

# SPEAKING UP FOR YOUR CHILD

*How to Talk With Teachers and Principals to Help Your Child Succeed*

**A**sk questions

**D**o keep an open mind

**V**isit the school, often

**O**rganize your thoughts

**C**ool, calm, collected

**A**ctive listening

**T**ake notes

**E**ncourage children to respectfully speak up for themselves



## Parent and Family Involvement Tips for Parents

<p><b>Welcoming all families into the school community</b>—families are active participants in the life of the school, and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to what students are doing in class.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get to know the principal, teachers, and school staff.</li> <li>• Offer to volunteer in the school and at school and PTO events.</li> <li>• Introduce yourself to other parents.</li> <li>• Offer to do a presentation about your job or culture in your child’s class.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Communicating effectively</b>—families and school staff members engage in regular, meaningful communication about student learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish regular communication with your child’s teacher through e-mail, phone calls, notes, or visits.</li> <li>• Ask your child’s teacher how they best like to be reached.</li> <li>• Participate in surveys conducted by the school.</li> <li>• Attend school activities and events.</li> <li>• Keep folders and notes and go to meetings to resolve issues prepared with questions and the goals you have for your child.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Supporting student success</b>—families and school staff members continuously collaborate to support students’ learning and healthy development in home and at school, and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connect with your child’s teacher to find out what your child should know and be able to do by the end of the school year.</li> <li>• Work with the teacher and school staff to understand academic learning goals.</li> <li>• Create a safe and structured place for your child to read and study every night.</li> <li>• Talk with your child about your expectations and make sure your child gets enough rest.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Speaking up for children</b>—families are empowered to advocate for their children to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will enhance their success.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend school meetings and become a part of the school improvement process that helps plan strategies to identify and resolve problems at school and to improve the academic performance of all students.</li> <li>• Learn advocacy strategies and techniques and share with other parents.</li> <li>• Encourage your school to offer workshops and meetings for parents about school programs, policies, and resources.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sharing power</b>—families and school staff members are important and valued partners with unique information regarding decisions that affect children. Families and school staff members together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs including full engagement in the school improvement process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage your school to host dialogue meetings with families and staff about school programs.</li> <li>• Attend school meetings to learn about the instructional program and policies.</li> <li>• Attend meetings with school system leaders and the school board members to learn about education priorities and the budget.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Collaborating with the community</b>—families and school staff members collaborate with community members to connect students, families, and staff members to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share information about resources in the community with other parents.</li> <li>• Share the “good news” about your child’s school with community organizations and businesses.</li> <li>• Reach out to community organizations and businesses you use and invite them to provide services, products, and/or donations to the school.</li> </ul>