

*School*  
**COMMUNITY  
NETWORK**

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# EDUCATION

More Resources



# School Community Network

## Core Beliefs

A school community rests upon mutual respect, strong relationships, shared responsibility, and focused attention to students' learning. Its core beliefs are that:

- all parents have dreams for their children and want the best for them.
- all teachers are inspired by professional standards and personal conviction to see that their students succeed.
- student success is bolstered when parents, teachers, and other members of the school community work in unison in their behalf.
- school leaders are the prime movers in establishing and nurturing the processes and practices necessary in intentionally strengthening the school community.

## Outcome Goals for a School Community

1. Reading & Literacy. Every student, and students of all ages, will learn to read well, read often, enjoy reading, and achieve literacy through a focused alliance of family support and powerful classroom instruction.
2. Self-Directed Learning. Every student will become a self-directed learner through teaching that incorporates study skills and learning strategies, homework practices that build effective study habits, and school and family guidance that encourages self-directed learning.
3. Respect & Responsibility. Every student will develop a sense of responsibility and respect for self and others that fosters social and emotional well-being through consistent direction and support from the family and the school.
4. Community. The school will function as a community of its members – students, their families, teachers, administrators, school staff, and volunteers.

## Further Resources Available

<http://www.schoolcommunitynetwork.org/> - School Community Network website

<http://www.schoolcommunitynetwork.org/resources/> - Parent and School Resources, including Parent-Child Activities in English and Spanish, searchable databases, and more

<http://www.indistar.org/action/Community.html> - Indicators in Action - School Community Course, 5 professional development modules with video clips of effective practices in action (Courses on Instruction and Leadership are also available)

<http://www.centeril.org/personalcompetencies/> - Personal Competencies - Supporting the teacher's ability to influence a student's learning and personal competencies (cognitive, metacognitive, motivational, and social/emotional) by virtue of their personal knowledge of and interaction with the student and the student's family.

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## Top 10 Factors that Affect Learning

### In Rank Order from Total of 28 Factors Studied

From *A Synthesis of Research: What Helps Students Learn?* by Wang, M., Haertel, G., & Walberg, H. of the Temple University Center for Research in Human Development and Education.

1. Classroom Management
  - ◆ Group alerting (active participation), engagement of students, learner accountability, smooth transitions, and teacher “withitness.”
2. Metacognitive Processes (Learning Strategies)
  - ◆ The student’s ability to plan, monitor, and, if necessary, re-plan learning strategies.
3. Cognitive Processes (Prior Knowledge of Subject Area)
  - ◆ Prior knowledge of subject area and competency in basic skills—reading, mathematics.
4. Home Environment and Parental Support
  - ◆ Parental interest in child’s academic performance, monitoring of homework, and high expectations.
5. Student/Teacher Social Interactions
  - ◆ Sense of membership, self-esteem as result of social interactions among students and teachers.
6. Social/Behavioral
  - ◆ Disruptive behaviors vs. constructive behaviors.
7. Motivational/Affective
  - ◆ As evidenced in effort, perseverance, self-control, self-regulation.
8. Peer Group
  - ◆ Peer group’s level of aspiration in learning, schooling.
9. Quantity of Instruction
  - ◆ Time spent on learning.
10. School Culture
  - ◆ Schoolwide emphasis on and recognition of academic achievement.

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## Norms of Collaborative Behavior

From the Center for Adaptive Schools, <http://www.mondaymusings.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/7-Norms-1.pdf>

### PAYING ATTENTION TO SELF AND OTHERS

- ◆ Be aware of the impact you may be having on the group and on each of the members of the group.
- ◆ Be alert to how something is said and how others respond.

### PRESUMING POSITIVE PRESUMPTIONS

- ◆ Promotes meaningful dialogue and advances the conversation.

### PARAPHRASING

- ◆ “Are you saying...?”
- ◆ “What I hear you saying is...”
- ◆ “Let me try to re-phrase that...”

### PAUSING

- ◆ Allows time for thinking and enhances the dialogue, discussion, and decision-making.

### PROBING

- ◆ “Please say more...”
- ◆ “I’m curious about...”
- ◆ “I’d like to hear more about...”
- ◆ “Tell us more about...”

### PUTTING IDEAS ON THE TABLE

- ◆ “Here’s something I’d like the group to consider...”
- ◆ “One thought I have is...”
- ◆ “A possible approach might be...”

### PURSUING A BALANCE BETWEEN ADVOCACY AND INQUIRY

- ◆ Consider the difference between my position and our interests.

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## Working with a Small Group

### 1. Be sensitive to the group members' feelings.

Begin the session by connecting with the group members. You may be a bit nervous, but so are they. Think about them. Ease their nervousness by being warm, supportive, and genuine.

### 2. Begin by stating the purpose and goals of the session.

What do you hope to accomplish?

### 3. Set a tone of confidence.

People want to be assured. Show your confidence. You can have a powerful and positive impact on people, and you can help them. Be sure of yourself.

### 4. Encourage people to participate.

Draw reluctant people into discussions. Thank them for their comments. Nod, smile, say, "Interesting point." Keep talkative group members from dominating the conversation.

### 5. Use a strong voice.

Be sure you are being heard.

### 6. Stay on track.

Keep conversation focused on the point at hand.

### 7. Don't be afraid to say, "I don't know."

If you don't know, don't bluff. Admit that you need to find the answer. Suggest that you will seek advice, gather information, and report back. Or ask if someone in the group has the information.

### 8. Summarize conclusions and important points.

Help the group arrive at conclusions. Restate and summarize the conclusions. End the session by listing the conclusions and the actions to be taken next.

## Speaking to an Audience

### R-C-D

RELAX: Take a deep breath, exhale slowly, pause

CONTROL BODY: Posture, hands, feet, facial expression, eye contact

DIRECT SPEECH TO THE LISTENERS: Clearly and to the point

## Preparing to Present

<p>■ <b>Dress...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Attire must be:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional</li> <li>Comfortable</li> <li>Neat</li> <li>Appropriate</li> <li>Climate conscious</li> <li>Audience conscious</li> <li>Unrevealing</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>■ <b>Smell...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bathe or shower</li> <li>Soft perfume/cologne</li> </ul>	<p>■ <b>Body...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good posture</li> <li>Positive body language</li> <li>Don't fumble</li> <li>Don't slouch</li> </ul>
<p>■ <b>Hands...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use at minimum as not to cause a distraction</li> <li>Grasp hands in front of body</li> <li>No Scratching</li> </ul>	<p>■ <b>Voice...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Speak loud and clear</li> <li>Use intonation</li> <li>Don't scream</li> <li>Pronounce words properly</li> <li>Pause</li> <li>No gum chewing</li> <li>Do not drift off at end of sentence</li> <li>Use proper English</li> </ul>	<p>■ <b>Eye Contact...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Look at your audience</li> <li>Familiarize material as not to read</li> <li>See the whites of their eyes</li> </ul>
<p>■ <b>Planning...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Know your material</li> <li>Write it out</li> <li>Don't procrastinate</li> <li>Research</li> </ul>	<p>■ <b>Knowledge...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Know your topic</li> <li>Research topic thoroughly</li> <li>Study</li> </ul>	<p>■ <b>Interaction...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilize hands on materials</li> <li>Smile</li> <li>Allow comments and questions</li> <li>Do not lecture entire presentation</li> </ul>
<p>■ <b>Materials...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare a list</li> <li>Have more than enough/ not too much</li> <li>Don't use bad copies</li> <li>Don't have material in wrong order</li> <li>Don't use dated material</li> </ul>	<p>■ <b>Set-up...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arrive early to set up</li> <li>Know your room</li> <li>Greet your guests</li> <li>Have a back up plan</li> <li>Leave nothing to chance</li> </ul>	

## Backward Planning

Before reading workshop, think about what student learning outcomes you want to achieve.

✧ i.e. Comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, phonemic awareness, phonics

Ask teacher and /or parents what they think is the problem as to why their children are struggling or need help.

Allow time for a response.

Ask what they think is the solution.

Listen and restate their answer.

Ask how can parents help?

Inform parents that in order for the child to be successful, a partnership needs to be formed and strengthened to ensure academic success. Inform parents that the majority of the child's time is spend in the home and that you need their help. Share why you are involved in education.

What type of research based strategy support do you want to introduce to family members?

Retelling questions

Practice fluency

Why is this support important?

Be able to comfortably discuss that good readers have certain behaviors.

How do you want them to do this?

Show the parent by modeling the behavior in your workshop.

Conducting the Reading Workshop for Parents:

Focusing on whether or not participants liked the experience answer these questions:

Was time well spent

Did the material make sense to them

Were the activities well planned and meaningful

Was the leader knowledgeable and helpful

Did the participants find the information useful

Did the professional development activities promote changes that were aligned with the mission of the school and district

Were changes at the individual level encouraged and supported at all levels

Were sufficient resources made available including time for sharing and reflection

Were successes recognized and shared

Did the new knowledge and skills that participants learned make a difference

**EXPECTED OUTCOMES:** Parents will be able to understand the five parts of reading and will be introduced to reading strategies to be used in the home.

Use knowledge and the stages of group development to build effective teams.

**RESULTS:** Parents are now accountable for what they have learned. Ask them to let you know how these knew ideas are working. Explain to them the reinforced learning in the home is an extension of the learning standard that was taught that day. Explain that the learning standard is used ot measure the child's learning of a new skill.





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## Helping Our Children: Reading and Writing at Home

Center for Literacy  
University of Illinois at Chicago

One of the most important things that parents can teach their children is the love to read and write. Parents can share reading and writing experiences with their children so they can discover the benefits that these skills bring to life.

### Reading

With your help, your children discover the joys and benefits of reading: new worlds, new ideas, fun and entertainment. Do not wait until your children attend school. You should interest your children to read or write at early as three years old, if not before.

How can I help my children to read?

- Show your children how much you enjoy reading. If they see you reading newspapers or magazines or books, they will imitate your behavior.
- Make a special place to read. It should be quiet and set apart from the TV/computer.
- Visit the library regularly.
- Have your children choose their own books.
- Ask another member of the family to read if you do not have the time or do not know how to read well: an older sibling, a grandparent, an aunt, an uncle, etc.
- Make up your own books.
- Read in the language that you feel most comfortable with. Reading will create a common bond between you and your children.
- Read to your children as moments of entertainment and fun. Children should not be forced to read.
- Write notes to your children and read them together.

## A New Wave of Evidence—In Short

The evidence is consistent, positive, and convincing: families have a major influence on their children’s achievement in school and through life. This fourth edition of Evidence confirms that the research continues to grow and build an ever-strengthening case. When schools, families, and community groups work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, stay in school longer, and like school more. How are the many ways that families are engaged in their children’s education related to achievement? Many studies found that students with involved parents, no matter what their income or background, were more likely to

- earn higher grades and test scores, and enroll in higher-level programs.
- be promoted, pass their classes, and earn credits.
- attend school regularly.
- have better social skills, show improved behavior, and adapt well to school.
- graduate and go on to postsecondary education.

**When schools build partnerships with families that respond to their concerns and honor their contributions, they are successful in sustaining connections that are aimed at improving student achievement.**

Several studies found that families of all income and education levels, and from all ethnic and cultural groups, are engaged in supporting their children’s learning at home. White, middle-class families, however, tend to be more involved at school. Supporting more involvement at school from all parents may be an important strategy for addressing the achievement gap.

### Do programs and special efforts to engage families make a difference?

Yes, several studies found that they do. For example, teacher outreach to parents was related to strong and consistent gains in student performance in both reading and math. The effective outreach practices included meeting face to face, sending materials home, and keeping in touch about progress. Workshops for parents on helping their children at home were linked to higher reading and math scores. Schools with highly rated partnership programs made greater gains on state tests than schools with lowerrated programs.

### How do higher performing schools engage families and community?

Schools that succeed in engaging families from very diverse backgrounds share three key practices. They

- focus on building trusting collaborative relationships among teachers, families, and community members.
- recognize, respect, and address families’ needs, as well as class and cultural difference.
- embrace a philosophy of partnership where power and responsibility are shared.

### What is the impact of parent and community organizing on improving schools?

This type of engagement is based outside schools and led by parents and community members, and it is growing nationwide. These efforts are aimed at schools that are low performing. Strategies of community organizing are different from traditional parent involvement and are openly focused on building low-income families’ power and political skills to hold schools accountable for results. A new group of studies found that community organizing contributed to these changes in schools:

- Upgraded school facilities.
- Improved school leadership and staffing.
- Higher-quality learning programs for students.

- New resources and programs to improve teaching and curriculum.
- New funding for after-school programs and family supports.

### Summing up

When parents talk to their children about school, expect them to do well, help them plan for college, and make sure that out-of-school activities are constructive, their children do better in school. When schools engage families in ways that are linked to improving learning, students make greater gains. When schools build partnerships with families that respond to their concerns and honor their contributions, they are successful in sustaining connections that are aimed at improving student achievement. And when families and communities organize to hold poorly performing schools accountable, studies suggest that school districts make positive changes in policy, practice, and resources.

### How can we put these findings into action?

- Recognize that all parents – regardless of income, education, or cultural background – are involved in their children’s learning and want their children to do well.
- Design programs that will support families to guide their children’s learning, from pre-school through high school.
- Develop the capacity of school staff to work with families.
- Link efforts to engage families, whether based at school or in the community, to student learning.
- Build families’ social and political connections.
- Focus efforts to engage families and community members on developing trusting and respectful relationships.
- Embrace a philosophy of partnership and be willing to share power with families.
- Make sure that parents, school staff, and community members understand that the responsibility for children’s educational development is a collaborative enterprise.
- Build strong connections between schools and community organizations.
- Include families in all strategies to reduce the achievement gap among white, middle-class students and low-income students and students of color.

Taken from:




*A New Wave of Evidence - The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement*

Available at <http://www.sedl.org/connections/resources/evidence.pdf>

## What Good Readers Do: From A to Z

California Reading Association suggests 26 behaviors that describe fluent, constructive, strategic reading at all ages. Teachers, parents and students can use this ABC to promote literacy growth and enjoyment.

### Good Readers:

 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Good readers use their prior experienced information from the text to make predictions and use analogies to improve comprehension.</li> </ul>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ By being in the continued presence of reading modeled by parents, teachers, schoolmates, and friends, good readers develop lifelong literacy habits.</li> </ul>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ From the very early stages, goariety of books and types of literature to read.</li> </ul>
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 <p>Good readers focus on larger chunks of print as they read more efficiently, their minds can gain more information and improve comprehension of texts.</p>	 <p>Good readers generate elaborations or embellishments during reading (summaries, inferences, or notetaking). These foster greater comprehension, recall and use of the material read.</p>	 <p>One of the best ways to become a more fluent reader is by reading a wide range of books, magazines, newspapers and other material.</p>
 <p>Good readers go to where books are. They use the library, browse in bookstores, borrow books from friends and give books as gifts.</p>	 <p>Good readers know that reading can serve many purposes. Reading can be informative, enjoyable, enriching, and be a useful tool to solve a variety of problems.</p>	 <p>To facilitate comprehension, good readers make mental pictures when they read.</p>
 <p>Good readers shift speeds depending on their purpose and the type of book they are reading.</p>	 <p>Good readers continuously appraise and self-monitor their comprehension as they are reading. They are metacognitively aware of what they know, what they want to find out and how to do that.</p>	 <p>Good readers of all ages need frequent opportunities to listen and enjoy many stories and other texts being read aloud, an important factor in helping to build the background knowledge for success in reading.</p>
 <p>Good readers make links and applications between the books they read and their lives.</p>	 <p>Good readers orchestrate four types of cues: their background knowledge, visual information (letter/sound associations, word and sentence meanings, and language structure in the text.</p>	 <p>Good readers use monitoring and problem solving strategies such as using known words and word parts, rereading, reading ahead and cross-checking and searching sources of information.</p>
 <p>During reading, good readers put into their own words the gist of what they have been reading.</p>	 <p>Good readers ask questions and then read to seek out the answers to those questions.</p>	 <p>Good readers gradually learn to make internal responses and personal reflections (thoughts and discussions) to literature by first making a variety of external responses (reconstructions, retellings, redrawings, and rewritings)</p>
 <p>Good readers are always joining together to discuss and share what they are reading with others. Book habits are acquired naturally as a result of these interactions.</p>	 <p>Logging lots of reading mileage, good readers take advantage of many opportunities to read both in and out of the classroom.</p>	 <p>Good readers use their background experiences and knowledge of the world to make inferences, think critically, relate new discoveries to old knowledge and construct meaning from text.</p>
 <p>Good readers verify their predictions as they read. Comprehension equals confirmed predictions.</p>	 <p>Writing as it relates to speaking enhances both reading and writing ability; good readers write a lot and use their learning in writing to help in their reading.</p>	 <p>As a priority, good readers have a meaning orientation to print, always seeking to make sense when they read.</p>
 <p>Always having a book and choosing to engage in reading during leisure time is a hallmark of a good reader.</p>	 <p>Logging lots of reading mileage, good readers take advantage of many opportunities to read both in and out of the classroom.</p>	 <p><b>CRA</b> Literacy for All California Reading Association</p>

## UNITY

*I dreamed I stood in a studio  
And watched two sculptors there.  
The clay they used was a young child's mind  
And they fashioned it with care.*

*One was a teacher – the tools she used  
Were books, music, and art.  
One was a parent with a guiding hand and a gentle loving heart.*

*Day after day, the teacher toiled with touch  
That was careful, deft, and sure.  
While the parent labored by his side  
And polished and smoothed it o'er.*

*And when at last, their task was done  
They were proud of what they had wrought.  
For the things they had molded into the child  
Could neither be sold nor bought.*

*And each agreed they would have failed  
If each had worked alone.  
For behind the parent stood the school  
And behind the teacher, the home.*

Ray A. Lingenfelter, Elementary Principal

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[www.schoolcommunitynetwork.org](http://www.schoolcommunitynetwork.org)