

# Key dimension: Participate

## Family-School Partnerships Framework

### A guide for schools and families

#### Strategies for participating

'Participate' is one of the seven key dimensions identified in the *Family-School Partnerships Framework* as guidelines for planning partnership activities. Strategies that utilise this dimension can encourage active participation in developing, building and sustaining partnerships to support engagement in student learning and school activities.

- Provide opportunities for families to extend their knowledge and understanding of the language of learning, assessment, reporting and curriculum. This can be delivered in a face-to-face or online format, such as workshops or information for parents and families, that focus on specific school programs or current assessment practices.
- Recognise the value of family and extended family in a child's education with activities, such as inviting families to a 'Family Day' or 'Grandparents Day'.
- Invite families to attend or assist with school events within the classroom or other learning activities in the school, such as sports carnivals and celebration days.
- Conduct an audit, survey, consultations, focus groups, or family morning or afternoon teas to ask families how they would like to participate at school.
- Be mindful of parent commitments to work, pre-schoolers/siblings or other activities to ensure there are various ways for them to participate and contribute. Consider providing childcare to enable participation in activities at school.
- Encourage parents to join and participate in a parents' association, school council or school board, and organise induction and ongoing training and support to sustain efforts.
- Provide opportunities for parent members of the school board or parent association to be a representative on school committees, such as student safety or strategic planning.
- Encourage family participation to represent the diversity of the school community and actively encourage participation in available opportunities.
- Collaboratively develop within the school community a policy for recruitment, training, goal setting and recognition for volunteers. Implement flexible schedules for volunteers and regularly review effectiveness.
- Identify all possible ways to involve parents and families. This could include inviting parents and families to participate in the classroom or on excursions, talk to students about their jobs/career opportunities or topics of interest, tutor or mentor students, coach sports teams or help in the canteen.
- Explore options for enabling all families to participate in assemblies and events. For example, conduct assemblies and events at varying times.
- Establish networks to link families with formal parent representatives.

Developed by the Family-School and Community Partnerships Bureau. The Bureau is a partnership between the Australian Council of State School Organisations and Australian Parents Council, with support from the Australian Government. Visit the [Department of Education and Training website](#) for more information.