

Letter from a “Concerned Mother”

Superintendent Greg Cuttemloose
Hardy Knox Union School District
Independence, CA

September 7, 2010

Dear Superintendent Cuttemloose:

I recently attended my child's orientation for a new middle school. When I asked the principal how I could help in my child's classes, she told me I couldn't—that this was middle school, not elementary school, and that she wants the students to be less dependent on their parents. How insulting! I was the PTA President at my son's elementary school for five years and was present on his campus nearly every day because I believe kids are more successful when their parents are heavily involved in their lives. Just like athletes or musicians whose parents attend all their practices, kids whose parents volunteer in their classrooms know they have someone cheering for them every step of the way. And let's face it—middle school students are still kids. There are a lot of problems and issues they simply aren't ready to face alone yet. Having a parent continue to be a frequent presence in their school lives is one of the best ways to ensure young adolescents don't make too many big mistakes before they're prepared to handle the consequences. Moreover, in this time of big budget cuts, how can any school afford to turn away volunteers?

The benefits of parents in middle school classrooms are many: Schools need the help; parents need to know what's going on; and kids need someone looking after them.

—A Concerned Mother