

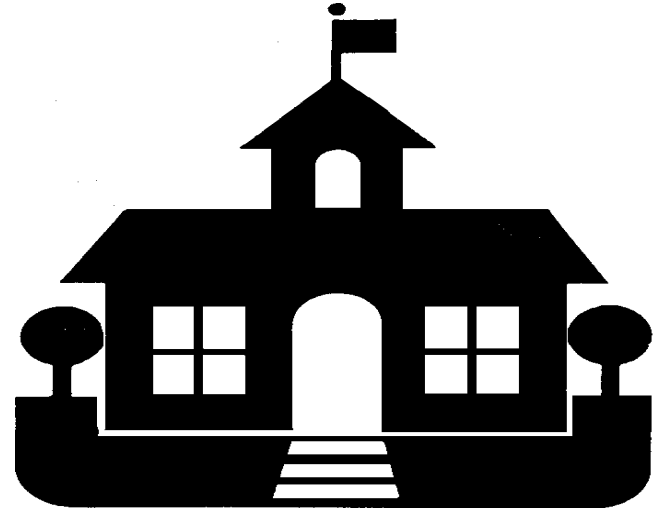
WVEA
WEST VIRGINIA
EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

AN NEA AFFILIATE

1558 Quarrier St.
Charleston, WV 25311

*Brochure Compliments
of the
West Virginia Education Association*

***Get
Involved. . .***



In Your Child's School

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Partners in Learning

“Recent studies show that when families are involved in their children’s education in positive ways, the children achieve higher grades and test scores, have better attendance at school, complete more homework and demonstrate more positive attitudes and behavior.”

—Oregon Association for the Education of Young Children



What is a Parent Involvement Program?

You and the teacher share a deep concern for your child’s welfare, and there is no better way to encourage your child’s growth and development than by working together to meet her or his education needs.

How Does This Program Benefit My Child?

The primary focus of the parent involvement program is on the child. It aims to meet children’s needs more fully by making your school’s education program more flexible, and thus more child-oriented, through increased personal attention and assistance.

As a parent, you are already aware of childhood curiosity. Your child wants to learn—but a lack of learning opportunities can stifle natural desire to find out about the many things that make up the world. By helping your child’s teacher, you both can offer new and varied experiences—suited to his or her interests and capabilities.

What Will I Gain From Participating in the Program?

Your school system needs your support to carry out its programs. By working in your school, you will become more familiar with these programs, and you will see why they are vital to your child. With this new understanding of education needs and goals, you can give the school the backing it needs and encourage others to do the same.

Ten Things Teachers Wish Parents Would Do

- Be involved in their children’s education. Family involvement helps students learn, improves schools, and makes teachers’ jobs easier.
- Provide resources at home for reading and learning. Families should have books and magazines for their children and read to or with their children each day.
- Set a good example. Families should show their children that they believe reading is enjoyable and useful. They shouldn’t spend all their time in front of the TV either.
- Encourage children to do their best in school. Families must indicate that they believe education is important and that they want their children to do the best they possibly can at school.
- Emphasize academics. Too many families get caught up in athletics and in preparing their children for the world of work, where academics should be their first concern.
- Support school rules and goals. Families should take care not to undermine school rules, discipline, or goals.
- Use pressure positively. Families should encourage children to do their best, but they should not apply too much pressure by setting unattainable goals or by involving them in too many activities.
- Call teachers early if there is a problem (not wait for teachers to call them), so there is still time to improve the situation.
- Accept their responsibility as parents and not expect the school and teachers to take over this job.
- Families should make it their responsibility to teach children basic discipline at home rather than leave this task to teachers.

voluntary for them, too. Your child's teacher feels you will be a valuable asset to the program, and wants your help.

How Can I Help in the Classroom?

There are so many activities in which parents can participate—all of which mean an enriched learning experience for your child and his/her classmates. For example, there are clerical jobs such as completing attendance forms or filing instructional materials. Or you can work directly with children as you read them stories or help them play educational games. If you have an unusual hobby, you can be a “guest speaker” and show the class some of your work.



The activities you participate in will be decided by you and the teacher you are assisting. In this way, the teacher can plan lessons with a knowledge of your skills and interests, and provide you with a variety of interesting tasks.

You can also contribute your ideas about the parent involvement program or the education system in general. Being a parent, you have a different viewpoint that is valuable to the teacher.

What Are the Qualifications for a Parent Volunteer?

The basic requirements are simple. You should:

- enjoy working with children
- have an interest in education and the community
- feel a commitment to the goals of the parent program
- want to help
- be dependable and in good health.

As you can see, it is very easy to qualify—and the rewards are great.

How Much Time Do I Have to Spend at School?

It's strictly up to you! You can work out a schedule convenient to you and the teacher—from one or two days a week to an hour a month. If you don't have transportation or if you have preschool children, you can set up carpools or share baby-sitting services with other volunteers. If you work during the day, you can still contribute by making things at home or helping with weekend activities.



Both fathers and mothers should remember that it is important for children to have contact with parents in the classroom—whether you come to school to tell them about your job or make recordings of instructional drills for them to listen to. Whatever time you can give will be appreciated—it means more learning opportunities for each child.

To Whom Will I Be Responsible?

You will determine your schedule and activities with the teacher you are helping, who will be your primary contact at the school. He or she will be there at all times to guide you and offer suggestions. The program is based on a cooperative partnership. The teacher plans and initiates learning activities, and you reinforce these efforts by motivating students, stimulating their interest in learning and building their self-confidence.

When Can I Start?

Right now—by volunteering your services and by offering any suggestions you have to help teachers plan a more effective program. You can also contact your friends and encourage them to participate. The success of your school's parent involvement program will be determined by your enthusiasm and interest—so get involved! The result will be a more meaningful education for your child.

*Content reprinted from NCAE “A Team” materials

Ten Things Parents Wish Teachers Would Do

- Build students' self-esteem by using praise generously and avoiding ridicule and negative public criticism.
- Get to know each child's needs, interests and special talents, as well as the way each child learns best.
- Communicate often and openly with parents, contacting them early on about academic or behavioral problems and being candid rather than defensive when discussing these problems.
- Regularly assign homework that helps children learn and advise parents how they can work with their children on this homework.
- Set high academic standards, expecting all students to learn and helping them to do so.
- Care about children—children learn best when taught by warm, friendly, caring, and enthusiastic teachers.
- Treat all children fairly—don't play favorites.
- Enforce a positive discipline code based on clear and fair expectations that are established at the beginning of each school year. Set limits and reinforce positive behavior.
- Vary teaching methods and make learning fun.
- Encourage participation by reaching out to involve families in their children's education, showing them how they can help their children at home—remembering that family members want to work with teachers to help their children do their best.

Excerpted from The National PTA Talks to Parents: How to Get the Best Education for Your Child, copyright by the National PTA. Permission to reprint has been granted by National PTA.

You will learn more about everyday happenings in the classroom from the increased communication and interaction between you and the teacher. You will have the satisfaction of helping children during a very important stage in their development.

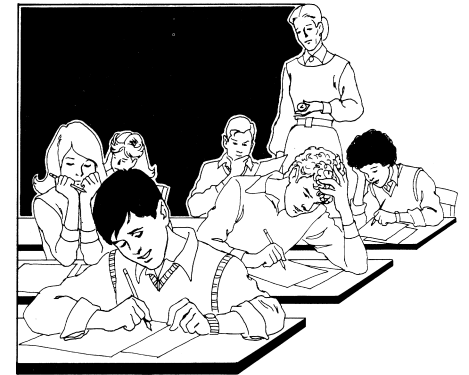
You will be able to provide the teacher with valuable information about your child and your community—creating a link between school and community so vital in our society. You will learn new skills in working with children.

To sum it up, participation in the parent involvement program will give you a chance to make a significant contribution to your child, your school, and your community.

Why Do Teachers Need My Help?

Today, there is an increasing emphasis on individualized instruction—fitting the curriculum to the child. Time and money often work against a teacher who wants to employ new methods and materials to give each child personal guidance.

When you assist teachers with growing paperwork, make instructional materials, or conduct a science experiment, you give them more time for planning activities, for trying new teaching strategies, and for working directly with children. As a parent volunteer, you allow them to be more effective teachers—and the school obtains your skills and services that might be unavailable due to financial limitations.



Do Teachers Really Want Me in the Classroom?

Teachers, like anyone else, want to be as effective in their work as they can, and your help will enable them to devote more time to work with your child. The parent involvement program is

