Kana Richard,

Unfortunately, at my school, parent involvement is nowhere near where we would like it to be.  Therefore, finding something that "excites" me is difficult. There are instances throughout the school year, where our school hosts “parent night”, and disappointingly so, our turnout is minimal.  However, to increase parental involvement we have started using many online tools within the last three years that have the ability to increase parental involvement.  Some of these ideas are very new to us and it is hard to measure the success, but it is exciting.   For example, teachers have started using the Remind app that will communicate to the parents, and our school administrators also now use the Schoolway app to increase communication with the parents of our students.  Our Parent/Teacher Organization known as PTO is very involved with our school activities and help facilitate parental involvement at our school. The PTO organizes banner roll and honor roll breakfast each nine weeks to celebrate students with academic excellence.  In addition, the PTO also hosts a snack sale each month, which is a great way for parents to be involved in their children’s school environment. They are heavily involved in school fundraisers as well as being a major provider in Teacher Appreciation Week. A well organized and committed PTO plays an essential part in a school being successful that sometimes goes unnoticed. “The importance of parent involvement during the early years of schooling in supporting children’s outcomes means the facilitation and maintenance of family–school partnerships are an important element of educational policy and practice” (Daniel, 2015, pg. 126).  Parental involvement is critical to the success of students in an educational setting.

We usually see the parents of either the students who are doing great or the ones that are struggling and constantly in trouble. Whenever I have contact with parents, I always try to say something positive about the student regardless of the situation. Parents of students with behavior issues are constantly hearing the negatives about their children. I would like to see more positive contacts made by teachers to parents about their children. This could be done with a simple letter or a phone call home.  Also, another thing I would love to see happen is more involvement from parents in the classroom. Schools and teachers need more involvement from parents in the student’s academics. They need to be aware of how materials are being taught and how to help students succeed on as assignment. If more parents were involved in the daily learning of their children, there would be more potential for academic growth.

I would like to become part of more committees in our school that involve parents. I would like to be the voice of change and allow others to see the possibilities and encourage parents to take the next step. Sending home newsletters isn’t always enough. More parent contact needs to happen building wide. With the help from teachers in the school, involving parents will not be as hard as they perceive it to be. Parent involvement at home is not always going to solve issues, but parent involvement in the school setting will play a significant role in the classroom.

References

Daniel, G. (2015). Patterns of parent involvement: A longitudinal analysis of family-school partnerships in the early years of school in Australia. Australasian Journal Of Early Childhood, (1), 119.