



# Programs and opportunities

**A+ Schools has a range of volunteer opportunities for parents, students, and other citizens who care about our schools and want to help improve them. Whether you want to share your views on timely issues, help us gather new information, or just learn more about an issue, we have an opportunity for you.**

## School Works

Our School Works program sends trained volunteers into schools to conduct confidential interviews with school staff—most recently, with teachers. What do teachers need to ensure student success? Interviewers ask for information about staffing, training, coursework, support services, resources, and students' learning opportunities. A+ Schools analyzes the compiled information; community members review the issues and establish priorities. In earlier phases of this program, volunteers interviewed high school and middle school principals and guidance counselors. A+ Schools shared the findings with school staff and the community and used them to develop community priorities for our schools. (The full reports can be found at our Web site.)

## Board Watch

A+ Schools advocates for an open, transparent, accountable, and effective school board. Through Board Watch, trained volunteers observe Pittsburgh Board of Education meetings and rate the board on five indicators of good governance. A+ Schools translates these reports into quarterly grades for the school board on each indicator.

## Teen Bloc

We believe students should be involved in shaping the agenda for our city's public schools. Anyone can nominate a student who attends a Pittsburgh public or charter high school for this leadership group. Participants learn how to define their ideas for change, work with a team, establish strategic relationships, and put their ideas into action.

## Community conversations

A+ Schools holds community conversations on important issues such as the school district's budget, choosing a superintendent, and the reconfiguration of schools. We also hold public meetings to discuss the results of initiatives such as School Works and to help define priorities.

## Community mobilization

A+ Schools also mobilizes community members to work for changes needed in our schools through school-based teams and city-wide campaigns. Currently we are working with parent teams at Faison, King, Manchester, and Mifflin to support their work as advocates and partners in school improvement. Past city-wide campaigns included equitable budgets, and keeping our best teachers. Our next effort will be school board voter education.

**Visit our Web site at [www.aplusschools.org](http://www.aplusschools.org) or call us at 412-697-1298 to:**

- Volunteer for School Works.
- Volunteer for Board Watch.
- Nominate a student for Teen Bloc.
- **Join a community-based team for campaigns and organizing.**
- Volunteer to facilitate a small group during a community meeting.
- Sign up for our mailing and/or email lists.
- Find more information about any of our programs.