that were conducted to help reach GOAL 1 in each category. Explain the next steps that will be taken to maintain or improve the partnership activities in the next school year. Use additional pages if more than three family and community involvement activities were conducted to reach this goal.

Partnership Activity/ies	<b>Action Team Support:</b> How helpful and active were the team members?	<b>Other Support:</b> How helpful were the family, community member, student, and others	<b>Implementation</b> How well was the activity planned and implemented?	<b>Overall Success of Activity:</b> Did the activity reach its targeted audience? Did it produce results?
1.				
2.				
3.				

**Which activity/ies will continue in the next school year? \_\_\_\_\_ What changes might be made to improve the support, implementation, or overall success of the activity/ies?**

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