

Family Engagement Plan

The District Policy on Community Relations

The mission of Hays CISD, an innovative community of learners that values the diversity and legacy of the people, is to nurture students to become extraordinary citizens through unique, personal, educational experiences. This mission encompasses all students from pre-kindergarten to twelfth grade. Through two-way communication, parents are encouraged to be full partners with the school in the education of their child.

The contributions made by parents, families, and community members to children's education are invaluable.

For this reason, all administrators, teachers, and other staff shall work to achieve the full involvement of parents, families, and community members as partners in the schools.

The following standards for involvement provide a framework for parent, family, school, and community partnership programs here at Hays CISD:

Partnership programs shall use a variety of channels to connect schools, families, and communities in meaningful ways.

Partnership programs shall help all families establish home environments to support children as learners.

Partnership programs shall assist learning efforts in school, at home, and throughout the community in ways that link school to real life.

Partnership programs shall recruit and organize parent, family, and community resources to support educational programs both within and outside the schools.

Partnership programs shall support parents, families, and community members as partners with schools in making decisions that affect students and education.

Partnership programs shall strengthen schools, parents, families, and student learning through community resources and services.

District Family Engagement Opportunities

1. Let's Talk! This feature on the district website is a component of the K-12 Insight stakeholder engagement programs to further open two-way communication between the district and stakeholders. It allows parents, community members and business partners to ask questions and receive answers.
2. The district added kiosks at each middle schools to help increase volunteers and record the number of volunteer hours. Middle schools were provided with laptops to use as their Kiosks. Kiosks are now at every elementary and middle school campuses. Parents enjoy the simplicity of the devices to check in and parents are valued at the campuses.

3. Each campus encourages parents and volunteers to register in the VIP (Volunteers in Public Schools) system. The VIP system processes the criminal history background check. It also serves a tool for parents to record their volunteer hours. Volunteer hours recorded on the VIP system are used determine the Presidents Volunteer Service Awards.
4. Every year each campus selects a Campus Parent Volunteer of the Year who are then recognized for their volunteer service at the annual Hays CISD Volunteer luncheon held in April. Recipients receive a special plaque for their service to Hays CISD at the wonderful luncheon.
5. The President's Volunteer Service Award is an annual parent recognition held at the May school board of Trustee meeting. Parent volunteers must record their volunteer hours in the VIP system to be eligible to qualify. Awards are distributed by gold, silver and bronze depending on the hours recorded. This year each recipient received a letter signed by the US President, a pin and medal for their award.

Hours by Award	Bronze	Silver	Gold
Young Adults (16-25)	100 – 174	175 – 249	250 +
Adults (26 and older)	100 – 249	250 – 499	500+
President's Lifetime Achievement Award: Individuals who have completed 4,000 or more hours in their lifetime			

6. The Hays CISD PTA Council made up of each campus PTA board of directors meets quarterly. The purpose of the meeting is to exchange parent involvement opportunities, receive PTA board training and assistance with council issues.
7. District-wide student registration allows families to register their children at a one stop shop. All student registration routinely conducted by school registrars, as well as nursing, special education, and LEP assessments will be done on-site.
8. District conducts annual school supply drive, annual Christmas Angel Tree drive, Thanksgiving food boxes to families in need.

Each campus improvement plan in the district also includes a parent, family, and community component outlining programs planned or in place for the purpose of improving and ensuring partnership-driven parent, family, and community involvement. Each campus provides several opportunities for parental involvement. Campuses communicate parental involvement activities and events through social media outlets (Facebook, campus websites, and Twitter), as well as, notes home and flyers of events. Each campus also had a representative receive specialized training in our Parent Involvement Action Network.

In addition to the district-level plan for Family Engagement, and the campus specific opportunities for Family Engagement, The Family Engagement Plan for the High Quality Pre-Kindergarten Grant was created to provide a deeper level of specificity to achieve and maintain high levels of family involvement and positive family attitudes toward education. This portion of the Family Engagement Plan is inclusive of the policy as listed above and articulates the six required components that are purposefully crafted to support the HQPG. This plan can be found at: <https://www.hayscisd.net/Page/306>

Component 1: Family to Family Support

The district is facilitating family to family support by:

- Meet-the-Teacher Night – an evening that provides campus tours, family volunteer opportunities, classroom introductions and school groups (PTA) recruiting for families. Families will become familiar with one another and begin to build their support network. Encouraging your child to put a high priority on education and working with your child on a daily basis to make the most of the educational opportunities the school provides.
- Moms meet Moms – Each classroom has a volunteer “Class Mom” that communicates with all other classroom families to support one another and any upcoming classroom event.
- Class Dojo – classroom communication is also available for parent to parent through this digital two-way community communication. Both parents and teachers can communicate to enhance the participation and distribution of information for all. We also encourage families to ensure that your child completes all homework assignments and special projects and comes to school each day prepared, rested, and ready to learn.

Component #2: Network of Community Resources

Hays CISD parents have access to:

- Wellness Clinic provides free and reduced cost services to all our PK students.
- Seton Dental Care Clinic provides our students with free dental care and the dental work is done on campus with parent consent.
- Head Start provides additional services to our families including a half day of school in the Head Start classrooms.
- United Way provides our parents with access to Hays County Resource Guide along with parental involvement conferences free of charge and all their resources are bilingual.
- Communities in Schools provides targeted parental involvement classes throughout the school year to meet the needs of our families.
- Becoming a school volunteer. Parents and community members that wish to serve as volunteers can access the required criminal history background check at www.hayscisd.net.
- Contacting school officials if you are concerned with your child’s emotional or mental well-being.

Component #3: Participate in Decision Making

Both experience and research tell us that a child’s education succeeds best when there is good communication and a strong partnership between home and school. Serving on the School Health Advisory Council (SHAC), assisting the district in ensuring local community values are

reflected in health education instruction and other wellness issues. The district provide parents opportunity for input in decision making by:

- Providing opportunities for families to provide input on key decisions happening in the program (i.e. family surveys, focus groups).
- Using an intake questionnaire at the beginning of the school year so that teachers can learn about the children in their classroom from their parents' perspective and begin some mutual goal setting with each individual family.
- Educating families about their rights under State and Federal law regarding the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
- Identifying a parent to represent the prekindergarten program at elementary school functions.
- Using parents as equal partners with staff in reviewing family engagement survey results and making decisions regarding plans for continuous improvement.

Component #4: Equip Families with Tools to Enhance Learning

We provide our families access to the following resources:

- Utilizing campus libraries for parents to check out items (books, videos and online resources).
- Partnering and promoting local libraries for child development classes, story time and item check out.
- Ready Rosie Active Family Engagement – Online access to videos take place in real environments such as restaurants, grocery stores, and playgrounds, to demonstrate how to find learning moments in everyday activities.
- Conferencing with families at least twice during the school year and collaborating with them in setting goals for their children while at the prekindergarten program.
- Parents will become familiar with all of their child's school activities and with the academic programs, including special programs, offered in the district.
- Discussing with the school counselor or principal any questions you may have about the options and opportunities available to your child.
- Doing an annual survey at the beginning of the school year to identify parents' talents, skills and cultural traditions that they would be willing to share with the classroom.
- Encouraging family members to volunteer in the classroom, using the time to foster enhanced communication regarding their child's development.

Component #5: Evidence Based Practices

We strive to meet the needs of all our families through the ongoing development of our staff.

- Conscious Discipline Training – evidence based social and emotional learning.
- Training children to greet and say good-bye to parents and their classmates as a means to show respect for all program participant.
- Providing training for educators on how to respond to families that are in a crisis
- Providing professional development that is effective in developing skills in working with families. Topics could include: engaging fathers, communication styles, parenting practices, understanding and responding to your child's behavior, etc
- Working with parents on monitoring your child's academic progress and contacting teachers as needed.
- Providing professional development that focuses on how culture can influence perspectives on child-rearing, such as: communication styles, role of professionals, caregiving (sleeping, eating, toileting), discipline, language and learning;

Component #6: Evaluate Family Engagement

Hays CISD provides our families with:

- Setting child-centered goals with parents at the beginning of the school year. Check in with them several times during school year to discuss the progress that has been made in achieving the mutually developed goals
- Serving as a parent representative on the district-level or campus-level planning committees, assisting in the development of educational goals and plans to improve student achievement
- Surveying parents at least annually on the effectiveness of the prekindergarten experience for their child and their family;
- Communities in Schools (CIS) – conduct surveys after all trainings to determine success and relevance of training sessions for continuous improvement and goal setting.
- Participating in the development of your child's school-family compact as applicable.