

Weakley County School District

Parent and Family Engagement Plan

2023-2024

Revised July 2023

#WeakleyStrong



WEAKLEY COUNTY SCHOOLS

WHAT RESEARCH SAYS ABOUT PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Family Engagement, as defined by the National Parent Teacher Association, is the participation of families in every facet of the education and development of children from birth to adulthood. It is important that we recognize that families are the primary influence in their children's lives. Family engagement takes many forms, including families' shared responsibilities in decisions about their children's education, health, and well-being, as well as participation in organizations that reflect the community's collaborative aspirations for all children. The broad view of engagement affirms that families' role as the child's primary teacher and the home as the child's first classroom (Barbour, 1966).

"We have 50 years of research showing that what families do matters. Whether it's loving school, college access, good attendance, or academic success, family engagement has positive correlations with all sorts of indicators." (Dr. Karen Mapp, Senior lecturer on education and faculty director of Education Policy and Management Master's program at Harvard Graduate School of Education)

Engaging every family in a child's education is an important piece of improving that child's learning, according to research by Joyce Epstein, director of the Center for School, Family, and Community Partnerships at John Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland. Epstein (2001, 2009) alleges that there are many reasons for developing and establishing a partnership with school, family, and community. The main reason for such partnerships is to aid students in succeeding at school. It is also noted that families help their children have success in school by daily encouraging, listening, monitoring, praising, reacting, and discussing.

The framework of family engagement, as derived by the PTA's National Standards for Family-School Partnerships and adopted by the TN State Board of Education on July 30, 2010, includes the following:

- **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.
- **Communicating effectively**- Families and school staff engage in regular, meaningful communication about student learning and well-being.
- **Supporting student success**- Families and school staff continuously work together to support students' learning and healthy development both at home and school and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.
- **Speaking up for each 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.
- **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.
- **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.

What families do to help their children learn is even more important to their academic success than the financial status of the family (Walberg, 1994).

When families are involved in their children's education in positive ways, children achieve higher grades and test scores, have better attendance at school, complete more homework, demonstrate more positive attitudes and behavior, graduate at higher rates, and have greater enrollment in higher education (Becher 1984, Ballen and Moles, 1966).

Every research study on family engagement conducted over the past 20 years has shown the same result: family engagement increases student achievement and self-esteem. Research has shown this to be true in large and small communities; from preschool through high school; in poor and affluent areas; and in urban, rural, and suburban communities.

PRINCIPLES FOR BUILDING EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS:

- The school must operate from principles that respect the unique role of the family in a child's homeschool relationship of a child.
- All families have strengths and should know they are valued.

- All families can contribute to their child's education and to the school program.
- All families have the capacity to learn developmental and educational techniques to help their children.
- All families have a perspective on their children that can be important and useful to teachers.
- Family-child relationships are different from teacher-child relationships.
- Families should be consulted in all decisions about family engagement.
- All families really do care about their children (Becher, 1984).

Family and parent engagement is most effective when it is comprehensive, well-planned, long-lasting, and when it takes a positive approach, rather than focusing on remedial intervention. Families do not have to be well-educated to help; in fact, children from low-income and minority families have the most to gain when schools engage families.

WHAT ARE WE CURRENTLY DOING?

To determine how well Weakley County Schools partners with and promotes parent and family engagement in your child's education, a survey is conducted every other year. This survey is voluntary and confidential. The results of this survey inform our school administrators of areas that need improvement as well as emphasize where we excel.

- 1-Welcoming Families
- 2-Communicating Effectively
- 3-Supporting Success
- 4-Speaking up for Each Child
- 5-Sharing Power
- 6-Collaborating with Community

DISTRICT LEVEL

1-Welcoming Families:

The Weakley County School District provides technical assistance to schools in helping to plan and implement effective parent and family engagement activities through such events as meetings with school principals, meetings with family-groups, providing financial support for allowable parent and family engagement functions, literacy and technology parent trainings, and other pertinent activities per request. Weakley County Schools promotes family and community support in programs for English Language Learners (ELL) students.

2-Communicating Effectively:

The Weakley County School District publishes and distributes a Student Handbook, which is sent home to each family at the beginning of each school year. This book contains most of the pertinent information and policies that families need, including a directory for schools with personnel and phone numbers. To ensure that school related information regarding programs, meetings, and other activities is available to parents in a format that can be easily understood, the Weakley County School District will maintain a system-wide website. One feature on this website is a listing of grade level curriculum by month so that families will know what their child is learning. Information regarding meetings, special events and school lunch menus will also appear in the local newspapers and radio PSAs. More school specific information can also be found on each schools' webpage. Each parent also has access to ParentVue, which is a free online program that enables them to view grades, attendance, school schedules and behavior reports daily. Teacher contact information is also available on this link. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, ClassDojo, Remind 101 and Robo Calls are other options that aide in further communication with parents.

3-Supporting School Success 4- Speak up for Each Child:

The Weakley County School District provides training for families and staff in ways to implement new initiatives under Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Showing our commitment toward supporting school success and our desire for families to better advocate for their children. Weakley County Schools has employed a Parent and Family Engagement Coordinator with the intent to act as a liaison between schools and families. It is our hope a more comfortable environment will be created by implementing a better foundation for communication between teachers and parents. Families will be able to better monitor their child's progress and have the confidence to partner with educators to improve student achievement.

5-Sharing Power:

The Weakley County School District holds an annual meeting to which families, school personnel, and interested citizens are invited to have input and ask questions about both the design and implementation of all federally funded school programs, including parent and family engagement requirements. One important part of these requirements is to annually evaluate the content and effectiveness of the parent and family engagement plan.

6-Collaborating with Community:

The Weakley County School District meets, coordinates strategies and plans with other programs having similar goals and responsibilities for parent and family engagement, including but not limited to Reading First, Pre-School, and Head Start.

Standard(s) Addressed	School: <u>Dresden High</u> Family and Community Involvement Activities	Event Occurrence
2	Title I Meeting	August
2	Student Planning	All Year
2	Progress Reports	Every 3 Wks.
2	School Compact	August
2	School Website	All Year
2	School Newsletter	Quarterly
2	Senior Parent Newsletter	September
2	Report Cards	Every 6 Wks.
2, 3	Financial Aid Workshop	October
1, 2, 4	Freshman Parent Orientation Meeting	March
1	Academic Banquet	April
1, 2	FFA/Alumni Meeting	Monthly
2,3,4,5,6	School Improvement Plan	All Year
1	FCCLA Veterans Day Program	Yearly
1	HOSA Fundraisers	3-4 Times
1	HOSA Chaperones to Competitions	2 Times
1	HOSA Parents as Drivers for Competition Trip	2 Times
1, 3	HOSA Parents as Guest Speakers	2 Times
1, 2, 3	HOSA Meetings, Calls, Emails, Open House, and Orientation	All Year
1, 2	Athletic Parent Meetings	All Year
1, 3, 6	Athletic Team Events	All Year
1, 3, 6	FFA Banquet and Awards Night	Spring
1, 2, 3, 5	Senior Parent Meeting	September
1, 2, 3, 5	Junior Parent Meeting	April
1, 3	Athletic Awards Night Banquet	2 Times
3, 6	Community Service Projects – BETA	All Year
2, 6	Principal is Member of the Rotary Club	All Year
2	Weakley County Handbook	August
2, 3	Call Parents to Check on Absentees/Tardies/Lack of Progress	All Year
3	After School Help Sessions	All Year
2, 3	Letters Sent Home Regarding Failures and Suspensions	All Year
3, 6	Choral Concerts and Community Appearances	Monthly
3, 6	Pop Band	Monthly
3,5	STEM Construction Competition to Help Needy Families	October
2, 6	Communication Through Social Media (Facebook)	Daily
1, 2, 6	Parent Teacher Conference	Semester
5, 6	FCCLA and HOSA St. John's Basketball Night	February
5, 6	FCCLA Nursing Home Project	December
1, 4, 6	Christmas Toy Drive	December
1, 4, 6	HOSA/WCMT Can Drive	December
1, 4, 6	Operation Shoe Box	December
1, 4, 6	FBLA Angel Tree Gifts	December

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Standard(s) Addressed	School: Gleason Family and Community Involvement Activities	Event Occurrence
1,2,3,4,5,6	Title I Meeting	August
1, 3, 6	Open House	Fall
1, 2, 3, 5	6 th Grade Orientation Night	August
1, 6	UTM Farm Day	Fall
1	Thanksgiving Meal with Parents and Grandparents	November
1	J.O.Y. Senior Citizen Dinner	December
1, 6	Community Can Caravan Partnership with WCMT	December
1, 3, 6	Hometown Christmas Student Ornaments at City Hall	December
1, 6	UTM Basketball Game	Spring
1, 6	Bulldog Be Mine Event	February
1	Little Dribblers/Little Spirits Parent Nights at the Gym	Spring
1	Pancakes with Parents	March
6	Farm Bureau Chick Hatching Co-Op	Spring
3	JH "Citizen of the Six Weeks" Recognitions	Each 6 Wks.
1, 3	Academic Awards Programs – Elementary	Dec. & May
1, 3	Honors Banquet – JH and HS	May
1, 3	Beta Inductions – Elem, JH, and HS	May
1, 3	Athletic Banquets – JH and HS	Spring
1, 3	Reading Celebration	May
1, 3	Kindergarten and Pre-K Graduation	May
1, 3	High School Graduation	May
2	Teacher Newsletters	All Year
3	Honor/Merit Roll Program (grades 6-12)	Each 6 Wks.
1,2,3,4,5,6	GSA (Parent Organization)	All Year
1,2,3,4,5,6	GSAA (Alumni Association)	All Year
2	Front Yard Digital Marquee	All Year
2, 4	Absentee Update Calls to Parents	Mondays
1, 2, 4	IEP Meetings	All Year
2, 4	Parent Teacher Conference	Twice Yearly
2, 4	Student Planners	All Year
2	Progress Reports	Mid 6 Wks.
2	School Compact	August
1,2,5,6	Parent Teacher Advisory Committee	All Year
2	School Website	All Year
2	Report Cards	Every 6 Wks.
1, 6	Guest Readers	All Year
2, 3	Financial Aid Workshop	January
2, 3	Four Year Plan Registration for Incoming Freshmen	Spring
1, 3	Academic Awards Banquet	May
1	Fall Fest	Fall
6	Veterans Day Program	November
6	Woodmen of the World	All Year

Standard(s) Addressed	School: Greenfield Family and Community Involvement Activities	Event Occurrence
1, 3	K-3 Reading First Parent Night	August
1, 2, 3, 5	8 th Grade Parent Night (scheduling for high school)	April
1, 2, 3, 4	Parent Teacher Conference	Twice Per Yr.
1, 2	Open House	August
1	Honor Roll Program	Every 6 Wks.
3	Weekly Readers Program	Yearly
1, 2, 3	Dual Enrollment Meeting (college classes in high school)	August
2	School Compact	August
2	Weakley County Schools Handbook	August
2	School Based Website	All Year
6	Community Service Projects/BETA	All Year
2	Monthly Calendars	Monthly
1, 3	Athletic Booster Club (officers/members)	All Year
6	Veterans Day Program	November
2	School Marquee	All Year
1, 2	Awards Programs	May
2	Student Planners/Agendas 6-12	All Year
2	Call Parents to Check on Absentees/Lack of Progress	All Year
2, 3, 6	Financial Aid Informational Meeting (partnership w/UTM)	December
1, 2, 3, 6	FAFSA – Assistance with Financial Aid Paperwork (w/UTM)	January
2, 3	Four Year Planning for Incoming Freshmen	Spring
1	Parents Have Lunch with Child	As Desired
2, 4, 5	IEP Meetings	All Year
1, 6	UTM Farm Day Chaperones	Fall
1, 6	UTM Basketball Games/Chaperones	Fall
1, 2, 3, 4	Progress Reports Every Three Weeks	All Year
1	Holiday Parties-Chaperones	As Needed
1	Donuts With Dad	Spring
1	Muffins With Mom	Fall
1	Grandparents Day	September
1	May Day	May
1, 6	Athletics Banquet	Spring
6	Fire Prevention Week/Fire Safety Carnival	October
1	Kindergarten Graduation	May
1, 3	Beta Club meetings/trips/chaperones	All Year
1, 6	Harvest Carnival	October
1, 2, 3, 4	Phone calls to parents regarding meetings, etc.	All Year

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