

PARENTING MATTERS: A Powerful Partnership between Families, School & the Community Leads to Student Success!

What is the best predictor of a child's academic success? Studies conducted over the last 30 years show clearly that the involvement of parents in their children's education is the best predictor. The family makes critical contributions to a child's achievement from early childhood through high school. Involvement in a child's education is not only critical to the child's success but also to the overall quality of the school. The difference between a good school and a great school is the parents!

This is what the Parenting Matters initiative with the local schools is all about. Parents, school staff and the community all share the commitment to the educational success of local children. When working together, children achieve great things!

Increasing family involvement in the education of their children is an important goal for schools. Schools that have developed successful partnerships with parents view student achievement as a shared responsibility, and all stakeholders--including parents, administrators, teachers, and community leaders--play important roles in supporting children's learning. When families are involved in their children's education, children earn higher grades and receive higher scores on tests, attend school more regularly, complete more homework, demonstrate more positive attitudes and behaviors, graduate from high school at higher rates, and are more likely to enroll in higher education than students with less involved families.

If families are to work with schools as partners in the education of their children, schools must provide them with the opportunities and support they need to become involved. Developing effective partnerships with families requires that all school staff (administrators, teachers, and support staff) create a school environment that welcomes parents and encourages them to raise questions and voice their concerns as well as to participate appropriately in decision making. Developing partnerships also requires that school staff provide parents with the information and training they need to become involved and that they reach out to parents with invitations to participate in their children's learning.

When parents, families, and members of the community are involved with schools, all children benefit. Adult participation sends the message that school is important and the work children do there is worthy of adult attention.

This article is part of the PARENTING MATTERS initiative to increase parenting resources in Rio Grande County. In addition, books and DVDs are located at the Carnegie Library in Monte Vista. For more information please visit the RGPP website at www.rgpp.org.