How is Your Partnership with Parents?

Use this self assessment to see where your school falls on the partnership path. Under each question, circle the letter beside the statement that seems to best describe your school.

1) What is your school's attitude toward families?
   A) Parents belong at home, not at school. If students don't do well, it's because their families don't give them enough support.
   B) Parents are welcome when asked. There's only so much they can do.
   C) Parents can be involved at school in a number of ways. It tries to make contact with all of them at least once a year.
   D) Our school sets high standards for all students and families. It partners with families to make sure every single student succeeds.

2) Does the school give families information about standards and the curriculum?
   A) Parents don't need to know much about this, and they probably won't understand it anyway.
   B) Parents get information about what students will be learning at the fall open house.
   C) Teachers send home folders of student work.
   D) Families help assess student portfolios, using scoring guides. They also attend regular exhibits of student work, where students explain how it meets standards.

3) Can parents and family members easily see the principal and visit classrooms?
   A) Families should not bother school staff. Visiting the classroom distracts the children. Besides, parents will need security clearances before they are allowed in.
   B) He school calls families if their children are having problems. Families can visit on report card pickup day.
   C) The school has several family events every year. Parents help out as volunteers or tutors.
   D) Parents are involved in all aspects of the school. They can attend staff training and the principal has regular hours each week to meet with families. Every school committee has active parent members.

4) Does the school have an active parent group, such as a PTA or Parent Association?
   A) The principal has picked a small group of parents to help out.
   B) The active parents are mostly middle class. The others don't come or contribute.
   C) The parent group sets its own agenda and raises money for the school. They also write the school handbook.
   D) Families decide how they want to be involved. They reach out to make sure all families take part in some way. Parents can use the phone, copier, fax machines and computers. The family center is always full of parents.

5) Does the school openly discuss tough issues, like achievement gaps, racism and bullying?
   A) The problems at our school are dealt with by its professional staff.
   B) The principal sets the agenda for discussions at staff meetings. Sometimes a few parents are invited.
   C) The school gives progress reports to parents, but the test data are hard to understand.
   D) Parents and teachers have study groups and do action research on issues like prejudice and tracking. Families are part of all major decisions.

ANSWER GRID

ANSWER	POINTS
1) _____	_____
2) _____	_____
3) _____	_____
4) _____	_____
5) _____	_____

ADD ALL POINTS: _____

Where is Your School?

- You will find an answer grid after the final question.
- Transfer your answers to the answer grid.
- Give yourself the following points:

  A= 1 point B= 2 points C= 3 points D= 4 points
- Add up your points for a grand total.

Right now your school is a…..

- **5-7 points: Fortress School.** Your school is trying to keep parents away rather than work with them.
- **8-11 points: Come If We Call School.** Your school wants parents to be involved, but only on its terms.
- **12-15 points: Open-Door School.** Your school welcomes families and supports their involvement in a number of ways.
- **16-20 points: Partnership School!** Your school is willing and able to work with all families!