

**North Dakota Department of Public Instruction
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Six Types of Parental Involvement

Volunteering

Volunteering: Recruiting and organizing parental help and support.

Volunteering – Type 3

The third type of parental involvement is volunteering. When schools provide opportunities for parents to volunteer, families are enabled to share their time and talent to support the school, classrooms, teachers, students, and their child. Volunteering does not have to take place within the school or classroom walls; it can also take place within other parts of the district, community, or home. Here are some ways that parents and families can volunteer their time:

- Helping in the library, computer room, family room, resource room, playground, or lunch room.
- Assisting with after-school programs or field trips.
- Attending student performances, extra curricular activities, assemblies, celebrations, and other events.

When volunteers are recruited by schools, it is important to match the volunteers' time and talents to the needs of the teachers, students, and administration. Utilizing parent volunteers strengthens school events and relationships. It tells students, faculty, and the community that parents care about the school and its students.

Sample Activities

Examples of activities schools could conduct to promote volunteering include, but are not limited to:

- Gathering information about the level and frequency of family and community participation in school programs.
- Encouraging families and other community members to show their support by attending school events.
- Offering youth service learning opportunities for students who want to volunteer in the community.
- Assisting school staff to learn how to work with parent and community volunteers.
- Asking family members how they would like to participate as volunteers at their child's school or in the community, and responding in a timely manner to their offers of assistance.
- Encouraging family and community members to become involved as:
 - o participants on the school improvement team.
 - o presenters to students on careers and other topics.
 - o assistants with art/music/science/etc., shows, read-aloud events, theater workshops, book swaps, and other activities.
 - o tutors/mentors.
 - o chaperones on field trips and other class outings.
 - o instructional assistants in classrooms, libraries, and computer labs.

- non-instructional assistants.
- from-the-home contributors of baked goods, assembling materials, typing, etc.
- ❑ Offering volunteer opportunities for working single parents.
- ❑ Having a program to recognize school volunteers.
- ❑ Gathering information about the level and frequency of family and community participation in school programs.

Problems and Solutions

When schools recruit volunteers it is important that they recruit a wide variety of individuals, provide training and outline expectations of the volunteers, and create schedules that are workable with the times the volunteers have available. This will help all families know that the school values their time and talents and will utilize them in the best way possible. Volunteers must feel their efforts are appreciated. Also, schools must recognize that “volunteering” does not have to happen within school hours or within the school walls. A volunteer means anyone who supports the schools goals or student learning at any time or any place.

Documentation and Evaluation

No matter the number of volunteer activities a school is implementing, it is crucial that these activities are adequately documented and evaluated. Documenting activities may include obtaining volunteer signatures, retaining materials or listings from volunteer opportunities, or compiling materials used for volunteer activities. Each volunteer activity should also be evaluated by the school. The evaluations should provide insight from the school, volunteers, and its participants. Evaluation is crucial, as this is often the determining factor of whether or not the activity should continue, be revised, or be dismissed all together.

Resources

Resources used to develop this document include:

- ❑ Epstein, J., Sanders, M., Simon, B., Salinas, K., Jansorn, N., and Voorhis, F. (2002). *School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action* (2nd ed.). California: Corwin Press, Inc.
- ❑ National Network of Partnership Schools. (n.d.). *Epstein's Six Types of Parent Involvement*. Retrieved August 21, 2007 from www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000/sixtypes.htm.