Epstein's Six Types of Parent Involvement

Dr. Joyce Epstein of Johns Hopkins University has developed a framework for defining six different types of parent involvement. This framework assists educators in developing school and family partnership programs.

**Epstein's Framework of Six Types of Involvement**

1. **Parenting**: Help all families establish home environments to support children as students.
   - Parent education and other courses or training for parents (e.g., GED, college credit, family literacy).
   - Family support programs to assist families with health, nutrition, and other services.
   - Home visits at transition points to elementary, middle, and high school.

2. **Communicating**: Design effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communications about school programs and children's progress.
   - Conferences with every parent at least once a year.
   - Language translators to assist families as needed.
   - Regular schedule of useful notices, memos, phone calls, newsletters, and other communications.

3. **Volunteering**: Recruit and organize parent help and support.
   - School/classroom volunteer program to help teachers, administrators, students, and other parents.
   - Parent room or family center for volunteer work, meetings, and resources for families.
   - Annual postcard survey to identify all available talents, times, and locations of volunteers.

4. **Learning at home**: Provide information and ideas to families about how to help students at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions, and planning.
   - Information for families on skills required for students in all subjects at each grade.
   - Information on homework policies and how to monitor and discuss schoolwork at home.
- Family participation in setting student goals each year and in planning for college or work.

5. Decision making: Include parents in school decisions, developing parent leaders and representatives.
   - Active PTA/PTO or other parent organizations, advisory councils, or committees for parent leadership and participation.
   - Independent advocacy groups to lobby for school reform and improvements.
   - Networks to link all families with parent representatives.

6. Collaborating with the community: Identify and integrate resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning and development.
   - Information for students and families on community health, cultural, recreational, social support, and other programs/services.
   - Information on community activities that link to learning skills and talents, including summer programs for students.

Following are National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement created by Dr. Epstein, and the national PTA.

### National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs

**Standard I:** Communicating - Communication between home and school is regular, two-way, and meaningful.

**Standard II:** Parenting - Parenting skills are promoted and supported.

**Standard III:** Student Learning - Parents play an integral role in assisting student learning.

**Standard IV:** Volunteering - Parents are welcome in the school, and their support and assistance are sought.

**Standard V:** School Decision Making and Advocacy—Parents are full partners in the decisions that affect children and families.

**Standard VI:** Collaborating with Community—Community resources are used to strengthen schools, families, and student learning.

*Sources: Michigan Department of Education, National Network of Partnership Schools, PTA.*