How Well Does Your School Support Parents as Advocates?

	Explaining the School to Families	Check one for each question			
1	The school handbook and Web site show how the school is organized and provide information for contacting school staff.	☐ Already Doing this	☐ Could do this easily	☐ This will take time	☐ This will be hard
2	All families get information about academic and after-school programs for students and how to apply for them.	☐ Already Doing this	☐ Could do this easily	☐ This will take time	☐ This will be hard
3	There is a clear written process for resolving complaints or problems, and all families know how to use it.	☐ Already Doing this	☐ Could do this easily	☐ This will take time	☐ This will be hard
	Conferring with Teachers	*Check one for each question*			
4	Teachers contact each family at least once a month with an update on their child and send graded student work home for review once a week.	☐ Already Doing this	☐ Could do this easily	☐ This will take time	☐ This will be hard
5	Parents can easily contact teachers and other staff with information and questions about their children.	☐ Already Doing this	☐ Could do this easily	☐ This will take time	☐ This will be hard
6	If your school is a middle or high school, each family knows an adult in the school they can contact about their child.	☐ Already Doing this	☐ Could do this easily	☐ This will take time	☐ This will be hard
	Supporting Advocacy	*Check one for each question*			
7	At workshops and other information sessions, parents learn how to ask the right questions about their children's progress and placement.	☐ Already Doing this	☐ Could do this easily	☐ This will take time	☐ This will be hard
8	The school confers with families about which program is best for their children and gives them the information they need to make the best choice.	☐ Already Doing this	☐ Could do this easily	☐ This will take time	☐ This will be hard
9	The school actively recruits students for gifted and advanced programs and works with families to explain the program and obtain their support.	☐ Already Doing this	☐ Could do this easily	☐ This will take time	☐ This will be hard
10	Parents are part of the decision-making process about student placement in these programs.	☐ Already Doing this	☐ Could do this easily	☐ This will take time	☐ This will be hard
11	Counselors and teachers refer families to education and recreation programs in the community that can help their children.	☐ Already Doing this	☐ Could do this easily	☐ This will take time	☐ This will be hard
	Transition Programs	*Check one for each question*			
12	The school make personal contact with all new families before the school year begins.	☐ Already Doing this	☐ Could do this easily	☐ This will take time	☐ This will be hard
13	Teachers and students visit preschool program and feeder schools to talk about the school and answer questions.	☐ Already Doing this	☐ Could do this easily	☐ This will take time	☐ This will be hard
14	Special events for students and families welcome them to the school, give them a tour of the building, and connect them to "buddies" or mentors.	☐ Already Doing this	☐ Could do this easily	☐ This will take time	☐ This will be hard
	Planning for the Future	*Check one for each question*			
15	If your school is an elementary school, school staff ask families about their goals for their children and discusses how the school can prepare them for that future.	☐ Already Doing this	☐ Could do this easily	☐ This will take time	☐ This will be hard
16	If your school is a middle school, all sixth-grade parents get information about what courses are required for college or other postsecondary education and what students should take in middle school to qualify for those courses in high school.	☐ Already Doing this	☐ Could do this easily	☐ This will take time	☐ This will be hard
17	If your school is a high school, all ninth-grade families get a college or career planning handbook that contains an individual graduation plan and explains all the steps for applying to college. It also lists what courses are required for college admission.	☐ Already Doing this	☐ Could do this easily	☐ This will take time	☐ This will be hard

Use the following questions to reflect on the answers from your checklist.

In which areas are you doing well?

Which areas need more work?

How are parents involved in your school to promote constructive advocacy?

What are your concerns?

What steps could you take to develop a program to support parents as advocates?

Right now?   *Over the long term?*