



Thursday, April 08, 2004

Dear Chamber Member:

On behalf of the Seguin Area Chamber of Commerce and the Education Partnership Committee, we would like to invite you to participate in the Family Friendly Business Program. In today's workforce, the need for businesses to be "Family Friendly" and offer programs that help employees balance work and family responsibilities is growing. Studies show that being family friendly and helping families balance life and work responsibilities can have a positive impact on the business, family and community where they are located (Families and Work Institute, Dept. of Trade and Industry, Institute for Employment Studies).

The Seguin Area Chamber of Commerce's Education Partnership Committee has developed a program to recognize businesses that adopt strategies to increase parental and employee involvement in the education of the Seguin area youth. The Family Friendly Business Program is open to Chamber of Commerce members. Those businesses that participate in the program by adopting any number of the following business practices will be recognized in the Chamber newsletter and on the website. Additionally, businesses will be ranked based on their level of commitment and success and the top business will be recognized at the Annual Chamber Awards Banquet.

SUGGESTED FAMILY FRIENDLY BUSINESS PRACTICES

- 1.) Recognize student employees or the children of employees who do well in school (attendance, academics, and special honors). Public recognition shows the importance you place on education and instills pride in the employees.
- 2.) Provide scheduling flexibility to allow time for employees to actively participate in a child's education (volunteer work, parent-teacher conferences, mentoring etc.)
- 3.) Provide opportunities for employees to attend seminars and classes on parenting skills and other related issues.
- 4.) Set up an education information center, bulletin board, or web page in your place of business. Relevant information could include parenting tips, school calendars, recognition, announcements, etc.



- 5.) Encourage and recognize employees who take on leadership roles in the school system (PTC officer, room mother or father, school board member, booster club member, etc.).
- 6.) Help schools communicate with parents by providing space to display school announcements, upcoming events, and other information.
- 7.) Encourage employee to become “lifelong learners” through recognition of tuition assistance (GED attainment, continuing education, and higher education classes.)
- 8.) Hire high school students on a part-time basis only during the school year and don’t schedule them to work past 10 PM.
- 9.) If hiring non-high school graduates, encourage high school completion or require attainment of GED within a reasonable time.
- 10.) Serve as an advocate for education and for the school system (Junior Achievement Program, Small Business and Education Partnership).
- 11.) Provide educational scholarships or sponsorships for employees and their children.
- 12.) Support and participate in specific educational activities (career days).
- 13.) Provide financial support for specific educational activities.
- 14.) If hiring an active student, review report cards/progress reports to check for attendance, grades, and course of study. Only hire those students who are advancing successfully in their studies..
- 15.) Other education-related programs.

Thank you for your consideration of this valuable program. We invite you to submit your program for consideration for the award for the Outstanding Family Friendly Business. We will be providing more information about the award selection criteria in the near future. If you have questions please do not hesitate to contact me at the Chamber office.

Sincerely,
Rob Cunningham
President, Seguin Area Chamber of Commerce