

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TOOLS**

**Module 4**

**Increasing Volunteerism**

## Getting Ready

Welcome to *Professional Development Module 4: Increasing Volunteerism* from **Working Together: School-Family-Community Partnerships, a Toolkit for New Mexico School Communities**. As a facilitator, you are among a group of educators who are working with teachers, families and community members to provide information, resources and strategies to both increase and strengthen family and community involvement across New Mexico.

Use this checklist as you prepare for the professional development session.

- o Using the hard copy, CD, or web version of the *Toolkit*, review the *Professional Development Tools*, *Teacher Tools* and *Family Tools* for *Module 4: Increasing Volunteerism*.
- o Review the PowerPoint slides and facilitator instructions in the hard copy and/or on the CD and modify the presentation as appropriate for your style and audience.
- o Prior to the session, review the goals for this module. They are included as a slide in the PowerPoint presentation. Add any goals to meet your needs.

### Goals for Module 4: Increasing Volunteerism

*By the end of this professional development module, participants will:*

- *recognize and value the diversity of experience and knowledge volunteers can offer;*
- *understand importance of structure and systems to successful volunteer efforts;*
- *identify challenges to effective volunteer experiences and develop solutions; and*
- *develop techniques for creating effective, culturally responsive volunteer opportunities.*

- o Make a copy of all of the handouts listed on the following page. These are found in *Professional Development Tools Module 4: Handouts* section following the PowerPoint slides and notes.
- o Using the CD, print out the PowerPoint presentation as “**handouts**” with three slides per page and space for notes. Copy for all participants.
- o Choose and prepare an **Icebreaker Activity** from the introduction to the *Professional Development Tools* Section.
- o Gather the necessary supplies and equipment in the following table.
- o Make a copy or print out the *Sign In Sheet* and place it so that all participants can access it. The *Sign In Sheet* for this module can be found in this section.



## Materials

Supplies	Equipment	Handouts/Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sign In Sheet</li> <li>• Flip chart paper</li> <li>• Markers</li> <li>• Scotch or masking tape</li> <li>• Paper for notes</li> <li>• Pens or pencils</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LCD Projector</li> <li>• Laptop Computer</li> <li>• <i>Toolkit CD</i></li> <li>• Screen</li> <li>• Extension cord(s)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Icebreaker Activity (optional)</li> <li>• PowerPoint Handouts</li> <li>• <i>Teacher Self-Assessment Rubric for Module 4</i></li> <li>• <i>Building Family-Friendly Schools</i></li> <li>• <i>Volunteer Survey</i></li> <li>• <i>Volunteering Project Ideas</i></li> <li>• <i>Strategies for Engaging and Involving Volunteers</i></li> <li>• <i>Volunteer Job Description Template</i></li> <li>• <i>Teacher Reflection for Module 4</i></li> <li>• <i>Evaluation Form</i></li> <li>• <i>Certificates of Completion</i></li> </ul>

## Reminders and Helpful Hints

It is critical for the facilitator to use the hard copy and the CD or web based version of the *Toolkit* to become familiar with the *Teacher Tools* and *Family Tools* for this module prior to the professional development session. The *Resources* in the *Toolkit* contain valuable information that can be used to supplement and design the session to better meet the needs of the participants.

Each slide in the PowerPoint presentation includes facilitator notes and scripts as a guide to use during the presentation. Facilitators are encouraged to merge presentation style and interactions with the dynamics and cultural needs of the group. Provide snacks, drinks and comfortable seating for small and large group activities. Arrange the physical environment so all participants can see the slides and all cords and wires are secure.

## Schedule

This professional development session is designed to take 3-4 hours with appropriate breaks. Time for breaks should be determined by the facilitator. Provide an adequate amount of time for participant interaction, group work and questions and responses. Remember to set aside time to complete the evaluation; celebrate the participants' accomplishments, and fill out or distribute the *Certificates of Completion*.

## Notes:

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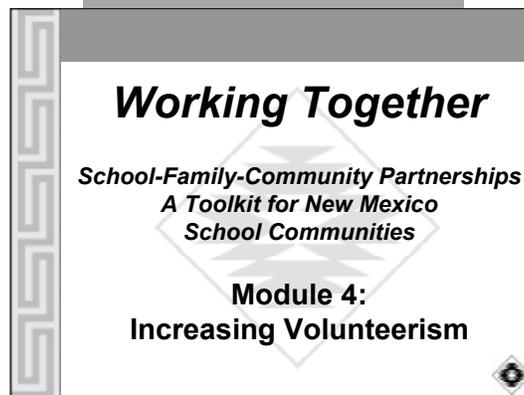
# Notes

# Increasing Volunteerism

## 1. Introduction

**Say:** This training on *Increasing Volunteerism* is from the *Toolkit* sponsored by New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) and developed by the Center for the Education and Study of Diverse Populations (CESDP).

It is called *Working Together: School-Family-Community Partnerships, A Toolkit for New Mexico School Communities*.

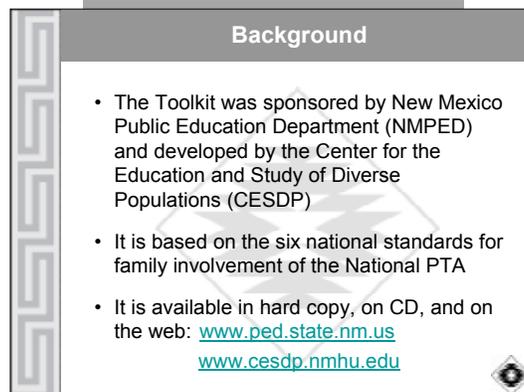


## 2. Background

**Instructions to Facilitator:** Share the slide with participants. Show them the CD and a hard copy of the *Toolkit*. Let participants know where the *Toolkit* is housed and procedures for use and copying. Remind participants that the *Toolkit* is not copyrighted and can be used in a variety of ways.

**Say:** The *Toolkit* has six *Professional Development Modules* as well as sections titled *Teacher Tools* and *Family Tools*. Each of the six modules contains information and useful resources, including ties to the New Mexico Teacher Competencies and Indicators that can be used for Professional Development Plans and Professional Dossiers.

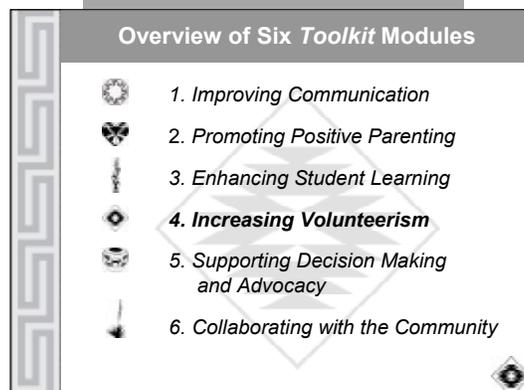
**Instructions to Facilitator:** Point out the *Teacher Tools* and *Family Tools* as they are in the *Toolkit*. (Use the hard copy or CD to do this.) Reinforce that there are useful resources in each section that can be copied or printed from the CD or web site.



## 3. Overview if Six Toolkit Modules

**Instructions to Facilitator:** Read the *Overview of Six Toolkit Modules* slide and point out that **Module 4: Increasing Volunteerism** is the fourth module in the *Toolkit*. It is based on the National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs, Standard 4: Volunteering.

**Say:** Module 4 focuses on strategies to increase volunteerism in the school and matching volunteer strengths and interests with the needs of the school.





**Goals for Module 4**

- Recognize and value the diversity of experience and knowledge volunteers offer.
- Understand importance of structure and systems to successful volunteer efforts.
- Identify challenges to effective volunteer experiences and strategize solutions.
- Develop techniques for creating effective, culturally responsive volunteer opportunities.

**4. Goals for Module 4**

**Instructions to Facilitator:** It is suggested that you review the goals prior to the professional development session and add any that meet your needs. Read the slide *Goals for Module 4* to participants.

On chart paper, add any goals that you or participants contribute.

**Competency 2**

**The teacher appropriately utilizes a variety of teaching methods and resources for each area taught.**

Relevant Master Teacher – Level III Indicator:

**C. Demonstrates effective integration of a variety of resources and learning experiences into the curriculum.**

**5. New Mexico Teacher Competencies**

**Instructions to Facilitator:** Share the slide with participants.

**Say:** The *New Mexico 3-Tiered Licensure System* provides the framework for documenting teacher qualifications. In collaboration with the principal or designated administrator, New Mexico teachers are required to develop and maintain Professional Development Plans (PDP) based on nine teacher competencies and accompanying differentiated indicators for their respective level of licensure (Level I, II or III).

This module on *Increasing Volunteerism* addresses New Mexico Teacher Competencies 2, 4 and 9. Let's review them on the following slides.

**Competency 2**

**The teacher appropriately utilizes a variety of teaching methods and resources for each area taught.**

Relevant Master Teacher – Level III Indicator:

**C. Demonstrates effective integration of a variety of resources and learning experiences into the curriculum.**

**6. Competency 2**

**Instructions to Facilitator:** Share slide with participants. Remind participants that they may be familiar with these competencies and indicators through their work on Professional Development Plans (PDP). Participants may raise questions or experiences regarding the development of a PDP.

**Say:** Competency 2 and the Level III Indicator focus on the importance of looking beyond conventional classroom materials to supplement teaching practices. Such resources can include outdoor learning as well as utilizing parent and community member volunteers to extend knowledge and relevance to student learning.

### 7. Competency 4

**Say:** Competency 4 and the Level III Indicator focus on the importance of teachers to reaching out to the community and utilizing resources that apply directly to the curriculum and how students understand that knowledge relates to the real world.

**Competency 4**

**The teacher comprehends the principles of student growth, development and learning, and applies them appropriately.**

Relevant Master Teacher – Level III Indicator:

**D. Integrates community resources, service agencies, other school personnel, parents, and community members into the curriculum.**



### 8. Competency 9

**Say:** Competency 9 and the Level III Indicator focus on including parents, family, and community volunteers in planning and decision making processes as they relate to student success.

For a complete list and more information on the New Mexico Teacher Competencies, visit the web site listed on the slide.

Next we will take a look at the *Teacher Self-Assessment Rubric* that addresses these competencies and indicators.

**Competency 9**

**The teacher works productively with colleagues, parents and community members.**

Relevant Master Teacher – Level III Indicator:

**D. Engages parents and community members productively in the work of the school.**

For more information and a complete listing of competencies and differentiated indicators visit [www.teachnm.org](http://www.teachnm.org)



### 9. Activity: Teacher Self-Assessment

**Materials:** Handout: *Teacher Self-Assessment Rubric for Module 4: Increasing Volunteerism*, chart paper and markers.

**Say:** The inquiry process asks teachers to become actively involved in reflecting on their own practices. Reflection often takes more time than we have now, but let's begin the process by reviewing the *Teacher Self-Assessment Rubric for Module 4: Increasing Volunteerism* in your handouts. Follow the instructions on the slide.

Toward the end of this workshop, you will be completing a self-reflection that will allow for you to record plans for improvement based on the information we share today.

**Instructions to Facilitator:** Allow about 15-20 minutes for participants to review and complete the rubric activity. Follow up with whole group reactions, questions, responses and discussion about how the rubric may be used as part of a teacher PDP.

**Activity: Teacher Self-Assessment**

- Divide into small groups of no more than six.
- Individually, complete and date the *Teacher Self-Assessment Rubric for Increasing Volunteerism* included in the handouts.
- Discuss findings as a small group and record strengths and needs.
- Discuss how you may be able to use this rubric in a teacher PDP.
- Report out to the group.





**Benefits of Volunteering**

**Enabling families to build on their own strengths and capacities promotes the healthy development of children.**

Source: Family Support America, 2000

**“Volunteer “ not only means those who come during the school day, but also those who support school goals and children’s learning anyway, any time.**

Source: Epstein, 2002

**10. Benefits of Volunteering**

**Instructions to Facilitator:** Share slide with participants by reading aloud the quotes.

**Say:** The top quote from Family Support America points at the importance of building a volunteer program that builds on the strengths of our families.

The second quote from Joyce Epstein points out that volunteering includes parental involvement in and outside of the school as well as participation at events. Now let’s review some specific benefits of volunteering for students, volunteers and the school community.

**Increasing Volunteerism  
Benefits to Students**

**Students may:**

- receive more individualized help;
- learn to work with others that may have differing skills, knowledge and talents;
- benefit from someone who speaks their native language and understands cultural influences; and
- receive the message that school and education are important to family.

**11. Benefits to Students**

**Instructions to Facilitator:** Review benefits to students with whole group and ask if there any other benefits that they would add to this list. Write responses on chart paper.

**Benefits to Volunteers**

**Volunteers can:**

- increase understanding of what children’s school life is like;
- share knowledge or areas of expertise;
- provide a message to children of the importance of school and of volunteering in the community; and
- realize that there are varied choices as to how one might volunteer.

**12. Benefits to Volunteers**

**Instructions to Facilitator:** Review benefits to volunteers with whole group and ask if there any other benefits that they would add to this list. Write responses on chart paper.

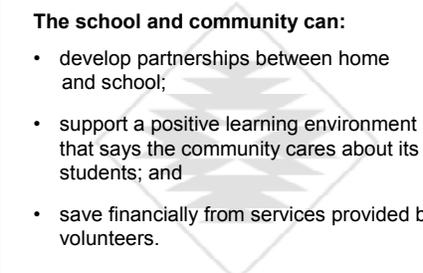
### 13. Benefits to School and Community

**Instructions to Facilitator:** Review benefits to school and community with the whole group and ask if there are any other benefits they would add to this list. Write responses on chart paper.

**Benefits to School and Community**

**The school and community can:**

- develop partnerships between home and school;
- support a positive learning environment that says the community cares about its students; and
- save financially from services provided by volunteers.



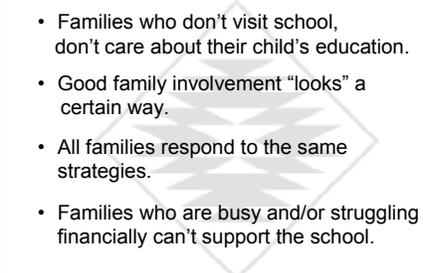
### 14. Common Misconceptions

**Say:** Let's consider some common misconceptions that can create barriers to creating positive relationships between school, family and community. It is helpful to surface misconceptions before we can move forward to looking at challenges and solutions to increasing volunteerism. Let's review the misconceptions listed here.

The last two points are particularly important. Sometimes we exclude families that we know are under stress or busy with full time jobs in an effort to protect them. There are many ways to involve family volunteers. Now let's look at what is considered as the foundation to a successful volunteer program.

**Common Misconceptions**

- Families who don't visit school, don't care about their child's education.
- Good family involvement "looks" a certain way.
- All families respond to the same strategies.
- Families who are busy and/or struggling financially can't support the school.



### 15. Foundation for a Successful Volunteer Program

**Say:** Let's take a look at some important considerations for developing a successful volunteer program.

- The **expectations** you have for volunteers set the tone for the volunteering experience for yourself, the students, and the volunteer.
- The **accountability** aspect of the program involves managing volunteers and keeping track of qualifications, interests, hours, needs, etc.
- **Clarity** means developing job descriptions to take the guess-work out of volunteering and help identify training needs.
- **Consistency** means that the more consistent the volunteer program is schoolwide, the easier recruitment and retention will be. If teachers and families don't have to reinvent the wheel every year, everyone has an easier time. It's much easier to plug into an existing, familiar structure.
- Fostering **connections** between families is the best recruitment and training circle there is. If your volunteer activities are designed to match culturally relevant practices in the community, you will experience greater success.

**Foundation for a Successful Volunteer Program**

- Expectations
- Accountability
- Clarity
- Consistency
- Connection



More importantly, the impact ripples out and not only do students benefit academically, but they also see themselves and their families in a different light. Resilience is built in the whole family.



**Recruitment & Retention of Volunteers**

- Offer volunteering opportunities, both in and outside of school.
- Establish volunteer procedures and school protocol.
- Match family strengths with school needs.
- Educate and assist teachers to effectively use volunteers as resources.
- Show appreciation for volunteer participation and contributions.



**Activity: Climate and Survey**

- Create a climate where parents feel valued and welcome.  
Refer to handout:
  - *Building Family-Friendly Schools*
- Survey skills, interests, and availability of parents.  
Refer to handout:
  - *Volunteer Survey*



**16. Recruitment and Retention of Volunteers**

**Say:** There are a number of practices to encourage volunteering with families. Some are listed here. In the next activity we will look at the use of surveys and creating a family-friendly environment. Let's take a look at these listed here. What else would you add to this list?

**Instructions to Facilitator:** Ask participants to read the list and then record any additions to the list on chart paper.

**17. Activity: Climate and Survey**

**Materials:** Handouts: *Building Family-Friendly Schools* and *Volunteer Survey*

**Say:** These two practices are critical to recruiting and retaining volunteers. There are two handouts in your packets that address these practices. *Building Family-Friendly Schools* and *Volunteer Survey*.

Some of the small groups will review the tool *Building Family-Friendly Schools* and rate the school.

Some of the small groups will review the *Volunteer Survey* and discuss how useful they think this tool would be to use in the community as well as how it might be adapted or modified.

**Instructions to Facilitator:** Assign some of the small groups with the task of reviewing the tool *Building Family-Friendly Schools*. Ask the group to rate the school and to prepare notes to share with the whole group about how family friendly the school is.

Assign some of the other small groups to the task of reviewing the *Volunteer Survey*. Ask them to review the survey and prepare notes to share with the whole group about any adaptations that could be made and how useful this tool would be for use in the school community.

Review each small group report with whole group discussion including questions, responses and action steps for improvement.

This activity can be adapted so that each of the small groups review both of the tools. Consider using the results of this activity as the basis of a proposal for strengthening the volunteer program at your school or as part of the school Educational Plan for Student Success (EPSS).

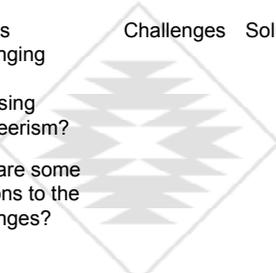
Allow approximately 15 minutes for this activity. If you have a survey that you and/or the PTA/PTO already uses, encourage participants to discuss how useful it is for your community and how it may be improved.

**18. Activity: Challenges and Solutions**

**Say:** From a teacher's and administrator's perspective, let's brainstorm some of the challenges that we face in our efforts to increase volunteerism. We can then look at some possible solutions to the challenges. In small groups create a list of challenges and solutions to those challenges. Select someone from your group to record and someone to report out to the whole group.

**Instructions to Facilitator:** As each group presents challenges and solutions, allow for discussion, questions and responses. Post chart papers on wall. Consider using the results of this activity as the basis of a proposal for strengthening the volunteer program at your school or as part of the school EPSS.

*Activity: Challenges and Solutions*



- What is challenging about increasing volunteerism?
- What are some solutions to the challenges?

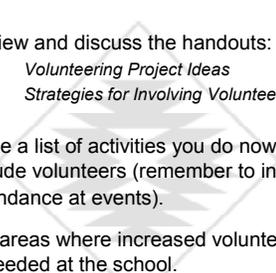
**19. Activity: Using Volunteers**

**Materials:** Handouts: *Volunteering Project Ideas* and *Strategies for Engaging and Involving Volunteers*

**Instructions to Facilitator:** Ask participants to work in small groups to complete the activity described on the slide.

**Say:** In small groups, work together to review the handouts and list activities you currently do that include volunteers. Then list areas where you feel increased volunteerism is needed. It is important to remember that a volunteer does not necessarily have to be in the classroom during the school day to help. Volunteers can help in a variety of ways in the school, community, and/or at home.

*Activity: Using Volunteers*



- Review and discuss the handouts:
  - *Volunteering Project Ideas*
  - *Strategies for Involving Volunteers*
- Make a list of activities you do now that include volunteers (remember to include attendance at events).
- List areas where increased volunteerism is needed at the school.

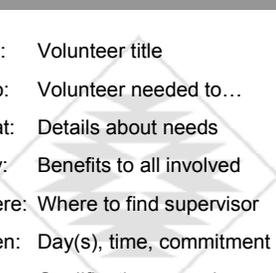
**20. Activity: Volunteer Job Descriptions**

**Materials:** Handout: *Volunteer Job Description Template*

**Say:** In small groups, choose one or two activities that can be improved with the help of volunteers and write up a job description to fit your needs. Use the handout *Volunteer Job Description Template* in your handout packet. Take about 15 minutes to prepare a job description and be prepared to share features of your description with the group.

**Instructions to Facilitator:** Allow about 15 minutes for this activity and then ask participants to share features of their job descriptions, questions, responses and reactions.

*Activity: Volunteer Job Descriptions*



- Title: Volunteer title
- Who: Volunteer needed to...
- What: Details about needs
- Why: Benefits to all involved
- Where: Where to find supervisor
- When: Day(s), time, commitment
- How: Qualifications, requirements, or conditions



**Best Practice Recommendations**

- Let all families know that their time and talents are welcomed and valued.
- Survey families regularly to identify interests, talents and availability.
- Organize volunteer work by providing training and matching time and talents with school, teacher, and student needs.
- Recognize efforts of volunteers.
- View the *Toolkit* on the web or CD and utilize the RESOURCES in the *Teacher Tools* and *Family Tools* for this module.



**Activity: Teacher Reflection**

- Reflect on the workshop and the strategies you have learned to increase volunteerism.
- Refer again to the *Teacher Self Assessment Rubric*.
- Then review the *Teacher Reflection Tool* for this module and take 10 minutes to *individually* complete the Plan for Improvement Column.



**Inside the Toolkit**

**Teacher Tools Resources**

- Worth a Click Links
- Building Family-Friendly Schools
- Volunteering Project Ideas
- Tips for Managing and Involving Volunteers
- Guidelines for Volunteers
- Show Appreciation to Volunteers
- Make Room for Father
- Volunteer Survey and Job Description Template
- A Skills and Experience Inventory



**21. Best Practice Recommendations**

**Say:** Let's review some of the key points covered during this session.

Remember that the *Toolkit* is available in hard copy, on a CD and on the web. There are some very useful resources related to all the topics we discussed today.

**Instructions to Facilitator:** Review the practices included on the slide and ask participants what else they would add to the list based on the information shared during the professional development session.

**22. Activity: Teacher Reflection**

**Materials:** Handout: *Teacher Reflection* for Module 4.

**Say:** Now refer to the *Teacher Self-Assessment Rubric* completed earlier and pull out the *Teacher Reflection Tool* included in the handouts. These evaluation tools will help us reflect on what we have learned and make plans for improvement through implementation of some of the workshop strategies. Please take about 10 minutes to follow the instructions on the slide. What are some of the plans for improvement that you included on this reflection?

**Say:** (After 10 minutes) In the months that follow, revisit the *Reflection Tool* and add examples of Evidence of Mastery in the third column. Consider using the *Self-Assessment Rubric* and *Teacher Reflection Tool* in your PDP or dossier.

**Instructions to Facilitator:** This activity can be adapted to include follow-up discussion with plans for revising the schoolwide EPSS, next steps and establishing task groups.

**23. Inside the Toolkit: Teacher Tools Resources**

**Say:** There are numerous useful resources in the *Toolkit* this section.

**Instructions to Facilitator:** Provide a brief overview regarding each resource for the participants. Show the participants the *Toolkit* notebook and CD you are working from. Review where they can find the *Toolkit* and how they can access it on the and on the web.

**Optional Extension:** Tour the resources using the CD and/or provide hard copies of the *Teacher Tools Resources* for Module 4 for all participants or for small groups to share.

**24. Inside the Toolkit: Family Tools Resources**

**Instructions to Facilitator:** As you did with the *Teacher Tools Resources*, point out that there is a complete set of useful *Family Tools Resources* included in the *Toolkit*.

**Optional Extension:** Tour the resources using the CD and/or provide hard copies of the *Family Tools Resources* for Module 4 for all participants or small groups to share.

*Inside the Toolkit*

**Family Tools Resources**

- Worth a Click Links
- Guidelines for Volunteers
- Volunteer Survey
- Skills and Experience Inventory
- Ideas for Volunteers
- Father-Friendly Schools



**25. Activity: Where do we go from here?**

**Instructions to Facilitator:** This is a fun and interactive capacity building activity that will strengthen participants' ability to share and implement strategies learned during this session with students, colleagues, families and community members.

**Say:** Work in small groups to develop a script of what you might say to students, families, colleagues or community members about this module, and what you plan to do as follow-up to increase volunteerism. Take 15 minutes to develop a short script. Each group will role play the script as it would be delivered to someone who was not at this professional development session.

**Optional Activity:** Use this time to make plans for next steps, strengthening/updating the school EPSS and establishing task groups.

*Activity: Where do we go from here?*

How can we use what we learned in this workshop in our schools, homes, and communities?



**26. To Learn More**

**Materials:** Handout: *Evaluation Form*

**Instructions to Facilitator:** Encourage participants to find out more, and see what else the *Toolkit* has to offer. Use the CD to tour the *Toolkit* with participants pointing out the *Teacher Tools* and *Family Tools* and the numerous resources.

Ask participants to complete the *Evaluation Form* or Module 4 found in the handout section of this module. Thank participants.

**To Learn More:**

- Access the complete School-Family Partnerships Toolkit with resources, references, and websites at:
  - [www.ped.state.nm.us](http://www.ped.state.nm.us)
  - [www.cesdp.nmhu.edu](http://www.cesdp.nmhu.edu)
- Complete Evaluation Form





### 27. Certificates of Completion

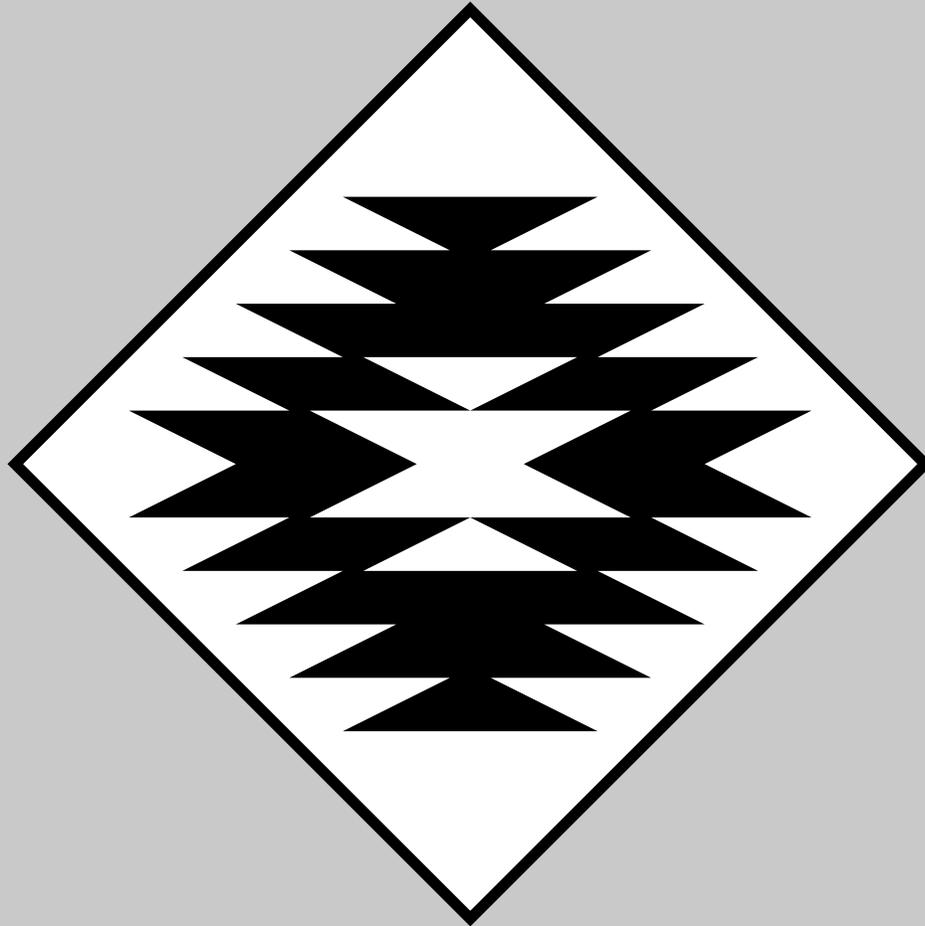
**Materials:** Handout: *Certificate of Completion*

**Instructions to Facilitator:** Have each participant write their name on the *Certificate of Completion* found in the handouts. As the facilitator, sign and date each certificate. If the facilitator is not the school principal, also arrange for the principal to sign and date each certificate. Distribute completed certificates and celebrate engagement in professional development in the area of school-family-community partnerships.

Another option is to print out the certificates prior to the session, include participants' names, facilitator and/or principals' names and dates as appropriate.

# Notes





**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TOOLS**

**Module 4**

**Handouts**



## Teacher Self-Assessment Rubric

Use this rubric to help evaluate how well you encourage volunteerism with families. Think about where you see yourself in the process and strategies on how to improve volunteerism by marking the box that most clearly matches what you are doing now.

INCREASING VOLUNTEERISM			
ELEMENT	BEGINNING	DEVELOPING	PROFICIENT
<p><b>Volunteering opportunities build on families' strengths, preferences and availability to volunteer.</b></p>	<p><b>I do not use volunteer support for my classroom activities.</b></p> <p>I am unaware of parent interest or availability to volunteer.</p>	<p><b>I rely on the PTA/PTO to survey volunteers to help with schoolwide activities.</b></p> <p>I seek volunteers for special occasions such as field trips or holidays.</p>	<p><b>I routinely survey families' skills, experiences and preferences to craft a variety of volunteering opportunities throughout the year.</b></p> <p>I use the following strategies:</p> <p>___ I survey families regarding their interests, talents and availability to volunteer.</p> <p>___ I develop a system for contacting parents to volunteer throughout the school year.</p>
<p><b>School staff members are familiar with culturally relevant traditions of service in the community and make an effort to bridge volunteer opportunities in the school and community.</b></p>	<p><b>I offer school-based, teacher-driven opportunities to volunteer in the classroom.</b></p> <p>I ask for parent support in the classroom.</p>	<p><b>I make an effort to learn about family involvement in the community.</b></p> <p>I am aware of the extended benefits of volunteering and service to promote community outreach.</p>	<p><b>I use my knowledge of culture and community to bridge volunteering opportunities between the school and community by using the following strategy:</b></p> <p>___ I ensure that all interactions with families create a climate in which families feel valued and welcome.</p>
<p><b>Ongoing staff development and support is provided that focuses on effective use of volunteer resources.</b></p>	<p><b>I have limited experience with staff development to increase volunteering with diverse families and communities.</b></p> <p>I participate in professional development activities about encouraging volunteering to a limited extent.</p>	<p><b>I seek out information on developing effective volunteering programs.</b></p> <p>I am aware of school and community resources and opportunities for volunteering.</p>	<p><b>I actively participate in professional development to assist in effectively using volunteer resources by engaging in the following activities:</b></p> <p>___ I am familiar with the school volunteer procedures and protocol.</p> <p>___ I am familiar with volunteer options in the school, classroom, home or place of employment.</p>



INCREASING VOLUNTEERISM			
ELEMENT	BEGINNING	DEVELOPING	PROFICIENT
<p><b>Formal and informal strategies are used to connect with and support volunteers.</b></p>	<p><b>I have limited structures to support effective volunteering either in the classroom or in the school.</b></p> <p>I am unsure how to reach out to families or how to respond when they offer help.</p>	<p><b>I use job descriptions for volunteers.</b></p> <p>I ask for family assistance in a variety of ways and welcome it when offered.</p> <p>I take full advantage of training opportunities for myself and families.</p>	<p><b>I use information about family strengths, preferences and cultures to make job volunteer descriptions match interests and abilities by using the following strategies:</b></p> <p>___ I routinely survey families and express appreciation for their service to school and community.</p> <p>___ I am involved in formalizing volunteer structures and/or training of peers.</p>
<p><b>Parent-teacher conferences are utilized to become informed about family skills and experiences.</b></p>	<p><b>I allow families limited or no opportunity to share strengths at parent-teacher conferences.</b></p> <p>I allow little or no opportunity for families to offer or learn how to support teachers and students in school.</p>	<p><b>I include learning about family as part of parent-teacher conferences.</b></p> <p>I use a feedback form for parents to fill out before conferences to elicit questions or concerns.</p>	<p><b>I assist families in identifying their strengths and offer opportunities to contribute to student and class success by using the following strategies:</b></p> <p>___ I view conferences as an opportunity to engage in two-way communication.</p> <p>___ During conferences, I share opportunities for volunteering that support classroom teaching and learning and allow parents to sign-up based on their interests and availability.</p>

# Building Family-Friendly Schools

“Schools must become places where families feel wanted and recognized for their strengths and potential.”  
(Ballen & Moles, 1994)

Family-friendly schools create a climate in which every characteristic of the school is open and helpful. These family-friendly schools make every effort to build partnerships with all families, not just those that are most involved. Use this checklist to determine how family-friendly your school is, as well as how you can increase its friendliness in a way that is reflective of the cultures and languages it serves.

Practices for creating a family-friendly school environment:	Yes	No
Create and publicly post a family-school-community partnership policy or mission statement that provides the philosophical framework for all family-school-community activities.		
Establish policies and practices that acknowledge and support traditional and nontraditional families, as well as those with differing schedules and commitments.		
Create an open-door policy and climate that is responsive to parents and their concerns. (If for safety reasons it is necessary to lock some doors, be sure that families understand this and know the procedure for calling and being met at the front door.)		
Set school calendars, when possible, to accommodate major community events, activities and ceremonies.		
<b>Create a front office atmosphere that makes people feel welcome:</b>		
Greet families with a smile and warm welcome.		
Have parent friendly information available in English and translated into other languages as necessary.		
Create a comfortable, clean place to sit, meet and access resources.		
Hire bilingual staff to serve as interpreters.		
Recognize that families have different learning styles and require that you vary the way information is shared.		
Arrange for flexibility in routine tasks such as registration and orientation (on-line options, telephone options, day and evening hours etc.)		
<b>School staff who are successful in engaging family members share the following qualities:</b>		
Recognize that parents play a crucial role in their child’s learning.		
Always treat parents with respect.		
Demonstrate professionalism and confidence.		
Demonstrate concern for students in all interactions with parents.		

How Can We Improve? \_\_\_\_\_

Adapted from Ballen and Moles (1994)



# Volunteer Survey

**Use this tool or modify it to survey families' interest in volunteering. Use the results to match volunteer interests and skills with school needs.**

Please complete this survey so the school knows in which areas you may be interested in volunteering. Please return the survey to the school secretary, principal, parent representative or teacher.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parents,

We are always looking for ways to improve our school and the opportunities available to the students. Volunteers can help in many ways.

We would like to poll your interest and availability for volunteering. In no way is this an obligation, just an opportunity. After we receive the replies, we will create a list of names as possible sources of assistance.

Please complete the following survey and return to the school office.

Thank you.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

What is the best time to reach you to talk about school events or your child? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What is the best time for you to attend meetings, conferences or school functions?

\_\_\_ Week days      Are there particular days of the week that are best for you?

\_\_\_ Evenings      Are there particular evenings that are best for you?

\_\_\_ Weekends      Do you prefer a particular day or time on the weekends?

(continued on back)

I am interested in learning more about volunteering **in the classroom** in the areas checked.

- Tutoring students
- Reading with students
- Working with small groups of students
- Translating for students – Language(s) \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_  
(English to Spanish) for example
- Helping prepare materials for classroom use
- Attending field trips
- Assisting with special events, (performances, celebrations, science fairs, etc.)
- Appearing as a guest speaker in the area of \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

I am interested in learning more about volunteering **at school** in the areas checked.

- Sponsoring a presentation to provide information about school goals and curriculum
- Leading a discussion at a community or Chapter House meeting on school issues
- Working in the school library and/or computer lab
- Photographing school activities
- Providing transportation to parents and/or students for special events
- Accompanying children to the clothing bank
- Typing, clerical work, copying handouts or making phone calls
- Preparing newsletters
- Preparing bulletin boards, posters and displays
- Campus beautification
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

I am interested in learning more about volunteering **at home** in the areas checked.

- Recruiting parents, community members and local businesses to participate in special programs for students
- Typing or data entry on a computer
- Gathering resource materials
- Sewing
- Providing snacks or food for special events
- Preparing envelopes or mail outs
- Other \_\_\_\_\_



## Volunteering Project Ideas

Consider the following activities suggested by the National PTA for increasing volunteerism. Keep in mind that in selecting activities, it is important to include initiatives for increasing parent/family involvement which are identified in the school's improvement plan or the *Educational Plan for Student Success (EPSS)*.

<p>Conduct a <b>school climate survey</b> in order to assess how friendly your school's climate is to parents. Use the information received to guide efforts to make the school's climate more inviting.</p>
<p>Host a <b>How You Can Make a Difference</b> orientation session for parents and volunteers each year. Invite school staff to address relevant topics, demonstrate equipment use and provide parents and other volunteers with a packet of timely information.</p>
<p>Create a <b>Volunteer Center</b> in the school. While it may take creativity, almost any facility can accommodate some sort of welcoming area for volunteers, from a corner of the library to an area in a hallway with a couple of lockers for personal belongings. Put up a bulletin board for announcements and be sure there is a place to sign in and record volunteer hours.</p>
<p><b>Show appreciation.</b> Thank volunteers throughout the year in the school newsletter, at special events and using personal thank-you notes. Consider creating a 'Wall of Fame' display or bulletin board with pictures of volunteers helping with school activities and events. Showing what and how much can be accomplished by volunteers can encourage others to get involved.</p>
<p><b>Create volunteer opportunities</b> that go beyond the traditional tasks that volunteers perform. For example, at the secondary level, consider a "Parents in the Hall Program" which encourages parents to drop in and get their exercise walking at the high school instead of at the gym. After picking up a volunteer/visitor badge at the office, these parents perform an important service by increasing the adult presence in the building and thereby reducing behavior problems. As a side benefit, parents get acquainted with the school.</p>
<p>Publish a <b>Volunteer Resource Book</b>, listing the interests and availability of volunteers for school staff members' use. Survey parents regarding their interests, so volunteer work will be meaningful. Be sure to determine how frequently a volunteer would like to participate, including the option of just one time per year. Include options for those who are available to help at home with a community or chapter house meeting. Use the resource book to help match school needs with volunteer interests.</p>
<p><b>Recruit one room representative</b> for each classroom who would be responsible for coordinating volunteer activities for the class. This person would work closely with the teacher, matching interests and needs.</p>

Adapted from: National PTA (2004)

# Strategies for Engaging and Involving Volunteers

Use these strategies as a planning guide for schoolwide improvement and/or in the development of the *Educational Plan for Student Success (EPSS)*.

Strategies	How We Can Improve
<p><b>The school collaborates with families on ways they can be involved:</b> An essential part of developing family-school collaboration is communicating directly with families and asking them how they would like to be involved and how the school can facilitate their involvement.</p>	
<p><b>The school provides family members with a variety of opportunities to participate:</b> If parents feel they lack the knowledge and competence to operate within the formal structure of the school, assist them in becoming comfortable in helping.</p>	
<p><b>The school expresses high expectations for family-school partnerships:</b> Make genuine efforts to reach out to families and assure them that their contributions are valued.</p>	
<p><b>The school recognizes diverse family structures:</b> Don't overlook other adults in students' lives such as grandparents, older siblings or tribal/community leaders who may play a central role in their upbringing.</p>	
<p><b>The school builds connections between families who speak the same language:</b> Families feel more comfortable attending school events if they know that other people they recognize and can communicate with will be there or if translation services are available.</p>	
<p><b>The school provides opportunities for meaningful involvement:</b> Family members are generally more interested in activities that are directly connected to their child. Inform family members of the purpose the activities serve and how they relate to curriculum goals.</p>	
<p><b>Design roles and responsibilities that build on families' gifts and talents:</b> Integrate the wealth of knowledge that families offer into curricular activities.</p>	



# Volunteer Job Description Template

Use this template to plan for volunteers. Share it during an initial meeting to review roles and responsibilities.

Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

**Who:** (What you want...)

**What:** (List full details about the job needed.)

**Why:** (Describe benefits to students, teacher and volunteer.)

**Contact:** (Include the name of teacher or supervisor and where to find them.)

**Where:** (Place for volunteer to report and work.)

**When:** (State the day, time and length of commitment.)

**How:** (List the special qualifications, requirements or conditions for this position.)

Source: [www.responsiveeducation.org](http://www.responsiveeducation.org)

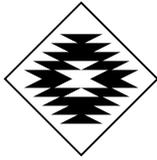


## Teacher Reflection

### What will I do to encourage and increase volunteerism at school?

Reflect on your current practices in each of the elements highlighted. Develop a plan for improvement which includes support needed, how strategies will be implemented and how you will know if each element has been accomplished (Evidence of Mastery). Use the resources provided in this module to support your efforts.

Increasing Volunteerism Elements	Plans for Improvement	Evidence of Mastery
I value and take the time to get to know families' skills and experiences.		
I offer a variety of volunteering opportunities that reflect families' strengths, cultural diversity and individual needs and preferences.		
I participate in on-going staff development to effectively use volunteer resources in the school and community.		
I communicate with families and make formal and informal efforts to understand and incorporate families' needs, cultures and languages into volunteering opportunities.		
I use parent-teacher conferences as a means of understanding families' strengths to build a volunteering program by matching classroom needs with the strengths that the family can offer.		



**Evaluation Form**  
**Working Together:**  
**School-Family-Community Partnerships**  
*Professional Development Session*  
**Module 4: Increasing Volunteerism**

Facilitator \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Training \_\_\_\_\_

Overall session rating: \_\_\_\_\_ Excellent \_\_\_\_\_ Good \_\_\_\_\_ Fair \_\_\_\_\_ Poor

WHAT WORKED WELL?	WHAT COULD IMPROVE?
WHAT IDEAS WILL YOU USE IN YOUR CLASSROOM/SCHOOL?	WHAT AREAS WOULD YOU IDENTIFY FOR MORE IN-DEPTH TRAINING

## Notes

# CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

is hereby awarded to

\_\_\_\_\_

For the Completion of  
**Professional Development Workshop**  
**Module 4: Increasing Volunteerism**

**Working Together: School-Family-Community Partnerships**  
**A Toolkit for New Mexico School Communities**



\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_





# Notes

