

909 PARENT INVOLVEMENT

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to affirm the School Board's position regarding the importance of parent/guardian and family involvement in their children's education and the Alexandria Public Schools District's commitment to family-school partnerships that support student achievement.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The school district will encourage all parents/guardians to be directly involved in their child's/children's education. We will foster genuine, caring relationships among administration, staff, students and their families. In order to support parents' abilities and interest in influencing and encouraging student success, appropriate parent education opportunities will be offered in a spirit of community collaboration and support of our children and their families. Our obligation to parents will be to regularly communicate with parents and seek their input regarding their children's education. We will provide timely and meaningful parent-teacher conferences, frequent reports to parents on their children's progress and reasonable access to all staff. Parents will be welcomed in our schools and encouraged to volunteer. We will monitor the need for and provide services such as translation, child care and transportation to enable all parents to be active participants in their children's schools. Through the support of the greater community and the active involvement of parents, Alexandria Public Schools will be a successful partner in providing the best possible educational opportunities for all students in our community.

III. NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR FAMILY – SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

Alexandria Public Schools hereby adopts the National Standards for Family/School Partnerships (as modified):

Standard 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.

Standard 2: Communicating effectively – Families and school staff engage in regular, meaningful communication about student learning.

Standard 3: Supporting student success – Families and school staff continuously collaborate 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.

Standard 4: Speaking up for every child – Families are empowered 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.

Standard 5: Sharing power – Families and school staff are partners in decisions that affect their children. Alexandria Public Schools works in partnership with parent groups and advisory committees to inform, influence and create policies, practices and programs to serve families and children.

Standard 6: Collaborating with community – Families and school staff collaborate with community members to connect students, families and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services and civic participation.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. The superintendent will ensure that parent/family involvement and education are supported at a district and site level, that the school calendar provides adequate opportunities for all parents to be involved in parent-teacher conferences and that district communication standards encourage frequent communication from school to families and allow parents reasonable access to school staff while protecting student-teacher instructional time as a top priority.
- B. Each principal will ensure an active parent group which supports parent education, parent volunteerism and parent involvement in site level decision-making.
- C. The district will work in partnership with local organizations and agencies to provide parent education, social services referrals and support for families in overcoming socio-economic barriers to active parent involvement in children's education.
- D. The district will annually survey parent perceptions regarding feeling welcome in the school, communication with the school and parent education and involvement opportunities at the school.

V. EXPRESSING MATTERS OF CONCERN

When parents have concerns about their child, staff or policy issues, they are encouraged to address the concerns as soon as possible to avoid issues escalating. Often, simple respectful communication will resolve an issue. The district believes that issues are best resolved at the level closest to the occurrence. Therefore, parents are asked to first contact the staff member closest to the situation, usually a teacher or coach. If a resolution cannot be found, the principal is the second contact. At the district level, the administrator closest to the issue should be the first point of contact. If resolution cannot be found at the principal or administrative level, the superintendent is the next level of contact.

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