Stimulating Parent Involvement to Stimulate Student Success

**Collaboration, Strategic Planning and Resilience are the
Essential Ingredients for Principals and School Councils
Interested in Stimulating Parental Involvement**

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Study Purpose

This reports highlights the findings of a research project with a primary purpose of determining if school councils have the ability to influence the rate of parental participation in education, with a particular emphasis on the types of involvement that may lead to improved student learning (building on Epstein's [1995] six types of involvement framework). The secondary purpose of the research project was to identify the ways in which Ontario's parents prefer to be involved in their child's education.

Rationale for Study

School councils were mandated into existence in Ontario in 1995. Since that time, school councils have struggled to play a consistent and meaningful role within Ontario's education system (Fullan & Quinn, 1996; Kerr, 2000; McKenna & Willms, 1998). In the 1998 report on school councils by the Education Improvement Commission (EIC), a key recommendation was to declare "improving student learning" as the overall goal for councils across the province (EIC, 1998). One of the key methods that the EIC identified for achieving this goal was "fostering parental involvement," although neither the EIC report nor the subsequent *Ontario Regulations 612 and 613* (2000), intended to define the structure and roles of school councils, contained clear direction for school council volunteers on the types of parental involvement that should be fostered to improve student learning. Without this clear direction, it is unrealistic to expect school councils to intuitively and effectively address the goal of improving student learning in a meaningful way (Fullan & Quinn; Kerr; McKenna & Willms). If volunteers are unable to make a meaningful difference, it seems reasonable to anticipate erosion in the participation rate of parents willing to serve on a school council. The 14th annual study on *Public Attitudes Towards Public Education in Ontario* (Livingstone, Hart, & Davie, 2002) confirms a declining trend among parents willing to serve on their school council between 1994 and 2002. Ultimately, declining participation may threaten the viability and sustainability of the school council system in Ontario.

As there is a large body of research (Brough & Irvin, 2001; K. Cotton & Wikelund, 1989; Epstein, 1995, 2001b; Henderson & Berla, 1994; Ross, 1994; Umphrey, 1998) that indicates a link between parental involvement and student learning, fostering increased levels of involvement may lead to improved student learning. Presented with evidence that school councils can stimulate rates of helpful parental involvement, I believe that school council volunteers may better understand that they have a real ability to make a meaningful difference within their schools, and as a result, the declining rate of parents willing to serve on school councils may be halted or reversed.

Overview of the Study Design

This study examined parental participation rates for various forms of parental involvement in a school where the school council had established a focus on stimulating parental involvement and compares those rates to schools where the school councils had a less established focus on stimulating parental involvement. Qualitative data were used to understand the activities of the school councils involved in the study and the conditions present within the schools that may have impacted parental involvement. Quantitative data were used to determine and compare the rates of parental involvement between the schools with an established focus on

stimulating parental involvement versus the schools with a less established or developing focus on stimulating parental involvement.

The study broke participating schools into two cells for inclusion in the study as follows:

1. Cell 1: schools with functional school councils and an established focus on stimulating parental involvement within their schools, and
2. Cell 2: schools with functional school councils and either a limited or developing focus on stimulating other parents within their school communities to be involved in the education of their children.

From a list of six suburban schools provided by a school district with an established policy guiding the advancement of family, school and community partnerships, prescreening interviews were completed with the principals and separately with the school council chairs to determine suitability for placement into one of the two cells of the study. Once the placement was complete, follow-up interviews with either the principal or school council chair were used to identify actions taken by the school council and staff members to stimulate parental involvement. These interviews were used to understand the conditions present that may have had a potential impact on the rates of parental involvement within the school. The final stage involved the use of a parent survey instrument to gain data about the rates of parental participation in a variety of different types of involvement activities.

An Overview of Schools in the Study

Of six schools identified for study participation, only one school met the criteria (Table 1) to be included in the first cell of the study. This is a school with a higher level of focus and an established approach to assessing, planning for, and developing programs to stimulate parental involvement among the school community. The school council partners with the principal to develop specific action plans within a modified version of Epstein's areas of involvement. The use of Epstein's organizer was coincidental and was not a criterion for involvement in the study or for placement into the first cell of the study. The Epstein approach was introduced to the school council by the principal and, as such, it is a principal-led approach that is accepted and participated in by the school council. The approach was first introduced to the school by the principal 2 1/2 years ago, and several participants have been actively involved in it over that entire time period. As such, I describe this school as one with an established program to stimulate parental involvement, led by the principal, with the active support and collaboration of the school council. The school in this cell was given the pseudonym of Alpha school.

Two schools were included in the second cell of the study. Both of these schools have school councils with a focus and developing approach to stimulating parental involvement. There were no schools identified without any focus on stimulating parental involvement. The schools categorized within the second cell of this study both have a less established program for stimulating parental involvement than the school included in cell 1, primarily on the basis of time committed to this focus. The participants are relatively new in their roles, with school council leadership in each of these two schools new to their roles within the past year. The schools in this cell were given the pseudonyms of Beta school and Delta.

Findings

Alpha school in cell 1, with an established principal and school council program of stimulating parental involvement, indicate a significantly higher rate of active volunteerism within the school than Beta and Delta schools in cell 2 (Table 2).

Study participants who claim to be active volunteers either within the school or on a school council demonstrate significantly higher rates of participation across a wide range of parental involvement activities (Table 3), including those that primarily take place at home, versus individuals who indicate that they are primarily focused on helping their children at home. These results indicate that a school council with an established program of stimulating parental involvement can stimulate a higher rate of active volunteerism (Table 4) and that active volunteers demonstrate higher rates of participation across a range of parental involvement activities. Other studies have demonstrated a linkage between parental involvement and student achievement (Brough & Irvin, 2001; K. Cotton & Wikelund, 1989; Epstein, 1995, 2001b; Henderson & Berla, 1994; Ross, 1994; Umphrey, 1998). From the results of this study, it is evident that a principal and school council can collaborate to stimulate higher rates of parental volunteerism which has an impact on parental participation rates across a spectrum of types of involvement. Given the established linkage between parental involvement and student achievement, these results demonstrate how a principal and school council focused on stimulating parental involvement can have an indirect impact on student achievement.

Conclusions

The results of this study indicate that a link does appear to exist between a school council focused on stimulating parental involvement and the rates of parental involvement within the school. A school principal and school council working collaboratively to stimulate programs and activities within eight categories of parental involvement may be a method for school council participants to make a meaningful contribution within a school community in support of student learning and work towards achieving the purpose identified for school councils by the EIC (1998) and in Regulations 612 and 613 (2000).

Results from this study also confirm the existence of two distinctly different types of parents including those who primarily help their children at home and those who are willing and able to engage in various types of volunteer activities within the school. There are many individual factors involved in a personal choice of this nature including available time, work schedules, the presence of other children in the home, etc. (Epstein, 2001b). Both types of parents are involved in supporting their children's education at home in a variety of ways and with participation rates that might be considered to be fairly high. A vast majority of parents indicate taking an active role in:

1. Communicating,
2. Helping at home,
3. Attending school events, and
4. Building parenting skills.

The problematic element inherent in these kinds of involvement for organizers and promoters of parental involvement programs is that, for the most part, participation can be either

"invisible" (Table 5), as they take place primarily at home, or, in the case of attending school events such as parent-teacher interviews or the annual meet-the-teacher night, they take place so infrequently that they do not provide organizers and promoters of parental involvement programs with a sense of progress or accomplishment. Without data or visible proof of parental involvement, principals, teachers, parent organizers, and school council organizers may perceive parents to be apathetic or disinterested, causing organizers to become discouraged and demotivated (Lasky & Moore, 2003) and withdraw effort or support to actively promote parental involvement.

Despite a potential absence of feedback, organizers and promoters of parental involvement should remain confident that the majority of parents are interested in helping their children, as evidenced by the participation rates (Table 6) shown in this and other studies (Canadian Teachers' Federation, 2004; Epstein, 1995). It may take a variety of approaches, different communication strategies to reach the different types of parents, and the resilience to continue without the benefit of obvious or positive feedback. Organizers may also wish to consider developing a mechanism to monitor participation rates over time. Such a mechanism could become a valuable source of feedback to determine if initiatives are making a difference and identify areas where organizers might need to focus in order to further support parents and students.

This study also demonstrated that a principal and school council focused over time on stimulating parental involvement using a modified version of Epstein's (1995) framework to strategically plan their activities, as was the case for Alpha school in this study, can positively influence rates of parental involvement. Evidence in this study confirmed an ability to generate a significantly higher rate of volunteerism, and among volunteers, significantly higher rates of parental participation in a variety of activities to support their children's learning. This study also found directionally higher rates of home support for students in Alpha school (Table 6).

Recommendations for Organizing Programs to Stimulate Parental Involvement

School councils and other organizers of programs to stimulate parental involvement in education may wish to consider some or all of the following recommendations.

1. Stimulate activity within eight strategic categories of involvement. By understanding and recognizing the ways that parents prefer to be involved in their child's education, school councils can collaborate with principals and teaching staff to stimulate engaging activities within each of the seven categories of involvement confirmed as preferred types of involvement during this study. In addition, school organizers can tap into community resources where they are beneficial to students (collaborating with community), as recommended by Epstein, and encourage parents to take advantage of community learning activities for their children.

School council leaders, principals, and other organizers of programs to stimulate parental involvement in education may wish to consider adopting and using the *Parental Involvement Leadership Model for Ontario* shown in Appendix A. This chart demonstrates how school leadership, including a principal and school council, can approach the task of stimulating a range of programs and initiatives to address each of the eight strategic categories of parental involvement. The chart in Appendix A also distinguishes between a variety of typical programs and initiatives to involve parents and the eight strategic categories of parental involvement. This model builds on Epstein's (1995) six types of involvement framework in support of family, school and community partnerships.

2. Encourage volunteerism by adopting good volunteer management practices. School councils, principals, and other organizers of parental involvement programs may also consider embracing good management techniques for creating a welcoming and productive environment for volunteers. This may involve volunteer meetings that are separate from school council meetings, relevant training and development, and appropriate recognition programs.

It is also worth recognizing that establishing a program for good volunteer management may lead to a higher level of volunteerism within the school and, based on the results of this study, that school volunteers demonstrate higher rates of participation in a wide range of activities to support their children.

Organizers may wish to consider adopting and using the *Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement* developed by Volunteer Canada (2001) and the expertise that exists in organizations that depend on effective volunteer management for success.

3. Encourage and support parents who prefer to help at home. Organizers of programs to stimulate parental involvement may also wish to acknowledge and demonstrate respect for parents who prefer to help their children at home and in the community and seek ways to provide these parents with the information that they need to provide good, quality support for children at home. Organizers may consider leveraging the events that bring parents and children to the school to present parents with a welcoming, encouraging environment where they can feel comfortable seeking additional information if they need it. It may be necessary to exercise caution to avoid creating feelings of guilt among parents who may not be able to volunteer for a variety of reasons (e.g., time, other family responsibilities, etc.) but invites participation in ways that demonstrate respect for their preferences.

4. Design communications to acknowledge and anticipate the different informational needs of distinctly different types of parents. Those who design and deliver communications may wish to consider leveraging various communication approaches to reach, acknowledge, and demonstrate respect for the preferences of distinctly different parents in order to meet their distinct informational needs. The recognition that at least two distinct groups of parents exist makes it necessary to tailor communications from time to time, depending on which group is the focus of a communication. Tailoring a message to speak directly to a specific group can improve the impact of the communication by demonstrating knowledge about an audience and respect for their preferences. For example, parents who primarily help at home will be most interested in communications to assist them in supporting their children at home or in community learning activities. Parents interested in volunteering will want to know about upcoming events and volunteering opportunities and what might be expected of them.

Summary

This study provides evidence of a linkage between a school council working collaboratively with a principal and focused on stimulating parental involvement and the rates of parental involvement within the school. Given the linkages that exist between parental involvement and student achievement (Brough & Irvin, 2001; K. Cotton & Wikelund, 1989; Epstein, 1995, 2001b; Henderson & Berla, 1994; Ross, 1994; Umphrey, 1998), stimulating parental involvement in education appears to be a viable method for school council volunteers to make a meaningful difference within their schools toward the goal of improving student learning.

This study also confirmed that slight modifications to Epstein's (1995) framework are appropriate for use in recognizing the activities that parents are involved in by distinguishing between traditional volunteering, attending school events, and fundraising. As a result, the modified framework shown in Appendix A may be a suitable approach to guide school councils and principals in their efforts to stimulate parental involvement within a school community.

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Table 1

Criteria Differentiating Schools in Cells 1 and 2

Differentiating criteria	Schools in Cell 1 Established focus	Schools in Cell 2 Developing focus
Level of school council activity over past 2 years co-ordinating and supporting parents to be involved in the education of their children[a]	Very active	Somewhat active
Length of time that the council and principal have collaborated to focus on stimulating parental involvement	Alpha school - 2 and a half years + (a level of focus was reported to be in place prior to the arrival of the current principal)	Beta school – 1 year Delta school – less than 6 months
Tenure of the current principal within the school	Alpha school - 2 and a half years	Beta school – 2 years Delta school – 5 months
Tenure of the current school council chair or cochairs	Alpha school - 2 years	Beta school – 1 year Delta school – 1 year

[a]Responses obtained separately from principals and school council chairs to determine if the council was very active, somewhat active, not very active, or not active at all.

Table 2

Overall Types of Involvement Participated in by Parents in the Study

	Total	Cell 1	Cell 2
Claimed participation	$N = 314$	$n = 110$	$n = 204$
I help my child with schoolwork at home	95.5%	97.3%	94.6%
I have volunteered in my child's school in the past 12 months (other than school council)[a]	32.5%	39.1%*	28.9%
I am or have been a member of school council[b]	16.6%	22.7%*	13.2%
None of the above	4.5%	2.7%	5.4%

Note. Chi-square test for significance used comparing cells 1 and 2.

[a]$\chi^2(1, N = 314) = 4.52, p \leq .05.$ [b]$\chi^2(1, N = 314) = 4.51, p \leq .05.$

*p ≤ .05.

Table 3

Rates of Participation for Parents Who Actively Volunteer and Parents Who Primarily

Help at Home

Preferred Types of Involvement By Participation Rate	Total study N = 314 100.0%	Actively volunteer n = 123 39.2%	Primarily help at home n = 191 60.8%
Communications			
14 I regularly receive and read notices and newsletters from the school	97.8%	96.7%	98.4%
24 I use a school journal to communicate with my child's teacher	67.5%	69.1%	66.7%
Helping at Home			
2 I help my child with schoolwork at home[a]	95.5%	100.0%**	92.7%
55 I help my child with homework almost every night	74.5%	78.0%	72.3%
57 I read to my child[b]	72.9%	81.3%**	67.7%
Attending School Events			
39 I attended all parent teacher interviews this year[c]	86.3%	91.1%*	83.2%
40 I attended the meet the teacher night	88.9%	87.8%	89.5%
41 I attended all concerts or special events at the school when my child was involved[d]	73.6%	80.5%*	69.1%
Building Parenting Skills			
7 I read books about parenting	78.3%	82.1%	75.9%
10 I have attended seminars or guest speakers at the school to hear about parenting issues[e]	27.7%	41.5%**	18.8%
Volunteering			
1 I have volunteered in my child's school[f] In the past 12 months (other than school council)	32.5%	82.9%***	0.0%
29 I have helped supervise class field trips this year[g]	28.7%	55.3%***	11.5%
30 I have volunteered in my child's classroom this year[h]	20.7%	48.8%***	2.6%
32 I help organize special events for students[i]	19.1%	39.0%***	6.3%
Fundraising			
34 I help with fundraising activities[j]	22.0%	41.5%***	9.4%
Participating in Decision Making			
3 I am or have been a member of school council[k]	16.6%	42.6%***	0.0%

Note. Chi-square test for significance used comparing those who volunteer versus help at home.
[a]$\chi^2(1, N = 314) = 9.44, p \leq .01$. [b]$\chi^2(1, N = 314) = 7.17, p \leq .01$. [c]$\chi^2(1, N = 314) = 3.86, p \leq .05$.
[d]$\chi^2(1, N = 314) = 4.98, p \leq .05$. [e]$\chi^2(1, N = 314) = 19.10, p \leq .001$. [f]$\chi^2(1, N = 314) = 234.60, p \leq .001$.
[g]$\chi^2(1, N = 314) = 70.09, p \leq .001$. [h]$\chi^2(1, N = 314) = 97.13, p \leq .001$.
[i]$\chi^2(1, N = 314) = 51.89, p \leq .001$. [j]$\chi^2(1, N = 314) = 44.79, p \leq .001$. [k]$\chi^2(1, N = 314) = 96.77, p \leq .001$.
* $p \leq .05$, ** $p \leq .01$, *** $p \leq .001$.

Table 4

Comparison of Claimed Volunteerism Between Cells 1 and 2

	Total	Cell 1	Cell 2
Total claimed active volunteerism	$N = 314$	$n = 110$	$n = 204$
I have volunteered in my child's school in the past 12 months (other than school council) or I am or have been a member school council[a]	123	53	70
	39.2%	51.0%*	34.3%

Note. Chi-square test for significance used comparing cells 1 and 2.

[a]$\chi^2(1, N = 314) = 5.77, p \leq .025$.

*p $\leq$ .025.

Table 5

Summary of Participation Rates in Visible and Invisible Types of Involvement by

Volunteers and Parents Primarily Focused on Helping at Home

Type of parent	"Visible" types of involvement	"Invisible" types of involvement
Parents who indicate that they primarily help at home (and do not claim to volunteer) 60.2% of survey respondents	83.2% attending school events 2.6% volunteering in class 9.4% fundraising 0.0% participating on a school council	98.4% communication 92.7% help at home with schoolwork 75.9% build parenting skills n/a co-ordinating community learning activities
Parents who indicate that they have volunteered 39.8% of survey respondents	91.1% attending school events 48.8% volunteering in class 41.5% fundraising 42.6% participating on a school council	96.7% communication 100.0% help at home with schoolwork 82.1% build parenting skills n/a co-ordinating community learning activities

Note. The terms visible and invisible are not absolute terms. Rather, they refer to whether or not

an individual can easily be observed participating in the various activities.

The rates of involvement shown are taken from Table 3. Where multiple activities

are represented by the category of involvement shown above, the highest rate of involvement

from among those multiple activities is shown to demonstrate the highest rate of participation

claimed by study participants.

Table 6

Preferred Types of Involvement by Participation Rate

	Total study N = 314	Cell 1 Established program n = 110	Cell 2 Developing program n = 204
Communications			
14 I regularly receive and read notices and newsletters from the school	97.8%	96.4%	98.5%
24 I use a school journal to communicate with my child's teacher	67.5%	68.2%	67.2%
Helping at Home			
2 I help my child with schoolwork at home	95.5%	97.3%	94.6%
55 I help my child with homework almost every night	74.5%	77.3%	73.0%
57 I read to my child	72.9%	75.5%	71.6%
Attending School Events			
39 I attended all parent teacher interviews this year	86.3%	90.0%	84.3%
40 I attended the meet the teacher night	88.9%	89.1%	88.7%
41 I attended all concerts or special events at the school when my child was involved	73.6%	80.0%	70.1%
Building Parenting Skills			
7 I read books about parenting	78.3%	72.7%	81.4%
10 I have attended seminars or guest speakers at the school to hear about parenting issues	27.7%	30.0%	26.5%
Volunteering			
1 I have volunteered in my child's school[a] In the past 12 months (other than school council)	32.5%	39.1%*	28.9%
29 I have helped supervise class field trips this year	28.7%	34.5%	25.5%
30 I have volunteered in my child's classroom this year	20.7%	22.7%	19.6%
32 I help organize special events for students	19.1%	20.9%	18.1%
Fundraising			
34 I help with fundraising activities	22.0%	22.7%	21.6%
Participating in Decision Making			
3 I am or have been a member of school council[b]	16.6%	22.7%*	13.2%
Collaborating with/Co-ordinating Community Learning Activities[c]			

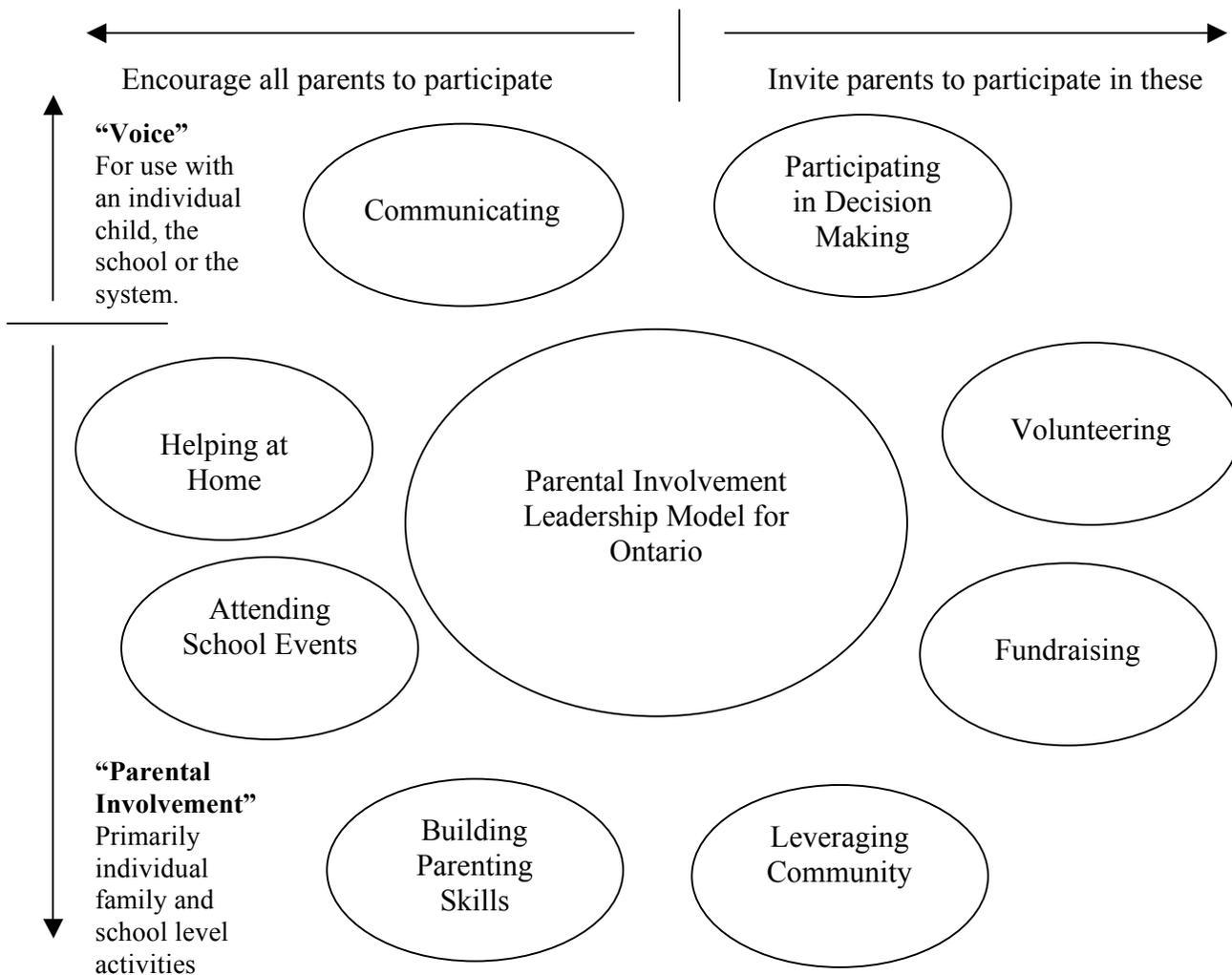Note. Chi-square test for significance used comparing cells 1 and 2.
[a]χ^2(1, N = 314) = 4.52, p ≤ .05. [b]χ^2(1, N = 314) = 4.51, p ≤ .05. [c]Comparable rates for these types of activities were not obtained in this study. *p ≤ .05.

Appendix A

Parental Involvement Leadership Model for Ontario

The Parental Involvement Leadership Model recognizes the general categories of involvement that parents demonstrate a preference for through their participation.

These represent "multiple forms of particular involvement to be deliberately fostered, developed and supported" (Fullan & Quinn, 1996, p. 3).

Encourage all parents to participate | Invite parents to participate in these

"Voice"
For use with an individual child, the school or the system.

Communicating

Participating in Decision Making

Helping at Home

Parental Involvement Leadership Model for Ontario

Volunteering

Attending School Events

Fundraising

"Parental Involvement"
Primarily individual family and school level activities

Building Parenting Skills

Leveraging Community

Closely adapted from the work of Dr. Joyce Epstein, with minor adjustments to fit the Ontario context.

Typical Programs and Initiatives can be categorized within one of the Eight Strategic Categories of Involvement.

Eight Strategic Categories of Parental Involvement (Strategic Level)	Types of Parental Involvement Initiatives and Programs (Program or Tactical Level)
Communicating Strategic Intent: Establish an informative two-way dialogue between home and school to: • Build a sense of school community • Exchange information about upcoming events in the school or in a child's life • Enable parents and teachers to monitor a student's progress and reinforce key messages	• School newsletters • Class newsletters to keep parents up to date on curriculum progress and how parents can help at home • Websites and use of email • Use of a voicemail system to share information • School signs to announce upcoming events or accomplishments • Telephone calls to home • A class parent telephone tree • Student 'courier packs' to get information to and from home • Use of student agendas • Distinct communications initiatives to meet address the informational needs of different types of parents
Helping at home Strategic Intent: Enable parents to provide helpful assistance to their children at home including: • Guidance and support to complete homework assignments • Guidance on course selections when required • Support to prepare for and participate on school teams, clubs and special events	• A clear school homework policy endorsed by the whole school • Homework instructions that enable parents to provide home support • Homework sign-backs • Homework assignments and due dates on a website, in a class newsletter, an email or on a voicemail recording • Tips to enable parents to help students (without doing the homework) • Course selection information • Career planning and post secondary prerequisite information to enable informed course selections • Information about the various extracurricular school teams, clubs and events that students might participate in

Eight Strategic Categories of Parental Involvement (Strategic Level)	Types of Parental Involvement Initiatives and Programs (Program or Tactical Level)
Attending school events Strategic Intent: Encourage parents to attend activities at the school to: • Learn about ways to further support the learning and development of their children • Be welcomed as important contributors to the vibrancy and effectiveness of the school community • Demonstrate an active interest in the activities of the school to their children, which reinforces the importance of the school and learning to their children	• Create a welcoming and memorable meet the teacher night • Provide advance notice for key events • Encourage all parents to attend parent teacher interviews, and reach out to those who cannot attend • Encourage both parents and students to attend events together or create events for both parents and students (e.g., Snuggle Up and Read) • Concerts • Academic nights (e.g., Science, literacy or music nights) • Sporting events • Seasonal events • Leverage some events for participation first and add a component of fundraising
Building parenting skills Strategic Intent: Build the confidence and capacity of parents by providing access to resources to: • Support the growth and development of their children. • Gain knowledge and skills to remain resilient in the difficult task of raising a child • Become aware of issues facing their children, and how they might recognize and deal with those issues (e.g., bullying)	• Establish a parent resource centre within the school with books, DVDs etc. either within the library or within a dedicated Parent's Room • Organize guest speaking events to cover topics of interest to parents (helping children at home, building literacy skills at home, bullying, etc.) • Partner with other schools to expand available range of topics. • Announce other events occurring in the community that might be of interest to school parents

Eight Strategic Categories of Parental Involvement (Strategic Level)	Types of Parental Involvement Initiatives and Programs (Program or Tactical Level)
Volunteering Strategic Intent: Increase the capacity of the school to support student learning by: • Providing volunteers with opportunities to develop and contribute • Encouraging parents and members of the community to volunteer in a variety of activities of their choosing • Supporting volunteers with training, direction and appreciation	• Actively welcome volunteers into the school • Recruit, provide instruction and direction and recognize volunteers for their contributions • Encourage teachers to identify key roles for volunteers to assist with key curriculum goals (e.g., literacy), class field trips or special events • Field trip supervisors • Class readers • Math or Science helpers • Library or office assistance • Establish a joint parent/teacher leadership team to coordinate volunteering activities within the school • Hold volunteer meetings separately from the school council (many volunteers are not interested in school council issues) • Leverage resources from Volunteer Canada, including the Canadian Code for Volunteering to assist in creating rewarding experiences for school volunteers
Fundraising Strategic Intent: Enhance the financial resources of the school with additional funds to: • Support student learning through support for the school plan for continuous improvement • Provide additional educational resources or opportunities for teachers, students and parents • Support children and families with programs to enhance a healthy learning environment	• Invest in education program (a one-time annual contribution rather than a continuous stream of piecemeal fundraising initiatives) • Magazine sales • Book fairs • Flower or tree sales • Bake sales • Organized charity events such as Jump Rope for Heart, Hoops for Heart, the Terry Fox Run • Hot lunch programs (which can also double as a service to parents and to children within the school) • Golf tournaments • School events

Eight Strategic Categories of Parental Involvement (Strategic Level)	Types of Parental Involvement Initiatives and Programs (Program or Tactical Level)
Fundraising continued …	• Guest speakers (can be no charge, cost recovery, or profit making) • Easter egg hunts • Fireworks displays • Many other specific programs • Focus on raising the money for a specific purpose, which brings meaning to a fundraising drive
Participating in decision making Stimulate a sense of partnership and ownership in decisions that support students and the school by: • Providing parents with the timely information they need to make decisions or assist their children with decisions regarding school affairs • Establishing conditions for an effective school council • Inviting parents and the community into a dialogue on major issues or decisions facing students or the school	• Provide parents with the information they need to make informed decisions with or for their children • Create conditions for an effective school council • Council training sessions • Planning nights • Guest speakers • Share school budget information • Share the school plan for continuous improvement, seek input and the support of the council • Encourage school council members to network with others in the board or elsewhere in the province • Encourage skills in teamwork • Establish a method for resolving conflicts

Eight Strategic Categories of Parental Involvement (Strategic Level)	Types of Parental Involvement Initiatives and Programs (Program or Tactical Level)
Leveraging community Strategic Intent: Mobilize community resources to enhance student learning and: • Help address task of teaching all students within a community environment • Foster community responsibility, participation and interaction • Embed the school as an increasingly integrated part of the community	• Seek out community resources helpful to the school to support curriculum, fundraising or to become more integrated within the community • Bring a Junior Achievers program into the school • Establish a music lesson service through the school • Encourage parents to take advantage of community sports teams, clubs, Cubs, Scouts, Brownies, Guides, Sparks, Beavers, church groups • Bring organizers of community groups and clubs and providers of learning opportunities to the school for a "community fair" event • Fill the Community Representative position on the school council • Bring local business owners into school events

For additional information, or a copy of the full report, please visit:

www.schoolcouncils.net

www.parentinvolvement.ca

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