

**Parent Engagement Opportunity Fund
June, 2009**

Queen Charlotte Home and School Association

President: Joanne Dunne

Principal: Parker Grimmer

Name of Project: Music, Muffins and Mingling

Goal(s):

- To recruit, organize and train parent volunteers
- To promote effective communication of school programs and archives.
- To involve the school community in celebrating success at Queen Charlotte.

Description:

We hosted an event on a morning in June in which parents, staff, students and community helpers were invited to the school to mingle. A slide show of activities was shown and we also previewed activities and resource requirements for the upcoming year.

Did you achieve your goal?

Yes, staff, students and parents attended the event.

Who did the project benefit?

The project benefitted all stakeholders. Any opportunity to provide dialogue among teachers, students and parents builds relationships and partnerships.

What challenges are you still facing with parent engagement?

It is always a challenge to communicate with parents how they can support activities and education, especially at the junior and senior high levels.

Thoughts about the project topic (provided by project partners):

Communication between the home and the school during the junior high years can be a challenge due in large part to the age of the child. During this stage of development, open sharing with parents and adults in general has been replaced by a need for privacy and silence.

The school that provides parents the opportunity to communicate about a variety of topics in informal gatherings with teachers and other parents helps them to better understand their adolescent child. The adolescent is making a transition from focusing on understanding their material world to understanding themselves and others. Children need parents more than ever during this period where uncertainty and emotions are an ongoing reality.

Informal gatherings, where the focus is on understanding the child as a learner and as an individual who is moving toward independence, can foster communication between the child and the parent and assist in enhancing school success.