

**2024-2025**  
**High-Quality PreKindergarten**  
**Family Engagement Plan**  
**East Fort Worth Montessori Academy**

Our Mission/Vision:

We partner with families to provide high-quality Montessori education to build foundational skills during children's formative years.

Maria Montessori believed that during the formative years of education, children are sponges and they are excited to learn independently as the teacher guides their formation of skills, independence, choices, and play. It is a mandate in Texas with the approval 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 the Texas Education Agency in collaboration with other state agencies.

East Fort Worth Montessori Academy Pre-K program embraces the uniqueness of families and promotes a child-centered and age-appropriate learning culture. Building partnerships between educators and families, through the Family Engagement Plan ensures that every child is encouraged, supported, and challenged to achieve the the best and become the best version of themselves.

The six East Fort Worth Montessori Academy Family Engagement Plan strategies are based on research, input, and dialogue which have proven to demonstrate positive impacts on our outcomes. This plan encompasses what is contained in the Commissioner's Rule (102.1003(f)) in addition to examples of how each of the family engagement strategies will be accomplished in our high-quality Early Childhood Program. The following presents strategies within each of the six domains:

## Strategies in Action: (1) Facilitating Family-to-Family Support

EFWMA's Early Childhood Program creates a safe and respectful environment where families can learn from each other as individuals and in groups, including volunteering within the school and sharing their educational and career experiences with other families. It ensures opportunities for participation in events designed for families. Examples of events include:

- Pre-K Back to School Night - In August, families who qualify for the Pre-Kindergarten program receive information about their teacher, administrator, and community resources to help start the school year. Meet the teacher and other families in the class.
- Curriculum Night - At the end of each nine weeks, parents are invited to the classroom to view students' work, watch them perform, watch them model what they've learned and receive information for the following nine weeks. It creates a welcoming space for parents and teachers to talk about concerns and share community resources and information.
- Room moms/dads volunteer to support classroom activities
- ELL Parents Meet Up - SIOP strategies are implemented to reiterate strategies parents can use when instructing students. Montessori's Practical Life and Sensorial materials are used to demonstrate developmentally appropriate practices.
- Meeting with a Campus or District Administrator - Town Hall meetings are hosted twice a year to provide an opportunity for parents to connect and share experiences, in addition to voicing concerns and creating collaborative solutions.
- Quarterly Cultural Events - provides an opportunity for families to share their cultures with the community, staff, and students. Students perform plays, songs and dances from various cultures.
- Open House - is held in November and March to allow families to connect with their teacher and staff at each campus and see work samples and their child's progress.
- School Events - Red Ribbon week kick-off, Veteran's Day, Leader In Me House Meetings, Moms Breakfast, Dads Breakfast, Grandparents Breakfast.
- Schoolwide Book Fair Week happens twice a year (December and May)
- PTO meetings - encourages parents to volunteer
- Class field trips and other activities that invite family and community participation: Fire Station 20, Pumpkin Patch and Butterfly Garden
- Campus advisory committees provide opportunities for parents to give administrators at EFWMA feedback.
- ECSE Transition Newsletter

### Strategies in Action: (2) Establishing a Network of Community Resources

The EFWMA Family Engagement Plan partners with community organizations to apply for resources. We have established partnerships with business, and community agencies. We invite the community, parents, teachers, and upper elementary students to give input on our policies. We partner with Tarrant County Health to support us with resources and information on mental health. Our ESL Department provides translators and culturally relevant resources to reflect the home language of the family. Examples of Strategies in Action (B) include:

- Partner with Eastside Public Library to showcase students art work and visits for reading time.
- We partner with Firestation 20 and the Police Department to read to students.
- Partners with ESL Department to secure interpreters and translator.
- District Kinder Round Up - transitioning learners from their early childhood class to the kindergarten class.
- Quarterly Smores and District messages to inform parents about events and academic standards with activities.

### Strategies in Action: (3) Increasing Family Participation in Decision-Making

EFWMA promotes and cultivates family participation in decision-making by inviting parents to either the ESL SIP Parent Meetings or PTO Meetings, or Advisory Meetings to give input on policies, processes and goals for the school. The strategies outlined in Strategy two supports building leadership skills for family members and providing opportunities for families to advocate for their children/families while collaborating with families to develop strategies to solve problems. Cultivating a culture of transparency and two-way communication with families has supported the creating of clearly defined goals, outcomes, timelines, and strategies for assessing progress; providing each family with an opportunity to review and provide input on program practices, policies, communications, and events to ensure the program is responsive to the needs of families. EFWMA uses certain tools such as surveys, town hall meetings to gather feedback on the Family Engagement Plan. Examples of family participation in district and campus decision-making opportunities include:

- EFWMA Advisory/Site Base Committee/SHAC committee includes parents, business and community members, educators, administrators and other district staff to advise district leadership in establishing and reviewing district education goals, objectives, and major district-wide classroom instructional programs
- ESL/LPAC Committee - is a committee of Emergent Bilingual families and EFWMA staff coming together to review continuous improvement of ESL/Bilingual supports and services at EFWMA.
- EFWMA maintains an environment that values parent engagement, leadership and involvement.

- Home Visits to support and guide parents with creating home made montessori materials to support their child.
- LPAC and ARD parent representation
- Regularly held parent/teacher conferences: CLI Engage, EC Progress Monitoring Tool,
- Progress monitoring/Report card information is shared with parents encouraging their feedback, questions, and ideas regarding future learning experiences.

#### Strategies in Action: (4) Equipping Families with Tools to Enhance and Extend Learning

Pre-Kindergarten educators at EFWMA recognize the families as the first teachers in the child's life. To equip families with tools to enhance and extend their child's learning, teachers make home visits and host curriculum night to show parents how to create education resources to support learning at home while strengthening the family/school partnership; equip families with resources and skills to support their children as they advance kinder and first grade. Teachers also work with an independent community agency to provide complementary home learning activities for families to engage in a home with children through the breakdown of TEKS standards. Parents receive this information through text. Other information is presented in newsletters, parent/family-teacher conferences, sheltered instruction operation protocols for ELL learners and emergent bilingual learners. Information on age-appropriate developmental expectations is also provided through our room parents group meetings. Examples of how EFWMA equips families with tools to enhance and extend learning include:

- Fastalk Academic Resource activities for TEKS Standards. It is also an engagement tool where parents/guardians receive weekly information and activities that align with our curriculum. It gives parents activities to participate in learning at home and includes scripted activities.
- Teacher/parent conferences held throughout the school year. Collaborating with parents to set goals and expectations for their children while in the Pre-Kindergarten program
- Pre-Kindergarten channel on the district webpage that shares information supports learning for children participating in the program
- Districtwide academic activities and resources for home
- Homevisits for family engagement and family engagement.
- ELL Meetings for parents to create and work together.

### Strategies in Action: (5) Developing Staff Skills in Evidence-Based Practices

EFWMA believes in a continuous improvement philosophy while humanizing what we do to support all internal and external stakeholders to be successful. 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; providing academic support through SIOP strategies and developing staff skills to support to be culturally responsive.

Strategies in Action (E) include:

- Develop educator skills to support and use culturally responsive awareness with diverse families.
- Promoting and developing family engagement as a core strategy to improve teaching and learning among all educators and staff
- Continuous professional learning achieved through Early Childhood training opportunities at Region 11
- Continuous professional learning on curriculum, supplemental curriculum, evidence-based instructional strategies, and PK Guidelines
- Educators partner with Instructional Coaches for continued professional development and coaching
- Learning how to keep a prepared Montessori classroom for our early childhood learning environments.
- Utilization of resources available in CLI Engage and Circle Progress Monitoring platforms,
- Continuing membership in the Region 11 Co-op as a means of professional learning,
- Child Find training for early childhood educators/paraprofessionals throughout the school year.

## Strategies in Action: (6) Evaluating Family Engagement Efforts and Using Evaluation for Continuous Improvement

Self-assessment supports continuous improvement as we analyze our measurable outcomes and evaluate our programs effectiveness. Our Fasttalk resource develops a data collections system that monitors family communication and our homevisits tracks family engagement. We use the data to ensure alignment between family engagement activities and district/school teaching and learning goals and to promote continuous family engagement. Efforts contributing to the evaluation process include:

- Parent surveys to gain information on parents' perceptions of program effectiveness. Survey results serve to improve program design and to increase parent outreach and involvement.
- EFWMA will conduct an annual EOY program evaluation and a review of the results will support improvement efforts for the new school year considering all areas of the Family Engagement Plan.
- Common Needs Assessment is sent each spring to collect data about where the needs are districtwide and to project and adjust budgets as needed.
- 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.
- 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 documented and monitored at the campus/district levels. Qualitative data will be collected to ensure the specific needs of families are being addressed through surveys.

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