

A Guide to Using “Beyond the Bake Sale” in Schools



For educators and parents

NEBRASKA



Statewide Parental Information and Resource Centers

www.NebraskaPIRC.org

“...partnerships among schools, families and community groups are not a luxury – they are a necessity.”

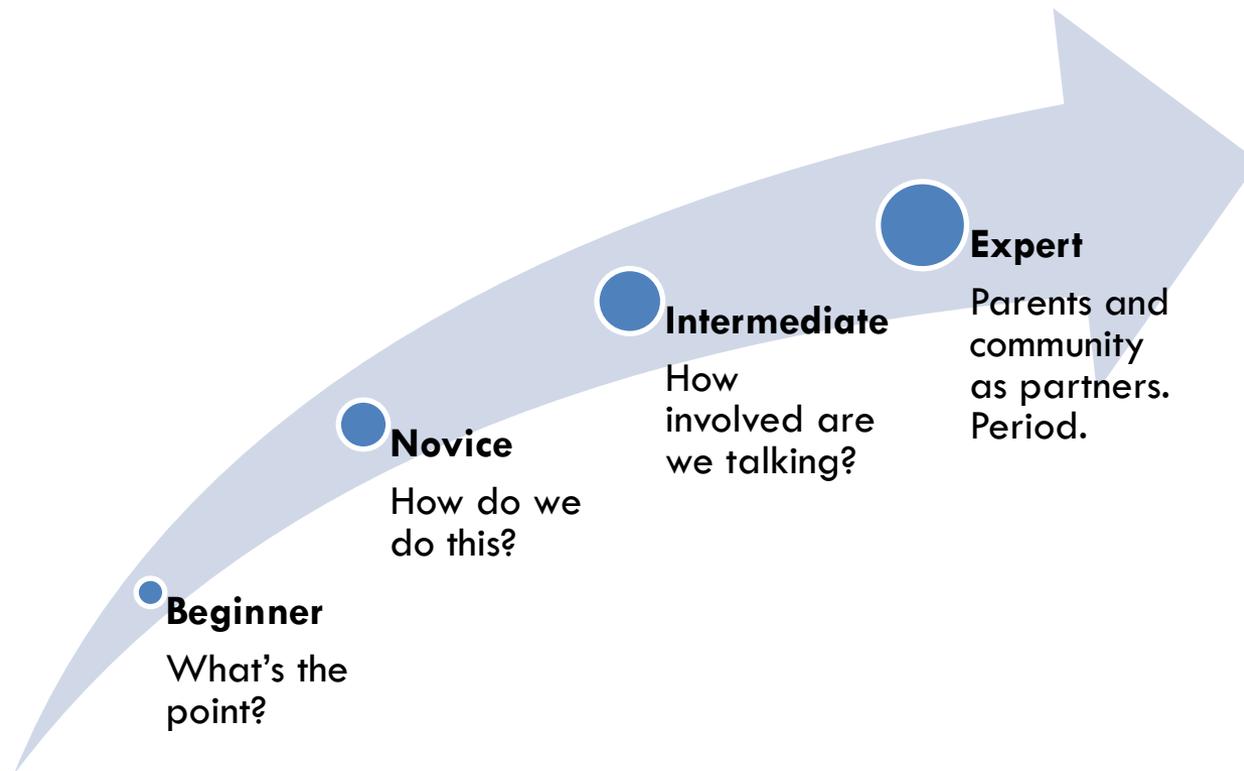
Purpose

This presentation is intended to guide your individual use of the Beyond the Bake Sale resource.

- The presentation focuses on “meeting you where you are.”
- To do so, we ask that you think critically about where you and your school are on a parent involvement spectrum.

Where are you? Where is the school?

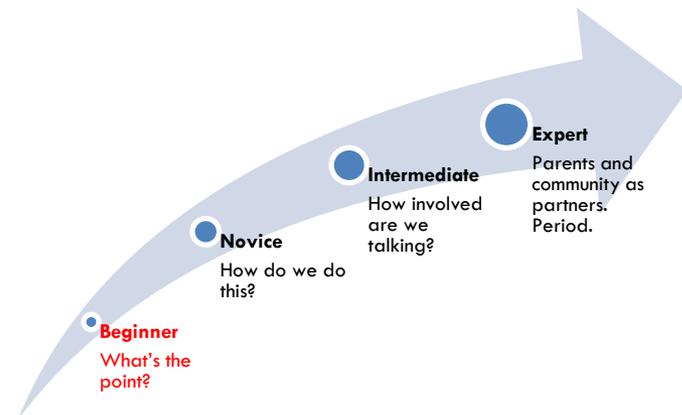
Parent involvement on a spectrum...



Level 1: Beginner

Starting Out

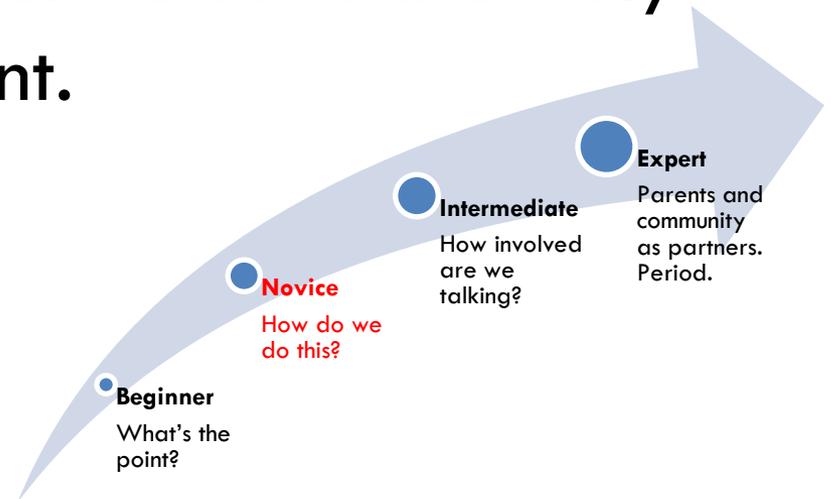
- The tips, tools and resources may seem too difficult to implement. Your school is just starting the journey to parent involvement, and there may be resistance.



Level 2: Novice

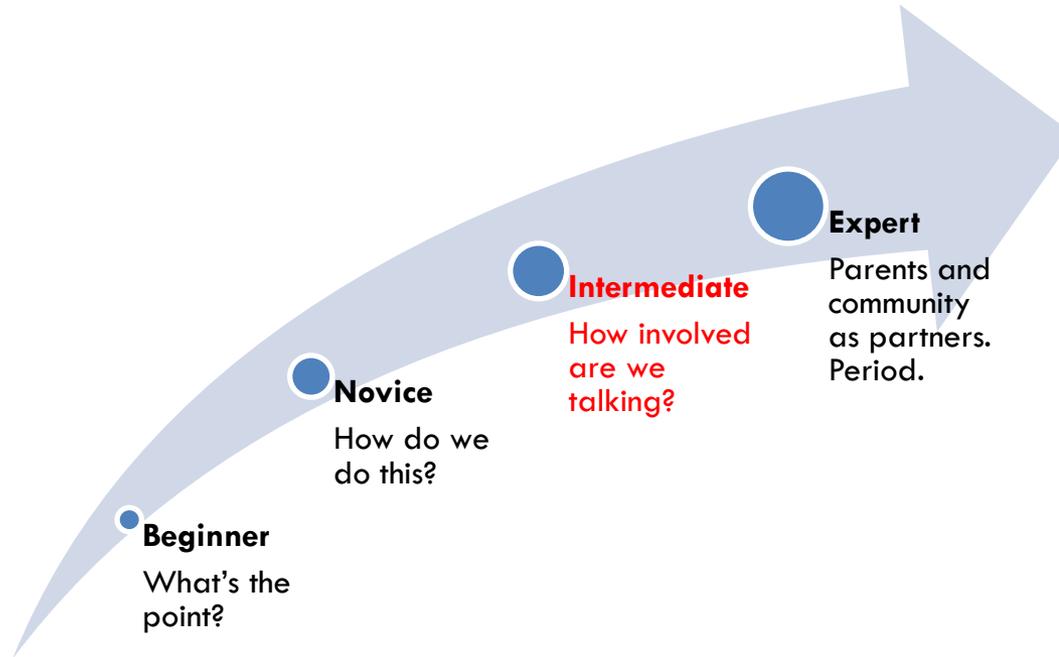
Half In, Half Out

- Think about the tools that may fit your needs. Parent involvement is a good thing, and there are regular efforts to include families, but work needs to be done to ensure efforts are truly meaningful and consistent.



Level 3: Intermediate

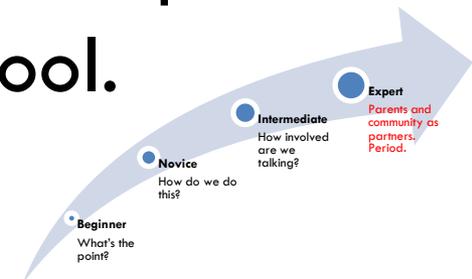
- We're on our way, but there's a lot left to do!



Level 4: Expert

We've Got It!

- For this group, you all know what you're doing. You have parents everywhere, teachers get it, and the community is involved. You describe your discussion as authentic and you're able to find AND implement solutions together. You know that there's always room for improvement and you're looking for another tool.



Are you ready?

To make this work – remember your creativity.

Think about the PURPOSE of the tool, and if you still can't make it work as is, tweak it.

Many tools are to help you critically reflect on your own practices – be open.

Chapter 1

Why does parent involvement matter? (pages 2-9)

1. Partnership & Student Academic Achievement are closely linked.
2. Partnerships help build and sustain public support for the schools.
3. Families & the community can help schools overcome the challenges they face.
4. Teachers can benefit from parent & community partnerships.
5. No Child Left Behind Act provides partnership opportunities that can help schools meet the requirements of the law.

Chapter 2

What Is a Family-School Partnership Supposed to Look Like? (Pages 13-25)

- Four Versions of Partnership:
 - Partnership School (p. 15)
 - Open-Door School (p. 16)
 - Come-if-We-Call School (p. 17)
 - Fortress School (p. 18)

Take time to look through these scoring guides, marking the descriptors that best describe your school. Then, looking at page 19, take time to candidly discuss where your school falls. Read through the rest of the chapter, and discuss the book's vision of effective family-school partnership, while thinking about what YOUR vision is for your school.

Chapter 3

Ready, Set, Go! (pages 27-46)

– Four Core Beliefs

1. All Parents Have Dreams for Their Children & Want the Best for Them (suggested steps for action on p. 31)
2. All Parents Have the Capacity to Support Their Children's Learning (suggested steps for action on pp. 34-36)
3. Parents and School Staff Should Be Equal Partners (suggested steps for action on pp. 38-39)
4. The Responsibility for Building Partnerships Between School & Home Rests Primarily with School Staff, Especially School Leaders (suggested activity on pp. 41-43)

Chapter 4

Developing Relationships (pages 47-79)

How Can You Build Trust Instead of Blaming Each Other?

“Parents tell us that feeling welcome and being treated with respect by school staff is the number one key to their connection with a school.”

- This chapter explores steps that school leaders and your action team can take to create a school culture that fosters positive relationships with families and community members.
 - Trust is key in developing relationships with families. The chart on p. 49 displays four elements of trust.

Complete the checklist on pages 75-79. Then discuss where your school is and use suggestions from the chapter to address your school’s areas of needed growth.

Chapter 5

Linking to Learning (p. 81-111)

How Will Involving Parents Help Your Test Scores?

- To help their kids at home, parents need to know what's going on at school. Chapter 5 is organized into the following sections with strategies to inform parents (pages 84-107).
 - Helping families understand what's happening in the classroom
 - Putting student work front and center
 - Communicating regularly with families about learning
 - Putting learning at the center of parent-teacher conferences—and including students
 - Using student achievement data to design programs for families
 - Collaborating with community organizations
 - Complete the checklist on Pages 108-111. Then discuss where your school is, and use suggestions from the chapter to address your school's areas of need.

Chapter 6

Addressing Differences (pp. 113-149)

How Can You Deal with Issues of Race, Class, and Culture?

Diversity brings rich resources and opportunities for schools and communities, but it also can bring conflicts and misunderstandings.

- Begin with this premise: All families, no matter what their income, race, education, language, or culture, want their children to do well in school— and can make an important contribution to their children’s learning.
- Promote Understanding of Different Cultures
- Recognize and Address Class and Language Differences
- Address Issues of Race and Racism
- Welcome and Respect All Families
- Complete the checklist on pages 146-149. Then discuss where your school is, and use suggestions from the chapter to address areas of need.

Chapter 7

Supporting Advocacy (pp. 151-186)

How Can “Problem Parents” Become Partners You Can Work With?

1. Recognize that parents have the right to influence what happens to their children in school. Their requests will be treated with respect, as long as they are made in a civil manner (p.152) .
2. Set up a proactive process for collaborating with families to monitor students’ progress, address their difficulties, and plan for their futures. Explain the process clearly and apply it fairly. Avoid a situation in which some families have (or seem to have) a lot of inside influence, while others have (or feel they have) little or none (p. 152).

What is an Advocate? A person who speaks out for another. Work with parents and staff to help them understand what it means to be a good advocate of students (Look at the chart on p.155).

Complete the checklist on pages 182-186. Then discuss where your school is and use suggestions from the chapter to address your school’s areas of need.

Sharing Power (pp. 187-218)

Who's in Charge Here Anyway?

- Partnership requires sharing power. The starting point for teachers and administrators is to see families as partners and not simply as clients or guests.
 - No one has ever said that democracy is efficient. Differences of opinion and potential conflict are a natural part of school life. People have strong views on matters that affect their children.

Again, complete the checklist on pages 214-218. Then discuss where your school is and use suggestions from the chapter to address your school's areas of need.

Chapter 9

Scaling Up (pp. 219-250)

Why Can't All Schools in a District Create Strong Partnerships with Families?

- For a school district to be serious about closing the achievement gap, it will also have to be serious about closing the gap between Fortress Schools and Partnership Schools.
 - This chapter explores what a district can do to develop system-wide policies and practices that support families to enhance their children's experience in school.

There is a checklist on pages 247-250 to assess where your district is. Think about steps ***you, or your school*** could take to develop a district-wide initiative.

Chapters 10 & 11

Help! Where Can you Find Useful Resources to Build Your Partnership? (pp.251-287)

- This chapter is a list of annotated resources. The bibliography at the end of the book also lists useful resources.
- The chapter is divided into three sections, 1. Chapter Topics; 2. Selected Resources; 3. Recommended Reading from the San Diego PALs.

Tools To Support Your Work (pp.289-319)

Where Do We Start?

- Information in this chapter offers guidance on tracking your program outcomes in ways that are easy to do and make sense.

Additional Resources

- Nebraska Parental Information & Resource Center,
<http://nebraskapirc.org/>
- Nebraska Department of Education, Continuous Improvement Process Toolkit
<http://www.nde.state.ne.us/ciptoolkit/familycommunity/index.html>
- Nebraska Parent Teacher Association (PTA)
<http://nebraskapta.org/>
- Nebraska Parent Training & Information
<http://www.pti-nebraska.org/>

Additional Questions?

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