

What Do We Mean by “Family & Community Connections With Schools”? (Module 1)

Online version available at <http://www.sedl.org/learning/>

Worksheet Module I

This document is intended to be used with the CD version for Module I. For additional information and directions, consult the text-only version available on CD 2.)

What’s Your Experience?

What is your experience with school, family, and community connections at your school or schools in your community?

Click the box beside the action that represents the kinds of activities you have experienced with schools in your community.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attended a school open house | <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteered as a tutor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attended a parent organization meeting | <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteered as a program coordinator or organizer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attended a meeting regarding student’s classroom behavior or achievement | <input type="checkbox"/> Attended a college preparation meeting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Participated in a parent-teacher conference | <input type="checkbox"/> Attended strategy session for helping students with homework |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contributed funds or materials for school fundraiser or booster program | <input type="checkbox"/> Participated in a parenting class |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Voted in a school election or bond issue | <input type="checkbox"/> Participated in an adult ESL class |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Talked via phone about student’s behavior or achievement | <input type="checkbox"/> Participated in an adult literacy class |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Accessed information about student’s assignments via e-mail, Internet, or phone | <input type="checkbox"/> Participated in an adult enrichment class |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Participated as a guest speaker or instructor |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Participated in facility planning or building meeting |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Participated in school-parent decision-making activity |

What is your total number of experiences? _____

How many of them are in each column? Left? _____ Right? _____

Traditional



Typically, takes the form of a request from the school for family or community member to act.

Reciprocal



Typically, has benefit for school and families equally.

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Greatest Impact?

Which kind of interactions do you feel might have the greatest impact on student achievement?

Traditional

Reciprocal

If you chose **Traditional**, you might consider

In traditional interactions, school staff are generally the only ones who benefit from the involvement. If you want the greatest impact, you need to create connections that foster interaction among students, school staff, family, and community members so that everyone involved in the efforts benefits from the actions.

If you chose **Reciprocal**, you might consider

Programs that are characterized by reciprocal interactions among students, school staff, family, and community members have greater benefits to all involved.

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Defining the Types of Connections

Fostering Supportive Home Environments is defined as strategies that assist families with parenting skills and help create home conditions to support student academic achievement.

Promoting Shared Decision Making is defined as strategies that include families and community members as partners in school decisions.

Expanding Family, Community, and School Communication is defined as strategies that help to promote effective two-way communications among schools, families, and community members or groups.

Coordinating Resources and Services is defined as strategies that unite efforts and programs to provide services for families, students, school, and community.

Fostering Volunteer Support is defined as strategies that organize and support family and community members in their efforts to support the school and its students.

Supporting Youth Development is defined as strategies that provide services for students, such as health and physical development, creative expression, and leadership development.

Supporting Learning Outside of School is defined as strategies that involve families and partner organizations to support learning in a variety of settings other than the classroom.

Expanding Community Development is defined as strategies that involve the school in community planning and decision-making as a community institution, as well as create opportunities for the community to utilize the school's resources.

In Your School . . .

Let's take a moment to take stock of what is happening in your school. **In what ways are family and community members currently involved in your school based on these categories?**

Record your answer in the box below.

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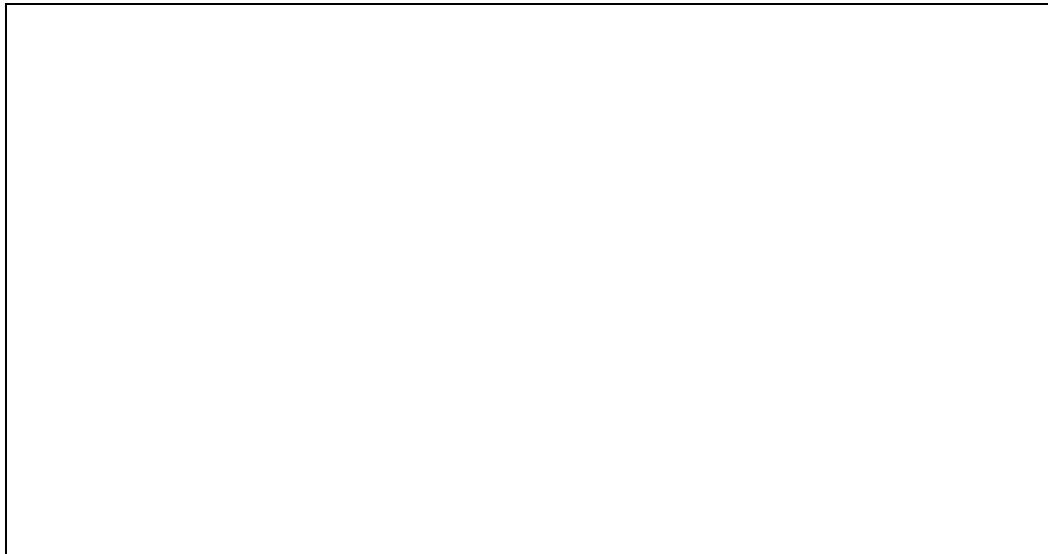
What school activities Foster Supportive Home Environments?

Record your answer in the box below.



What school activities Promote Shared Decision Making?

Record your answer in the box below.



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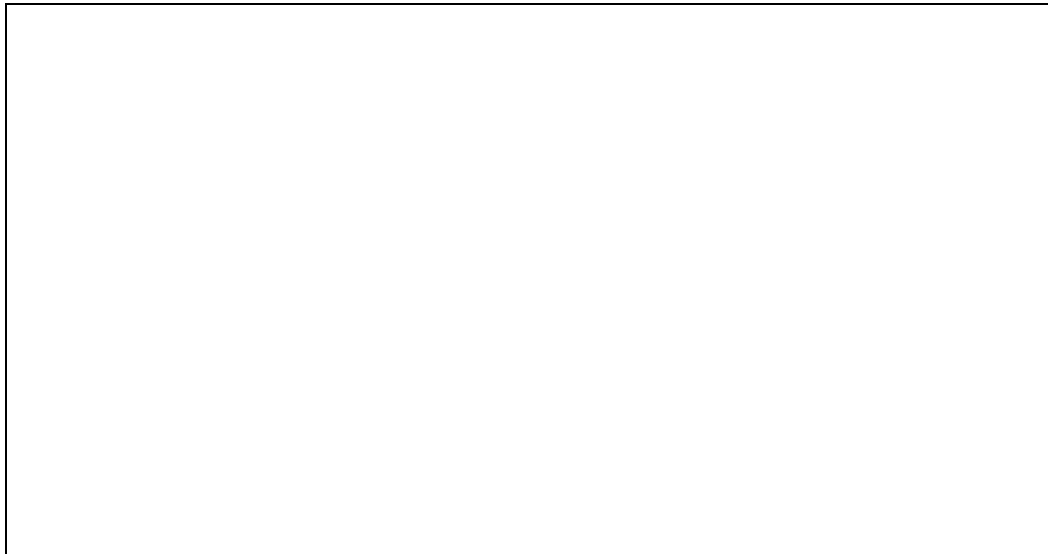
What school activities *Expand Family, Community, and School Communication?*

Record your answer in the box below.



What school activities *Coordinate Resources and Services?*

Record your answer in the box below.

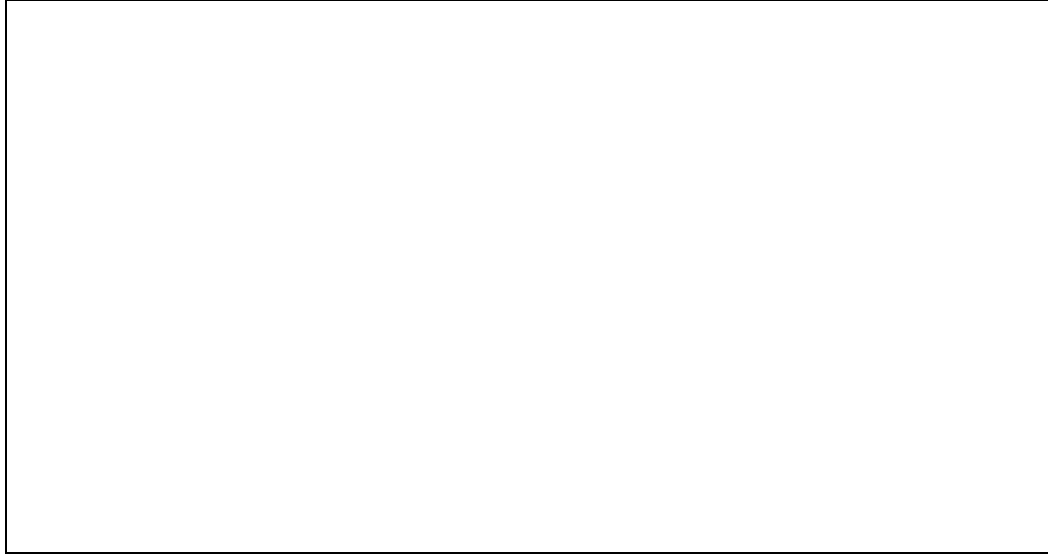


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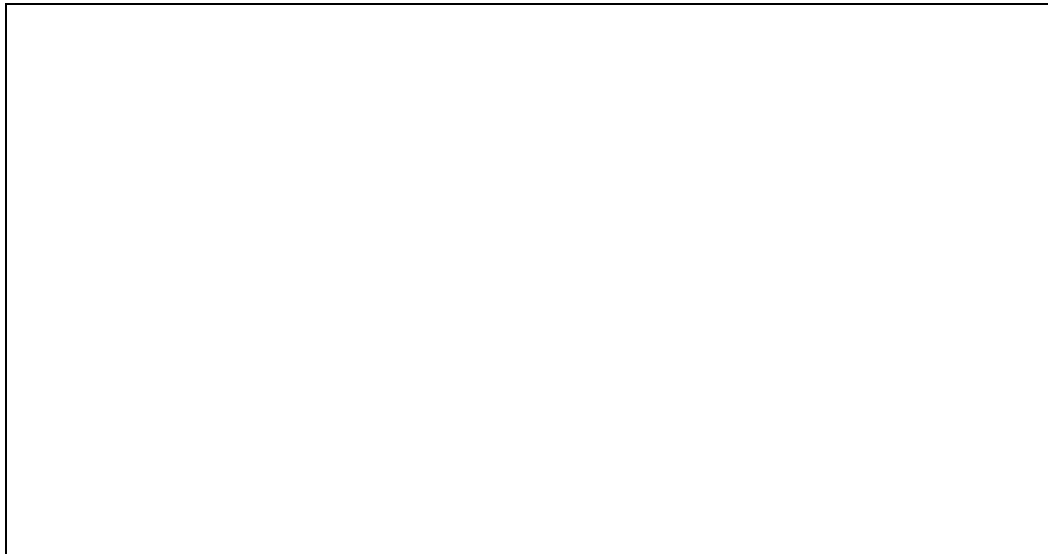
What school activities Foster Volunteer Support?

Record your answer in the box below.



What school activities Support Youth Development?

Record your answer in the box below.

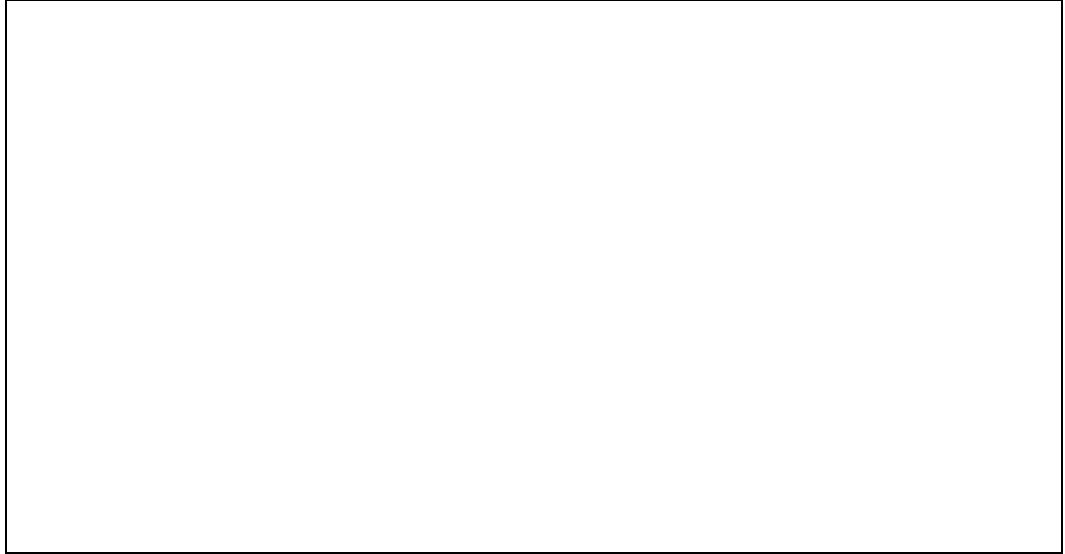


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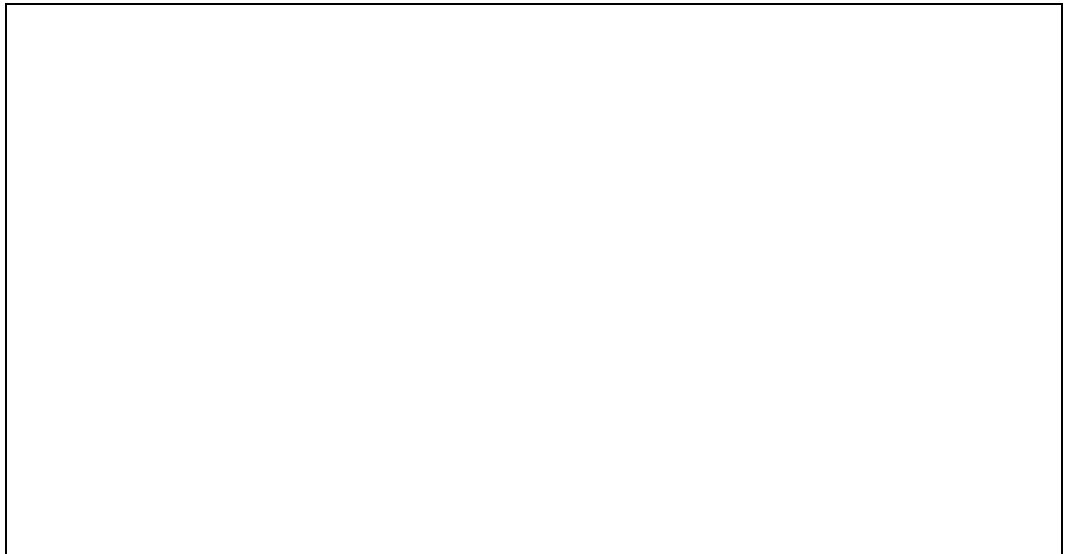
What school activities *Support Learning Outside of School*?

Record your answer in the box below.



What school activities *Expand Community Development*?

Record your answer in the box below.



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Benefits to Stakeholders

What are the possible benefits for

Students?

When programs focus tightly on academic needs, the result can be better support for student academic efforts, leading to increased achievement gains.

Families?

When outreach programs address specific family needs, the result can be successful parent involvement in student learning, positive family-school staff interactions, and improved individual skills and knowledge.

Schools?

When programs focus on key learning targets, the result can be higher student achievement, positive teacher-student interactions, and additional resources.

Community?

When programs seek to address family needs, the result can be additional resources for the community and its families and more efficient outreach efforts.

What benefits would you like to see from family and community connections in your school?

Record your answer in the box below.

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What Benefits Do You Want?

As you have worked through this module, you have recorded what you would like to see as benefits in your school community.

What type of involvement would create these benefits?

Check on the box to mark the type of involvement you think will bring about the benefits you want to achieve.

- Fostering Supportive Home Environments
- Promoting Shared Decision Making
- Expanding Family, Community, and School Communication
- Coordinating Resources and Services
- Fostering Volunteer Support
- Supporting Youth Development
- Supporting Learning Outside of School
- Expanding Community Development

Take a moment to review your comments.

In a short paragraph, describe your goals for a family and community connection program at your school. Don't forget to include the benefits as you talk about your goals!!

Record your answer in the box below.