

Office of the  
Education  
Ombudsman

Professional Development for Educators



1-866-297-2597

[www.waparentslearn.org](http://www.waparentslearn.org)

2010

# Professional Development for Educators and School Staff

The Office of the Education Ombudsman (OEO) believes in the importance of partnerships between schools and families. We offer a wide variety of on-site interactive classes that provide educators with practical tools and strategies to strengthen partnerships with families and ultimately guide students to higher standards of learning. Our classes are specially-designed to meet the needs of Superintendents, Principals, Teachers, Family Involvement Liaisons/Coordinators, Para-Educators and other School/District Staff.

Take advantage of our unique classes and institutes taught by Education Ombudsmen who draw on decades of experience as teachers, counselors, administrators, and attorneys in Washington public schools. Education Ombudsmen work daily with parents, educators, and school administrators across the state to resolve conflict and problems affecting students. Now you have the opportunity to have experts come to your workplace and teach you proven techniques and strategies to work more effectively with the families of your students. Call us!

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## Class Descriptions

- **Essential Partnerships – Involving Families in Schools**

Research shows that successful school-family partnerships are predictors of student academic success. This class explores the value of the diverse perspectives that families bring to the school setting, debunks myths about parent involvement, and identifies the specific benefits to schools of promoting active partnerships with families. Participants will examine successful models and study best practices and strategies currently used in public schools around the state.

**3 hours - \$600 Maximum 40 participants. Clock hours available.**

- **Difficult Conversations - Preventing and Resolving Conflict with Families**

Conflict between families and school staff negatively affects student learning and staff morale, and discourages families from staying involved. This class will demonstrate what you can do to maintain healthy working relationships with parents and strengthen existing partnerships. First we will explore how to prevent conflict through active communication, then examine why and how conflict can escalate, and finally identify how to de-escalate conflict once it has occurred. Through role-playing and sample scenarios you will practice strategies for effective professional communication in difficult circumstances, active-listening techniques, and problem-solving.

**4 hours - \$800 - Maximum 40 participants. Clock hours available.**

- **Helping Families Understand the Public Education System**

Many families could become more effective partners in education if they simply received better basic information about the Washington public education system. This class equips educators and school staff with the tools and information necessary to further educate parents and help them navigate the ins-and-outs of the school system. Participants will leave with resources for explaining how school districts are structured, understanding student rights and responsibilities, and covering specifics of school rules, district policies, and state and federal education laws.

**3 hours - \$600 Maximum 40 participants. Clock hours available.**

- **Embracing All Families: Developing Cultural Competence**

We define Cultural Competence as the ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures. With the increasing diversity of our school communities, we know that the needs of all families are not always addressed. This class will help you develop awareness of your own cultural world views and attitudes towards cultural differences. We will discuss the experiences and perspectives of immigrant, refugee, and migrant families, and analyze the challenges these families face in participating in their children's education. Raise your Cultural Competence, and explore differences and similarities between cultural groups in an open supportive setting.

**3 hours - \$600 - Maximum 40 participants. Clock hours available.**

- **Embracing All Families: Strategies to Involve ELL Families**

In family homes where English is not the first language, English Language Learners (ELLs) face unique challenges in navigating our public school system. This interactive class draws on our knowledge of how ELL parents view the system and what they say schools should do to support them. Participants will learn strategies to better communicate with ELL families, work effectively with interpreters, maximize the benefits of translation resources, and plan inclusive school programs and events. We will highlight examples of successful involvement strategies at both the local and national levels.

**3 hours - \$600 - Maximum 40 participants. Clock hours available.**

- **Managing, Training and Nurturing School Volunteers**

This class will help you to develop an effective volunteer program for your classroom, school and/or school district. First you will elaborate a program vision, and then create a system for recruiting families and volunteers from the community. You will devise an action plan to train volunteers, place them appropriately, and supervise their work. On-going successful volunteer programs emphasize appreciation and recognition of volunteers' completed work.

**3 hours - \$600 - Maximum 40 participants. Clock hours available.**

- **The Accidental Ombudsman**

Are you a staff member who finds yourself occasionally in charge of in-taking and/or resolving parent or family complaints? If so, this class is for you. Learn tips from professional Ombudsmen about setting up systems to track complaints, listening to parents to ensure they feel heard, asking the right questions, beginning to problem-solve, and informing and empowering unhappy parents. Find out how to prevent conflict from escalating and reach workable solutions that focus on what is best for the student.

**4 hours - \$800 - Maximum 40 participants. Clock hours available.**

## **School-Family Partnership Institutes for Educators**

Our Institutes are in-depth one- or two-day conferences that are customized to the particular staff training needs of schools and school districts. Each 7.5-hour day includes topics from the classes described above, and can happen at a school, school district, ESD, or community site.

**1- day Institute** - 8 hours - \$1,600 Up to 100 participants. Clock hours available.

**2- day Institute** - 16 hours - \$3,200 Up to 100 participants. Clock hours available.

## **To Schedule Classes and Institutes**

Class fees include materials, preparation time, and travel within 60 miles of Seattle. There are extra costs for trainers' travel and lodging outside this area.

To schedule classes or for more information, contact Cathy Liu Scott at [cathyliu.scott@gov.wa.gov](mailto:cathyliu.scott@gov.wa.gov) or at 206-729-3211.

## **The Office of the Education Ombudsman**

Resolves disputes and conflict between parents and schools and promotes school-family partnerships across the state. To learn more about OEO, visit [www.waparentslearn.org](http://www.waparentslearn.org) or call 1-866-297-2597.