

Parent Involvement Committees

The PIC acts as a direct link for parents to the director of education and the board of trustees. The PIC participates at the board level to support, encourage, and enhance the engagement of parents in improving student achievement and well-being. The PIC does this by providing information and advice to the board on parent engagement, communicating with and supporting school councils, and undertaking activities to help parents support their children's learning at home and at school. The manner in which a PIC achieves these goals depends on the local needs of its board and community, and on how the PIC is organized.

School councils are local bodies that support improved student achievement and well-being through the

involvement of parents and enhance the accountability of the education system to parents. They advise principals and, where appropriate, school boards on issues affecting education programs and the operation of individual schools. School councils focus on increasing parent involvement within the school community as a key factor in improving student achievement and well-being.

To achieve this goal, school councils work with the school principal to create a welcoming environment, increase opportunities for parents to provide input on and respond to school and board initiatives, identify barriers to parents' engagement in their children's education, and implement strategies to overcome the barriers.

Ontario's Parent Engagement Policy

Introduced in 2010, Ontario's parent engagement policy, as set out in the document *Parents in Partnership: A Parent Engagement Policy for Ontario Schools*, articulates a vision of parent engagement in Ontario schools. The policy recognizes that parent involvement is multi dimensional and that parents have a role to play in fulfilling each of Ontario's core priorities for educational excellence. The policy identifies four key strategies designed to support parents as partners so that they have the opportunity – and the knowledge, skills, and tools – to work together with all education partners and contribute fully to the success of Ontario's students and our education system.

Ontario's Vision of Parent Engagement In Ontario's education system, all partners acknowledge the positive impact of parent engagement on student achievement. Students are supported and inspired to learn in a culture of high expectations in which parents:

- ♦ are welcomed, respected, and valued by the school community as partners in their children's learning and development;

- ♦ have opportunities to be involved, and also a full range of choices about how to be involved, in the to support student success;
- ♦ are engaged through ongoing communication and dialogue with other educational partners to support a positive learning environment at home and at school;
- ♦ are supported with the information and tools necessary to participate in school life.

Equally important, the policy acknowledges that developing effective parent engagement practices and programs requires action on the part of education partners at every level of the education system.

Accordingly, it sets out actions for schools, school boards, and the Ministry of Education that will, individually and collectively, contribute to realizing Ontario's vision for parent engagement across the province educational community.