How Well Is Your School Sharing Power & Practicing Democracy?

Directions: As a team, review and rate the following items, then complete the reflection questions at the end of the survey to help you design a plan for sharing power and practicing democracy.

Promote Understanding of Different Cultures	Already doing this	Could do this easily	This will take time	This will be hard
1. The School Site Council (SSC) has a voice in all major decisions and includes students and family members who reflect, represent and speak up for the school's student population.				
2. If the School Site Council and English Learner Advisory Committee merge, the SSC includes representatives for the major languages of the site's English Learners.				
3. Families are trained to take leadership roles at school and mentor new families. Training includes facilitation skills that encourage and support participation.				
4. Time is dedicated at each School Site Council meeting to address the needs of English Learners, students receiving Special Education services, and other student populations who might need additional support.				
5. The school surveys students and families to get their ideas about programs and policies. Surveys are co-designed and tallied with students and families, and conducted in the major languages of the school's family community.				
6. Family members are encouraged to participate as problem-solvers for school improvement.				
7. Meetings of the SSC and ELAC are held at various times of day, to accommodate families with different schedules (e.g. alternate mornings and evenings).				
8. Families "funds of knowledge" (skills, ideas and practices developed in their home and community) are recognized as assets in developing site plans.				
9. Families and community members who reflect the student population participate in the staff hiring process, including principal selection.				
Building Strong, Representative Parent/Family Groups (Including PTA, PTSA, or independent parent groups)	**Already doing this**	**Could do this easily**	**This will take time**	**This will be hard**
10. Surveys and focus groups are some ways that the parent associations reach out to families, invite them to participate, and hear about their ideas and concerns.				
11. The parent/family organizations are focused on improving achievement and equitable opportunities for all students, and consider priorities within your School Plan for Student Achievement when setting goals and developing projects.				
12. Time is dedicated at meetings of the general parent/family organization to hear from the site's African American family affinity group and ELAC (if these are in place), to share ideas, address concerns and plan activities together.				
13. All of the school's student and family organizations participate in school community meetings as part of the site planning / School Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA) process.				
14. Funds raised by the parent/family organization to support the school are allocated based on priorities set through the school planning process and School Plan for Student Achievement.				
15. The school helps connect members of the site's student and family leadership groups with district-level advisory groups such as the Parent Advisory Council, Student Advisory Council, African American Advisory Council, Community Advisory Committee for Special Education and District English Learner Advisory Committee.				
Drawing on Community Resources	**Already doing this**	**Could do this easily**	**This will take time**	**This will be hard**
16. Family members and school staff participate in workshops and classes offered by the school, school district and/or community groups.				
17. The school taps local businesses and community institutions for technical services, job opportunities for families and students, reduced fees, tutoring and mentoring.				
18. School staff, students and families work with community organizations to develop solutions to challenges such as bullying, traffic hazards, community violence, access to health care and healthy food, etc.				
19. If community partners raise issues or concerns about the school, the site works with them to make improvements. If community organizations have not approached the school, the school reaches out to them.				

This checklist is taken from *Beyond the Bake Sale—The Essential Guide to Family-School Partnerships* (2006) by Anne T. Henderson, Karen L. Mapp, Vivian R. Johnson, and Don Davies (pages 214-218).

Use the following questions to reflect on the answers from your checklist.

In which areas is your school site doing well?

Which areas need more work? Which members of your staff or school community can help?

How are families involved in your school to promote shared power and practice democracy?

What are your concerns?

What steps could you take to improve ways to share power and practice democracy?

Right now?	*Over the long term?*

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