**DECISION-MAKING ACTIVITIES**

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* Have “low-tech” and “high-tech” options for parents to receive and provide information in which decisions need to be made (What are their accessibility needs?)
  + LOW-TECH
    - notices, memos, progress notes, schoolwork, and other two-way communications
  + HIGH-TECH
    - Internet video, Audiotapes / Podcasts, Website pages, Teacher Blogs, text messages, Electronic newsletters
* Information, and guiding questions, to help families make decisions about:
  + School programs
  + Student courses
  + School policies, programs, reforms, and student transitions
  + Choosing schools (open enrollment), selecting courses, joining extra-curricular activities
  + Special services
  + Post-graduation transition options (college, employment, independent living)
* Include parent representatives on various school committees
  + consider representation of parents from all racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, and other groups
  + assist parents in understanding data to focus decisions on student outcomes
  + write / type all ideas / suggestions so parents know they are heard
  + parents have equal decision-making roles / leadership roles
* Organize and maintain an active parent organization(s)
  + increase parent organization participation by holding meetings at various times and locations to enable parents to attend at least 1
    - Provide multiple ways for parents to provide input (email, written, phone message, survey, etc. . .)
  + Parent representatives (school council, school improvement team, PTA/PTO, other…) could gather ideas from other parents and report to committee
  + Annual survey of parents to get ideas about programs and policies
    - Offer parent and student training in leadership, decision making, advocacy, and collaboration
    - Offer draft of IEP for parents to review in order to help decision-making at IEP meeting
* Offer Parent Mentor or other support name and contact information to help parent understand and make decisions regarding their child’s education
* Monthly breakfasts with administrators / school board to hear current information and time for questions and discussions
* Establish two-way channels of communication for questions, suggestions, and interactions (what is best way for Parent to reach you) to help parent make decision(s)
* Obtain ideas from families to improve the design and content of communications such as newsletters, report cards, and conference schedules
* Suggestion box – forms and pencils with it – acknowledge receipt of suggestion within a day

RESOURCES:

*Beyond the Bake Sale*, by A.T. Henderson et al., 2007 by The New Press.

*Families, Professionals, and Exceptionality, Seventh Edition*, by A. Turnbull et al, 2015 by Pearson Education, Inc.

S*chool, Family, and Community Partnerships*, *Third Edition*, by J. L. Epstein et al., 2009 by Corwin Press.

*What Successful Schools Do To Involve Families: 55 Partnership Strategies*, by N.A. Glasgow & P.J. Whitney, 2009 by Corwin Press.