

- Develop a win-win attitude. Celebrate each other's accomplishments.
- Both positions are difficult at times. Remember the value of humor in keeping things in perspective.

### A final word

The PTA and the principal must strengthen their ties in order to support the education of all children

A working partnership between the principal and the PTA, dedicated to the welfare of all children and youth, can strengthen family life and improve education for all of our children.

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## Teamwork

What does it mean for the PTA and the principal to work as partners? It means that each understands his or her responsibilities, and the other's. It means setting goals and working cooperatively to achieve them. It means respecting each other's opinion—not expecting automatic approval from the other and not withdrawing support if opinions differ. It means reaching out to all parents and school staff to help our children reach their potential.

## How the principal builds a partnership with parents

It is up to the principal to make parent involvement a school priority. All major studies have shown that parent involvement in education is one of the keys to quality education. The principal can welcome parents to the school by following some of these suggestions:

- Working to make parents feel welcome and comfortable in school—the first step toward parent involvement.
- Planning for and encouraging parent-teacher conferences. Showing parents and teachers how to use conferences to build parent-teacher teamwork. Making sure conferences are held at times when parents can come.
- Being active in the PTA and encouraging teachers to participate.
- Helping the PTA keep its primary focus on education rather than fund-raising. The principal and PTA can work together to solve problems and set goals that will benefit students.
- Recognizing PTA volunteers' efforts. Appreciating the contributions of parents.
- Encouraging constructive discussion with parents that build confidence in the school's leadership and strengthen parent partnerships.

## How the PTA and parents create a partnership with the principal

Most parents want to take an active role in their children's education. Being a member of the PTA gives them a way to work together in partnership with the principal. Here's how:

- Focus on education and how to benefit students.
- Present PTA concerns and issues to the principal. Develop a forum that allows for frank and open discussion.
- Work with the principal or site-based management council to set goals. Plan programs that will help achieve these goals.
- Be alert to staff and community talents and resources, and draw on them for the benefit of the entire school.
- Help the principal promote fair discipline for all children.
- Keep things seen or heard at school confidential. Encourage every volunteer to honor the ethical considerations and legal responsibilities regarding the privacy of students and their records.

## Principal and PTA president: Working together

The principal and the PTA president represent two important groups in the school: staff and parents. Here are some suggestions for nurturing this important partnership:

- Meet regularly. Discuss issues. Review plans for events. Keep each other informed.
- Work out problems or misunderstandings in a direct, honest way. Keep an open mind. Listen to each other.
- When working with parents and community, be positive and enthusiastic about your school.