



The Comcast
Parent Involvement
Matters Award

Choose Your Seat.
Get Involved.



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What would a Comcast Parent Involvement Matters Award winner look like?

He/she might demonstrate all of the five areas of parent involvement described on the following pages, or he/she might demonstrate only one area, but he/she will have made a real difference for students, parents, and schools. >>

Message from Comcast

At Comcast, we are committed to developing and supporting programs that ensure the vibrancy and strength of communities across Maryland. That's why we collaborated with the Maryland State Department of Education to create the Comcast Parent Involvement Matters Award.

With this award, we'll celebrate outstanding parents and highlight the incredible impact involved parents can have, not just in their child's life, but on an entire school community.



We look forward to learning about the exciting parent-led projects taking place in schools across our state right now. If you know a committed, involved parent who has made a significant contribution to Maryland public education, please nominate him or her for the Comcast Parent Involvement Matters Award.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barbara A. Gehrig". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Barbara A. Gehrig
Senior Vice President
Comcast Maryland/Delaware/Richmond Region

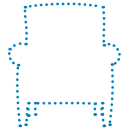
Areas of Parent Involvement

The Maryland State Department of Education provides leadership and guidance to local school systems in designing parent involvement programs.

After consulting with the Maryland State Department of Education, Comcast decided to use a nationally-recognized framework for family involvement as a springboard to identifying the areas of involvement to be demonstrated by nominees for the Parent Involvement Matters Award.

While this framework is based on six types of parent involvement, we are seeking award nominees who demonstrate involvement in five areas. Nominees can demonstrate involvement in all five areas or only one, but the nominee must have made a significant, positive impact on public education with their involvement project within the last 24 months.

1. Communication



Fostering communication that impacts the school community.

2. Volunteering



Recruiting or organizing volunteers, or supporting school activities, both internal and external.

3. Learning



Organizing or coordinating learning activities that reinforce homework or classroom skills.

About the Award

The Comcast Parent Involvement Matters Award is an annual award for parents (and others with legal responsibility for a child) whose exemplary contributions to public education have led to improvements for Maryland's public school children, teachers, schools, programs, and/or policies. Comcast created the award with the Maryland State Department of Education to highlight the positive impact parents have on public schools and to encourage all parents to get involved in whatever way they can.

Application Deadline

January 23, 2008

Completed packages must be postmarked by January 23, 2008 and mailed to:

Maryland State Department of Education
Office of Academic Policy, 7th Floor
Attn: PIMA
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Applications can be downloaded in English and select foreign languages at www.MarylandPublicSchools.org.

Submissions will not be accepted online or by e-mail.



“Parent involvement in public education is essential. Behind every effective, high-achieving school you will find a strong network of dedicated, involved parents and a school staff that is committed to supporting parent involvement.”

Nancy S. Grasmick
State Superintendent of Schools

4. Decision Making



Participating on decision-making committees, or in programs that advocate system or policy changes, or serving as a representative for the school or education community.

5. Community Collaboration



Coordinating resources and services for the school community, which could include fundraisers that would enhance a school’s services or environment, or coordinating resources or services from the school community that may serve an external community.

Examples of Award-Winning Parent Involvement

What would a Comcast Parent Involvement Matters Award winner look like?

He/she might demonstrate all of the five areas of parent involvement, or he/she might demonstrate only one area, but he/she will have made a real difference for students, parents, and schools.

The following are a few examples of possible award-winning activities for explanatory purposes only. They do not represent the only types of activities that could win an award.

- Serve as a spokesperson for parents and be an active participant or leader of a school, district, or state committee that brings about major policy changes that support students and schools.
- Lead an effort with many partners—such as school staff, businesses, government entities, and the community—to develop a shared school-community park, playground, or other space or facility.
- Recruit and manage a network of volunteer translators to help non-English speaking parents communicate with the school and vice versa.
- Develop an interactive Web site that facilitates communication among parents, the school, and the larger community.
- Lead a group effort among school staff, local businesses, and local musicians to create a series of instructional clinics for students and performances for the school community.
- Develop and deliver a series of workshops for other parents on topics such as how to encourage academic achievement in children, how to be involved in the school, how to advocate for children with special needs, and more.

Eligibility

To be considered for the Comcast Parent Involvement Matters Award, nominees must:

1. Be a parent, which includes a natural parent, an adoptive parent, a legal guardian, a person acting as a parent of a child such as a relative or a stepparent with whom a child lives, and any other person legally responsible for the child's welfare.
2. Have a child in a Maryland public school.
3. Not be an employee of Comcast, the Maryland State Department of Education, or the Maryland public school system.
4. Have conducted or participated in the project for which he/she is nominated within the last 24 months.

Opportunities for Winners

After the celebration, the winner and semi-finalists will have many opportunities to be recognized and to promote parent involvement, such as:

- Participating in a public service announcement to be broadcast on Comcast cable television.
- Speaking at educational events and conferences.
- Appearing at Maryland State Board of Education and/or local board of education meetings.
- Participating on educational task forces and/or committees.
- Participating in a "best practices" publication and/or Web site that will serve to inspire parents as well as give them practical advice.

Selection

PROCESS

After reviewing all completed application submissions, judges will select 24 local award winners—one parent from each of the 23 counties in Maryland and one parent from Baltimore City. A second group of judges will review the 24 local winners' applications and select five semi-finalists for the state-level award; interview them; and select one to be the state-level award winner.

Comcast will host an award celebration in April 2008 to recognize all 24 local winners. At the celebration, the names of the semi-finalists and the winner will be announced. The winner and semi-finalists will each receive a monetary award to further parent involvement activities.

CRITERIA

To qualify for the award, the nominee shall:

1. Be a consistent advocate of public education.
2. Have had a significant, positive impact on public education with his/her creativity, innovation, and/or commitment at the school, district, or state level in one or more of the following areas:
 - Communication
 - Volunteering
 - Learning
 - Decision Making
 - Community Collaboration

Application Instructions

Please read and follow these instructions carefully.

- Complete all four sections of the application. A complete application packet includes the original documents and 2 copies of each document. Incomplete applications will not be considered.
- Limit your answers to the space provided in each section in a type size no smaller than 11 point.
- Use the forms provided in Sections 1, 3, and 4. For Section 2, please follow the directions provided.
- If you have questions about the application or award program, please contact pima@msde.state.md.us (preferred) or Heather Bradbury at 410-767-0478.

The complete application package must be postmarked by **January 23, 2008** and mailed to:

Maryland State Department of Education
Office of Academic Policy, 7th Floor
ATTN: PIMA
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Application for Comcast's Parent Involvement Matters Award

SECTION 1: Contact Information

Nominee

Full Name: _____
Last First M.I.

Address: _____
Street Address Apartment/Unit #

City State ZIP Code

Home Phone: () _____ Alternate Phone: () _____

E-mail: _____

Nominator

Full Name: _____
Last First M.I.

Address: _____
Street Address Apartment/Unit #

City State ZIP Code

Home Phone: () _____ Alternate Phone: () _____

E-mail: _____

How do you know the nominee? _____

Project Information

Title: _____

Location: (including city) _____

Telephone: () _____ County: _____

SECTION 2: Narrative

The narrative for Section 2 should be a separate sheet and is limited to one page with one-inch margins, single spacing, and in a type size no less than 11 point. The top of the page should include:

- Section 2
- Nominees Name
- Project Name

Please describe the nominee's outstanding contribution(s) to public education. Consider the five areas of parent involvement described on the previous pages and explain how the nominee demonstrates any or all of these areas of involvement. Explain the impact the nominee's involvement has had on students, teachers, the school as a whole, and/or the community. Please include the names of schools, school systems, and/or organizations who were involved in the project.

Application for Comcast's Parent Involvement Matters Award

SECTION 3: Letters of Recommendation

Three original, one-page, signed letters of recommendation are required from people in different positions who have direct knowledge of the nominee's accomplishments. The following are examples of different positions: school administrator, teacher, student, parent, school district administrator, school board member, community or faith-based leader, business leader, and legislator.

Please provide the name and contact information for the letters' authors below and include the letters in the application.

First Recommendation Letter

Printed Name: _____
(a signature must be provided on the actual letter)

Title: _____

Organization: _____

Telephone: () _____ E-mail: _____

Second Recommendation Letter

Printed Name: _____
(a signature must be provided on the actual letter)

Title: _____

Organization: _____

Telephone: () _____ E-mail: _____

Third Recommendation Letter

Printed Name: _____
(a signature must be provided on the actual letter)

Title: _____

Organization: _____

Telephone: () _____ E-mail: _____

SECTION 4: Statement of Agreement for Nominee

Please read the following statements carefully and sign your name.

I AGREE THAT:

- I am aware of and support my nomination for the Comcast Parent Involvement Matters Award.
- I meet the eligibility requirements on page five of this packet.
- I have never been convicted of a felony crime, child abuse, or neglect.

I ALSO AGREE THAT if I am identified as a local winner, semi-finalist, and/or state winner, I will participate in:

- the Comcast Parent Involvement Matters Award ceremony.
- a personal interview at the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) or Comcast.
- a recorded interview, portions of which may be taped for purposes that include, but are not limited to, broadcast on cable television, streaming

on the Web, and screening at education-related events.

- a public service announcement for broadcast on Comcast cable channels.
- a recognition ceremony at the MSDE.
- educational events (e.g., state or district level conferences on family involvement) that may include invitations to speak, as my schedule permits. (MSDE and Comcast understand that parents already have many commitments.)
- a "best practices" publication and/or Web site with the MSDE staff. (This participation will likely involve speaking with MSDE staff and providing any materials relevant to my parent involvement project.)
- a background investigation that will require providing my social security number and fingerprints. (This will only be required of semi-finalists.)

Nominee Printed Name: _____

Nominee Signature: _____ Date: _____