



Parent Involvement on the REACh District or School Building Leadership Team:

You've been invited to join or are considering joining your district's/school's REACh Leadership Team as a parent member. You may have questions about REACh and the role and expectations of parents on your team. This handout is designed to answer some of your questions. Be sure and ask your school principal or REACh Leadership Team chair about any questions you have. Please also refer to the fact sheet **REACh: Helping Children Succeed in School** for more information.

Why is it important for parents to be on the REACh Leadership Team?

Inviting parents to serve on the Leadership Team, or the team responsible for planning and enacting district/school goals and activities, involves them as decision-makers. Parent members offer a unique opportunity for all leadership team members to hear about the insights, perceptions, and concerns parents have as they shape the vision for learning. Effective schools and districts have many parents involved in many, different ways.

What is the Parent Role on the Leadership Team?

Parents on the team

- attend team meetings.
- participate meaningfully as an equal member of the Leadership Team in all aspects of decision making and to represent the perspective of families in the work of the Team.
- share not only their own observations and experiences, but also those of other families in the school. They offer a perspective different from educators, and their voices are absolutely essential to the decision-making process.
- participate in school/district efforts to encourage and maintain family involvement directly related to student learning and success.
- support and assist the school/district in developing and maintaining active family-school-community partnerships using the "Six Types of Family-School-Community Partnerships."
- ensure that information is communicated effectively to a variety of individuals (including parents and community members).

What are some of the things a parent team member might be expected to do?

Most importantly, parents help the Leadership Team be more effective when they act as "the parent voice" in team discussions. Parent team members should feel welcome to offer their views about why or why not an idea will "work" with families or about how to make something work better. For example, a team discussing the pros and cons of having a family reading night will want parents to share their views about times, activities, and incentives that will boost attendance at the event.

Other activities parent team members may participate in include:

- Some teams feature a "parent report" at every meeting to ensure that parent members have a time to speak with everyone listening.
- Attending team trainings. Some trainings may be away from the school.
- Helping to design and create awareness of parent surveys and parent forums or workshops.
- Sharing the general concerns and wishes of other families related to team discussions.
- Telling other parents about REACh options and opportunities.
- Communicating with school parent groups about REACh plans and activities.



A “Year in the Life” of a Parent Representative – What might it look like?

The following is a sample of what a parent representative might expect to do while on the Leadership Team.

- Meet other team members, or at least meet with principal and determine date of initial training.
- Attend initial training
 - Beginning School Implementation – BSI - (for schools new to REACH Initiative) **OR** Framework Appraisal – FA -(for schools continuing in the REACH Initiative)
 - Learn about the REACH Initiative
 - Learn about the REACH Framework
 - Discuss the role of the mentor
 - Develop an action plan for each school based on team’s self assessment of REACH Framework implementation
- Meet with Leadership Teams(s) (district and/or school)
 - Reflect on BSI or FA training experience
 - Review action plan
 - Discuss expectations of team members, especially the role of the mentor
 - Discuss communication methods/modes and meeting process
 - Set future meeting dates and times
 - Discuss future training needs to meet action plan activities
- Throughout the year:
 - Meet with Leadership Team
 - Review and analyze data to determine next steps, needs for district, school, staff, and parents to improve outcome for all students.

Throughout the year, parent representatives work collaboratively and participate in discussions that may require confidentiality (not sharing with those not involved on the leadership team). Parent representatives are part of the team and reflect on and analyze data to determine next steps for the system. You will participate in discussions where staff may share gaps or weaknesses in the curriculum, instructional strategies, or programs. This is what the school improvement process is all about and you will bring a parent’s perspective as you participate in team discussions.

How can I learn more about REACH and my school’s/district’s participation in it?

Feel free to share your questions and concerns with your school’s principal or REACH representative. Many schools ask veteran team members to share REACH meeting minutes, reports, and a general overview and history of the process with new members before their first Building Leadership Team meeting. Other schools assign a veteran member to “mentor” new members through the first few meetings, answering questions and providing background information.

Visit the REACH website at www.reachwi.com to view and download family involvement materials and a schedule of family involvement workshops. The site also offers extensive information about the REACH Initiative, framework, grants, and available technical assistance.

