

## Parent Involvement

### 3. Fundraising Activities:

In order to run special programs or activities that are not funded by the Ministry of Education, schools often have fundraising activities. Parents can help support the school's efforts to raise money so that all children at the school can participate in additional activities. These might include:

- special field trips or field studies such as visiting a museum.
- day or overnight camping trips.
- sports activities (swimming programs, tennis lessons, etc).
- performing arts activities such as music, dance or drama.
- cultural events and/or performances.

In addition to the above, many schools support special causes in order to encourage social responsibility.

### 4. Parent Advisory Committee (PAC):

Every school has a PAC\*. It is made up of parents and the school administration (principal or vice principal). Teachers may also be involved. PACs are open to all parents and welcome new parents. They may be able to provide interpretation, if needed. The PAC meets about once a month, often in the evenings, to discuss and set its goals and objectives to help make the school and school community a better, safer place.

PAC may also help the school find ways to:

- fund new playground equipment.
- improve and/or replace gym equipment.
- upgrade the school's computers and/or software.
- support programs to promote social responsibility.

\* See brochure entitled **Parent Advisory Committee**.

In Canada, schools welcome parent involvement. Talk to your child's teacher or school administrator to find out how you can become involved in your child's school.

### "Parent Involvement in Schools"

This brochure is one in a series sponsored by the VSB SWIS program and produced collectively by a group of ESL teachers and the VSB MCLW team.



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# Parent Involvement in Schools



## Elementary

## What does parent involvement mean?

Parent involvement means parents participating in their children's education. It includes the support parents give their children at home\* as well as direct support in the school.

Support in your child's school might include:

- attending school events and meetings.
- helping in the classroom.
- assisting with special events, sports teams, and clubs.

## Why is parent involvement important?

Research shows that a child's learning improves when there is parent involvement.

## How can I become more involved?

Parents can be directly involved in their child's education in a number of ways.

\* See brochure entitled "**Ways you can Support your Child's Learning at Home.**"

### 1. Meeting with the Teacher:

There are several ways parents can meet with their children's teachers. These may vary from school to school.

- **Meet the Teacher Night** is a chance to meet the teachers in your child's school early in the school year. It is an evening where you get information about your child's educational program and the upcoming school year.
- **Goal Setting Meetings** are opportunities for parents to discuss the specific learning needs and goals of their child.
- **Parent Teacher Conferences** are scheduled two or three times each year, usually shortly before or after report cards are sent home. These meetings give parents and teachers a chance to review how your child is performing in school, to celebrate successes, and if necessary, to set plans to help your child perform better.
- **Parent or teacher-called meetings** are meetings that are requested by you or your child's teacher. They can be requested at any time to discuss your child's progress.

Interpreters may be available to help you if you need them. It is important to be on time for these appointments.

### 2. Volunteering at School:

The ways you can volunteer vary from school to school. Some involve a short term commitment, others a longer commitment.

#### Short Term Volunteering

##### **'Field Trips' or 'Field Studies'**

Teachers often ask for adults to help when taking classes on special trips outside the school. Your help will make the trip safer and more enjoyable for all children, including your own.

##### **Special School Events**

Schools often have special events that require extra adult help. These may include:

- concerts and plays.
- science fairs.
- multicultural evenings and dinners.
- sports day.

#### Longer Term Volunteering

##### **Volunteering in the Classroom**

Often parents volunteer in their child's class for one or two hours, one or two days a week. Parents help in areas such as:

- reading with children in small groups.
- helping a child or a small group of children in a particular subject, such as art or math.
- helping to decorate the school, classroom bulletin boards, or other tasks.

Other areas that may involve longer term volunteering include:

- helping in the school office, especially with specific programs such as 'Safe Arrival,' a program many schools have.
- assisting in the library by helping with such tasks as shelving or checking out books.
- helping with your child's school lunch program, if the school has one.
- helping with sports and teams.