

National Standards for Family-School Partnerships Assessment Guide

Throughout this implementation guide, the levels of practice build on each other, assuming that good practices at the emerging and progressing levels will continue at the next level.

Standard 2—Communicating Effectively

Families and school staff engage in regular, two-way, meaningful communication about student learning.

Goal 1: Sharing Information Between School and Families: Does the school keep all families informed about important issues and events and make it easy for families to communicate with teachers?

| Indicators | Quality of Implementation | | | Your Current Level |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| | Level 3 Excelling Highly functioning level of development and implementation | Level 2 Progressing Functioning level of development and implementation | Level 1 Emerging Limited level of development and implementation | |
| Using multiple communication paths | <p>Families, the community, and school staff communicate in numerous interactive ways, both formally and informally.</p> <p><i>For example, school and PTA/parent group leaders take part in community forums in different neighborhoods and appear on radio or local TV call-in programs and use social networking online to engage families.</i></p> | <p>School staff collaborate with the PTA/parent group to develop connections with families through multiple two-way communication tools, including personal calls, e-mails, and notes.</p> <p><i>For example, parents who are not fluent in English are given up-to-date information through bilingual staff or parent volunteers who are available at times convenient for these families.</i></p> | <p>The PTA/parent group and school keep families informed of upcoming events in a variety of ways, including regular print and electronic notices, in the languages spoken in the community.</p> <p><i>For example, the school uses newsletters, fliers, e-mail, automated phone calls, and text messages in the home languages of families as needed.</i></p> | <input type="checkbox"/> Level 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Not here yet |

Standard 2—Communicating Effectively, continued

| Indicators | Quality of Implementation | | | Your Current Level |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Level 3: Excelling | Level 2: Progressing | Level 1: Emerging | |
| Surveying families to identify issues and concerns | <p>Parent survey results are reflected in the School Improvement Plan.</p> <p><i>For example, programs, policies, and practices are developed collaboratively by teachers, administrators, families, and community members to meet the needs of parents as identified in the survey.</i></p> | <p>The parent survey is translated into multiple languages and communicated in various ways, including in person, online, in print, and by phone, and made available to all parents. Results are posted on the school and/or PTA website and discussed.</p> <p><i>For example, the PTA/parent group plans morning coffees and evening “happy hours” to discuss survey results with parents and solicit additional feedback.</i></p> | <p>PTA/parent group leaders and representatives from the school staff (e.g., principal, teacher) complete a parent involvement survey. The results guide the development of parent involvement programs.</p> <p><i>For example, the executive committee of the PTA/parent group and the principal meet over the summer to discuss the survey results and plan strategies to address barriers.</i></p> | <input type="checkbox"/> Level 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Not here yet |
| Having access to the principal | <p>The principal personally welcomes families into the building and meets regularly with parents in small groups or one-on-one as needed, in school and in different neighborhoods.</p> <p><i>For example, the principal and PTA/parent group develop an agenda for small-group dialogues to be held in different neighborhoods on issues such as school security or homework expectations.</i></p> | <p>The principal is accessible for scheduled meetings with groups of parents or individually at different times of the day.</p> <p><i>For example, the principal hosts monthly coffee hours that are open to all parents to discuss a variety of topics. Meeting times vary from month to month to accommodate parent schedules.</i></p> | <p>The principal shares information about schoolwide issues at PTA/parent group meetings, with opportunities for individual follow-up discussion by appointment.</p> <p><i>For example, the PTA/parent group invites the principal to a monthly meeting to discuss schoolwide test results and plans to address gaps in learning.</i></p> | <input type="checkbox"/> Level 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Not here yet |

Standard 2—Communicating Effectively, continued

| Indicators | Quality of Implementation | | | Your Current Level |
|---|---|--|---|--|
| | Level 3: Excelling | Level 2: Progressing | Level 1: Emerging | |
| <p>Providing information on current issues</p> | <p>A team of administrators, teachers, families, and community representatives strategically look at developing issues that affect families to determine whether there is a need for a schoolwide response.</p> <p><i>For example, the principal meets monthly with a parent-school-community team to address school-wide issues and determine appropriate responses.</i></p> | <p>All school families are kept informed of developing concerns in the school community.</p> <p><i>For example, print and electronic newsletters are generated on a regular basis. When serious concerns arise, families are immediately informed through e-mail, and letters are sent home.</i></p> | <p>The principal keeps the PTA/parent group president informed of current school issues and concerns.</p> <p><i>For example, the principal meets monthly with the PTA/parent group president to review issues that may affect families and student learning. The issues discussed are determined solely by the principal.</i></p> | <p><input type="checkbox"/> Level 3</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Level 2</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Level 1</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not here yet</p> |

Standard 2—Communicating Effectively, continued

| Indicators | Quality of Implementation | | | Your Current Level |
|--|--|---|---|---|
| | Level 3: Excelling | Level 2: Progressing | Level 1: Emerging | |
| Facilitating connections among families | <p>The PTA/parent group takes steps to help parents get to know those beyond their own neighborhood and culture.</p> <p><i>For example, the PTA/parent group plans small group events that begin with icebreaker activities, parents can also connect electronically through school listservs, blogs, and social networking Web pages.</i></p> | <p>The PTA/parent group and school jointly develop programs to help parents connect with each other.</p> <p><i>For example, the PTA/parent group collaborates with school staff to jointly plan an orientation program at the beginning of the year and distributes a calendar and a schoolwide directory with staff and parent listings.</i></p> | <p>The PTA/parent group provides opportunities for parents to get to know each other.</p> <p><i>For example, PTA/parent group newsletters provide contact information for parents who want to join a committee. Parents of students in each grade level can plan informal get-togethers to socialize with each other (e.g., a Parents of 4th-Graders Breakfast Club).</i></p> | <input type="checkbox"/> Level 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Not here yet |

“Families” and “parents” are used interchangeably to refer to adults who are responsible for a student. “Families from all backgrounds and neighborhoods” and “diverse families” include families from all races, ethnicities, cultures, religions, family structures, and economic levels, as well as those with physical or mental challenges.