

## Practical Tips for Engaging with your Child's School

Idaho's public schools want and need parents to be engaged as partners in their children's education. Parents are their students' most ardent advocates, and research shows that active parent involvement is the single best predictor of student success.

Here are some practical tips for engaging in your student's school:

- Talk to your child's teacher(s) and get to know them. They know the most about your student and how they are doing at school. Ask them how they prefer to communicate – email, text, phone or online platform.
- Attend school orientation meetings, back-to-school nights, dual credit/advanced opportunities orientations and other informational events and meetings. Prioritize attending parent-teacher conferences!
- Volunteer in your student's classroom. This is the best opportunity to see what your student experiences every day and how they interact with their teacher(s) and peers. If you can't volunteer in the classroom, explore other ways to support your school by helping with other tasks or activities.
- Read, read and encourage reading at all ages! Just 20 minutes of reading with your student in early grades makes a significant difference in keeping them on track to reach proficiency by the end of the third grade. Be a reader yourself – you are your child's most important role model.
- Track your student's projects and progress. Schools all have an online platform so that parents can see assignments and grades. Support your student(s) in staying on track with assignments and homework.
- Ask your student(s) to share specifics about what's going well in school and what isn't. Encourage them to solve problems and seek resolution. But, let them know you are willing to meet with teachers and administrators to address issues if they need your support.
- Be pro-active in reaching out to school or district administrators like counselors, principals/administrators or superintendents with questions and concerns. Provide constructive input on your student's needs and any concerns you have. If your questions or concerns aren't satisfied, attend a meeting of your district board of trustees. Check your district or charter school website for meeting times and how to sign up to address the board.

- Get involved with the parent organization at your school – Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) or Parent Teacher Association (PTA). This is a great way to meet other parents and to support your child's school.
- Go to extracurricular events - sports, concerts and other school events even if your student isn't involved. It's a great way to show your support for your school and community.
- Remember that you have rights. They are written into the education laws of Idaho, and you are the most important decision-maker in your child's educational experience.