# PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

**DISTRICT**
Hidalgo ISD
*Academically Acceptable*
*2007−08*

## PROGRAM SUMMARY

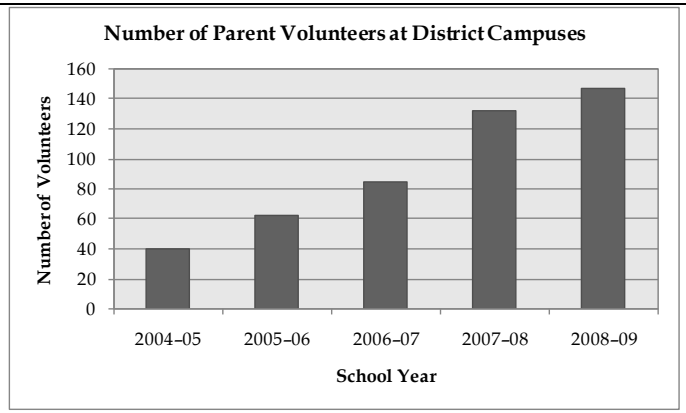
The **goal** of Hidalgo ISD's (HISD) program is to increase parental involvement and capacity to support their children in school.

**Key strategies** include a weekly speaker program for parents, parent centers on campuses, and a comprehensive parent education program.

**Outcomes** include increases in the number of parent volunteers at district campuses.

## EFFECTIVENESS

Since implementation in 2004−05, while the number of students enrolled has remained about the same, the district has seen increases in the number of parents participating in district activities. For example, staff reported that the number of parent volunteers at district campuses has increased from approximately 40 parents in 2004−05 to 148 parents in 2008−09.




*Source: District-reported data*

Please take one minute to answer the feedback survey (six questions).

Best Practices Feedback Survey

## CONTEXT/IMPLEMENTATION

*Demographics (2007–08)*

| Grade Levels Served | PreK–12 | | District Enrollment | 3,395 | |
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| **Ethnic Distribution** | | | **Economically Disadvantaged** | 3,050 | 89.8% |
| Hispanic | 3,383 | 99.6% | **Limited English Proficient (LEP)** | 1,903 | 56.1% |
| White | 6 | .2% | **At-Risk** | 2,445 | 72.0% |

*Source: AEIS*

*Background*

- HISD serves a student population that is 99.6% Hispanic, with 89.8% of students identified as economically disadvantaged and 56.1% of students identified for Limited English Proficient (LEP) programs.
- The district operates on a year-round schedule.
- The parental involvement program was initiated in 2004−05.

*Procedures*

Parental Involvement Activities

- HISD employed a Parent Involvement Coordinator supported by six campus-based Parent Involvement Facilitators. These staff met bi-weekly to coordinate and develop campus and district parental involvement activities supported through federal programs, such as Title I and migrant funding. Parent Involvement Facilitators reported to campus principals.
- Programs and topics for parent activities were based on district and campus staff recommendations, suggestions from parents provided through surveys, and the Family Frameworks curriculum available through the Texas Association of School Board's (TASB) Parent Involvement Network (for details, see http://www.tasb.org/services/parent/curriculum/documents/contents.pdf).[1]

[1] *The district was considering a shift from the Family Frameworks curriculum, which has a K−12 focus, to a curriculum developed by the Parent Institute for Quality Education, which addresses preK through Grade 12 (for details, see http://www.piqe.org /).*

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| | • Throughout the school year, the parental involvement program sponsored weekly speaker meetings at a centralized location in the district. Speakers from the district and community provided information on a variety of topics to increase family understanding of district academic requirements and opportunities (testing updates, college readiness), ways parents could support their child in school (literacy development and homework support), and general parenting and life skills issues, such as nutrition, conflict resolution and communication strategies, health and family services, money management, and alcohol and drug awareness.<br><br>Campus Parent Centers<br>• The district also established parent centers staffed by the Parent Involvement Facilitators at six of HISD's seven campuses (there is no parent center at the district's alternative high school campus). Parent center activities were designed to increase parents' ability to provide educational support in the home and to provide basic education for families based on parent needs/interests. Classes for parents included a self-paced beginning English program (Inglés sin Barreras, for details, see http://www.inglessinbarreras.com/), parenting skills, computer basics, arts and crafts, discipline tips, and cooking and nutrition.<br><br>• Parent centers also provided family literacy kits and training for parents to support campuswide family literacy activities.<br><br>• Parent centers sponsored trips for parents to museums, bookstores, and local historical sites, with emphasis on how parents could use these experiences to promote their child's learning.<br><br>• Staff communicated with parents about activities through flyers, parent nights, posters in post offices, and other migrant and Title I parental involvement outreach and activities. Staff also provided incentives, such as door prizes, to encourage parents to participate in parent activities.<br><br>• Parental involvement staff recruited volunteers through the campus parent centers and other district parental involvement activities to work on campuses and participate in school activities. Volunteers, working under the supervision of the Parent Involvement Facilitators, assisted teachers and school staff during the school day with activities such as making copies, preparing classroom displays and school bulletin boards, and serving as monitors in the hall and during lunch. Parent volunteers also helped to supervise children at the parent centers or at parent meetings when participants had to bring their children with them. |

- The district provided transportation for parents participating in parent center activities or other school or district meetings, activities, or events.

- In spring 2009, the district designated a centralized facility called the Community Empowerment Center for additional parental involvement activities. Using stimulus funds, the district planned to provide expanded programming for parents at the center, including wellness and fitness programs and more advanced computer classes.

Parent Academies

- In 2006−07, the district initiated the Parental Career Pathway Partnership Program, which provided opportunities for parents with limited English proficiency to obtain English literacy, workforce skills, and a postsecondary education. The program was offered tuition free to participants and was funded in part by a 21st Century Learning Center grant and South Texas College (STC). Courses in three academy pathways (see below) were taught by STC staff at a central location in the district.
  - The Language Academy (I, II, III) was a two-year program that provided beginning, intermediate, and advanced English as a second language (ESL) classes three days a week. Courses were offered both during the day and in the evening, but day classes were the most popular.
  - The Workforce Academy provided GED preparation and testing as well as specialized training and job placement support based on participant interests. Classes were held one day per week. The program identified employment opportunities for participants, either through available jobs at STC or jobs available through Workforce Solutions, the regional workforce development board.
  - The College Readiness Academy provided college placement testing and tuition support for parents seeking enrollment in certification or degree programs at STC.

- Enrollment in the program was open to any interested parent and was advertised through the district's various parental involvement activities. An initial group of 55 parents participated in the Language Academy. Some exited the program after completing the Language Academy, and some chose to continue into the Workforce Academy. Approximately 17 parents began the College Readiness Academy in summer 2009.

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| | *Lessons Learned*<br>• Staff reported that HISD's leadership had made parental involvement a priority and that the district had successfully removed barriers to parent participation. Families were informed and felt that they had a voice in their children's education. Staff also reported that the district's shift to dual language instruction beginning at the elementary level eight years ago (dual language is currently offered up to the junior high school level) had positively influenced recruitment for parent activities. Staff said that Spanish-speaking parents were more comfortable participating in school activities given the district's emphasis on Spanish language development.<br><br>• Reported challenges included funding to sustain and increase the quality of parental involvement activities. The district was investigating additional funding opportunities to continue the Parental Career Pathways program, including applying for another 21st Century Learning Center grant and use of stimulus funds. In addition, district staff wanted to enhance the parent centers with more quality materials, libraries, and computers. |

## DISTRICT STAFF

**Dr. Eduardo Cancino, Superintendent**
**Alberto Guerra, Parent Involvement Coordinator/Athletic Director**
Hidalgo Independent School District
324 E. Flora Street
Hidalgo, TX 78557
(956) 843-4404