

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INTRODUCTION

Board members and the superintendent attended two sessions led by Steve Constantino on family and community engagement in November 2004. Subsequently, a team consisting of the superintendent, a board member, a principal, an administrator, and a parent attended the Family Friendly Schools Institute in 2005. As a result of this training a family and community engagement policy was developed and recommended to the Board of Education. The policy was passed by the Board during July and August meetings.

The team also worked on a family/community engagement plan and developed a draft plan. The original team was expanded to include additional parent representatives from each school. This Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) held meetings to further develop the Family and Community Engagement Plan and to recommend ways to improve parent to home communication and family/community involvement in the schools.

This plan is a result of the work of the PAC. It is a living and evolving document that will be evaluated annually and modified as needed.

FAMILY/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN

The school system encourages the engagement of families and community members, both as individuals and as groups, in order to promote social, emotional, and academic growth of students. The school system will attempt to increase family engagement by taking the steps listed below.

1. The system will engage families in decision-making.
 - A. Family and community members will be involved in system-level and school level committees (such as, but not limited to, SIP committees, curricular committees, and the vision plan committee).
 - B. Efforts will be made to include representatives from all cultural, economic, and demographic groups.
 - C. Family and community input will be obtained from a variety of surveys.

MEASUREMENT:

1. A review to determine the inclusion of all stakeholders.
 2. The number of surveys issued
2. Standards for family engagement will be communicated to all shareholders.
 - A. The Federal Programs Coordinator and the Coordinator of Special Education Services will convene an annual meeting, to which all parents of participating children must be invited, to explain the programs, activities, and curriculum.
 - B. Family engagement standards will be communicated at the annual Open House at each school.
 - C. This policy will be posted at each school and on the district website.
 - D. Standards for family engagement will be reviewed, at least annually, at a district faculty meeting.

MEASUREMENT:

1. attendance at annual meeting
 2. attendance at Open House
 3. posting of engagement standards
 4. review of standards at annual faculty meeting
3. Data collected from various surveys and needs assessments will be used to evaluate and plan the types of family engagement activities that are needed and desired.

MEASUREMENT:

1. surveys administered at schools
2. school and system involvement plans reflect survey data

4. To insure continual improvement the district will annually evaluate its family and community engagement efforts.
 - A. The family engagement policy will be annually evaluated based on data gathered from all shareholders.
 - B. Family engagement efforts will be modified, as necessary, as a result of the evaluation.

MEASUREMENT:

1. incremental progress of subgroup performance on AYP standards
2. annual meeting to evaluate involvement plans and efforts

5. Each school will include family engagement as a part of the school improvement plan and will annually assess progress toward such goals.

MEASUREMENT:

1. information sessions for system leadership team
2. review of SIP'S for inclusion of family engagement goals

6. Understandable and usable information regarding standards and curriculum will be made available to families.
 - A. Curriculum calendars will be developed and distributed for each grade level.
 - B. Grade level/subject area curriculum standards will be included on school and system websites.
 - C. The Federal Programs Coordinator and the Coordinator of Special Education Services will convene an annual meeting, to which all parents of participating children must be invited, to explain the programs, activities, and curriculum.
 - D. Early grade standards will be shared at the pre-school transition meeting.
 - E. Schools will share standards at the annual Open Houses and through monthly newsletters.

MEASUREMENT:

1. distribution of curriculum calendars
2. evaluation of websites
3. information shared at open houses and through newsletters

7. The system will build capacity to create and sustain effective parenting strategies.
 - A. continuation of the Mother Goose program and efforts to expand attendance base
 - B. evaluation of Dolly Parton Imagination Library/number of families involved
 - C. development of new parenting programs
 - D. naming a family engagement coordinator at each school

MEASUREMENT:

1. implementation of each item listed above
8. Professional development for faculty and staff will help build capacity for family engagement.
- A. continuation of poverty training
 - B. additional opportunities for professional development on family engagement

MEASUREMENT:

1. attendance at professional development activities
 2. teacher evaluation of training events
9. The system will provide funding and resources to support family engagement efforts.
- A. professional development funds
 - B. funds for parent training
 - C. other system and school funding devoted to family engagement

MEASUREMENT:

1. evaluation of use of funds and resources
10. Federal programs will engage families in a variety of ways.
- A. The Federal Programs Coordinator and the Coordinator of Special Educations Services will convene an annual meeting, to which all parents of participating children must be invited, to explain the programs, activities, and curriculum.
 - B. Parents of children in these programs will be:
 1. provided reports on their child's progress;
 2. invited to conferences to discuss the program and their child's progress;
 3. invited to observe program activities;
 4. provided copies of family involvement policies, requirements, and other relevant provisions of the programs;
 - C. A Title 1 school-parent compact will be developed at each Title 1 school.

MEASUREMENT:

1. an increase in meeting attendance as evidenced by sign-in sheets from meetings
 2. pupil academic progress
 3. family rating sheets
11. The school district will coordinate and integrate family/community involvement strategies and programs.

- A. Maintain parent resource room at Sweetwater Primary
- B. Coordinate with Head Start
 - i. Head Start representation on pre-k advisor council
 - ii. joint pre-k screening
 - iii. Head Start to kindergarten transition strategies
- C. Operate and expand Mother Goose program
- D. Partner with the Sweetwater Education Foundation and Monroe County Advocate in operation of Dolly Parton Imagination Library
- E. Cooperate with public library in summer reading program.
- F. More collaboration with local newspaper
 - i. solicit more press coverage of school events
 - ii. encourage involvement from newspaper staff on PAC
 - iii. provide student articles to newspaper
- G. Collaborate with housing authority

MEASUREMENT:

- 1. amount of participation in these programs
 - 2. increase in press coverage
 - 3. number of collaboration efforts
12. The district will identify barriers that prevent economically disadvantaged, disable, limited English proficiency, limited literacy, racial, or ethnic minority background parents from participating in activities.
- A. Expand the PAC to include parents from under-represented populations.
 - B. Hold special events (registrations, graduations, etc.) that include interpreters.
 - C. Make a greater effort to translate letters and notices sent home.
 - D. Investigate utilization of "Life Line."

MEASUREMENT:

- 1. increased involvement by families from minority populations
13. The school district and individual schools will continue and expand family/community engagement and communication activities.
- A. homework support:
 - i. homework hotline
 - ii. Teacher Ease (evaluate expansion to additional schools and keep information updated)
 - iii. tutoring
 - iv. family academic night
 - v. America read nights
 - vi. summer reading w/library
 - vii. pre-k initiatives: Mother Goose, pre-k classrooms, Imagination Library
 - B. communication

- i. newsletters
 - ii. surveys
 - iii. websites
 - iv. PTO meetings
 - v. conferences/open houses
- C. special events
- i. muffins for mom/doughnuts with dad
 - ii. father/daughter dance
 - iii. Honors Night
 - iv. grandparent days
14. The district will establish written procedures so that parents may learn about the course of study and have access to all instructional materials.
- A. The system website will have a link to the state standards.
 - B. The SJH homework hotline will have information about school academics and events
 - C. The BIS family academic night will expose families to learning objectives and activities.
 - D. State and local standards will be shared at open houses and parent conferences.
 - E. The family/community engagement plan will be made available to parents.
15. The district will encourage school involvement from families and community through volunteer programs.
- A. Increase volunteers to include non-parents.
 - B. Invite parents and community members to read and tutor. Consider the use of morning time prior to school for volunteer activities.
 - C. Consider a mentoring program for students.

Measurement:

- 1. log of volunteer hours