

Sweetwater City Schools Family and Community Engagement Plan

The following Family and Community Engagement Plan is based upon the concept that families have a major influence on their children's achievement in school and through life. As a result of this influence, positive results with student achievement occur when schools, families, and community groups work together to support learning. The focus of the Plan is to build trusting, collaborative relationships among teachers, families, and community members. It also recognizes, respects, and addresses families' needs, as well as class and cultural differences. Every school in the district has received a copy of the plan and incorporates the standards as part of its own parent involvement plans.

The faculty and staff of Sweetwater Elementary School are unwavering in their commitment to communicate and involve parents, as well as all stakeholders, to better serve our students. Education is strengthened when it is the shared responsibility of students, teachers, parents, and the community. SES will increase family and community involvement with the following action plan.

Standard 1: Welcoming all families into the school community – Families are active participants in the life of the school and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to school staff, and to what students are learning and doing in class and school.

Action Plan:

- A school website will be hosted and maintained with information about Sweetwater Elementary School (SES).
- SES will sponsor a P.T.O.
- Volunteers will be solicited for school needs.
- Notes and phone calls will be made to solicit help when needed.
- Personal invitations will be done continuously throughout the community.
- A variety of opportunities to participate will be help such as field days, field trips, Christmas parades, and Fall Festival.
- SES will host a book fair family night.
- Schott–Gemtron and Archer's Family Pharmacy are formal business partners and provide financial support for the school.
- In the fall of each year, grandparents are invited to eat lunch with their grandchild on Grandparents' Day.
- SES will hold an awards day each six weeks for classrooms by grade level and then a school-wide awards day at the end of the school year.
- Parents are invited to eat lunch and/or breakfast with their children as desired.

Standard 2: Communicating effectively – Families and school staff engage in regular, meaningful communication about students learning.

- Parents will be contacted about upcoming school events and weather related closings through SchoolReach, a phone contact service.

- A monthly calendar will be sent to all parents and faculty to provide information about upcoming events and a summary of what is going on at Sweetwater Elementary School.
- Open House will be held before the first day of school to inform parents and guardians about school policies and procedures. This will also provide them a chance to meet their child's teachers.
- Each student will be provided with a school handbook that explains school policies, procedures, and the behavior expectation matrix.
- Signs will be posted outside announcing upcoming events.
- Parent-Teacher conferences will be held several times a year.
- Teachers and the principal will send notes home or make phone calls to parents to address specific student needs and/or school activities.
- Teachers will maintain ongoing communication with parents through newsletters, phone calls, e-mail, and personal conversations.
- PTO, along with the faculty and staff at SES, will sponsor a Fall Festival. This will be open to the entire community.
- Faculty's e-mail addresses are available on the school's website so parent and community members may contact them at any time.

Standard 3: Supporting students success – Families and school staff continuously work together to support students' learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.

- Websites will be provided with relevant information and links to educational websites.
- Projects and activities to be shared and constructed at home will be provided by classrooms and programs such as 4-H.

Standard 4: Speaking up for every child – Families are informed and enabled to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.

- Parents and community members will complete a survey each year.
- Parents will serve on the Parent Advisory Committee for collaborative decision making.
- Parents will serve on SACS teams and TSIPP teams for collaborative decision making.
- Parents are invited to volunteer and/or observe in their child's classroom.
- Parents are encouraged to contact the school at any time to schedule a conference with any staff member.
- A monthly newsletter will be sent home at the beginning of each month with school news and upcoming events.

Standard 5: Sharing power – Families and school staff are equal partners with equal representation in decisions that affect students and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.

- Parents are invited to participate in a parent advisory council that will typically meet on the last Monday of each month to share ideas for improvement and express concerns.
- Parents are invited to participate in SACS interviews and to be part of a team.
- Parents are given the opportunity to give feedback via a survey to provide feedback for continual improvement.
- Parents are invited to participate in P.T.O.

Standard 6: Collaborating with community – Families and school staff work together with community members to connect students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

- Community members are invited to participate in a survey to provide feedback for continual improvement.
- A school based therapist has been added to assist students and parents.
- A coordinating effort is established between Sweetwater Elementary School and the local Lion's Club to provide assistance to needy families to purchase eye glasses.
- The local health department provides periodical dental screenings.
- The TN Department of Health will periodically send a dentist to apply dental sealants to students' teeth, if needed and wanted.
- Sweetwater Citizens for the Arts and Sweetwater Elementary work together to provide opportunities to expose the students to the arts.
- Sweetwater Elementary School will participate in the CSSC, sponsored by Larry Orr.