

## **Activity 1: A Vision for Effective Parent-Teacher Relationships<sup>1</sup>**

**Time:** 45-60 minutes

**Materials:** Pen/pencil, chart paper, markers, “My Vision” and “Our Group’s Vision” worksheets

**Objective:** To create a vision for effective parent-teacher relationships

**Procedure:** In the space provided on the “My Vision” worksheet, use words and/or pictures to express your vision for effective parent-teacher relationships (elements of a perfect parent-teacher relationship). When you have finished, share your vision with the group. Explain your vision: what you mean, and what you hope for. Pay attention to similarities and differences between your vision and that of others in the group. Jot them down in the table provided.

When everyone has finished sharing, talk about the differences and similarities. As a group, try to formulate a vision statement. Write and rewrite the vision statement on the chart paper provided until everyone agrees. Write the final version in the space provided on the “Our Group’s Vision” worksheet. With the group, discuss what resources you might need and what steps you need to take in order to fulfill the goals in your vision statement. Jot these down in the space provided.

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<sup>1</sup>This activity idea was adapted from *Partnerships by design: Cultivating effective and meaningful school-family-community relationships*. This guide is available at: <http://www.nwrel.org/partnerships/cloak/booklet-one.pdf>

## My Vision

In the space provided, use words and/or pictures to express your vision for effective parent-teacher relationships (elements of a perfect parent-teacher relationship). When you have finished, share your vision with the group.

Explain your vision: what you mean, and what you hope for. Pay attention to similarities and differences between your vision and others in the group. Jot them down in the table provided.

**An effective partner-educator relationship looks like this:**

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**How does my vision compare to others?**

Similarities	Differences

## Our Group's Vision

As a group, try to formulate a vision statement. Write and rewrite the vision statement on the chart paper provided until everyone agrees.

Write the final version in the space provided below.

With the group, discuss what resources you might require and what steps you need to take in order to fulfill the goals in your vision statement. Jot these down in the space provided.

### **Group vision statement:**

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### **To fulfill our vision we need:**

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## Activity 2: Assessing School Culture

**Time:** Variable

**Materials:** Pen/pencil, “Observation Chart” handout

**Objective:** To assess the culture of your school and, if needed, identify strategies to improve accessibility and openness to parents.

**Procedure:** Assess the culture of the school using the questions listed in the “Observation Chart.” In the *Observation* column, write down what is currently happening at your school with respect to the question. In the *Strategies* column, write down any resources or methods that can be implemented to improve the situation.

## Observation Chart

In the *Observation* column, write down what is currently happening at your school with respect to the question.  
In the *Strategies* column, write down any resources or methods that can be implemented to improve the situation.

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Observations</b>	<b>Strategies</b>
Is the school inviting to parents from low-voice communities?		
Is there a family resource center?		
Are the signs to the main office visible and clear to non-English speakers?		
Are the various languages visible and integrated into the school? (e.g., posters and newsletters in various languages)		
Are the various cultures represented in school displays, events, and classroom activities?		

Has contact with parents been established?		
Has contact with parents been sustained?		
Are interpreters readily available?		
Are events, workshops, meetings, and other school events well attended by parents from low-voice communities?		
Are parents from low-voice communities involved or present during the school day?		
Do classroom activities necessitate family involvement?		

### **Activity 3: Personal Reflection**

**Time:** 30 minutes

**Materials:** Pen/pencil, “Personal Reflection” worksheet

**Objective:** To create belief statements that express your goals for an effective parent-teacher relationship.

**Procedure:** Take a few minutes to consider and reflect on the questions on the “Personal Reflection” worksheet. This is an individual activity. No sharing is required. Take as much time as you need to think through all the questions. When you have finished, write five belief statements summarizing your thoughts. Overall, are your beliefs regarding parents from low-voice communities negative or positive? Ask yourself: “What can I do to change my negative belief statements into positive statements?”

## Personal Reflection

This is an individual activity. No sharing is required. Take as much time as you need to think through all the questions below.

When you have finished write five belief statements summarizing your thoughts.

Overall, are your beliefs regarding parents from low-voice communities negative or positive? Ask yourself: "What can I do to change my negative belief statements into positive statements?"

### Personal reflection questions

- What is your personal vision for parent-teacher relationships?
- What are your roles and responsibilities in this relationship?
- What are parents' roles and responsibilities in this relationship?
- What meaningful opportunities do you provide for parent involvement?
- Do you collect contact information from all parents?
- How often do you communicate with parents?
- When a student has a problem, whom do you seek for solutions and support?
- Do you think parents are difficult or easy to work with?
- Do you view parents as uncaring and uninvolved or as supporters and resourceful?
- Do you include parents in a plan to solve a problem with a student?
- Do you use an interpreter to communicate with a non-English speaking parent?
- Do you think getting parents involved takes too much time and is wasted effort?

### Personal statements

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I believe \_\_\_\_\_  
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I believe \_\_\_\_\_  
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I  
believe\_\_\_\_\_

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I  
believe\_\_\_\_\_

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