

How Family Friendly Is Your School?

This checklist is taken from *Beyond the Bake Sale—The Essential Guide to Family-School Partnerships* (2006) by Anne T. Henderson, Karen L. Mapp, Vivian R. Johnson, and Don Davies (pages 75-79).

Directions: As a team, review and rate the following items, then complete the reflection questions at the end of the survey to help you design a plan for improving the “family-friendliness” of your school.

Welcoming Environment		Check one for each question			
1. Friendly signs inside and out welcome families and visitors and explain how to get around the building	<input type="checkbox"/> Already doing this	<input type="checkbox"/> Could do this easily	<input type="checkbox"/> This will take time	<input type="checkbox"/> This will be hard	
2. The school has standards of welcoming behavior that apply to all staff, including bus drivers, security guards, custodians, and cafeteria workers.	<input type="checkbox"/> Already doing this	<input type="checkbox"/> Could do this easily	<input type="checkbox"/> This will take time	<input type="checkbox"/> This will be hard	
3. Front office staff are friendly—recognize visitors right away, provide information easily, and answer the phone in a way that makes people glad they have called.	<input type="checkbox"/> Already doing this	<input type="checkbox"/> Could do this easily	<input type="checkbox"/> This will take time	<input type="checkbox"/> This will be hard	
4. There is a comfortable family resource room stocked with books, games, and educational information that families can borrow and where parents can meet.	<input type="checkbox"/> Already doing this	<input type="checkbox"/> Could do this easily	<input type="checkbox"/> This will take time	<input type="checkbox"/> This will be hard	
Programs & Activities to Engage Families in Improving Student Achievement		Check one for each question			
5. Current student work is displayed throughout the building. Exhibits clearly explain the purpose of the work and the high standards it is to meet.	<input type="checkbox"/> Already doing this	<input type="checkbox"/> Could do this easily	<input type="checkbox"/> This will take time	<input type="checkbox"/> This will be hard	
6. All programs and activities for families focus on student achievement—they help families understand what their children are learning and promote high standards.	<input type="checkbox"/> Already doing this	<input type="checkbox"/> Could do this easily	<input type="checkbox"/> This will take time	<input type="checkbox"/> This will be hard	
7. Special workshops, learning kits, and other activities show families how to help their children at home—and respond to what families say they want to know about.	<input type="checkbox"/> Already doing this	<input type="checkbox"/> Could do this easily	<input type="checkbox"/> This will take time	<input type="checkbox"/> This will be hard	
8. The school reports to parents about student progress and how teachers, parents, and community members can work together to make improvement.	<input type="checkbox"/> Already doing this	<input type="checkbox"/> Could do this easily	<input type="checkbox"/> This will take time	<input type="checkbox"/> This will be hard	
Strong Relationships Between Teachers & Families		Check one for each question			
9. A “joining process” welcomes families to the school, offers tours, makes bilingual speakers available, and introduces them to staff and other families.	<input type="checkbox"/> Already doing this	<input type="checkbox"/> Could do this easily	<input type="checkbox"/> This will take time	<input type="checkbox"/> This will be hard	
10. Teachers and families have frequent opportunities to meet face-to-face and get to know each other—class meetings, breakfasts, home visits, class observations.	<input type="checkbox"/> Already doing this	<input type="checkbox"/> Could do this easily	<input type="checkbox"/> This will take time	<input type="checkbox"/> This will be hard	
11. Teachers or advisors make personal contact with each family at least once a month.	<input type="checkbox"/> Already doing this	<input type="checkbox"/> Could do this easily	<input type="checkbox"/> This will take time	<input type="checkbox"/> This will be hard	
12. A family liaison helps teachers connect to families and bridge barriers of language and culture.	<input type="checkbox"/> Already doing this	<input type="checkbox"/> Could do this easily	<input type="checkbox"/> This will take time	<input type="checkbox"/> This will be hard	
Developing Families’ Self-Confidence & Power		Check one for each question			
13. Families are involved in planning how they would like to be involved at the school.	<input type="checkbox"/> Already doing this	<input type="checkbox"/> Could do this easily	<input type="checkbox"/> This will take time	<input type="checkbox"/> This will be hard	
14. School communities and the PTA/PTO reflect the diversity of the school community and actively recruit and welcome families from all backgrounds.	<input type="checkbox"/> Already doing this	<input type="checkbox"/> Could do this easily	<input type="checkbox"/> This will take time	<input type="checkbox"/> This will be hard	
15. The school is open and accessible—it is easy for parents to meet with the principal, talk to the teachers and counselors, and bring up issues and concerns.	<input type="checkbox"/> Already doing this	<input type="checkbox"/> Could do this easily	<input type="checkbox"/> This will take time	<input type="checkbox"/> This will be hard	
16. Parents develop school improvement projects and do action research—survey other families, observe in classrooms, review materials, and visit other schools and programs.	<input type="checkbox"/> Already doing this	<input type="checkbox"/> Could do this easily	<input type="checkbox"/> This will take time	<input type="checkbox"/> This will be hard	

