



40 minutes of Parent ENGAGEMENT

Parent involvement in education is critical for a child's success in school and is a key element of our *Framework for Great Schools*. On the other side of this page, you'll find ideas your colleagues are using to engage families during the 40 Minutes of parent time each week. These are great ways to create a welcoming culture and invite families into your school.

Principals and School Leadership Teams (SLTs) should meet at the beginning of the school year to discuss ideas and a plan for the 40 minutes. There are many creative ways to involve families. For example, invite parents to read to students at the start or end of the school day, hold potluck dinners with presentations, or host parent-faculty basketball games. Schedule family fun nights with arts, science, or math activities parents and children can do together. Hold workshops for parents, or create parent mentors who can share their expertise with other families.

You can find even more ideas at

schools.nyc.gov/40minutes. I encourage you to use these examples as a jumping-off point to discuss the types of activities that will best meet your school community's needs.

In developing a strategy for your school, include teachers, parents, and administrators in the conversation. Survey parents to find out what they want; this lets them know that you are committed to incorporating their needs into the fabric of your school community. By promoting the 40 minutes school wide, you are also communicating that student learning is your top priority.

Ultimately, you are responsible for implementing a successful parent engagement program in your school. Please share this one-pager with members of your SLT. My leadership team and I will be looking for innovative ways you are using the 40 minutes when we visit your schools this year.

Inspire and surprise us!

Schools across NYC are using the 40 minutes creatively to engage families and support student learning. Here are some of the activities already underway that you may want to tailor to your school:

Pot Luck Dinners and a Presentation

Have families prepare dishes reflecting their heritage. Include a presentation by a student or teacher.

Guided Workshops for Parents

Topics might include an overview of the curriculum; ways parents can support their child academically; tips for juggling work and parenting; or help with job-related skills, such as resume writing.

Workshops by Grade Level

Examples include literacy skills for grade 2, math strategies for grade 3, opinion writing for grade 5, STEM for grade 7, and college preparation for grade 10.

Guest Speakers

Host an elected or City official or a community leader to share how their education prepared them for the jobs they hold today.

Read Aloud to Students

Have parents or other adults from the community read with students; tie a reading to a special event. For example, for Halloween, students and parents could dress in and follow a spooky path to a classroom for a read aloud.

Student-led Parent Conferences

Have students describe their academic and social-emotional progress. It's a great way for them to share responsibility for their achievement.

Faculty-Family Sports

Host basketball games, mini track meets, or Zumba or yoga classes.

Popcorn Movie Night

Consider hosting two movies—one for parents, one for students—to give parents a night off.

Parent Mentors

Help parents learn from one another. For example, have parents with experience applying to high school share their expertise. Ask parents of upper-grade students to serve as mentors for parents of lower-grade students.

Parent Newsletters

Address topics of interest to your school community; for example, a newsletter on Spanish language arts and the benefits of being bilingual.

Family Fun Night

Involve parents and children in arts and crafts, or math or science activities.

Bring Your Parent to School Day

Have parents join their child for a shortened day with 20 minute classes on the curriculum, goals, and grading policies. Have teachers provide check lists parents can use at home to help their children.

Open House for Pre-K and Kindergarten

Offer parents of prospective students an information session and school tour. This is a great way to showcase your students' successes.

Holiday Primer

Have families share their traditions. Include the new school holidays: Lunar New Year, Eid Al-Adha, and Eid Al-Fitr, which recognize the heritage of our Asian-American and Muslim communities.

Parent Engagement in the Arts

Have parents and students perform on stage together. In preparation for the event, have parent musicians attend rehearsals and work with chorus and orchestra ensembles.

Breakfast with the Principal

Invite different parents each week to share ideas on ways to better support students.



Visit schools.nyc.gov/40minutes for more ideas.
Email 40minutes@schools.nyc.gov to share other ideas
that are working in your school.