

Active Parents Worksheets

Summary Indicator Worksheet	
Summary of Indicator Topics	Consider your Civic Index score in relation to the topic described. Write a few notes about how this topic seems relevant or not relevant to your school community.
<p>Topic 1: Sharing Information</p> <p>This topic connects to the following indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Parents stay informed about key education issues.</i> - <i>Parents participate actively in their child's education, such as volunteering in the school, getting their child to school on time, or doing homework with their child.</i> <p>To raise a Civic Index score in this area, parents need to actively</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seek the information they need to provide needed support to their children or the schools in their community - Share information with school staff, other parents, and the larger community that will help to support the needs of students 	
<p>Topic 2: Becoming Involved</p> <p>This topic connects to the following indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Parents participate in school-related parent organizations.</i> - <i>Parents participate actively in their child's education, such as volunteering in the school, getting their child to school on time, or doing homework with their child.</i> - <i>Parents participate on school councils or decision making panels.</i> - <i>Schools encourage active participation/contributions.</i> <p>To raise a Civic Index score in this area, parents need to become actively involved. This means: involved in schools by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual parents supporting their children's education - Members of the parent community supporting the needs of all schools and all students. Seek the information they need to provide needed support to their children or the schools in their community 	
<p>Topic 3: Participating in Decision Making</p> <p>This topic connects to the following indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Parents participate on school councils or decision making panels.</i> - <i>Parents participate in school-related parent organizations.</i> <p>To raise a Civic Index score in this area, parents need to actively become advocates for education by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using their words and actions to encourage decision-makers to draw on the resources, experiences, knowledge, and skills available at the school and in the larger community to meet the needs of every child. - Taking part in activities to learn new ways to support their children and participate and encourage activities that encourage improved education in their school community. 	

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Common Results Worksheet

Well-designed parental involvement with schools can result in networks that expand the kinds of resources to support student needs and lead to result that support student achievement. Take a moment to think about the structures that support involvement in your school community. For each description below, use the scale provided to note the value you give to each possible result.

5 as the highest value 1 as the lowest value

New school- and district-level policies that promote family and community connections with schools.

Schools often have taken parent involvement policies that are created to meet local, state, or federal orders. However, when school staff and parents cooperate to develop strategies and activities to address student needs, these efforts can have a much greater effect on meeting student needs. One outcome of this change in approach is powerful relationships. Once school staff and parents begin to interact regularly within school, they form relationships. Because these relationships encourage new levels of respect and caring, parents and staff find they want their efforts to have a greater effect on student needs in order to have greater value for students as well as parents. As a result, they often encourage the development of school and district policies that support meaningful efforts. Though these policies can take any form, financing and guidelines for involvement are the most common.

What value do you place on this result?

5	4	3	2	1
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New methods, formal and informal, of communication among all stakeholder groups.

One of the first concepts that comes from successful school-family interactions is an awareness of the need to encourage increased and more strategically-directed communication. Moreover, the relationships that are built as the groups interact make all involved feel more comfortable in reaching out to others and communicating in a more active way. With increased communication about key issues related to a child's learning—content taught, instructional strategies, state-test preparation, accountability requirements, and other topics specific to the needs of the child or the school community—everyone sees that improved communication can provide greater benefits to the students as well as to the parents and school staff.

What value do you place on this result?

5	4	3	2	1
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New resources to support the needs of the whole child, families, and schools

Though these efforts are started because of the need to provide support for classroom learning, the exchange of information about what is happening at school and home raises the awareness of both parents and school staff about issues that prevent students from being successful. It may be that there are conditions at home or situations at school that are interfering with a child's learning. Many times, both groups assume facts or conditions that do not exist. Sharing information breaks down these assumptions and opens the door to determining the resources that are needed by all stakeholders: school-based and not school-based. When parents and school staff regularly share information, they can begin to work together as partners to meet student's needs.

What value do you place on this result?

5	4	3	2	1
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New awareness and efforts to address barriers that hold back participation.

One of the outcomes of increased communication is a greater understanding of the barriers to participation. A teacher might assume that a parent has chosen not to be cooperative when in reality; the parent was unable to fill a request. On the other hand, parents may assume a teacher's request is unimportant because they don't understand why the request was made. When all stakeholders come to the same table and openly discuss barriers to parent involvement, all those involved gain a wider understanding of the situation for involvement. When these barriers are identified, parents can join teachers in finding ways to address all barriers—work schedules, literacy, siblings, health, or others.

What value do you place on this result?

5	4	3	2	1
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New structures that build an environment that encourages families to play a role in supporting the education of children.

Though efforts to involve parents typically start out on a small scale, it is not uncommon for them to grow into larger programs. There are three issues that influence this growth: First, as those involved know more about what needs to be done, they can do what needs to be done. Second, as school staff and parents interact with one another on a regular basis, they begin to form relationships. These relationships build commitment as everyone involved takes responsibility for making the effort more successful. Third, as parents take on new roles and responsibilities for their children's education, they will also assume leadership roles. The emergence of new leaders to support these efforts helps to make them sustainable.

What value do you place on this result?

5

4

3

2

1

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In your school community, what leadership roles do school staff ask parents to take on AND what leadership roles do parents assume on their own?

List the leaders among the parents that you know should take a more active role in education in your school community.

Describe any of the three characteristics—relationships, recognition, and involvement—that you feel are common to parent involvement in your school community.

Which characteristic and action is the least common?

Which characteristic and action should be most important?