



School Administrator's Guide to Parent Engagement

Strengthening Partnerships Within K-12 School Communities



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ONTARIO
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COUNCIL
Exemplary Leadership in Public Education

Goals

- ▶ By participating in this web conference, we will:
 - Understand the key highlights and alignment of the Guide with the Ministry of Education policy and strategy
 - Discuss the role of all partners
 - Share ideas for implementing the policy and strategy
 - Familiarize ourselves with the new resource

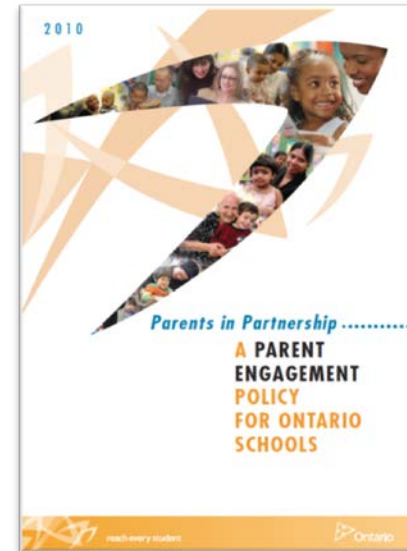
Why is parent engagement important to student success?

“When schools, families, and community groups work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, stay in school longer and like school more.”

Henderson

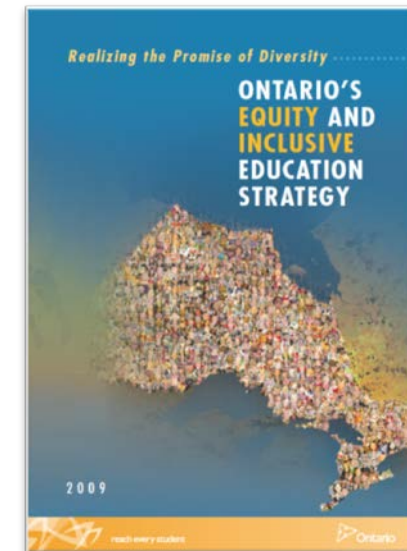
▶ *Parents in Partnership...A Parent Engagement Policy for Ontario Schools, 2010*

▶ http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/involvement/PE_Policy2010.pdf



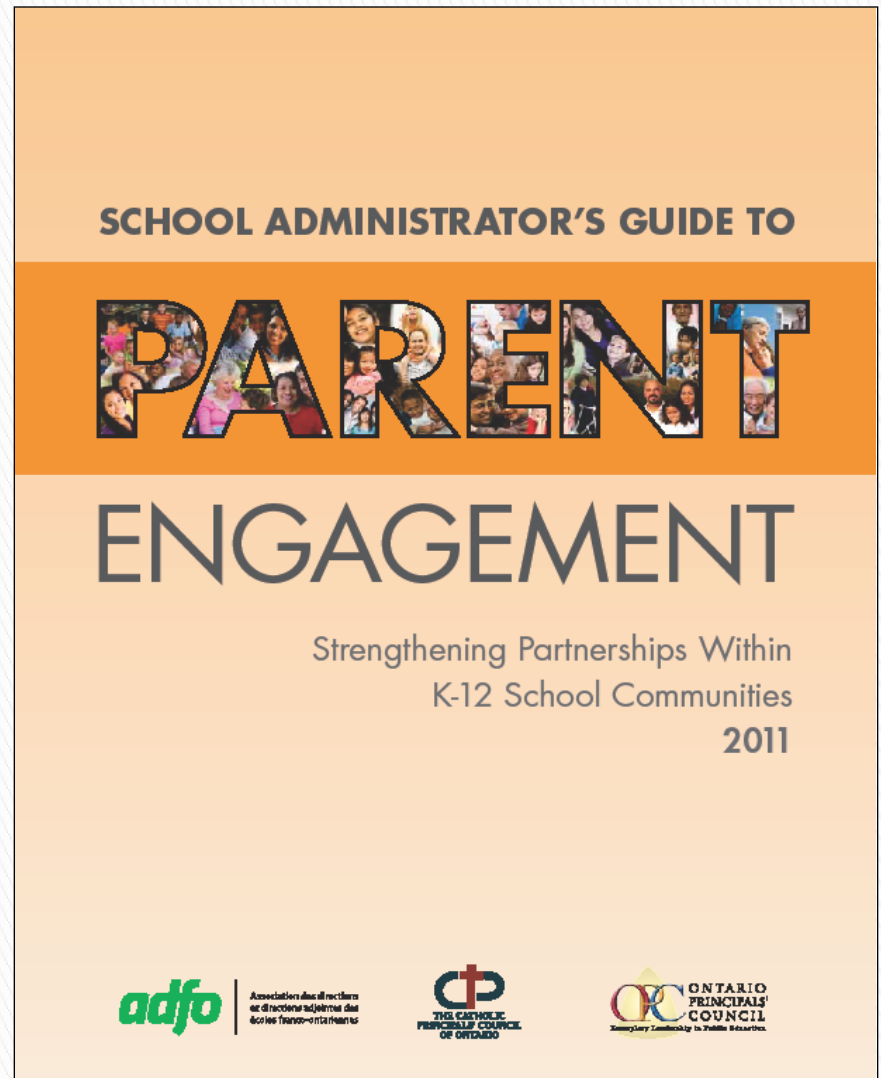
▶ *Realizing the Promise of Diversity... Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy, 2009*

▶ <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/inclusiveguide.pdf>



PE Resource

- ▶ *School Administrator's Guide to Parent Engagement – Strengthening Partnerships Within the K-12 School Communities, 2011*



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Research says:

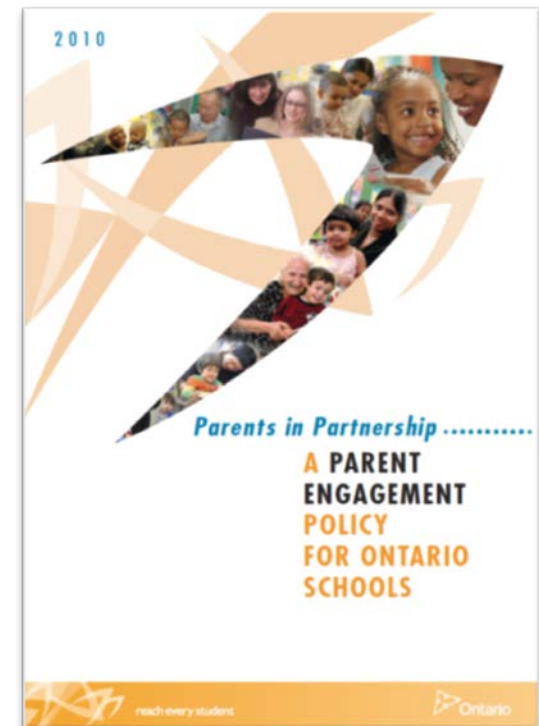
“Effective schools use their internal collaborative strength to seek out relationships with the community.”

Michael Fullan, 2000



Key Highlights: *Parents in Partnership... A Parent Engagement Policy for Ontario Schools*

- ▶ Ontario's vision of parent engagement
- ▶ What we know about parent engagement
- ▶ Four strategies for success



Key Highlights: Parents in Partnership... A Parent Engagement Policy for Ontario Schools

- ▶ Four strategies for success:
 - School Climate
 - Eliminating Barriers
 - Supports for Parents
 - Parent Outreach

Guide – Executive Summary (pg. 12)

Section 2

Executive Summary of Parents in Partnership: A Parent Engagement Policy for Ontario Schools

| Ontario's Vision of Parent Engagement | |
|--|--|
| Parent engagement has a positive impact on student achievement and well-being. | |
| Students are supported and inspired to learn in a culture of high expectations in which parents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are welcomed, respected and valued by the school community as partners in their children's learning and development; • have opportunities to be involved, and also a full range of choices about how to be involved in the educational community to support student success; • are engaged through ongoing communication and dialogue with other educational partners to support a positive environment at home and at school; and • are supported with information and tools necessary to participate in school life. | |
| The <i>Parent Engagement Policy for Ontario Schools</i> identifies four key strategies designed to support parents as partners so that parents have the opportunity – and the skills, knowledge and tools – to engage with all education partners in fulfilling Ontario's core priorities for education. | |
| What We Know | Strategies for Success |
| The positive results of a genuine partnership between parents and schools include improved student achievement, reduced absenteeism, positive student behaviour, and increased confidence among parents in their children's schooling. | Strategy 1: School Climate Foster and sustain a positive, welcoming school climate in which all parent perspectives are encouraged, valued and heard. <i>Parents in Partnership: A Parent Engagement Policy for Ontario Schools, pp. 17-19</i> |
| Parent involvement programs that are effective in engaging diverse families; recognize, respect and address cultural and socio-economic differences. Parents need to hold high aspirations and expectations for their children, and schools need to work in partnership with parents to support learning, so that the home and the school can share in these expectations and support learning. | Strategy 2: Eliminating Barriers Identify and remove barriers to parent engagement that may prevent some parents from fully participating in their children's learning and to reflect the diversity of our students and communities. <i>Parents in Partnership: A Parent Engagement Policy for Ontario Schools, pp. 19-20</i> |
| Parents have a primary influence on their children's attitudes towards school, their learning and their future success. | Strategy 3: Supports for Parents Provide parents with the knowledge, skills and tools they need to support student learning at home and at school. <i>Parents in Partnership: A Parent Engagement Policy for Ontario Schools, pp. 20-22</i> |
| Positive parental aspirations and expectations for their children's educational achievement have a strong relationship with children's actual achievement. | Strategy 4: Parent Outreach Review and expand communication and outreach strategies such as local workshops, presentations, tools and resources to share information and strategies related to supporting learning at home and parent engagement in schools. <i>Parents in Partnership: A Parent Engagement Policy for Ontario Schools, pp. 22-23</i> |

“Good schools become better schools when they are strongly connected with parents as part of the learning community.”

Research says:

“Parents need to hold high aspirations and expectations for their children, and schools need to work in partnership with parents so that the home and school can share in these expectations and support learning.”

J. Hattie, 2009



Executive Summary of *Parents in Partnership... A Parent Engagement Policy for Ontario Schools*

- ▶ Parent Engagement – Implications for Policy Development
- ▶ Challenges
- ▶ Opportunities
- ▶ The Role of Communication

Guide – Executive Summary (pg. 13)

Executive Summary of *Parents in Partnership: A Parent Engagement Policy for Ontario Schools*

| Parent Engagement - Implications for Policy Development | |
|--|---|
| <p>An effective parent engagement policy must acknowledge the importance of parent voice by providing multiple ways for parents to express their perspectives on education and to receive responses from other educational partners. <i>Parents in Partnership: A Parent Engagement Policy for Ontario Schools, p. 11</i></p> | |
| <p>Research has shown that school practices to involve families make a difference in whether or not - and which - families become involved, as well as how they become involved. <i>Parents in Partnership: A Parent Engagement Policy for Ontario Schools, p. 12</i></p> | |
| <p>A parent engagement policy that supports positive links through thoughtful, concrete actions contributes to a general awareness that all parents and families are welcomed at school. <i>Parents in Partnership: A Parent Engagement Policy for Ontario Schools, p. 12</i></p> | |
| Challenges | Opportunities |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language • Parent education levels • Single parenthood • Balancing schedules • Lack of communication • School environment • Attitudes of school staff • Reduced involvement at the secondary level • Cultural influences • Socio-economic status • Geography – local challenges facing urban, rural and northern communities • Break down barriers that exist • Reduced parent engagement at the secondary school level resulting in reduced parent volunteerism | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing technology advancements • Workshops for parents • Online tools and strategies • Increased knowledge and understanding • Broader opportunities for involvement • School councils • Parent Involvement Committees (PICs) • Parent Voice • Special Education Advisory Committees (SEACs) • Home conditions that support children as learners at all grade levels • Shared experiences • Early Learning (FDKP) • Community partnerships |
| The Role of Communication | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective, ongoing communication results in positive and respectful relationships. • An effective network includes clear two-way channels for communication from home to school and school to home. • A variety of methods should be used to communicate with diverse parent communities, from newsletters, emails, face-to-face meetings, interactive websites, online surveys, phone trees, videos and webcasts. • Respectful, ongoing communication and transparency are essential if we are to fulfil our vision of parent engagement. | |

Checklist for School Actions

- ▶ From Policy to Practice
- ▶ 14 School Actions (SA) – *Strategies for Success, page 14*

Discuss with your school team:

- ▶ Which of the 14 School Actions are you implementing and how?

Guide – Checklist of School Actions (pg. 14)

Section 2

From Policy to Practice: Checklist of School Actions

| Strategies for Success: School Actions (SA) | ✓ |
|--|---|
| SA-1: Establish and sustain a positive learning culture and welcoming school climate where parental input is welcomed, respected and valued. | |
| SA-2: Implement strategies to identify and remove discriminatory barriers that limit engagement by students, parents and our diverse communities. | |
| SA-3: Actively explore and utilize opportunities (such as Parents Reaching Out (PRO) grants) to further engage parents at school and at home to support student achievement. www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/reaching.html | |
| SA-4: Review existing parent and community partnerships and seek to expand them to reflect the diversity of our parents and the broader community. | |
| SA-5: Discuss learning expectations and students' academic progress with students and parents, and make efforts to assist parents who do not understand the language of the school. | |
| SA-6: Actively support and encourage school council members and other parents to share their ideas for reducing the student achievement gap and to help inform school improvement plans. | |
| SA-7: Support strategies (e.g. workshops, resources such as tips sheets and translation of materials) for parents and students to develop skills and knowledge that support a positive learning environment. | |
| SA-8: Work towards representation of diverse parent groups on all school committees including school councils. | |
| SA-9: Implement the board <i>Equity and Inclusive Education Policy</i> , and its programs and action plans, to support parent engagement and reflect the needs of our students and our diverse school communities. | |
| SA-10: Monitor school climate (e.g. through surveys and focus groups) to help identify barriers to parent involvement or issues that should be addressed in order to foster and support a safe welcoming learning environment. | |
| SA-11: Review self-assessment processes to determine the effectiveness of the school's parent engagement strategies. | |
| SA-12: Communicate progress to the board and the school's local community including educators, students, parents and the public. | |
| SA-13: Continue consulting with parents during the IEP/IPRC processes. | |
| SA-14: Where schools are offering full-day kindergarten, inform parents about this new initiative and explain how it will provide young students with a stronger foundation for future learning. | |

From Policy to Practice: List of Look-fors

- ▶ Indicators that measure parent engagement are:
 - Parents from diverse community groups are participating in meaningful school activities.
 - A diverse representation of parent groups are actively engaged in the school council.
 - Parents are participating in Parent/Teacher interviews.
 - The school suspension rate is lower than previous years.
 - The absenteeism rate is lower than previous years.

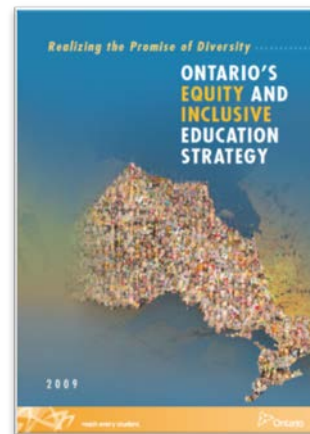
Participant's voice...

- ▶ What indicators do you value in your school that demonstrate parent engagement?
- ▶ Time: 5 minutes



Executive Summary of the *Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy*

- ▶ Vision of the equity and inclusion policy
- ▶ What we know about the equity and inclusion policy



Guide – Executive Summary (pg. 16)

Section 2

Executive Summary of Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy

| Vision |
|--|
| We envision an inclusive education system in Ontario in which: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• all students, parents and other members of the school community are welcomed and respected;• every student is supported and inspired to succeed in a culture of high expectations for learning. |
| To achieve an equitable and inclusive school climate, school boards and schools will strive to ensure that all members of the school community feel safe, comfortable and accepted. All staff and students need to value diversity and demonstrate respect for others and a commitment to establishing a just, caring society. |
| What We Know |
| There is a need to work collectively to realize our vision of an equitable and inclusive education system, and to eliminate all types of systemic barriers from Ontario's schools and society. |
| The equity and inclusive education strategy aims to close student achievement gaps by identifying and eliminating any biases and barriers that may limit students' prospects for learning, growing and contributing fully to society. |
| The strategy recognizes that factors such as race, sexual orientation, physical or mental ability, gender, gender identity and class may intersect to create additional barriers for some students. |
| The strategy recognizes that Ontario's publicly funded schools must increase their efforts to develop an approach that will respond to the full range of needs within the education community. |
| Parents want our schools to bring out the very best in their children and help them reach their full potential in a positive learning environment free from discrimination and harassment. |

Effective implementation is essential and is therefore a key component of this strategy.

*– Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools
Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation, p. 11*

| Guiding Principles of the Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy |
|--|
| Equity and inclusive education: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• is a foundation of excellence;• meets individual needs;• identifies and eliminates barriers;• promotes a sense of belonging;• involves the broad community;• builds on and enhances previous and existing initiatives; and• is demonstrated throughout the system. |

Research says:

“Effective implementation is essential and is therefore a key component of this strategy.”

Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools – Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation, page 11

Alignment of the Parent Engagement Policy with the Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy

- ▶ Guiding principles
- ▶ 8 Areas of focus – School action items
- ▶ School indicators for the implementation of these 8 areas of focus

Guide – School Action Items (pg. 17)

From Policy to Practice:

School Action Items Based on the Ministry of Education's Eight Areas of Focus

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Board Policies, Programs, Guidelines and Practices | ✓ |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement strategies to engage students, parents and the broader community actively in the review, development, and implementation of initiatives to support and promote equity and inclusive education. • Implement board equity and inclusive education policies, programs, and action plans that reflect the needs of their diverse school communities. | |
| 2. Shared and Committed Leadership | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide leadership that is responsive to the diverse nature of Ontario's communities and committed to identifying and removing discriminatory biases and systemic barriers to learning. | |
| 3. School-Community Leadership | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement strategies to review existing community partnerships so that they reflect the diversity of the broader community. • Work towards representation of diverse groups on school committees. | |
| 4. Inclusive Curriculum and Assessment Practices | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review classroom strategies and revise them as needed to help ensure that they are aligned with and reflect school-wide equity and inclusive education policies. | |
| 5. Religious Accommodation | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the board's religious accommodation guidelines and communicate these guidelines to the school community. | |
| 6. School Climate and the Prevention of Discrimination and Harassment | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement strategies to identify and remove discriminatory barriers that limit engagement by students, parents and the community. • Put procedures in place that will enable students and staff to report incidents of discrimination and harassment safely, and that will also enable the school to respond in a timely manner. | |
| 7. Professional Learning | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review classroom strategies and revise them as needed to help ensure that they are aligned with and reflect school-wide equity and inclusive education policies. | |
| 8. Accountability and Transparency | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report progress annually to the school board. • Develop school improvement plans that are aligned with <i>Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy</i>. • Review and establish self-assessment processes to determine the effectiveness of the school's equity and inclusive education plans and procedures. | |

Adapted from *Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation*, pp. 49-52

Case study

- ▶ A school team shares their story

Case study

▶ *Boys and Girls Book Clubs*

- *Elementary School*
- *Boys Book Club*
- *“Girls Rock and Read”*
- *Teacher support and guidance at recess time*
- *Healthy snacks provided by parents*
- *Participation at home on a regular basis (even if there is a language barrier)*
- *Council funds for book purchases and family dinner celebration*
- *Reading seminars and breakout groups for participants*




Case study

- ▶ *3 Stars and a WISH....how to report to parents at home about the program each day.*
 - *Students reflect on their day*
 - *Parents consult with students about future goals*



Case study


- ▶ Focus: How have you as a school team effectively engaged parents in your school?
 - ▶ Please provide your most effective strategy.
- 

Research says...

“If educators view students as children, they are likely to see both the family and the community as partners with the school in children’s education and development.”

Joyce Epstein, 2011

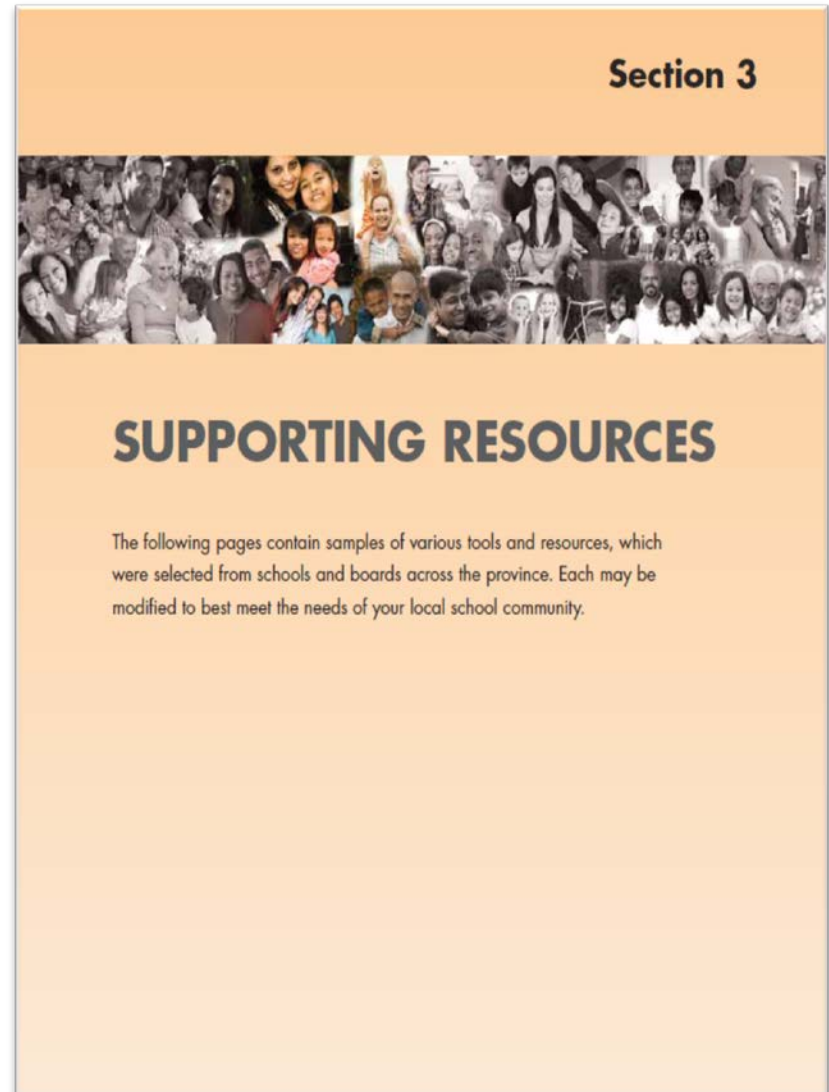
The School Administrator's Guide to Parent Engagement

- ▶ Executive Summary of *Parents in Partnership: A Parent Engagement Policy for Ontario Schools*
 - ▶ Checklist for School Actions
 - ▶ Look-Fors
 - ▶ Executive Summary of *Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy*
 - ▶ School Action Items based on the 8 Areas of Focus
 - ▶ School Indicators
 - ▶ Parent Engagement Highlights
 - ▶ K – 12 School Effectiveness Framework
 - ▶ A Caring and Safe School Culture
 - ▶ Assessing School Culture
- 


The Guide ...

- ▶ Supporting Resources:
 - Samples

- ▶ Pg. 27



The Guide...

- ▶ Parent Engagement in Action
 - ▶ References
 - ▶ Links to Resources
- 

How will the guide be available

▶ On the web site of each

- ADFO

- www.adfo.org

- CPCO

- www.cpco.on.ca

- OPC

- www.principals.ca



Printed copies: MBarchiesi@cpco.on.ca

Thank you for your participation and input.

▶ Feedback Form:

<http://resources.curriculum.org/csc/PARENTENGAGEMENTfeedback.shtml>

“Commitment to our student’s well-being is the driving force behind everything we do in education.”

Ontario’s Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy

