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## **TEACHER'S DESK CALENDAR**

### **School District of Palm Beach County**

### **West Palm Beach, Florida**

The Family Action Network (FAN) in the School District of Palm Beach County provided over 7,000 teachers with desk calendars for the 2000-01 school year. The Teacher's Desk Calendar included school holidays, important telephone numbers, and suggestions for involving families in their children's education. Many of the suggestions helped teachers involve hard-to-reach parents by broadening the definition of involvement and by providing families with information and resources to be partners in education.

Each monthly calendar listed TIPS (Teachers Involve Parents in Student Success) that include important family involvement research, suggestions, sample practices, and resource leads for teachers. Much of the information provided in TIPS links to the National PTA Standards for Family Involvement.

An interactive homework assignment called PICKS (Parents Involved in Creating Kids' Success) followed each monthly calendar. The assignment was to be duplicated and sent home with students. The calendar provided ideas about how teachers can customize parent letters with the school logo and important dates for upcoming events before duplicating the assignments. Translations of PICKS in Spanish and Haitian/Creole also were included.

Teachers assigned a PICKS activity each month after discussing the purpose and directions of the activity with students. The activities included the student assignment on the left side of the page and useful parent or learning partner information on the right side of the page. Students could complete the activities with any family member or adult that was available as a learning partner. The student and learning partner were often asked to sign and comment on the PICKS activity. The Desk Calendar included suggestions for follow-up activities that teachers can conduct in class.

Teachers' survey responses about the calendars were very positive, and plans are underway to provide the Teacher's Desk Calendars to all elementary and middle school teachers for the 2001-02 school year. They are an effective way to develop school-home partnerships by providing suggestions and activities to involve all parents, not just those parents who can come to the school building.

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