

**WEST SIDE ELEMENTARY  
FAMILY INVOLVEMENT PLAN  
2016 – 2017**

West Side Elementary:  
Parent Involvement Coordinator  
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Principal  
John Wright

PTO Officers  
President – Alainya Hare  
Treasurer – Lisa Simerly  
Secretary – Regina May

**West Side Elementary School**  
**Parent/Family Involvement Plan**

**School Motto:**

*Willing! Striving! Excelling!*

**School Mission Statement**

The mission of West Side Elementary is to provide a safe, encouraging, and engaging environment which will promote the development of respectful, responsible lifelong learners.

**Parental Engagement Definition**

National PTA standards define parental involvement as the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities. This involvement insures that 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. Parents and community members are included in development and evaluation of policies and programs at the school, and are active participants in decisions regarding their child's education through contact with teachers, administrators, and by serving on advisory boards and committees within the school.

The West Side Elementary Family and Community Engagement Plan is considered a living document and is updated yearly in response to parent input, school survey responses and changing needs of our school and student population. The plan is reported to parent and community members in a yearly meeting at the beginning of each school year, listed on our website, and on file in our parent corner. Parents and others are encouraged to comment on the plan and our PTO board and parent advisory committee work closely with our staff to help develop and approve the contents of the plan. The plan is presented in language the parents can understand, and can be translated at parent request. The plan will be read orally and discussed at the annual meeting to help parents with limited literacy skills to understand and be able to provide input.

At West Side, we acknowledge that collaborative efforts between school and home are essential to achieve academic success. We know that parents are children's first educators and their encouragement and support are vital. Studies indicate that students are more likely to succeed in school when parents or other family members are engaged in their school life. When schools, families, and community groups work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, stay in school longer, and like school more. This finding seems to hold true regardless of student grade level, race/ethnicity, socio-economic status, or parent level of education.

The Tennessee standards listed below are based on the **PTA's National Standards for Family-School Partnerships**. These standards were adopted by the State Board of Education on July 30, 2010.

**The standards and our strategies for implementation are as follows:**

1. **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. These events have become West Side traditions and are held annually:
  - Open House each August
  - Fall Carnival
  - Family Reading Night (two annually)
  - Homecoming Tailgate Party for families
  - Field Day events for all grade levels
  - May Day Program Musical in May
  - Parent and Grandparent Lunch Weeks
  - Kids Night Out sponsored by PTAC
  - "Boo Hoo" Breakfast for K parents to aid transition from preschool
  - Book Fair Volunteers
  - Kamp Kindergarten
  - K Donut shop
  - Camp Explore – 5<sup>th</sup> grade annual trip with parent/teacher chaperones
  - First Grade Thanksgiving Feast for Families
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Valentine Dance
  
2. **Communicating Effectively-** Families and school staff engage in regular, meaningful communication about student learning.
  - Grade Cards each 9 weeks
  - Mid-Term Reports
  - Boomerang Folders each week
  - School Newsletter each month
  - Classroom newsletters, calendars- weekly
  - Two parent-teacher conferences per year system wide
  - Parent conferences **anytime** per parent or teacher request
  - Phone calls, e-mails, notes from individual teachers as needed
  - RTI meetings with parents
  - Message Line
  - Homework Assignment books – to be signed daily by parents
  - Teacher websites and blogs
  - Special Education Meetings with parents
  - Student Handbook given to all families at beginning of year includes parent pact.

3. **Supporting Student Success-** Families and school staff continuously work together to support students' learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.
  - Family Engagement Activities to train and encourage parental involvement
  - Renaissance Learning Parent- Connect Website
  - Pearson Success Net online
  - Study Island
  - School Nurse works closely with parents
  - School Counselor
  - TCAP results (literature and information explaining results provided)
  - Website link to Blueprint for Learning
  - Back Pack Program for families in need
  - Early Learning Center Parent meeting with K teachers
  - TAD staff visit WS fifth grades for orientation
  - WS fifth graders go to TAD for visitation day
  
4. **Speaking Up For Every 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.
  - Parent Center volunteers in K
  - Parent Advisory Committee
  - PTO board
  - RTI Meetings
  - Special Education meetings
  
5. **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.
  - PTO Parent Organization meetings monthly
  - RTI Meetings to discuss goals and interventions
  - Parent surveys and evaluations of PI activities
  - Parent Advisory Council for PI Plan
  
6. **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.
  - Participation in charity or fundraising activities that benefit both the school and community organization
  - Shoe Drive for East Tennessee Christian Home
  - Collection of supplies for Humane Society Animal Shelter (December)
  - Christmas "Angels" – in partnership with Churches and parent volunteers
  - Sycamore Shoals annual Heritage Day
  - Elizabethton City Police Department K-9 visit with 1<sup>st</sup> grade each year
  - "Back Pack" food program for at-risk students (partner with local churches)

- K Kids
- Canned foods drive partnership with Fast Cash Co.
- Partnership with Pizza Inn Restaurant for AR award trips
- Gym open for community Yoga Classes
- Gym used for EHS Basketball practice after school
- Gym used for local church and civic organization events at request

Title I parent involvement activities will be coordinated with family engagement in other programs such as ELL, preschool programs, and homeless education. Our Kindergarten teachers hold an orientation meeting for parents and children each year jointly with our Early Learning Center. Children observe a “transition” day by visiting kindergarten classes in the school where they will attend. Homeless children are identified and served through our system wide program. All parent involvement activities are goal-oriented and designed to increase parent’s knowledge base and promote effective parenting practices at home. The meetings are flexible and take place at various times during the day and evening. Saturday meetings are held once per grading period to help students meet reading goals and offer parents information and support. Parent conferences are held in the morning, afternoon, or after school at parent request to help meet work schedules and provide opportunity for maximum parental input.

The West Side plan includes technical assistance for effective family engagement. Assistance is provided to parents in better understanding state standards, local assessments, and how to monitor a child’s progress and work with teachers to improve student achievement during open house meetings, conferences, and by teacher reports sent home. Parents have access to online resources and our computer lab is available to those who need assistance. After school tutoring and homework programs help improve achievement as well as offer assistance to parents. Early morning “Book Buddies” reading assistance is offered to students who may need extra support. Reasonable support for parent involvement activities, such as transportation, child care, or interpreter are provided at parent request.

West Side’s Family Engagement Plan provides for an evaluation process to promote continuous improvement of the involvement of all families. Annual surveys will be conducted to identify barriers to greater participation; to design more effective strategies, and to revise, if necessary, the parent involvement plan. Other surveys of reading, math home practices will help determine needed strategies and help the school provide meaningful engagement activities.

West Side faculty and staff are given adequate professional development in the importance of family engagement. Each staff member maintains records of parental involvement, with sign in sheets, agendas, and other documentation of contact. Articles taken from professional literature are distributed and discussed in PLC meetings and in general faculty meetings to educate staff of importance of having a family friendly school. Parental input from parent advisory meetings is incorporated into professional development programs to insure needs are being addressed. The goals for family involvement are presented to staff and parents during the open house and subsequent meetings, so all are aware of importance and commitment to family engagement.

The West Side Family Engagement Plan encourages families and school staff to work together to promote meaningful parent and family participation, raise awareness regarding the components of effective programs, and provide guidelines to improve and update our program of family involvement.