



Describing High School Parental Involvement: Voices from the Field

**Southwest Educational Development Laboratory and
Harvard Family Research Project**

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Zenna Nephew
Buffalo (NY)
Good Schools for All

1. Parents need to know what questions to ask
2. Starts the very first day of high school
3. Parents involved in decision-making at both school and district level
4. Many levels of involvement depending on parent comfort level
5. Start out slow to build confidence

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Scott Elliff
Citizens for Educational
Excellence
Corpus Christie, Texas

1. Parents should be engaging other parents
2. Build capacity for parent mobilization
3. Make adult connection with 10-12 students & their families
4. Do home visits

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Jake
Recent College Graduate

1. Involved, but not too involved
2. Be aware of what's going on, but give their kids space
3. Parents should get involvement "ques" from student
4. Parents play supportive role at home
5. Encourage extra-curricular

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Safisha Mance
Citizen and Business Person
Washington, DC

1. Schools need to be sensitive to parental schedules
2. Parent involvement should be mandated
3. Students cannot graduate without 20-30 hours of parent involvement
4. Encourages teacher, student, and parent interaction and networking

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**Linda Boswell-Bordelon
The Orchard Foundation
Alexandria, Louisiana**

- 1. Address whole student & not departmentalize**
- 2. Parents as partners with principal and teacher**
- 3. Many parents do not have the skills of parenting**
- 4. Parents intimidated by unwelcome school atmosphere**
- 5. School should be open, warm, friendly**
- 6. Be sensitive to parenting challenges**

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Jeff Edmondson
Former high school teacher
Knowledge Works Foundation
Cincinnati, Ohio

1. Bring parents into the new vision, design of new high school
2. Make schools/building more community oriented
3. Giving students a voice/school decision-making
4. Student decision-making will engage parents
5. School should be open, warm, friendly

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Cris Gutierrez
Teacher-scholar, peace
educator
Los Angeles, California

1. Engage parents in academic work in honest ways—course work to involve families
2. Parents ask questions of students
3. Different concept of schooling—parents to know how to ask for different kind of learning
4. Take parents out of the school settings to connect
5. Have parents relate to parents about young people
6. Parents-teachers converse in unusual ways

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Jason King
Parent Information Resource
Center Director
Turning the Page
Washington, DC

1. Find the space to access information/what information is important
2. Community plays role in supporting parents/develop plan
3. CBO's to broker discussions/public space
4. Student decision-making will engage parents
5. Engage parents through students
6. PI should be systematic

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William Miles
Public Education Network
Washington, DC

1. Challenge of interacting with multi teachers
2. High schools offer more services-guidance, college prep
3. Help ready student for post-secondary
4. Help prepare for life beyond high school/new terrain