

Family Engagement Plan Overview

Family engagement is defined as:

“The mutual responsibility of families, schools, and communities to build relationships to support student learning and achievement, support family well-being, and the continuous learning and development of children, families, and educators. Family engagement is fully integrated in the child’s educational experience and is both culturally and linguistically appropriate.” Texas Administrative Code §102.1003

It has long been recognized by both researchers and practitioners that family engagement play a non-negotiable role in education. It is no longer a suggestion, rather a mandate, in Texas with the passage of house Bill 4 in 2015. Texas Education Code §29.168, created by House Bill 4, 84th Texas Legislature, 2015, requires a school district or charter school to develop and implement a **Family Engagement Plan** to assist the district in achieving and maintaining high levels of family involvement and positive family attitudes toward education. The local **Family Engagement Plan** shall be based on the family engagement strategies established by Texas Education Agency in collaboration with other state agencies.

The Cross Plains ISD Prekindergarten/Early Childhood program embraces the individuality and uniqueness of families, and promotes a culture of learning that is child centered and age appropriate. Building partnerships between educators and families, by way of the **Family Engagement Plan**, ensures that every learner is encouraged, supported, and challenged to achieve the highest levels of knowledge, skills, and character.

The six Cross Plains ISD **Family Engagement Plan** strategies are based on empirical research and are proven to demonstrate positive short-term and long-term outcomes for early childhood education. This plan expresses what is contained in the Commissioner’s Rule (102.1003(f)) in addition to specific examples of how each of the family engagement strategies will be accomplished in our high quality PK program. The following articulates strategies within each of the six domains (A-F).

Strategies in Action: (A) Facilitating Family-to-Family Support

Cross Plains ISD's Pre- Kindergarten program creates a safe and respectful environment where families can learn from each other as individuals and in groups, and ensures opportunities for continuous participation in events designed for families. Examples of events include:

- Parent Teacher Organization Meetings and Activities
- Pre-K Roundup and Child Find registration
- PK Holiday Class Events supported by parents and volunteers
- Back to School Meetings and "Meet the Teacher Night"
- School Supplies Drive for families in need
- Class field trips and other activities that involve parents.

Strategies in Action: (B) Establishing a Network of Community Resources

The CP ISD PK Family Engagement Plan builds strategic partnerships by leveraging community resources; establishing and maintaining partnerships with faith-based organizations, and community agencies; monitoring and evaluating policies and practices to stimulate innovation and create learning pathways; identifying support from various agencies, including mental and physical health providers; partnering with local community-based organizations to create a family-friendly transition plan for students arriving from early childhood settings; and identifying partners to provide translators and culturally relevant resources reflective of home language. Examples of Strategies in Action (B) include:

- Cross Plains Public Library LAP program
- Resource Care Clinic connections
- Methodist Church Family Back Pack Weekend Meal Plan
- Title 1 Parent meetings
- Holiday Gift partners with local business for families in need
- Campus counselor assistance for short term family guidance and needs

- Pre-K Roundup flyers distributed to all elementary students to help share information about PreK.
- CP ISD translation services available for families through the counselor or Resource Care services.

Strategies in Action: (C) Increasing Family Participation in Decision-Making

Cross Plains ISD increases/promotes family participation in decision-making by developing and supporting opportunities related to district and campus goal-setting efforts targeting family engagement. CPISD utilizes appropriate tools such as surveys to gather feedback on the Family Engagement Plan. Examples of family participation in district and campus decision-making opportunities include:

- Campus Site-Based Decision-Making Committee composed of campus staff, community partners, parents, and business representatives focusing on planning, curriculum, budgeting, staff development, overall school organization, all with the intent of improving the achievement of all learners at the campus
- LPAC parent representation
- Regularly held parent/teacher conferences
- Parent surveys and parent communication process in an effort to be uniformly consistent and productive with survey results.

Strategies in Action D: Equipping Families with Tools to Enhance and Extend Learning

Pre-Kindergarten educators in CP ISD recognize the families of our learners as the first and best teachers in the child's life. In order to equip families with tools to enhance and extend their child's learning, our educators work with families to design or implement existing home educational resources to support learning at home while strengthening the family/school partnership; provide families with information and/or training on creating a home

learning environment connected to formal learning opportunities; equip families with resources and skills to support their children through the transition to school and offering opportunities for families and children to visit the school in advance of the pre-kindergarten school year; collaborate with families to appropriately respond to children's behavior in a non-punitive, positive, and supportive way; and assist families to implement best practices that will help achieve the goals and objectives identified to meet the needs of the child and family. Examples of how CP ISD equips families with tools to enhance and extend learning include:

- ISD offers a high-quality half day PK program to eligible learners, enhancing and extending socialization and facilitating parent involvement for Pre-K families
- Teacher/parent conferences held throughout the school year and collaborating with them in setting goals for their children while in the PK program
- Encouraging family members to volunteer in the classroom, using the time to foster enhanced communication regarding their child's development
- Utilize parent survey results to create parent workshops reflecting parent choice and interest, possibly in a mini-session platform
- Publish a monthly calendar of events with suggested extension home activities that correspond to activities done in the classroom
- Educator webpages include recommended learning links
- Parents are encouraged to access class/campus/district information from the Parent Portal on the CISD website
- Parents are provided with learner progress by way of regular report cards, weekly teacher communication, etc.

Strategies in Action: (E) Developing Staff Skills in Evidence-Based Practices that Support Families

Cross Plains ISD believes in a continuous improvement philosophy. We provide essential professional development for educators in understanding communication and engagement with families, including training on communicating with families in crisis; promoting and developing family engagement as a core strategy to improve teaching and learning among all

educators and staff; and developing staff skills to support and use culturally diverse, culturally relevant, and culturally responsive family engagement strategies. Strategies in Action (E) include:

- Develop educator skills to support and use culturally diverse, culturally relevant, and culturally responsive family engagement strategies
- Promoting and developing family engagement as a core strategy to improve teaching and learning among all educators and staff
- Continuous professional development achieved through training opportunities from Region 14, Early Childhood Annual Conferences
- Utilize developmentally appropriate activities to help children understand differences in families, cultures and traditions
- Educators will continue training targeting how to support families in crisis
- Train educator about the resources that are available in the community that support families' interests and needs
- Educators will participate in professional learning that focuses on strength-based approach to family engagement
- Utilization of resources available in CLI Engage and Circle Progress Monitoring platforms
- Provide Child Find services for early childhood families.

Strategies in Action: (F) Evaluating Family Engagement Efforts and Using Evaluation for Continuous Improvement

Self-assessment will be a cornerstone to the overall process of evaluating for program effectiveness and to support future improvements. Our PK program develops a data collection systems that monitor family engagement; uses data to ensure alignment between family engagement activities and district/school teaching and learning goals and to promote continuous family engagement; employs an evaluation plan to guide action; uses a cyclical process to ensure evaluation results are used for continuous improvement and adjustment; and ensures educators and

parents play a role in the family engagement evaluation process. Efforts contributing to the evaluation process include:

- Parent surveys will gain information on preferences of program components and parents' perception of program effectiveness. Survey results serve to improve program design and to increase parent outreach and involvement.
- CISD will conduct an annual EOY program evaluation and review of the results will support improvement efforts for the new school year considering all areas of the **Family Engagement Plan**.
- Child-centered goals setting collaborations with parents will continue at the BOY. Progress monitoring and reporting will occur at the BOY, MOY, and EOY
- Survey parents at least annually on the effectiveness of the prekindergarten experience for their child and their family
- Incorporating goals related to family engagement into the program/campus strategic planning initiatives
- Utilize the "High Quality Checklist" for Family Engagement Plan provided by Region 10 ESC.
- Utilize the "High Quality Pre-Kindergarten Self-Assessment" instrument created by the TEA to include results indicating strengths, opportunities to grow, and next steps for continuous improvement.
- Participation in family involvement activities will be quantitatively documented and monitored at the campus/district levels. Qualitative data will be collected to ensure the specific needs of families are being address through surveys. Evaluation results will future planning efforts in an effort to optimize family involvement within the school and Cross Plains community.

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