

Irving ISD Early Childhood Family Engagement Plan

2023-24 SY

The Irving ISD Family Engagement Plan contains the six mandated components from the High-Quality Prekindergarten Commissioners Rule and how those components and strategies are implemented in our district. We believe:

- that parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning
- that parents are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child
- that parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education

Strategy 1: Facilitate Family Support

(i) Creating a safe and respectful environment where families can learn from each other as individuals and groups

(ii) Inviting former program participants, including families and community volunteers, to share their education and career experiences with current families

(iii) Ensuring opportunities for continues participation in events designed for families by families

Activities in Irving ISD include:

- "Meet the Teacher" nights facilitating family to family interactions
- Parent Centers in each elementary and early childhood school building to facilitate an inclusive community space where parents can gather and talk with one another before/during/after the school day as well as volunteer in their child's school
- Parent Orientation Night during the first few weeks of school that guide parents through the curriculum, expectations, and campus/classroom procedures, as well as provide the families time with each other to build informal support structures with other families
- Parent-Teacher Organizations such as PTOs/PTAs are established at each early childhood and elementary school that provide support for parents and provides the opportunity to be involved in the organization

- Campuses host many informal and formal events throughout the year to bring families together to learn, support one another, and to have fun. Examples of events on campuses include PTO/PTA programs, literacy nights, math nights, family picnics, and Open House.
- Facilitate All Pro Dads on each elementary and early childhood school
- Provide district-wide communications in native languages of our families

Strategy 2: Establish a Network of Community Resources

- (i) Building strategic partnerships
- (ii) Leveraging community resources
- (iii) Monitoring and evaluation policies and practices to stimulate innovation and create learning pathways
- (iv) Establishing and maintaining partnerships with businesses, faith-based organizations, and community agencies
- (v) Identifying support from various agencies, including mental and physical health providers
- (vi) Partnering with local community-based organizations to create a family friendly transition plan for students arriving from early childhood settings
- (vii) Communication of short- and long-term program goals to all stakeholders
- (viii) Identifying partners to provide translators and culturally relevant resources reflective of home language

Activities in Irving ISD include:

- The district partners with the Irving Schools Foundations to help provide food, backpacks, and school supplies for students
- The district partners with the YMCA to provide low cost after school care for students at the elementary campuses
- The district partners with Head Start of Greater Dallas to provide nine Head Start classes in the district
- All information provided to parents is translated into Spanish and can be translated into other languages as needed
- The district hosts an annual Community Agency Fair in the spring providing parents connections to community resources available to them

- Parent Liaisons at the elementary campuses and the counselors at the early childhood campuses support parents with immediate and short-term needs
- The district [Adult Education and Literacy](#) department provides classes and support on topics such as citizenships, digital literacy, GED attainment (English and Spanish), ESL and literacy, and job supported ESL classes.
- District [Parent Engagement Newsletters](#) are sent out monthly
- Immunization clinics are held throughout the school year to provide free immunizations to students

Strategy 3: Increase Family Participation in Decision Making

- (i) Developing and supporting a family advisory council
- (ii) Developing, adopting, and implementing identified goals within the annual campus/school improvement plan targeting family engagement
- (iii) Developing and supporting leadership skills for family members and providing opportunities for families to advocate for their children
- (iv) Collaborating with families to develop strategies to solve problems and serve as problem solvers
- (v) Engaging families in shaping program activities and cultivating the expectation that information must flow in both directions to reflect two-way communication
- (vi) Developing, in collaboration with families, clearly defined goals, outcomes, timelines, and strategies for assessing progress
- (vii) Providing each family with an opportunity to review and provide input on program practiced policies, communications, and events in order to ensure the program is responsive to the needs of families
- (viii) Using appropriate tools such as surveys or focus groups to gather family feedback on family engagement

Activities in Irving ISD include:

- Campus Site-Based Decision-Making Committee (CIC) composed of parents, campus staff, district staff, community partners, and business representatives are implemented on each campus and focus on planning,

curriculum, budgeting, staff development, overall school organization, all with the intent of improving the achievement of all learners at the school and overall improvement of campus wide programs, including family engagement

- District Site-Based Decision-Making Committee (DIC) composed of parents, campus staff, district staff, community partners, and business representatives focus on planning, curriculum, budgeting, staff development, overall district organization, all with the intent of improving the achievement of all learners in the district and overall improvement of district wide programs, including family engagement
- Parents/guardians are encouraged to complete a questionnaire about their child at the beginning of the school year to guide teachers with a starting point to partner with each family to set mutual goals for the child
- Families are encouraged to complete a Parent Survey in the spring to be used in improving programs/services on the campus
- Title 1 elementary campuses create, with the help of a parent committee, a Parent Compact, with mutual agreements between the school and families on the roles and responsibilities of both parties to maximize the success of their students
- Parents representatives are included on the LPAC Committee and on the PTA/PTO boards
- Families are encouraged to attend parent conferences throughout the school year, with both the parent and the teacher providing important information and setting goals to support student success

Strategy 4: Equip Family with Tools to Enhance and Extend Learning

- (i) Providing families with updates at least three times per year that specify student progress in health and wellness, language and communication, emergent literacy reading, emergent literacy writing, and mathematics
- (ii) Designing or implementing existing home educational resources to support learning at home while strengthening the family/school partnership
- (iii) Providing families with information and/or training on creating home learning environments connected to formal learning opportunities
- (iv) Equipping 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 prekindergarten school year

- (v) Providing complementary home learning activities for families to engage in at home with children through information presented in newsletters, online technology, social media, parent/family teacher conferences, or other school related events
- (vi) Providing families with information, best practices, and training related to age-appropriate developmental expectations
- (vii) Emphasizing benefits of positive family practices such as attachment and nurturing that complement the stages of children's development
- (viii) Collaborating with families to appropriately respond to children's behavior in non-punitive, positive, supportive way
- (ix) Encouraging families to reflect on family experiences and practices in helping children
- (x) Assisting families to implement best practices that will help achieve the goals and objectives identified to meet the needs of the child and family

Activities in Irving ISD include:

- Teacher/parent conferences are held throughout the school year with the teacher and parents collaborating on goals for a successful prekindergarten year
- Sharing technology resources that are family friendly to connect parents, communicate information and enhance parent/guardian knowledge on child development topics
 - Resources include (but are not limited to):
 - ReadyRosie
 - SeeSaw
 - Savvas/Frog Street Newsletter
 - Savvas Family Engagement Portal (PreK 4)
 - Unite for Literacy
 - CLI Engage Family Activities
- Newsletters are provided each month from curriculum resources Savvas (PreK 4) and Frog Street (PreK 3) to provide information on the skills, concepts from the thematic unit being taught that month
- CLI Engage Circle Assessment Reports are sent home three times a year (October, January, and May) on student progress in health and wellness, language and communication, emergent literacy reading, emergent

literacy writing, and mathematics as well as activities from the CLI Engage Family Portal that provides parents support to help their child at home

- The district Home Instruction for Parents of PreSchool Youngsters (HIPPY) program is offered to parents of children between the ages of 3-5. This program trains parents on how to work with their child(ren) in the areas of literacy, math, science, motor, and language through weekly home instruction and role playing. [HIPPY Website](#)
- Report cards are sent home each six weeks providing parents with progress of their child on the PreK Guidelines
- Parents are encouraged to attend parenting classes at their home campus that are based on survey results of parent needs
- Families are encouraged to volunteer on their campus. Each campus has a parent room for parent volunteers.
- The district [PreK Website](#) has links to resources that support parents in the success of their early childhood student
- Family Nights are held throughout the school year to provide support for parents and modeling activities that can assist or extend learning at home (such as Literacy Night, Math Night, Science Night)

Strategy 5: Develop Staff Skills in Evidence-based Practices that Support Families in Meeting their Children's Learning Benchmarks

- (i) Providing essential professional development for educators in understanding communication and engagement with families, including training on communicating with families in crisis
- (ii) Promoting and developing family engagement as a core strategy to improve teaching and learning among all educators and staff
- (iii) Developing staff skills to support and use culturally diverse, culturally relevant, and culturally responsive family engagement strategies

Activities in Irving ISD Include:

- Developing educator skills to support and use culturally diverse, culturally relevant, and culturally responsive family engagement strategies
- Continuous professional development opportunities for educators at the campus/district level as well as through Region 10 to meet the High Quality PreK Requirements of professional learning
- Child Find training for early childhood educators and instructional aides

- Utilizing developmentally appropriate activities/books to help children understand similarities and differences in families, cultures and traditions
- Training PreK educators and parent liaisons on the resources that are available in the community and district that support families interests and needs

Strategy 6: Evaluate Family Engagement Efforts and Use Evaluations for Continuous Improvement

- (i) Conducting goal-oriented home visits to identify strengths, interest, and needs
- (ii) Developing data collection systems to monitor family engagement and focusing on engagement of families from specific populations to narrow the achievement gap
- (iii) Using data to ensure alignment between family engagement activities and district/school teaching and learning goals and to promote continuous family engagement
- (iv) Ensuring an evaluation plan is an initial component that guides actions
- (v) Using a cyclical process to ensure evaluation results are used for continuous improvement and adjustment
- (vi) Ensuring teachers play a role in the family engagement process

Activities in Irving ISD include:

- Annual parent surveys on district programs components give parents the opportunity to share their perception of successful implementation and ways to improve the program and/or increase involvement
- Utilizing the High-Quality Prekindergarten Self-Assessment instrument from the Texas Education Agency to determine strengths, opportunities to grow and next steps for continuous improvement for our early childhood program
- Utilizing the Region 10 High Quality Checklist for Parent Engagement to self-assess our parent engagement program and areas of improvement

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