



St. Martin Early STEAM Academy Family Engagement Policy

1. Purpose & Definition of Family Engagement

Family engagement at SMESA means the active participation of parents and caregivers in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication about academic learning and other school activities. Our school's goals are to ensure that:

- Parents are recognized as primary educators and nurturers, and we employ strategies to support parent-child relationships and learning, including methods that encourage father involvement.
- We create trusting, respectful, and welcoming school environments that reflect the unique cultural, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds of our families.
- Families participate in identifying students' strengths, needs, and goals, and connecting to in-school and community resources.
- Parents have opportunities to be volunteers or employees within SMESA.
- Engagement is provided in families' preferred languages, with interpreters as needed, so families feel safe and heard.
- Educators coordinate effectively (within FERPA and IDEA guidelines) to ensure seamless engagement across classroom, home, and community settings.

2. Joint Development & Review

SMESA will annually update this Family Engagement Policy, providing multiple opportunities for parent input. Parents are invited—via newsletters, flyers, school and district websites, and community channels—to feedback sessions in spring and fall. Feedback is incorporated into both the school's and district's policies and school-parent compacts.

3. Capacity Building

a. For Parents:

- SMESA will offer workshops and materials to help parents understand academic standards, assessments, and digital tools (e.g., Parent Command Center).
- Resources—including guides, practice assessments, and tech tutorials—will be available in multiple languages and formats, both online and in hard copy.

b. For School Staff:

- Teachers, support staff, and administrators participate in training (e.g., in August and April) on effective family engagement, communication, and inclusive practices.
- Staff will be trained to communicate clearly with families, using accessible language and interpreters when appropriate.

4. Strengthening School–Family Partnerships

SMESA collaborates with district staff to plan and deliver engaging family events—like STEAM Nights, family workshops, and learning showcases. We coordinate with local Pre-K, Head Start, and community programs to streamline resources and transition processes (e.g., Kindergarten Readiness). Parent workshops will be held at least once each fall and spring to support student success through shared learning strategies at home.

5. Annual Evaluation

Each year, SMESA will evaluate the effectiveness of our family engagement efforts through parent surveys and feedback sessions starting in April. Results will guide improvements, address participation barriers, and inform updates to both school and district policies.

6. Use of Title I Funds

We will allocate at least 1% (per ESSA requirements) for family engagement purposes. Parents will be involved in deciding how these funds are used—both through surveys and at annual meetings.

7. Communication & Accessibility

SMESA ensures that all communications are in clear, understandable language and available in multiple languages (if applicable). Information is shared via multiple platforms: school website, newsletters, automated calls, social media, and in-person events. Interpretive services will be provided at events and for key communications when needed.

8. School–Parent Compact

A compact outlining the shared responsibility for student achievement—between SMESA staff, parents, and students—will be jointly developed and updated each year, aligning with Section 1116(d) of ESSA.