



## **Frequently Asked Questions about Solid Foundation**

### **What is a Partner Organization?**

The Partner Organization partners with the school to assist in implementing the Solid Foundation process by offering support, resources, and training. The Partner Organization may be the school district, a Parent Information Resource Center, State Education Agency, or other organization. External Partners are personnel from the Partner Organization who are trained and certified in the Solid Foundation process.

### **What is an External Partner?**

The external partner is a technical assistance provider from a partner organization who assists the school team in the Solid Foundation process.

The external partner's role is to:

- Orient the school team
- Assist the team with assessment and planning
- Build capacity with training and assistance
- Monitor progress

### **What is a Solid Foundation "School Team"?**

The **School Team** includes the principal, teacher representatives, and parent representatives. It may include students at a high school level and community organization representatives. The team may be an existing committee, such as a school improvement team or a local school council, or a team that assembles specifically for the purposes of this project. Equal representation of the school's teachers and parents is required.

### **What is the primary purpose of this school team?**

The School Team takes a serious look at what is really happening---at home and at school. School Team members give "voice" to all stakeholders. In the first year, the Team oversees a complete needs assessment process and develops an action plan. Sub-committees may be formed (engaging other stakeholders) at this time, to work on different aspects of the plan. The School Team works cooperatively with other groups in the school (if active) toward the same goal of improved student achievement.

### **How does Solid Foundation ensure success and support continuous improvement?**

In the second year of the process, the action plan is implemented. Activities at school provide opportunities for effective parent involvement with student learning, and enhanced parent-school communication. Refreshed school policies that work to engage and involve parents with the school staff to ensure the success of students in school and beyond are introduced. Parent contribution to student learning through activities at home and in the community are acknowledged. A solid foundation has been laid---and a school community is united toward their site-specific goals for success.

In the third year, the cycle begins again. A new needs assessment process allows the team to review what has been accomplished to improve student achievement through increased parent engagement. It is a time to recognize and celebrate the good things that have been accomplished while activating a new and continuous plan for improvement. The solid foundation of student achievement through effective parent involvement utilizing a team approach is secure. The team will continue to monitor its progress and refine its goals to reach high levels of success.

### **How can Solid Foundation help our school community and involve parents?**

Parents are a child's first and most influential teacher. Ask any teacher what accounts for students' success in school, apart from the quality of instruction, and they will invariably say that parents matter most. They are right. Research also tells us that the relationships between parents and children, the encouragement and discipline students receive at home, powerfully affect school learning.

Solid Foundation can help a school community increase the ways that parents are involved as well as the level of parental involvement. Strategies suggested through this process encourage meaningful communication between home and school; engage parents to take an active role in their children's learning and participate in their children's education at school. Parents and teachers sit side-by-side, as full partners in decision-making, to assist in the education of the school community's children.