

# Trenton Public Schools



## Family and Community Engagement Guide



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**Position Title: Parent Liaison**

**Department/School: Office of School Support**

**General Summary:**

The Parent Liaison will be responsible for engaging the parents in the school community by working with the district's family and community engagement staff, principal, school staff, parent association, and community groups/agencies.

The Parent Liaison focuses on creating a welcoming environment for parents. This position reports to the Manager of School Support and works with the principal to identify parent and related school/community issues to see that they are addressed in a timely manner.

**Essential Job Functions:**

1. Works with the Office of School Support to ensure that district-wide goals are met.
2. Convenes semi-monthly events and workshops to create a welcoming school environment, increase parental engagement and to engage parents in their child's education.
3. Attends monthly meetings and training with the Office of School Support (OSS).
4. Completes and submits a Parent Liaison Reporting form accurately and punctually.
5. Maintains on-going contact with community organization that are involved with providing services to the school's education program.
6. Serves as liaison between the school and the parent/families of the school.
7. Serves as liaison to the District Family and Community staff
8. Maintains a Parent Resource Center at school.
9. Attends parent meetings with the principal when needed.
10. Assists parents with issues and concerns.

**Qualifications:**

High School Diploma or GED.

Trenton resident.

Knowledge of school, community and neighborhood.

Experience working with families and parents in education and/or community issues.

Communication skills necessary to work effectively with parents, staff and community.

Conflict resolution and mediation skills.

Available some evening and weekend hours with stipend.

**Professional Development:**

Parent Liaisons are required to attend monthly meetings. Each meeting will provide opportunities for:

- professional learning;
- collaborative discussions / sharing of ideas;
- understanding administrative responsibilities.

**Terms of Employment:** 10 months

**Salary:** In accordance with Paraprofessional contract.

## Six Types of Involvement

All schools can use six types of involvement to develop a comprehensive program of school, family, and community partnerships (Epstein 2001; Epstein et al. 2002).

Important Note: The National PTA has adopted Epstein's Six Types of Involvement.

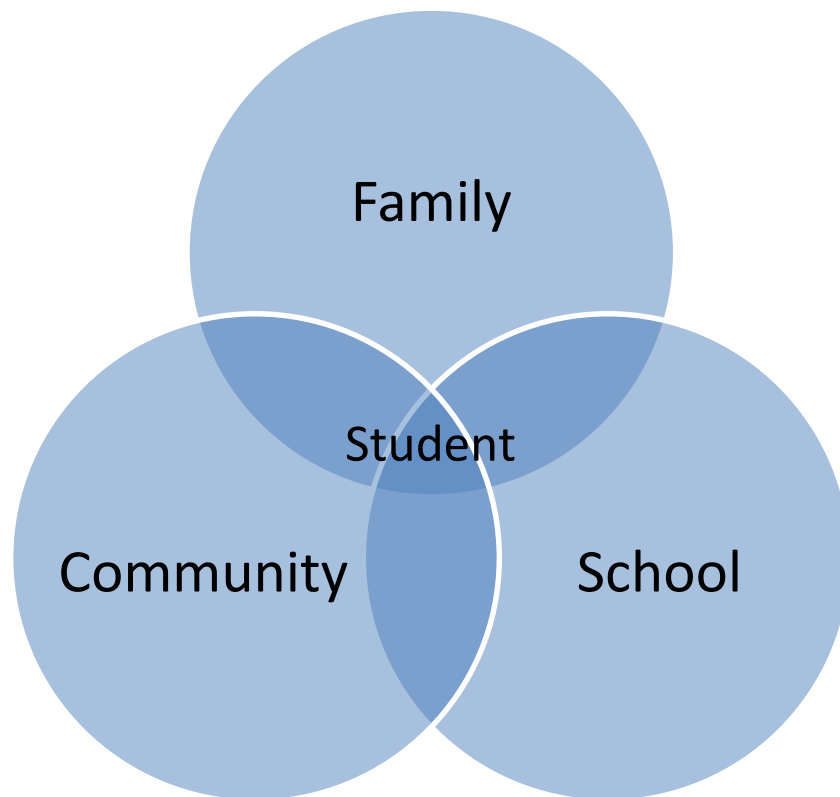


**Six Types of Involvement Diagram**

<p><b>Parenting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent Resource Center</li> <li>• Adults only math tutoring</li> <li>• Internet Safety Night</li> <li>• Workshops on Positive Discipline</li> </ul>	<p>Assist families with parenting skills, family support, understanding child and adolescent development, and setting home conditions to support learning at each age and grade level. Assist schools in understanding families' backgrounds, cultures, and goals for children.</p>
<p><b>Communicating</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent email list</li> <li>• Communication folder</li> <li>• Multilingual signage</li> <li>• Parent Survey</li> <li>• Robocall</li> </ul>	<p>Communicate with families about school programs and student progress in varied, clear, and productive ways. Create two-way communication channels from school-to-home and from home-to-school so that families can easily keep in touch with teachers, administrators, counselors, and other families.</p>
<p><b>Volunteering</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent Volunteer Translators</li> <li>• School Beautification Projects</li> <li>• Safe School Program- Parents on Patrol</li> <li>• Volunteer Recognition Reception</li> </ul>	<p>Improve recruitment, training, activities, and schedules to involve families as volunteers and audiences. Enable educators to work with regular and occasional volunteers who assist and support students and the school.</p>
<p><b>Learning at Home</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PARCC Night for Parents</li> <li>• Math/Science Family Nights</li> <li>• Parent/Child Book Discussions</li> <li>• Interactive Homework</li> </ul>	<p>Involve families with their children in academic learning activities at home, including homework, goal-setting, and other curriculum-related activities. Encourage teachers to design homework that enables students to share and discuss interesting work and ideas with family members.</p>
<p><b>Decision Making</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bring the PTA/o to the Parents</li> <li>• Diversity Discussions</li> <li>• Family Walk Through</li> <li>• Parent to Parent Interviews</li> </ul>	<p>Include families as participants in school decisions, governance, and advocacy through school councils, committees, PTA/PTO, and other parent organizations. Assist family and teacher representatives in obtaining information from and giving information to those they represent.</p>
<p><b>Collaborating w/ Community</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arts Extravaganza Family Night</li> <li>• Thanksgiving/Pot Luck Dinner</li> <li>• Family Festival &amp; Resource Fair</li> </ul>	<p>Coordinate resources and services for families, students, and the school with community business, agencies, cultural and civic organizations, colleges or universities, and other community groups. Enable students, staff, and families to contribute their service to the community.</p>

## **Epstein Model**

The goal of the Epstein Model is to create a channel by which more inter-connectivity is had between the focal points of Family, Community, and School. These strong connections ultimately garner increased student success.



**Epstein Model Diagram**

## **Activities Parent Liaison Should Not Be Engaged In**

While all members of a school staff may occasionally “pitch in” to assist in activities during the school day to ensure the health and safety of students, Parent Liaisons generally should not be engaged in:

- Maintaining attendance responsibilities
- Serving as school security
- Monitoring lunch duty
- Serving as school secretary
- Escorting students to bathrooms, and in/out of school building
- Monitoring student line-ups, recess and other school yard activities
- Substituting for teachers

### **Resources**

[Activities to Promote Parent Engagement](#)

[National PTA](#)

[Parent Involvement Matters!](#)

[Parent Liaison Monthly Reporting Form](#)

[Positive Behavior Support](#)

The Positive Behaviors Intervention & Supports website, PBIS.org, has a Family tab that is an excellent online resource for Parent Liaisons. A similar site, which also espouses positive activities and interventions for students, is NJPBS.org. Several Trenton schools are involved with these organizations and the tenets are used in many of the pro-social behaviors facilitated by our school staff members.

## **Guidelines for Roles and Responsibilities of Parent Liaisons**

A Parent Liaison is a person who works to bridge the communication between school and home by helping parents get the information, help and support they need to ensure their child's academic and social success in school.

Often, parents feel uncomfortable about sharing their situations or concerns with the teachers or school administration. Because good communication between home and school is such a vital part of their child's academic success, the Parent Liaison will listen to parents concerns and then work with them to make sure that their situation, question or point of view is expressed and understood. They will help support parents if they need to find ways to resolve any issues that may be impeding their child's success in school. The Parent Liaison wants to be sure that parents understand what they can do to get involved, keep informed, share information, and help their child do his or her best.

The Office of Family and Community Engagement wanted to make clear on the role and responsibilities of Parent Liaisons. The guidelines below have been created to further clarify the scope of this position and provide some examples of what activities should and should not be carried out by the Parent Liaison.

Criteria for funding under No Child Left Behind Act, Title I, Section 1118 includes, "implement(ing) programs, activities and procedures for the involvement of parents" and "build (ing) the schools' and parents' capacity for strong parental involvement." To the end, one of our department's goal is to ensure the role of the Parent Liaison is focused on: (1) creating a welcoming school environment for parents; (2) conducting outreach to engage parents in their children's education; (3) supporting the work of the PTA/PTO and (4) working with the principal to address parent issues and concerns at the school.

- Creating a welcoming school environment for parents
  - Sending a letter to parents about their role as Parent Liaison with their contact information and hours they can be reached;
  - Posting signs, bulletin boards and other displays at school entrance and/or lobby to inform parents how they can receive assistance and information;
  - Working with bilingual parents to assist in translating at meetings if applicable
- Conducting outreach to engage parents in their children's education
  - Creating and distributing outreach materials for parents (e.g., flyers about activities, school calendar of events);
  - Organizing events or activities to support parent attendance at key school events (e.g., parent-teacher conference, back to school week, etc.)
  - Developing ongoing relationships with community-based and local faith-based organizations to share info about school and identify community resources.
  - Surveying parents on information they need from school;
  - Providing information, resources and support for families to support their children's learning at home;



- Supporting the work of the PTO/PTA
  - Assisting in outreach for PTA/PTO activities, meetings;
  - Coordinating with PTA/PTO on Parent Liaison's outreach activities and tools (i.e., jointly developing a parent survey, contact list, phone trees);
  - Attending PTA/PTO meeting as an observer when invited to do so
  
- Serving as negotiator and facilitator for parent concerns
  - Serving as point of contact for parents
  - Working with school staff and Parent Engagement staff if needed, to address and resolve specific parent concerns

## **What can the Parent Liaison do for parents?**

Often, parents feel uncomfortable about sharing their situations or concerns with the teachers or school administration. Because good communication between home and school is such a vital part of their child's academic success, the Parent Liaison will listen to parents concerns and then work with them to make sure that their situation, question or point of view is expressed and understood. They will help support parents if they need to find ways to resolve any issues that may be impeding their child's success in school. The Parent Liaison wants to be sure that parents understand what they can do to get involved, keep informed, share information, and help their child do his or her best.

## **What kind of assistance can the Parent Liaison provide?**

**INFORMATION** – Parent Liaisons can provide parents with a personal tour of the school and explain the programs and resources available to them and their child. Parents do not have to be new to the school to get a tour. Liaisons can discuss some of the ways parents can be more involved with the school and their child's education. Liaisons can answer questions parents may have about school rules and regulations. Liaisons will advise parents of special events.

**CONFERENCES** – Working closely with the school administration, liaisons can help arrange meetings between parent and child's teachers and school personnel so that important information about their child is shared and understood. At the parent's request, liaisons can accompany them to a parent conference or other important meetings at the school to help clarify information about their child or home situation. Liaisons will help parents arrange for an interpreter if they need to communicate in their own language.

**SPECIAL HELP AND SERVICES** – Liaisons will provide information on agencies where parents need to go to get help or services for a child or their family. Examples include: Medical/Glasses, School Supplies, Afterschool Programs, Athletic Programs, Housing, Food, Clothing, etc.

**COMMUNICATION** – The Parent Liaison will work closely with the school to keep our parents informed of all activities including back-to-school nights, workshops, etc. In addition to handouts, parents can elect to receive updates via e-mail, text message, and their school and district webpage.

**WORKSHOPS** – The Parent Liaison will notify parents of upcoming workshops using the above mentioned communication methods.

Office of School Support

**Parent Liaison Monthly Reporting Form (Sample)**

September 2016

<b>Activity/Event</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Participation</b>
Morning Coffee & Suggestion Box	September 2016	Every morning parents who visit the center have the opportunity to enjoy a cup of coffee on us. The coffee station and suggestion box are placed in the parent's resource center for those parents who participate in the various programs the Parent Resource Center offers.
Parent Liaison Monthly Activity Planning Meetings	September 2016	The Parent Liaison's met during the month of September to allocate, plan, develop and implement the district's October workshop. The Coordinator, Mrs. Smith, discussed the topic, goals and objectives for the workshop scheduled for October xx, 2016. <b>Workshop Title:</b> "Title I"
District Back to School Nights	September xx, 2016	About # of parents were part of the successful school night event. Parents enjoyed a presentation by our Principal, visited their children's classrooms and learned what students would learn this year. The total Back to School night parent participation was #. (See attached sign in sheets)
ESL Online Classes	September xx, 2016	Independent and parent friendly online classes are available for parents Monday thru Friday between 10 am – 2 pm. Daily average attendance is 13 parents. <b>Total Enrollment = 22</b>
Lunch Application Status	September 2016	Parent Liaisons continue to collaborate with the Business Office/Nutrition Services to complete and process lunch applications.
Parent Group Meetings	September 2016	The Parent Resource Center (PRC) provides facility space to all district parent groups. PTO/A officers meet at the center monthly to plan and develop their respective school family engagement activities. PTO/A Officer Meeting = Total Participants (insert number) Total Meeting = (insert number)
Community Assistance	September 2016	PRC assisted parents with various community needs and referrals. Total = (insert number)
Star Parent	September 2016	Ms. X, parent of EV (was third grade student) was presented with an Education Award Certificate for achieving "33 hours" of ESL Online Education during the month of September.
<b>Total Parent Participation</b>	<b>September 30-, 2016</b>	<b>Daily Average Attendance Parents – 9</b> <b>Total Parent Visits = 225</b>

**Submitted by:** Ms. X, Parent Liaison of ABC School

**Date Submitted:** (insert date)

(This table above is a sample)



