

# Why Partnership Action Teams Need Teachers!

*By Ruth Anne Landsverk*

Are you trying to convince teachers that they need to be part of next year's Action Team? Whether you're looking for new teacher members or asking veteran teacher members to continue, here are some good, research-backed reasons why they should be partnership leaders in your school.

Studies show that:

## **Reason #1: Parents want teachers to tell them HOW to help their child at each grade level.**

Parents think they *should* help if teachers send home learning activities to do with their child. Parents are more likely to think that they *can* help when teachers show or tell them what to do.

**Conclusion:** *Action Teams need teachers to help organize home-learning activities so parents know how to help their children learn. (1)*

## **Reason #2: When parents are guided by teachers, they spend more TIME helping their child at home.**

Most parents help their children learn at home with or without the teacher's instruction, but say they would help more if the teacher showed them what to do. Over 85% of parents in one study said they spent 15 minutes or more helping their children daily on school activities when the teacher asked them to. Most parents reported that they could help their child an average 44 minutes more if the teacher showed them what to do.

**Conclusion:** *The Action Team process lets teachers and parents work together to figure out how to guide and encourage home learning. (1)*

## **Reason #3: Parents rank teachers and the school higher when teachers actively work to involve parents.**

Parents who believe their child's school is **actively working** to involve them are more likely to highly rate their school and their child's teachers. Furthermore, parents are more likely to be involved, themselves. Parents increased their understanding of school most when teachers frequently involved parents in children's learning and when the teacher frequently communicated with families.

**Conclusion:** *Teachers benefit when they actively work with parents on a Partnership Action Team to engage families in learning goals. (1)*

**Reason #4: Teachers are more likely to believe that all parents— regardless of socioeconomic circumstance—can help their child learn when the school has a parent involvement program.**

By allowing them to work closely with parents, Action Teams help teachers talk with and know families more, increase teachers' awareness of the families' strengths and talents, and make teachers more aware of their own abilities to share information on child learning and development. In addition,

**Conclusion:** *Action Teams allow teachers to develop their own capacities to understand, communicate with, and use the talents of families to increase children's learning. As a result, teachers come up with new ways to reach families, including those who don't come to the school building. (2)*

**Reason #5: Teachers are better able to help children achieve school goals for learning and behavior.**

Research shows that not only do students in schools with effective Action Teams and other practices of family involvement show gains in achievement test scores, but they also have better attendance, fewer discipline referrals, are more likely to go on to the next grade or graduate, and have a better attitude toward school. (2)

**Conclusion:** *What more needs to be said? Teachers **need** to be on Action Teams!*

**Sources**

(1) School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Preparing Educators and Improving Schools. 2001. Joyce L. Epstein.

(2) School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action, Third Edition. 2009. Joyce Epstein and Associates.