


Process One (of 6)

A step-by-step guide for a
FAMILY HANDBOOK

NOTE: Steps marked with a  are accompanied by one or more inserts, included in this packet

A Family Handbook is part of an overall approach to organizing family involvement.

- 1 Discuss the need for (or revision of) a Family Handbook** with the School Improvement Team.
- 2 Identify funds** for printing the Family Handbook.
- 3 Meet with the parent group** to collect their suggestions for Family Handbook topics.

School Improvement Team representatives can do this.

- 4 Survey families** to learn what information they need in a Family Handbook.
- 5 Interview new parents/families as they register** to find out what they want and need to know about your school.
- 6 Ask staff to suggest material** and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) to include in the Family Handbook.
- 7 Collect sample Family Handbooks** from other schools and other districts.

A School Improvement Team sub-committee can do this.

8 Summarize your research.

The SIT subcommittee summarizes what it has found into a sample Table of Contents, like the starter-version presented as INSERT for HANDBOOK Step 8. It presents its recommendation to the full School Improvement Team, which agrees on content.

9 Form an ad hoc committee to write the Family Handbook.

INSERT for HANDBOOK Step 9 offers sample pages to adapt and customize. Include parents, SIT representatives, staff and principal on the ad hoc committee. They should:

1. Divide up work and set a timeline for drafts.
2. Determine quantity to be printed (One per family, additional copies for split families, next year's kindergarten and new students, and a few extra to replace lost/damaged originals).
3. Draft sections and meet to review each others' drafts.
4. Select pictures or clip art for sections.
5. Format each page to have both page numbers and date of publication.
6. Arrange SIT and staff review of draft Parent Handbook.
7. Solicit bids for publishing the final copy.
8. Print final copies.

- 10 Label each Handbook with a family name** and send it home to the family with the youngest or only child enrolled.
- 11 Distribute extra copies as needed** when new children register or when kindergarten families arrive in the fall.
- 12 Save the document on disk** to facilitate updating and republishing.

