

**The key to success, experts stress, is for both families and educators to develop ways to generate more family and community involvement.**

**Some ideas for parents include:**

- Volunteer to read in your child's classroom.
- Volunteer to help teachers organize their classrooms before the school year, during breaks or at the end of the year.
- Chaperone a field trip.
- Serve as a translator during school-family meetings.

**Some ideas for administrators and teachers include:**

- Make family engagement part of the core instructional strategy.
- Establish a monthly breakfast or lunch between parents and school faculty.
- Host a school-family event off the school campus.
- Host family movie, reading and game nights.
- Invite local business owners, older adults and others who may not have children to the school for events and activities.
- Identify tasks that can be done by working parents before or after the school day such as organizing supplies.

## Illinois State Board of Education

ISBE oversees more than 4,200 schools in 870 districts across the state.

**Mission:** The Illinois State Board of Education will provide leadership, assistance, resources and advocacy so that every student is prepared to succeed in careers and postsecondary education, and share accountability for doing so with districts and schools.

**Goals**

- No. 1: Every student will demonstrate academic achievement and be prepared for success after high school.
- No. 2: Every student will be supported by highly prepared and effective teachers and school leaders.
- No. 3: Every school will offer a safe and healthy learning environment for all students.

Produced by the Public Information Division,  
October 2010



# FAMILY INVOLVEMENT



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# Parental Engagement in School Makes a Difference

**T**he Illinois State Board of Education encourages parents to volunteer in their children's schools and monitor students' academic progress. Studies show parental involvement improves students' learning experience and academic performance.

**"Parents and family members** can significantly impact their children's attitude and performance in school by getting involved with school events and activities," says State Superintendent of Education Christopher A. Koch. "A parent doesn't need to spend every week at school to make a difference. Even a few hours each year can enhance your children's learning experience and benefit their school."



**The Illinois Parent Teacher Association** promotes "Three for Me," a National PTA program that encourages families and community members to pledge three hours a year volunteering on school-related work in or outside the school building. National program results have shown that parents generally spend at least three times the goal – or nine hours per year – once they make the commitment. Volunteer work can take place in or outside of school. For more information on the program, visit the Illinois PTA site at [http://www.pta.org/three\\_for\\_me.asp](http://www.pta.org/three_for_me.asp).

**"Good family involvement** requires schools working as partners to identify a variety of opportunities for

family members in the community to engage in," says Debra Strauss, President of the Illinois PTA. "Research shows that family involvement positively impacts student success regardless of race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status or education level because they're focused on their children and that attention reaps positive results."

**There is widespread** consensus that family engagement is a critical ingredient for success from birth to career and offers an economic benefit. A 2009 Harvard Family Research Project report noted that schools would have to spend \$1,000 more per pupil to reap the same gain in achievement that an involved parent brings.

**An additional valuable** resource for families and educators to strengthen school communities is <http://www.illinoisparents.org>.

