



**COLORADO**  
Department of Education

# Measuring Parent Engagement and Family Involvement in Schools

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## Brief Summary

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This resource includes a list of scales that can be used to measure parent improvement in their ability to support their child(ren)'s learning. These scales were selected by the Expelled and At-Risk Student Services (EARSS) staff and researchers at the University of Northern Colorado based on two main criteria:

- 1) The scale has moderate to high reliability and/or validity
- 2) The scale has commonly been used with parents and/or has been published

EARSS grantees can select one scale to use that best fits their needs. Once a scale is selected, the scale can be administered to parents in various ways such as an online survey platform, paper/pencil method, or through an interview. Below are two examples of how a scale can be administered and how the results can be interpreted.

- **Example 1:** The selected scale can be administered to parents being served by the EARSS grant before services are delivered. The scale can then be administered again closer to the EARSS mid-year reporting and end-of-year reporting. Mean scores from the initial collection can serve as a comparison for mean scores during the mid-year collection and end-of-year collection. Significant increases from the original collection may indicate that a parent improved their ability to support their child(ren)'s learning.
- **Example 2:** The selected scale can be administered to parents close to the EARSS mid-year reporting and end-of-year reporting. A cut-off score can be selected based on the scale range (e.g., the lowest score on the scale that indicates agreement). For example, the Parents' Perceptions of Personal Knowledge and Skills Scale ranges from 1 (*disagree very strongly*) to 6 (*agree very strongly*). The cut-off for this scale could be set at 4 (*agree just a little*). Parents whose mean score is at or above the cut-off may have improved their ability to support their child(ren)'s learning

If you have any questions on how to select a scale, administer a scale, or analyze/interpret the results, please contact Greg Nusz at [Nusz\\_G@cde.state.co.us](mailto:Nusz_G@cde.state.co.us) or 303-358-1456.

## Parents' Perceptions of Personal Knowledge and Skills Scale

### Description

The *Parent's Perceptions of Personal Knowledge and Skills* scale is a 9-item scale which measures a parent's beliefs about their knowledge and skills related to their ability to support their child(ren)'s learning and education. The survey was developed to be administered to parents, guardians, or family members raising children in Kindergarten through 8th grade.

### Scale

**Instructions:** Please indicate how much you **AGREE** or **DISAGREE** with each of the following statements with regard to the current school year. Please select the best response per statement.

	Disagree very strongly	Disagree	Disagree just a little	Agree just a little	Agree	Agree very strongly
1. I know about volunteering opportunities at my child's school	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. I know effective ways to contact my child's teacher	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. I know about special events at my child's school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. I know how to communicate effectively with my child about the school day.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. I know how to explain things to my child about his or her homework.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. I know enough about the subjects of my child's homework to help him or her.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. I know how to communicate effectively with my child's teacher.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. I know how to supervise my child's homework.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. I have the skills to help out at my child's school.	2	2	3	4	5	6

### Citation

Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., & Sandler, H. M. (2005). Final performance report for OERI Grant # R305T010673: The social context of parental involvement: A path to enhanced achievement. Presented to Project Monitor, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, March 22, 2005.

The Family-School Partnership Lab is part of the Psychology and Human Development Department, Peabody College, Vanderbilt University in Nashville, USA. More information about this scale can be found at:

<https://discoverarchive.vanderbilt.edu/handle/1803/7595?show=full>



## Parental Self-Efficacy for Helping the Child Succeed in School Scale

### Description

The *Parental Self-Efficacy for Helping the Child Succeed in School Scale* is a 7-item scale which measures a parent’s belief that they have the ability to help their child(ren) succeed in school. The survey was developed to be administered to parents, guardians, or family members raising children in Kindergarten through 8th grade.

### Scale

**Instructions:** Please indicate how much you **AGREE** or **DISAGREE** with each of the following statements. Please think about the current school year as you consider each statement.

	Disagree very strongly	Disagree	Disagree just a little	Agree just a little	Agree	Agree very strongly
1. I know how to help my child do well in school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. I know if I’m getting through to my child.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. I know how to help my child make good grades in school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. I feel successful about my efforts to help my child learn.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. I have more influence on my child’s grades than other children do.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. I know how to help my child learn.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. I make a significant difference in my child’s school performance.	1	2	3	4	5	6

### Citation

Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., & Sandler, H. M. (2005). Final performance report for OERI Grant # R305T010673: The social context of parental involvement: A path to enhanced achievement. Presented to Project Monitor, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, March 22, 2005.

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<https://discoverarchive.vanderbilt.edu/handle/1803/7595?show=full>

## Parent Choice of Involvement Activities

### Description

The *Parent Choice of Involvement Scale* includes two 5-item subscales which measure parent involvement in home-based and school-based activities. The survey was developed to be administered to parents, guardians, or family members raising children in Kindergarten through 8th grade.

### Home-based Involvement Subscale

**Instructions:** Parent and families do many different things when they are involved in their children's education. We would like to know how true the following things are for you and your family. Please think about the current school year as you read and respond to each item. Please circle the response that best describes your involvement.

Someone in this family...	Never	1 or 2 times this year	4 or 5 times this year	Once a week	A few times a week	Daily
1. ...talks with child about the school day	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. ...supervises this child's homework.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. ...helps this child study for tests.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. ...practices spelling, math or other skills with this child.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. ...reads with this child.	1	2	3	4	5	6

### School-based Involvement Subscale

**Instructions:** Parent and families do many different things when they are involved in their children's education. We would like to know how true the following things are for you and your family. Please think about the current school year as you read and respond to each item. Please circle the response that best describes your involvement.

Someone in this family...	Never	1 or 2 times this year	4 or 5 times this year	Once a week	A few times a week	Daily
6. ...helps out at this child's school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. ...attends special events at school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. ...volunteers to go on class field trips.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. ...attends PTA meetings.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. ...goes to the school's open-house.	1	2	3	4	5	6



## Citation

Epstein, J.L., & Salinas, K.C. (1993). *School and family partnerships: Surveys and summaries*. Baltimore, MD: Center on Families, Communities, Schools and Children's Learning, Johns Hopkins University.

Walker, J. M. T., Wilkins, A. S., Dallaire, J. P., Sandler, H. M., & Hoover-Dempsey, K. V. (2005). Parental involvement: Model revision through scale development. *Elementary School Journal*, 106(2); 85-104.

More information about this scale can be found at:

<https://discoverarchive.vanderbilt.edu/handle/1803/7595?show=full>

## Elementary and Middle School Family and Community Involvement Surveys: Parent Involvement Subscale

### Description

The *Parent Involvement Subscale* is a 17-item scale which measures a parent's involvement in school activities. The survey was developed to be administered to parents, guardians, or family members raising children in Kindergarten through 8th grade.

### Scale

**Instructions:** Please circle the response that best describes your involvement.

How often do you...	Never	Once in a While	Once a week	Every day/Most Days
1. Read with your child?	1	2	3	4
2. Volunteer in the classroom or at the school?	1	2	3	4
3. Work with your child on science homework?	1	2	3	4
4. Review and discuss the schoolwork your child brings home?	1	2	3	4
5. Help your child with math?	1	2	3	4
6. Visit your child's school?	1	2	3	4
7. Go over spelling or vocabulary with your child?	1	2	3	4
8. Ask your child about what he/she is learning in science?	1	2	3	4
9. Talk to your child's teacher?	1	2	3	4
10. Ask your child about what he/she is learning in math?	1	2	3	4
11. Help your child with reading/language arts homework?	1	2	3	4
12. Help your child understand what he/she is learning in science?	1	2	3	4



How often do you...	Never	Once in a While	Once a week	Every day/Most Days
13. Help your child prepare for math tests?	1	2	3	4
14. Ask your child how well he/she is doing in school?	1	2	3	4
15. Ask your child to read something he/she wrote?	1	2	3	4
16. Go to a school event (e.g., sports, music, drama) or meeting?	1	2	3	4
17. Check to see if your child finished his/her homework?	1	2	3	4

### Citation

Sheldon, S. B. & Epstein, J. L. (2007). Parent survey of family and community involvement in the elementary, middle, and high grades. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships.

## Elementary and Middle School Family and Community Involvement Surveys: Parental Role Construction Subscale

### Description

The *Parent Role Construction Subscale* is a 10-item subscale which measures beliefs and behaviors suggesting that the parent is primarily responsible for the child’s school success. The survey was developed to be administered to parents, guardians, or family members raising children in Kindergarten through 8th grade.

### Scale

**Instructions:** Please circle the response that best describes your involvement.

It is a parent’s responsibility to...	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Make sure their child learns at school.	1	2	3	4
2. Teach their child to value schoolwork.	1	2	3	4
3. Show their child how to use things like a dictionary or encyclopedia.	1	2	3	4
4. Contact the teacher as soon as academic problems arise.	1	2	3	4
5. Test their child on subjects taught in school.	1	2	3	4
6. Keep track of their child’s progress in school.	1	2	3	4
7. Contact the teacher if they think their child is struggling in school.	1	2	3	4
8. Show an interest in their child’s schoolwork.	1	2	3	4
9. Help their child understand homework.	1	2	3	4



It is a parent's responsibility to...	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
10. Know if their child is having trouble in school.	1	2	3	4

### Citation

Sheldon, S. B. & Epstein, J. L. (2007). Parent survey of family and community involvement in the elementary, middle, and high grades. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships.

## [Parent Mastery Orientation Scale and Parent Performance Orientation](#)

### Description

The *Parent Mastery Orientation Scale and Parent Performance Orientation Scale* is a 13-item scale which measures a parent's behaviors related to a child's learning. The survey was developed to be administered to parents, guardians, or family members raising children in Kindergarten through 12th grade.

### Scale

**Instructions:** Please select the best response per statement.

	Not at ALL (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	A Lot (5)
1. I encourage my child to try to find the reason for the mistakes he or she make	1	2	3	4	5
2. I encourage my child to try to find the reason for the mistakes he or she makes.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I encourage my child to try to find the reason for the mistakes he or she makes	1	2	3	4	5
4. I encourage my child to do extra work to learn new things.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I pay close attention to my child's improvement in his or her school learning.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I try to find out from my child what he or she wants to learn about.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I encourage my child to feel successful for simply working hard on his or her homework.	1	2	3	4	5
8. When my child brings home a test or paper he or she completed, I ask first what grade he or she received.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I pay close attention to the grades my child receives	1	2	3	4	5



	Not at ALL (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	A Lot (5)
10. When my child is making a lot of mistakes on a task, I encourage him or her to try a different task.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I congratulate my child when he or she does better than others.	1	2	3	4	5

### Citation

Watkins, T. J. (1997). Teacher communications, child achievement, and parent traits in parent involvement models. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 91(1), 3-14.

## [Ohio Department of Education Parent and Family Involvement Survey](#)

### Description

The *Ohio Department of Education Parent and Family Involvement Survey* is a 27-item scale which measures family empowerment, effectiveness of creating channels of communication between home and school, levels of opportunities for families to participate in school activities, effectiveness of connecting families to in-school and community support mechanisms and resources, and providing a welcoming school climates. The survey was developed to be administered to parents, guardians, or family members raising children in Kindergarten through 12th grade.

### Scale

**Instructions:** *As a parent or caregiver, your involvement in your child's learning and school is valuable and important. This survey asks for your opinions about what your child's school does to get you involved in your child's education. Your individual responses, which may help schools improve connections with parents and families, will remain confidential. For each statement below, please select one answer that most closely matches your opinion on your child's school this current year.*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I receive information on what I can do at home to help my child improve or advance his/her learning	1	2	3	4	5
2. I receive information on health and nutrition.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I receive information on child development	1	2	3	4	5
4. My child's teacher asks to meet with me face to face at least once a year to talk about how my child is doing.	1	2	3	4	5
5. My child's school is very good about staying in touch with me (e.g., letters, phone calls or e-mails).	1	2	3	4	5

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
6. When my child's school communicates with me it is easy for me to read or understand.	1	2	3	4	5
7. If I have a question, concern or comment about my child the teacher, principal or guidance counselor gets back to me right away.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I am invited to meetings so that I can learn about what is going on in the school (e.g., issues or policies).	1	2	3	4	5
9. There are many different ways I can be involved with the school, either at the school itself, at home or in the community.	1	2	3	4	5
10. When I volunteer at the school, I am given training and resources to do my task well, if needed.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I receive regular updates from the teacher on my child's progress.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I receive information on what my child should learn and be able to do in each grade in school.	1	2	3	4	5
13. My child's teacher(s) adjust their teaching styles to meet the academic needs of my child.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I believe my child is challenged by the school academic curriculum.	1	2	3	4	5
15. My child's teacher(s) hold high expectations for my child.	1	2	3	4	5
16. My child receives the academic support needed to meet his/her individual needs.	1	2	3	4	5
17. I am asked what my goals are for my child's learning and/or what classes or programs my child should take.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I am asked about my child's talents and strengths.	1	2	3	4	5
19. I can be involved in school improvement planning and decision-making at my child's school.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I am invited to help plan family involvement activities.	1	2	3	4	5
21. I am given information about community services that help with families' needs (adult education, job, health, mental health, utilities, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5
22. I am given information about services to support my child's learning and behavior needs and	1	2	3	4	5



	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
enhance his or her talents (tutoring, mentoring, camps, career exploration).					
23. The school helps my child feel comfortable as he/she moves from one grade to the next.	1	2	3	4	5
24. My involvement in my child’s education is valued at my school.	1	2	3	4	5
25. My child’s school is a friendly environment for students, parents and families.	1	2	3	4	5
26. My child’s school is a safe place to learn.	1	2	3	4	5
27. My child’s school respects all cultures and diversity.	1	2	3	4	5

**Citation**

Ohio Department of Education

**Website**

More information about this scale can be found [here](#).

## Power of Partnerships Family Survey

### Description

The PTA created a 6-subscale and 21-item tool which measures family-school partnerships: (1) Welcoming All Families into The School Community Subscale, (2) Communicating Effectively Subscale, (3) Supporting Student Success Subscale, (4) Speaking Up for Every Child Subscale, (5) Sharing Power Subscale, and (6) Collaborating with Community Subscale. The survey was developed to be administered to parents, guardians, or family members raising children in Kindergarten through 12th grade.

### Scale

**Instructions:** For each statement below, please select one answer that most closely matches your opinion on your child's school this current year.

Welcoming All Families into the School Community Subscale	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. When I walk into the school, I feel the school is inviting and that this is a place where parents "belong."	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. The school's policies and programs reflect, respect, and value the diversity of the families in the community.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. Students in the school are treated fairly no matter what their race or cultural background.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. I feel welcome at PTA/parent group meetings.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Communicating Effectively Subscale	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
5. The school keeps all families informed about important issues and events.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. The school makes it easy for families to communicate with teachers.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. The school communicates with families in multiple ways (e.g., e-mail, phone, website).	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. I can talk to the school principal when I need to.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. My child's teacher communicates with me on a regular basis.	1	2	3	4	5	6



10. It is easy to get a translator if I need one.	1	2	3	4	5	6
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Supporting Student Success Subscale	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
11. My child’s teacher keeps me well informed about how my child is doing in school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. I understand the academic standards my child is supposed to meet and how the curriculum is linked to those standards.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. My child’s teacher and the school give me useful information about how to improve my child’s progress.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. All students are challenged to do their best	1	2	3	4	5	6

Speaking Up for Every Child Subscale	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
15. If the school can’t help me, they will connect me to someone who can.	1	2	3	4	5	6
16. I understand the rules and requirements for student dress, language, and behavior.	1	2	3	4	5	6
17. The school keeps me informed of my rights under federal and state laws and policies and helps me exercise those rights as needed.	1	2	3	4	5	6
18. I feel empowered to advocate for my own child’s and other children’s success in school.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Sharing Power Subscale	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
19. The school consults with me and other families before making important decisions (e.g., changes in curriculum, school policies, dress code).	1	2	3	4	5	6
20. The school provides opportunities for families to develop relationships and raise concerns with school leaders,	1	2	3	4	5	6



public officials, and business and community leaders.						
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Collaborating with Community Subscale	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
21. The school connects students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and community improvement initiatives.	1	2	3	4	5	6

**Citation**

National Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

**Website**

More information about this scale can be found [here](#).