



From Parent Involvement to Parent Engagement

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Shifting the Focus

From “how to get more parents into the school to how we can support them at home...”

Ken Leithwood, Webcasts for Educators, 2012

From “...parent involvement (merely being present) to parent engagement”

School Community Journal, 2016



Evolving Role of Parents in Education

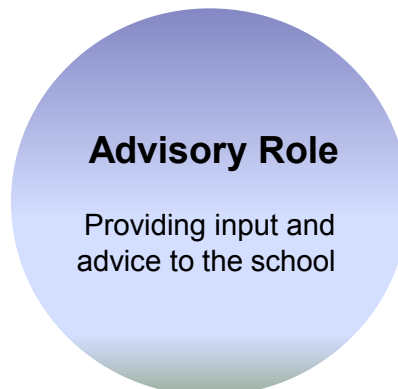
50's, 60's, 70's, 80's



Volunteering,
Fundraising,
Attending
school events

*Learning
Struggling
Change*

90's



Narrowly
defined
advisory
role

*Learning
Struggling
Change*

21st Century



Recognizes all
forms of helpful
Involvement,
Joint efforts of
educators and
parents

Kerr & Thurston, 2001



How do parents engage?

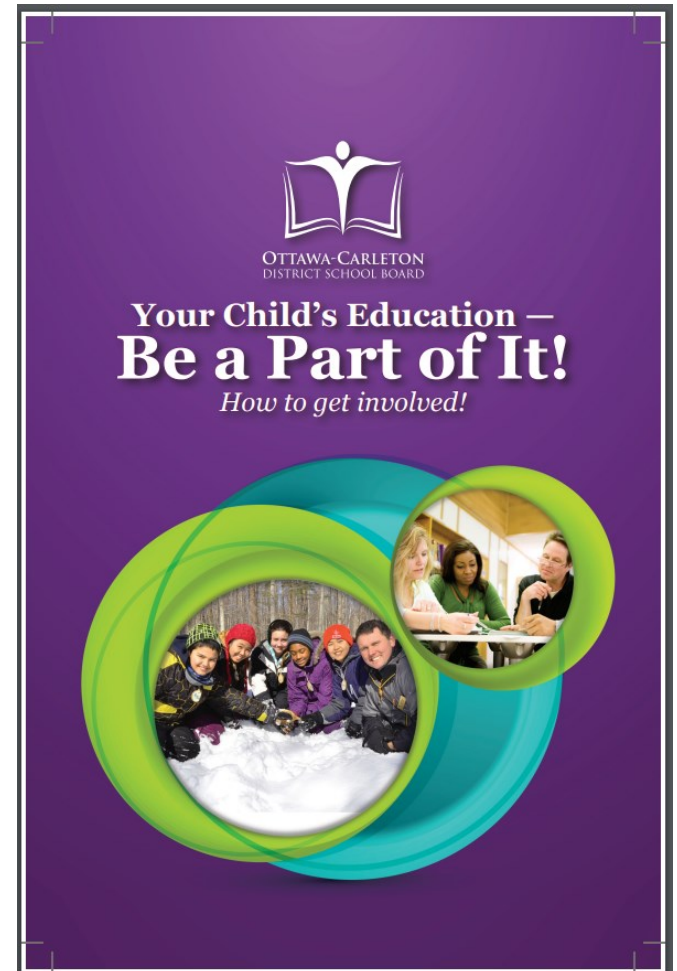
Joyce Epstein's Framework of 6 Types of Involvement for School-Family-Community Partnerships



Your Child's Education – Be a Part of It!

Translated into:

- Arabic
- Chinese
- Chinese Simplified
- English
- Farsi
- French
- Russian
- Somali
- Spanish
- Urdu
- Vietnamese



“..removing barriers to involvement may become a course of action to parent engagement”

School Community Journal, 2016



Barriers to Involvement

1. Time
2. Newness to Canada
3. Language
4. Not Feeling Welcome
5. Personal Experience with School
6. Family Responsibility



Group Activity

Identify strategies/ tools to overcome barriers to parent involvement.

What's in place/ what's needed



Barrier #1 - Time

Strategies to address barrier #1:

- Afford parents flexibility to get involved at their convenience

Tools:

- Speaker Series in evenings
- Parent Conference on weekends
- OCDSB app providing parents with instant access to calendars, busing information, etc.



Barrier #2 – Newness to Canada

Strategies to address barrier #2:

- Facilitate the integration of the newcomers into the school system
- Familiarize newcomers with available supports

Tools:

- Family Reception Center support for newcomers
- Workshops in the Parent Conference to acquaint parents with processes taking place at school



Barrier #3 – Language

Strategies to address barrier #3:

- Develop tools to support non-English speakers

Tools:

- Translation support through MLOs and Family Reception Center
- ThoughtExchange in a number of languages



Barrier #4 – Not Feeling Welcome

Strategies to address barrier #4:

- Engage in discussions with groups that may experience systemic bias and barriers
- Engage parents through a variety of venues

Tools:

- Focus groups on lived experiences
- Community Use of Schools



Barrier #5

Personal Experience with School

Strategies to address barrier #5:

- Build staff capacity in conflict resolution
- Engage parents through community partners

Tools:

- Professional Development for staff
- Extracurricular activities involving parents



Barrier #6 – Family Responsibility

Strategies to address barrier #6:

- Acknowledge the various ways parents are involved in their child's education and wellbeing
- Offer tools to allow parents meet other family commitments

Tools:

- Provide daycare/food during events
- Allow participation in meetings through electronic means



Next Steps

How does this inform our
workplan?

