

FOR PARENTS

What is a Parent Leader?

A parent leader is defined as one who is able to provide support to parents, students, teachers, and constituents in their community with the objective of obtaining positive outcomes for everyone. They also encourage other parents to take on leadership roles in education. This individual passionately represents the needs and perspectives of all parents, improves the direction of their families, and acquires the knowledge and skills needed to have a meaningful voice without being in a staff role at the school. Parent leaders become role models for family engagement, advocating not only on behalf of their own children, but for other families as well.

How Can I Become a Parent Leader?

- 1 Provide support and leadership through active engagement in your child's education.
- 2 Work collaboratively with your school's principal, teachers, and parent liaison to learn about all aspects of the school's structure and share this information with other parents.
- 3 Remember T.E.A.M. — Together Everyone Achieves More. Continue to support your child's learning at home by working with their teacher to help them develop good homework and study habits.
- 4 Ask questions and "speak out" to have a powerful voice in the decision-making that directly impacts every component of your child's education.
- 5 Help create opportunities for community members and stakeholders to support school efforts through meaningful collaboration related to curriculum and school improvement.
- 6 Talk with your child's teacher and school principal to learn about opportunities to get involved in your school's advisory councils as a method to make your talents, skills, and availability to assist known.
- 7 Work with other parents at your school to develop a plan of action for engaging all parents with the goal of helping your school's administrator improve learning for all children.

FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

How Can I Build and Sustain Parent Leaders?

Developing parent leaders is a progressive process. Each academic year schools experience a new influx of parents who are at different stages of involvement and awareness, of responsibility. As a parent becomes empowered and accumulates the skills to make positive changes, he or she will emerge as a parent leader, taking on leadership roles within the school and community. Utilizing parent leaders effectively will greatly contribute to the overall success and progress of your school and its mission.

What Steps Can I Take to Develop Parent Leaders In My School Community?

- 1 Develop a structure or system that is designed to educate parents in your school about the function of the school board, school and district policies, test score interpretation, and parental rights and responsibilities related to education.
- 2 Offer quality family engagement opportunities for parents to acquire the tools they need to effectively implement family engagement strategies at home and at your school.
- 3 Ask parents at the beginning of the school year about their interests to allow adequate time for those interests to be developed and utilized throughout the school year.
- 4 Include parents in the school's mission writing process and highlight the important role they play in the school-family-community partnership alongside the faculty and staff.
- 5 Set a goal to engage in meaningful conversation with the parents at your school and ask for their input on the decisions that directly impact school improvement and student achievement.
- 6 Reinforce confidence in your parents and their ability to be educational stakeholders, capable of acting on behalf of all students.
- 7 Make sure parents feel welcomed and cultivate a school community of trust, where both teachers and parents believe that each one has the other's best interest in mind as they both strive to make positive changes within the school and community.