

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF INVOLVING PARENTS?

Sharing the research on parent involvement is an important first step in building staff capacity for parent involvement.

One of the most important findings for teachers is that their initiative to reach parents makes a difference in terms of student achievement.

Research by Joyce Epstein and Henry Becker showed that reading achievement improved when teachers treated all parents as if they wanted to be involved (even when all parents did not or could not respond), when they focused on positive communication with parents, and when they gave parents suggestions on how they could help with reading or other language activities at home.

Benefits for students:

- ✓ Increased student achievement
- ✓ Fewer behavior problems
- ✓ More positive attitudes about homework
- ✓ More homework completed, especially on weekends
- ✓ More positive attitudes toward school
- ✓ Less absenteeism
- ✓ More connection between home and school

Benefits to parents:

- ✓ Increased student achievement
- ✓ Appreciation of teacher's efforts to inform them about the instructional program
- ✓ Ideas from teachers on how to help their children
- ✓ A feeling they should help their children
- ✓ Greater understanding of the instructional program
- ✓ Increased ability to help their children
- ✓ Confidence in the teacher's interpersonal skills and overall teacher ability

Benefits for teachers:

- ✓ Increased student achievement
- ✓ More homework completed and returned
- ✓ Happier students and less behavior problems
- ✓ More support from parents both at school and at home

When teachers communicated selectively and only about problems and student failures, none of these positive benefits were realized. In contrast, when teachers reached out to all parents – students, parents, and teachers were clearly the winners.