

# 20 Things You Can Do RIGHT NOW to Get Parents Involved



1. Start the year by asking the parents to respond in writing to the following question, "In a million words or fewer tell me about your son/daughter."
2. Keep flyers short and to the point – Use bullet points and answer 5 W's –(who, what, when, where, why). Translate flyers. Many students who speak English have parents who do not.
3. Provide (and advertise) childcare. Students can receive service-learning hours for this.
4. Find out which local restaurant is popular with parents and order accordingly. "If you do not feed them, they will eat you."
5. Create a "Take Your Parent to School Day" to familiarize parents with the building and school personnel.
6. Consider hosting an event at a different venue. Sometimes parents who are intimidated by schools are not by libraries, community centers, church spaces, etc.
7. Organize self-directed parenting groups. Provide the time, space, coffee, topic and resources. Ask one parent to invite others and lead the discussion.
8. Create a Parent Newsletter.
9. Create two positions – a *Community Outreach Coordinator* who would reach out to families before students attend and help with orientation to school, and a *Family Coordinator* who would be the parent advocate, make contact with parents, establish dialogue and problem-solve.
10. Include students in parent-teacher conferences. A plan of action should be made between all three.
11. Bring parents in with high quality student performances.
12. Sandwich parent meetings between student performances.
13. Ask parents to judge/evaluate student exhibitions (art, science, humanities, math projects) using a rubric.
14. Create volunteer opportunities – room parents, help with performances, auditions, fundraising, bringing food, translating/interpreting.
15. Find ways to increase parents' comfort in and with the school. Know who they are (their name, their child, their occupation, etc.), so that they feel they are a part of the school.
16. Videotape meetings and keep a library of tapes for parents to borrow.
17. Involve children more in getting parents there. Student-led conferences and student-led IEP meetings attract parents.
18. Make a list of your most "at-risk" kids and have each teacher "adopt" two (and their families) to create a long-term mentor/advocate relationship.
19. Invite parents to an evening classroom assistance program. Teachers provide detailed information for photocopying, laminating, cutting and pasting, etc. Parents are given the equipment to complete the projects.
20. Call, email or text parents about one positive thing every quarter.