**Parent-Teacher Partnerships for Student Success**



**Module 3: Equality and Decision-Making**

**Decision-Making Activities**

* Have “low-tech” and “high-tech” options for parents to receive information
  + LOW-TECH
    - Weekly folders for notices, memos, progress notes, schoolwork, and other two-way communications
    - School signs
  + HIGH-TECH
    - Internet video, Audiotapes / Podcasts, Website pages, Teacher Blogs, text messages, Electronic newsletters, Electronic student log
* Provide 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 one
* 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.

Contents were developed under a grant from the US Department of Education, #323A120002-13 and adapted in 2017 by The Ohio State University. However, the contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the US Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government. Project Officer, Jennifer Coffey. PTP Documents Archive: <https://u.osu.edu/familyschoolpartnerships/ptp/>