

Family and Parent Engagement Policy 2025 - 2026

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ATLANTA AREA SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

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J. Jack Johnson, Superintendent

www.aasdweb.com

890 North Indian Creek Drive

Clarkston, GA 30021

(VP) 404-348-8414

Our mission at the Atlanta Area School for the Deaf is to provide a language-rich student-centered learning environment through American Sign Language and English for the purpose of empowering our students to live independent, fulfilling lives and to become productive, contributing members of society.

AASD's Family Engagement Policy

What is it?

This Family Engagement Policy outlines opportunities for families to support student learning and social-emotional health. AASD values the contributions and involvement of family members and believes meaningful partnerships with families are key.

How is it revised?

In the 2024 Policy Review meetings, parent surveys, and School-Parent Council meetings, stakeholders looked closely and suggested revisions to last year's policy which were then considered by school staff as they created this year's Family Engagement Policy.

Who is it for?

All AASD families are invited to participate fully in the opportunities described in this plan. AASD provides full access for families with limited English, parents, or guardians with disabilities, and those of migratory children.

Where is it available?

It is distributed to all students at the start of the school year. Copies are available in our Family Resource Room and on our website, www.aasdweb.com.

What is Title 1?

Atlanta Area School for the Deaf is a Title I school as identified by the, **Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015** (ESSA). Title I support state and local school reform efforts tied to challenging state academic standards to reinforce and enhance efforts to improve teaching and learning for students.

Title I program must be based on effective means of improving student achievement and include strategies to support family engagement. All Title I schools must jointly develop with all parents, a written Family and Parent Engagement Policy.

Annual Title 1 Meeting

Each year AASD hosts an Annual Title 1 Parent and Family meeting. A video version is also sent to all families and housed on the school website. The meeting explains AASD's Title 1 program, the nature of Title 1 programs, parental requirements, our Family Engagement Policy, the School-Parent Compact and our schoolwide plans for the new school year. The meeting also shares our school curriculums, state and local assessments measuring student growth, and AASD's performance profile, showing our school's progress toward meeting the learning goals of the Georgia Department of Education. Families will be notified about this meeting in advance in a variety of ways. Interpretation in ASL and Spanish is provided.

AASD 2025-2026 SCHOOL THEME:

LEARN ~ GROW ~ THRIVE

As we incorporate our school motto "*Excellence Everyday...That's the Panther Way!*" we will strive to build students' deep-rooted language base in ASL. A rich language base is essential to reading and literacy and leads to understanding in all academic areas.

Research shows that children's reading ability is linked to their foundational language skills. This means that students' reading level cannot exceed their foundational language level. For this reason, we work to increase the American Sign Language level of every student and work closely with families to nurture this language at home.

GROWTH MINDSET

A GROWTH mindset at AASD means a thriving, positive school climate. We cultivate this through:

- Collaborative planning
- The Ron Clark Academy Houses, incentive system
- Raising expectations for all stakeholders

AASD SCHOOL GOALS FOR 2025 – 2026

- Students will increase their American Sign Language (ASL) and bilingual literacy skills (ASL and English) through improved instruction and system-wide support.
- Students will increase their math skills through improved ASL integration and instruction across all classrooms.
- Students will demonstrate increased engagement, achievement, and well-being through consistent access to high-quality instruction, equitable support services, and a positive school climate.

Families as Partners

The Atlanta Area School for the Deaf believes in the participation of parents and guardians in regular two-way, meaningful communication to ensure that:

- Parents play a crucial role in assisting their child's school attendance.
- Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school and at home.
- Parents are full partners, included in decision-making regarding the education of their child.

Family Input

All family perspectives and viewpoints matter. All are invited to School Council meeting, held in September, November, January, March and May. We offer other meetings, live and virtually, at various days and times to accommodate family schedules. Meetings are interpreted in ASL, Spanish or other home languages. Individual and group conversations offering us feedback are always welcome.

Family Resource Room

Just off the front lobby at AASD is our Family Resource Room offering space to relax, work, meet with staff and/or find resources families may need.

Family Engagement Team

Our Family Engagement Team consists of the coordinator, Hispanic liaison, social worker, and front desk receptionist. The team partners with the IEP team, the nurse, teachers, and support staff to encourage wholistic engagement. Contact information for all can be found at the end of this document.

Parent and Family Engagement Standards

The National PTA Standards for Family-School Partnerships guide our family engagement.

- Welcoming All Families
- Communicating Effectively
- Supporting Student Success
- Speaking Up for Every Child
- Sharing Power
- Collaborating with Community

AASD partners with families by:

Providing professional learning and coaching opportunities for staff to build skills as they work with families to support children's learning.

Providing academic and social support materials, in a language families can understand. These include digital and printed materials.

Sharing information in English and Spanish with all families in a timely fashion, regarding school events and activities, through our website, email, phone calls and social media.

Collaborating with Babies Can't Wait (BCW) and Georgia PINES and offering specialized toddler and pre-school programs, including ASL classes and family support groups, to help prepare families and children for kindergarten and improve school transition.

Working with all parents and families to develop a working knowledge of American Sign Language. We do this by offering regular classes, on-line resources, and support materials.

Building capacity in families to assure confidence and readiness regarding their child's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Engaging families of high school students in transition to college and/or career programs through partnership building with the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency.

Events and Family Learning

Each department – Elementary, middle, and high school will host events specific to families during the school year, including plays, presentations and parent teacher conferences each semester.

School – Parent Compacts

As part of this plan, AASD and our families develop a department-based **School-Parent Compact**, which is an agreement that specifically explains **how** parents and teachers will work together to ensure students reach grade-level standards.

Compacts are updated annually based on feedback from parents, students and teachers during our Annual Policy Review, Spring School Council Meeting, and family school climate surveys. Families receive revised Compacts each year, which are reviewed at parent-teacher meetings in the fall.

A Unique Learning Community

All AASD families are part of our special learning community. We offer a rich bilingual education in both American Sign Language and English where experienced Deaf professionals, teachers of the deaf, coaches and administrators serve as active daily role and language models for our students.

Let us know how we can support you this year!

Contact Us

AASD Front Desk and Receptionist

Tosha Brown, aasdfrontdesk@doe.k12.ga.us

Main Line: 404-296-7101

Front Desk VP: 404-348-8401

Fax: 404-299-4485

www.aasdweb.com

Superintendent

Jack John, jjjohnson@doe.k12.ga.us

VP: 404-348-8414

AASD School Principal

Thomas Gray, Thomas.Gray@doe.k12.ga.us

PH: 470-532-0222

After School and Athletic Program Director

Chad Moore, mimoore@doe.k12.ga.us

404-537-1163(VP)

Student Records

Tanya Hall Smith, tahall@doe.k12.ga.us

VP: 404-381-8165

Family Engagement

Patti Lombardi, plombardi@doe.k12.ga.us

PH: 404-272-2769

School Social Worker

Cece Milligan, cecilia.milligan@doe.k12.ga.us

VP: 470-947-5041

Spanish Liaison

Maria Hernandez, mhoffiz@doe.k12.ga.us

PH: 404-300-5901