

**North Dakota Department of Public Instruction
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Six Types of Parental Involvement

Collaborating with Community

Collaborating with Community: Identifying and integrating resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices, student learning, and development.

Collaborating with Community – Type 6

The sixth type of parental involvement is collaborating with the community. These activities encourage and support cooperation between schools, families, community groups, organizations, agencies, and individuals. Communities have a significant role to play in the education, development, and well-being of students. These community activities identify and integrate community resources, whether they are human, economic, material, or social, to improve schools, strengthen families, and assist students to succeed.

Sample Activities

Examples of activities schools could conduct to promote collaboration with the community include, but are not limited to:

- Acting as a source of information and referral regarding services available in the community for families.
- Using a variety of strategies to reach out to adults, families, and children of all ages, races, and socioeconomic backgrounds in the community.
- Encouraging local civic and service groups to become involved in schools in a variety of ways such as mentoring students, volunteering, speaking to classes, and helping with fundraising events.
- Encouraging staff and students to participate in youth service-learning opportunities.
- Opening school buildings for use by the community beyond regular school hours.
- Working with the local chamber of commerce or business/community organizations and public libraries to promote adult literacy.
- Having a program with local businesses that enhances student work skills.
- Publishing and disseminating school improvement team meeting notices, summaries, and agendas, and encouraging the feedback and participation of community members.

Problems and Solutions

Collaborating with agencies outside the school walls can be difficult for educators. To make these collaborations successful for all those involved, they must:

- Outline who is responsible for leading, funding, and supervising the activities.
- Link the community experience with the curriculum, lessons, or homework happening in the school.
- Inform all families and students about community programs and services to ensure equal opportunities for services and participation.

Documentation and Evaluation

No matter the number or type of activities a school is implementing to collaborate with the community, it is crucial that these activities are adequately documented and evaluated. Documenting activities may include retaining meeting minutes or agendas of collaboration meetings; compiling and listing information utilized during the collaboration opportunities; and logging collaboration opportunities participated in by the students, families, and community, etc. Each collaborative activity conducted should be evaluated by the school. The evaluation should also seek input from the parents, students (as applicable), and community on whether or not the collaboration was effective. Evaluation is crucial, as this is often the determining factor of whether or not the activity should continue, be revised, or be dismissed all together.

Resources

Resources used to develop this document include:

- ❑ Epstein, J., Sanders, M., Simon, B., Salinas, K., Jansorn, N., and Voorhis, F. (2002). *School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action* (2nd ed.). California: Corwin Press, Inc.
- ❑ National Network of Partnership Schools. (n.d.). *Epstein's Six Types of Parent Involvement*. Retrieved August 21, 2007 from www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000/sixtypes.htm.