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## ***Portland Public Schools’ Learning Guides for Families***

Portland Public Schools believes that family engagement in student learning and goals is a key strategy to improving academic achievement across the district. Research shows that this kind of meaningful engagement will improve outcomes for all of our students. (See “Big Picture from Research” attached.) In order to build family engagement in student learning, we have developed “Learning Guides for Families” as tools to support communication and collaboration among teachers, families, and students.

The PPS Learning Guides for Families are intentionally designed to provide families with information about students learning expectations in each grade using family friendly language. This will empower families to participate in their child’s learning. The guides provide families with tips for activities aligned to learning goals that promote students learning at home. The guides will also help teachers and families develop consistent messages for students about achievement and will help open build the relationship between teachers and families.

Guides are available in Acholi, Arabic, English, French, Khmer, Portuguese, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese. A supply of books has been provided to your school. Parent-Community Specialists and other translation staff will bring the appropriate non-English copies to parent-teacher meetings and events. Anyone can also access copies of the learning guides on the district’s website ([www.portlandschools.org](http://www.portlandschools.org) in the “Parent” section).

We encourage you to be strategic and creative in your use of the guides. Keep in mind that these guides are not disposable handouts, but rather tools for teachers to engage families in an ongoing collaboration for student learning. To maximize the effectiveness of the guides, schools and teachers need to be thoughtful and intentional in how they are utilized. In utilizing these tools to improve student achievement, please adhere to the guidelines listed below.

<b>Please Do:</b>	<b>Please Don’t:</b>
Utilize the guides at parent conferences, curriculum nights, and any other opportunity for direct engagement with families.	Send them home in student’s backpacks unless some kind of communication between teacher and family has occurred to compliment the resource.
Add additional learning goals or ideas for home learning support tailored specifically to the students and family. We have added a section for “notes” just for this purpose.	Hand out to the masses or use as a “give away” – they are better utilized as part of ongoing, targeted conversations related to student learning.
Utilize parent guides for other grades when and if the learning outcomes and strategies are appropriate for the student’s learning goals.	Hand someone all the grades guides at one time for them “to hold onto for the future”. They will be more effective if they are targeted to current learning goals.

We hope this resource will be a useful tool for you in achieving student success. Please connect with your building leaders with any questions or concerns. Thank you for all your hard work on behalf for Portland students and their families.



# Big Stories from Research:

1. When families are involved at home and at school, children do better in school, and the schools get better. *The effects are greatest for low-income students.*
2. Families are doing more at home than we realize or give them credit for.
3. Parent advocacy and support has a protective effect on children.
4. Investing in parent education when children are young will pay off throughout their whole career in school.
5. The more that programs and activities for families are linked to what their children are learning and doing in class, the greater impact they will have on students achievement.
6. Community Organizing efforts to build parent and community leadership are improving schools.
7. When families are welcomed and treated with respect, honored for their contributions, and connected to teachers, other parents and what's happening in the classroom, they become motivated to be involved over the long-term, in ways that can improve their children's success in school.