

**Family Involvement:
What it Looks Like in the School**
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The first two articles in this series on family involvement discussed its importance -- for the student, school, and family -- and its many benefits, including higher grades and test scores, better attendance and increased graduation rates. While the last article discussed the forms it can take in the home, in this article we will be examining what family involvement looks like within the school setting.

Just as a parent's support of his or her child's education can occur in a number of ways in the home, so can their participation within the school. Schools and parent clubs have many opportunities for parents and other adults to take part in, ranging from one-time-only events to monthly or weekly tasks or projects.

In the classroom . . .

Volunteering in a classroom is often the first thing people think of when considering being involved in their child's school. Every classroom has needs that a parent or other volunteer could help meet, including correcting papers, making photocopies, keeping the classroom's bulletin boards updated, or working with students one-on-one or in small groups. Classroom volunteers generally volunteer weekly or monthly, as it best fits their schedule.

Of course, parents aren't limited to volunteering inside their student's classroom. There are many tasks that can be completed from home such as prepping crafts or other projects. Chaperoning class field trips is another fun way to participate outside the class setting. If volunteering for a specific class, whether in the classroom, from home, or as a chaperone, sounds like a good fit for you, talk with your child's teacher.

Around the school . . .

In addition to classrooms there are other areas within the school that can benefit from parent involvement as well. Our schools welcome volunteers interested in working in the library, computer lab or office, or on the playground during recess.

Serving on a school's Site Council is another way adults can actively support their child's school. Site Councils are composed of parents, teachers and other staff, the principal, and in some cases, students. The councils meet monthly, addressing issues that affect each school's instructional program, student behavior, and staff development. Site Councils also serve as a conduit for information, providing effective two-way communication between parents and school staff. To learn more about your school's Site Council, or other opportunities to be involved in your child's school, talk with the building principal or counselor.

Throughout the District . . .

Along with volunteering in a classroom or school building, there are also opportunities to be engaged at a District level. Oregon City School District has committees that deal with textbooks, facilities, health issues and the budget. Each committee has a specific focus and needs members with different experience, strengths and expertise. To learn more about the various committee opportunities available visit the district's website (www.orecity.k12.or.us) or talk with your child's principal. District committees provide parents and other adults in the community an excellent opportunity to support schools and students throughout the district.

The forms of parent involvement discussed in this article have focused on the classroom, school and district. Joining and volunteering with the school's parent club (PTA or PTO, for example) is another important form of parent involvement, and one we will look at in depth in our next article.