



Title I Parent Contact Newsletter

TITLE I MISSION STATEMENT

Through service and leadership, we will ensure fair and equal opportunities for school communities to attain a high quality education. March 2003

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Parent Education Facilitators

Louise C. Booth ext. 33238
Andrew J. Moore, Jr. ext. 33214
Neville H. Schouburgh ext. 33229
Kerri L. Thompson ext. 33237

386/255-6475-DaytonaBeach
386/734-7190-DeLand
386/427-5223-New Smyrna

Title I
Herbert Street Center
1290 Herbert Street
Port Orange, FL 32129

Volusia County School District
2011- 2012 Activities Calendar

DECEMBER 2011

- 7-Early Release
- 14-Early Release
- 16-Teacher Duty Day
Winter Break Holiday
Begins
- 4-Januray, Classes
Resume

*The best thing you can
give children, next to
good habits, are good
memories.*

Sydney J. Harris



PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT BARRIERS

Parents identify three major barriers that prevent them from becoming involved at school: (a) time and life demands, (b) lack of knowledge about what is expected of them and how they can help their children at home, and (c) factors in the school environment.

Time and life demands. Time seems to be a major barrier stopping parents from participating in school activities or helping their children with schoolwork at home. Parents often report lack of time or schedule conflicts as the two most important barriers to parent involvement. Parents feel that, frequently, activities at school are held at inconvenient times.

With the increase in single-parent households and mothers of school-aged children entering the work force in great numbers, time has become very valuable for parents who struggle to make ends meet. It is important that Parent Contacts and school staff recognize and adapt to this need by surveying parents about convenient times for activities, offering alternative means of communication, and most of all, understanding that it is not the parent's fault if he or she cannot participate. For example, parents often report having difficulty attending parent-teacher conferences during the day due to inflexible work schedules. Whenever schools made adjustments to accommodate parents' time restrictions, parents were very responsive, offering greater cooperation and support for teachers and the school. In general, parents are appreciative of any parent involvement and outreach efforts schools make and give high marks to teachers who encourage parent involvement in their regular educational activities.

Child care responsibilities also influence the parents' ability to participate in their child's education. If it is hard for parents to attend the parent-teacher conference for one of their children, obviously the degree of difficulty increases tremendously for two or more. Many families do not have child care resources. This is a big obstacle for their participation in school activities. Alternative child care and after-school programs offered by community organizations can offer parents a helping hand so they can attend school events. Several schools provide some form of child care on days that parent participation is essential such as for parent-teacher conferences. In that way parents can have the opportunity to participate and actively contribute in their child's education.

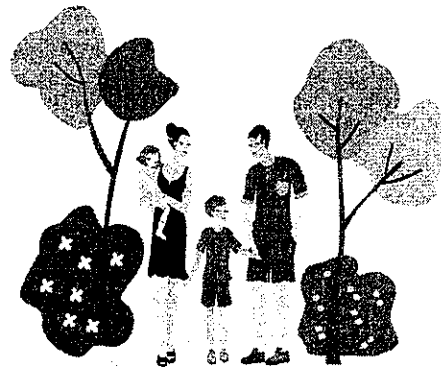
Lack of Knowledge. An important ingredient to parent involvement is communication between parents and teachers. Most parents report that they would like to know what their children are learning at school and how they can be involved in their education. Parents feel that schools must inform them about their curriculum as well as about ways to help their children at home. Many parents believe that parent involvement in their children's school would increase if they had more information and understood better what their children were learning.

Parents look to the school to suggest specific ways they can become involved and help their children learn. Even providing parents with general information can be sufficient to trigger noticeable change. For example, informing parents through a newsletter about parent participation, how powerful it is for their children's academic achievement, and how parents can be involved in their children's education can yield higher parent involvement rates.

The school environment. Based on recent census data, ethnic and cultural diversity is increasing in the United States. The need for schools to prepare minority students for full participation in American life and society has become even more pronounced. Children may experience adverse conditions such as poverty and lack of resources in the family, school, or the community. In addition, parents of such children often have limited education themselves, and negative personal experiences with the educational system lead them to mistrust and often fear the school environment. Such perceptions pose a serious obstacle in parent involvement and may influence the children's attitudes and their school performance negatively. Another factor that complicates things even further is the fact that schools tend to communicate with parents primarily when there is a problem at school. This association between school and bad news only reinforces the parents' reluctance to get involved and fuels their defensiveness when dealing with the school system.

The development of positive, trusting attitudes toward the school is a slow process that requires attention, frequent evaluation, and most importantly, the school's and the parents' commitment to establish and maintain a constructive and trusting partnership.

(Excerpts taken from The Power of Involvement: Evidence, Ideas, and Tools for Success, U.S. Department of Education Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2008.)



PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Important Dates

16 December - 4 January, 2012 - Winter Break

21 January - Family Expo, Deland High School, 8:30 a.m.– 2:30 p.m.