

Parent Involvement: Key Staff Roles in Elementary Schools

The five staff roles listed here have been identified as crucial to the success of the Toyota Families in Schools model, an intensive family literacy program implemented in 45 Title I schools.

Some schools may have staff capable of fulfilling these roles under a slightly different title.

District Coordinator:

- Named by the school district as the overall coordinator for the Families in Schools initiative
- Assists in the selection process for the three school sites in the district
- Assists in developing each school's plan for the Families in Schools model
- Develops and oversees the district/school budget for the Families in Schools initiative
- Plans for and coordinates family literacy training and professional development for school staff
- Assists in program start-up
- Serves as the primary liaison between the schools and collaborative partners/stakeholders
- Holds regular meetings with school staff involved in the initiative
- Monitors assessments and submits reports of the program as required by stakeholders
- Plans for future sustainability of the program

School Principal:

- Provides leadership for establishing a comprehensive family literacy program in the school
- Provides visible support/motivation for the initiative
- Provides appropriate space for implementation of the four components of family literacy
- Supports family literacy training and professional development for the family literacy team and the whole school staff
- Supports Parent and Child Together (PACT) Time in the school-age classroom and utilizes staff meetings to discuss methods and strategies for successfully implementing this component
- Establishes a positive school climate for parents working in the classrooms with their school-age children
- Helps recruit parents into the program

Adult Education Teacher:

- Provides adult education instruction on-site for family literacy adult students
- Coordinates the schedule for PACT Time with each classroom teacher
- Supports the parent's role in PACT Time with school-age children
- Serves as liaison between the parent and the classroom teacher
- Meets with classroom teacher prior to parent working with the child
- Helps classroom teacher prepare for parent working with child in the classroom by discussing plans for space and materials for parent, as well as content of lesson to be taught while parent is in the classroom
- Makes suggestions to help facilitate a positive reception of parents into the child's classroom
- Meets with parent prior to parent entering his or her child's classroom to help the parent identify expectations
- Debriefs with parent after classroom visit to determine what additional support the parent needs to encourage further learning
- Prepares parents for successive visits

Elementary School Teacher Envoy:

- Serves as the communication link to other certified staff involved in PACT Time, which could include multiple teachers
- Understands the process of PACT Time and the value of parents working and learning with their children
- Keeps staff abreast of how PACT Time is evolving throughout the school
- Assists adult education teacher to schedule time for parents to work in their children's classrooms

- Demonstrates for entire staff the process for making PACT Time work successfully
- Evokes confidence and trust from families and other staff

Parent Liaison:

This role is selected differently in schools across the nation. Many school districts utilize a Title I teacher. Others use a school counselor, a Family Resource Center Coordinator or a similar staff member.

- Recruits families for the program
- Supports parents as they become involved in the program and communicates with them about their educational and non-educational needs
- Assists adult education teacher with Parent Time
- Assists adult education teacher with scheduling parents to work in their children's classrooms during PACT Time
- Supports parents throughout their experience as adult learners in an elementary school setting