

Checklist

How Family-Friendly Is Your School?

W E L C O M I N G E N V I R O N M E N T

1.

Friendly signs inside and out welcome families and visitors and explain how to get around the building.

☐ *Already doing this*

☐ *Could do this easily*

☐ *This will take time*

☐ *This will be hard*
2.

The school has standards of welcoming behavior that apply to all staff, including bus drivers, security guards, custodians, and cafeteria workers.

☐ *Already doing this*

☐ *Could do this easily*

☐ *This will take time*

☐ *This will be hard*
3.

Front office staff are friendly—recognize visitors right away, provide information easily, and answer the phone in a way that makes people glad they have called.

☐ *Already doing this*

☐ *Could do this easily*

☐ *This will take time*

☐ *This will be hard*
4.

There is a comfortable family resource room stocked with books, games, and educational information that families can borrow and where parents can meet.

☐ *Already doing this*

☐ *Could do this easily*

☐ *This will take time*

☐ *This will be hard*

Developing
Relationships
...

**PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES TO
ENGAGE FAMILIES IN IMPROVING
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

5. Current student work is displayed throughout the building. Exhibits clearly explain the purpose of the work and the high standards it is to meet.

☐ *Already doing this* ☐ *Could do this easily* ☐ *This will take time* ☐ *This will be hard*

6. All programs and activities for families focus on student achievement—they help families understand what their children are learning and promote high standards.

☐ *Already doing this* ☐ *Could do this easily* ☐ *This will take time* ☐ *This will be hard*

7. Special workshops, learning kits, and other activities show families how to help their children at home—and respond to what families say they want to know about.

☐ *Already doing this* ☐ *Could do this easily* ☐ *This will take time* ☐ *This will be hard*

8. The school reports to parents about student progress and how teachers, parents, and community members can work together to make improvements.

☐ *Already doing this* ☐ *Could do this easily* ☐ *This will take time* ☐ *This will be hard*

**STRONG RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN
TEACHERS AND FAMILIES**

9. A “joining process” welcomes families to the school, offers tours, makes bilingual speakers available, and introduces them to staff and other families.

☐ *Already doing this* ☐ *Could do this easily* ☐ *This will take time* ☐ *This will be hard*

**Beyond the
Bake Sale
. . .**

10. Teachers and families have frequent opportunities to meet face-to-face and get to know each other—class meetings, breakfasts, home visits, class observations.

☐ *Already doing this* ☐ *Could do this easily* ☐ *This will take time* ☐ *This will be hard*

11. Teachers or advisors make personal contact with each family at least once a month.

☐ *Already doing this* ☐ *Could do this easily* ☐ *This will take time* ☐ *This will be hard*

12. A family liaison helps teachers connect to families and bridge barriers of language and culture.

☐ *Already doing this* ☐ *Could do this easily* ☐ *This will take time* ☐ *This will be hard*

DEVELOPING FAMILIES’ SELF-CONFIDENCE AND POWER

13. Families are involved in planning how they would like to be involved at the school.

☐ *Already doing this* ☐ *Could do this easily* ☐ *This will take time* ☐ *This will be hard*

14. School committees and the PTA/PTO reflect the diversity of the school community and actively recruit and welcome families from all backgrounds.

☐ *Already doing this* ☐ *Could do this easily* ☐ *This will take time* ☐ *This will be hard*

15. The school is open and accessible—it is easy for parents to meet with the principal, talk to teachers and counselors, and bring up issues and concerns.

☐ *Already doing this* ☐ *Could do this easily* ☐ *This will take time* ☐ *This will be hard*

**Developing
Relationships**

. . .

16. Parents develop school improvement projects and do action research—survey other families, observe in classrooms, review materials, and visit other schools and programs.

☐ *Already doing this* ☐ *Could do this easily* ☐ *This will take time* ☐ *This will be hard*

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR FAMILIES AND STAFF

17. Families learn how the school system works and how to be an effective advocate for their child.

☐ *Already doing this* ☐ *Could do this easily* ☐ *This will take time* ☐ *This will be hard*

18. Teachers learn about effective approaches to working with families of diverse cultural backgrounds.

☐ *Already doing this* ☐ *Could do this easily* ☐ *This will take time* ☐ *This will be hard*

19. Families and staff have opportunities to learn together how to collaborate to improve student achievement.

☐ *Already doing this* ☐ *Could do this easily* ☐ *This will take time* ☐ *This will be hard*

20. The school reaches out to identify and draw in local community resources that can assist staff and families.

☐ *Already doing this* ☐ *Could do this easily* ☐ *This will take time* ☐ *This will be hard*

Which areas are you doing well in? Which ones will need more work?

**Beyond the
Bake Sale**

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How are parents involved in making the school open, welcoming, and collaborative?

What are your concerns?

Reflection: What steps could you take to help your school become more family-friendly?

Right away:

Over the long term:
