



Building Strong Relationships with
Families & Increasing Parent Involvement
to Improve Student Achievement

Farmington Elementary
Mayfield, Kentucky

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School Facts

- Elementary School
- Pre-School – 6th Grades – 310 students
- Rural Western Kentucky
- 23 Teachers, 9 Assistants
- No Child Left Behind – Met all AYP goals
- Kentucky Core Content Tests –
 - 2001-2006 Top School in the Region 5 of the 6 years
 - 2006 Sixth School in the State
 - 2006 Reached Proficiency in All Seven Tested Areas

Building Family Relationships

Home Visits

It's all about building positive relationships

Teacher buy-in – Just takes one visit

Teachers experience the students' world outside of school

Parents are in their comfort zones and more likely to discuss concerns

Visits are on a volunteer basis

Our numbers have increased significantly since the first year

Families find out who their teachers are, reduces first day anxiety

Building Family Relationships

Preparation

Families sign up in May before school is out and at Kindergarten registration

Visits are scheduled the week before school starts on the same day from 2:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Teachers meet before visiting homes to focus on the goals and be reminded of protocols

The Protocol

Safety - Go in pairs

Non-threatening - Dress informally – school shirts

Start with a positive - Take school supplies

Building Family Relationships

The Visits

Some visits happen on the front porch – Watch for non-verbal cues

Parents/Families do the talking and need to feel like the experts

Teacher shows the child attention and then talks with the parents

Question sheet keeps the focus on the child

Children love showing the teachers their bedrooms

Teachers become knowledgeable of students' interests

Parents have a new school friend, someone they feel comfortable calling

Teachers reflect the next day – Important Part

Family Communication

- Weekly Newsletters

Classroom schedules, Instruction concepts, special events, spelling words, homework

- Constant communication

Phone calls, notes home, positive "Happy" notes on small daily achievements students have accomplished

Notes to former students now in middle school and high school give encouragement and communicate our interest in their graduation

Family Communication

- School Public Relations

- Live Daily News Show

- School Web-site

- Teacher Web-sites

- Monthly Calendars

- Announcements & Pictures in Local Newspaper

- Work with District PR person to communicate special school news

Family Involvement

- Special Family Invitations

Celebrations for Student Achievements

Back to School Night

Walk the Walk Night

Family Nights – Reading with the Eagles

PTO meetings with Student Presentations

Moms & Muffins, Dads & Donuts,
Grandparents' Breakfasts

Open Invitations for Breakfast and Lunch

Collaboration on Special Projects

Family Involvement

- Volunteer Efforts

Classroom

Classroom assistance at special times when extra help is needed, Field Trips, Celebrations

School

Office help, Beautification, Special Events, Extra-Curricular

Community Reading Coaches

One on one relationships centered around reading
Same child, twenty minutes once a week

Family Involvement

- Parents and Families take the initiative to address school needs:
 - Walking Trail
 - Library Transformation
 - Renovation of Office
 - Washington DC Fundraising and Trip

Summary Points

- Building Family Relationships and Increasing Family Involvement leads to improvements in Student Achievement

- Challenges still ahead

Many families had negative school experiences and see schools as the enemy.

Socio-economic issues are used as excuses for weak relationships and lack of involvement.