

# Elm Tree Elementary

## Parental Involvement Plan

### 2025-2026

## **1: Jointly Developed Expectations and Objectives**

The administration, teachers, and faculty at Elm Tree Elementary have parents as equal partners by allowing them to have a say in school decisions. Parental engagement is essential to the school's success because guardians and families know their children's needs. Family input is instrumental to ensuring that the students get the support they need. At Elm Tree Elementary, parents are involved in many decisions including planning, reviewing, and improving educational programs. The school gathers parent feedback through parent surveys taken in the Fall and Spring of each year. These surveys ensure that the Elm Tree Parent Engagement Committee gains meaningful insight into issues, concerns, and celebrations that Elm Tree parents would like to see addressed or see continued within the school. Students are often surveyed throughout the year which aids the committee in including the student population's input in school engagement opportunities.

Guardians and school community members are also welcomed to share concerns and reflections during the year through email, in-person meetings, virtual meetings, letters, and/or phone communication. This allows teachers and administrators to gather information from guardians and the community that can better the educational experience of our students and families.

Guardians and school community members are also strongly encouraged to volunteer and help school personnel anytime and at many capacities throughout the school year. These volunteer efforts include monthly discussions with the principals, weekly filling of Tuesday communication folders, working with students, volunteering at the book fair, picture day volunteering, helping with fun and field day, involvement and planning of holiday parties, involvement in awards assemblies, assisting with school fundraisers, running club volunteering, and many other activities throughout the school year. From all of these experiences, they can provide input on how to best improve the school activities that the school provides for our students.

The guardians and school community members are openly invited to volunteer and serve on Elm Tree's Parent and Family Engagement Committee. The committee is a representation of the school population. Each Fall, the Parent and Family Committee reviews the school survey to address any concerns that the survey data shows. The committee then edits the plan by adding or removing components that meet the needs of all stakeholders and align with the mission and vision of Elm Tree Elementary.

Parental involvement information on the school website includes ways parents can be involved in all of Elm Tree Elementary activities. New families to the school are provided information at Open House or upon enrollment on how they can be involved in the many school partnerships.

## Parent and Family Engagement Committee:

Stephanie Buerkle, Principal  
Kristen Kossover, Assistant Principal  
Shelley Moore, School Counselor  
Sarah Ahten, Registrar  
Thomas Beaudet, Parent  
Molly Degen, PTO Board Member  
Frank DiNuzzo, Parent

Amber Beaudet, parent  
Tatum Palmer, Kindergarten Team Lead  
Kelsey Elliott, 1st Grade Team Lead  
Kelsee Skinner, 2nd Grade Team Lead  
Kinsey Cox, 3rd Grade Team Lead  
Amber Lichlyter, 4th Grade Team Lead  
Emily Cason, Librarian

## 2: Communication

To encourage communication with parents, the school will:

- Prepare informational packets to be sent home electronically and/or via Tuesday folders in paper copy form
- Parent Handbook with clear school regulations and information
- Parental Involvement Plan/Brochure distributed prior to school starting and to new enrollment families throughout the year.
- Recommended roles of the parent, student, teacher, and school through interest surveys
- Information on ways for parents to become involved in their child's education (PTO, Volunteer Opportunities, etc.)
- Activities planned throughout the year to encourage parental involvement (Kindergarten Orientation, Open House, Back to School Night, Kindergarten/Fourth Grade Graduation, Fourth Grade Final Walk, Rise & Shine Assemblies, and a system of communication between school and home with Parent/Teacher Conferences which are offered over the course of several days during the week and at a variety of times both during school hours and after working hours, weekly Tuesday communication folders, On-line Calendar, email, weekly newsletters, school website, Facebook, phone, etc.)
- Encourage communication with parents by scheduling no less than 2 parent/teacher conferences per school year in the Fall and Spring.
- Plan and engage in other activities determined by the school to be beneficial to encourage communication with parents.
- Provide information about skills assessments, report card grading system, and interpretation of computerized testing through parent curriculum nights and conferences.
- Monthly Wildcat Newsletter, teacher emails, class newsletters, webpage, Facebook, school wide email distribution list.
- Tuesday communication folders are sent home weekly and information is updated weekly on the website.
- Notify families when students are receiving awards or special recognition at Rise & Shine Assemblies
- Contact families regarding academic or behavior problems as well as positive student behavior and achievement.
- Disseminate information clearly and specifically by using language that is understandable to all parents in a multimedia approach through the use of paper copies in Tuesday Folders, school

marquee, social media posts, school website and feed, website hyperlinks, QR codes, teacher newsletters, Wildcat Weekly Newsletter, etc.)

- Translate communications to assist non-English speaking parents as much as needed
- Provide a Volunteer Orientation in the Fall and a Volunteer Appreciation Celebration in the Spring to orient parents as well as celebrate their involvement.
- Distribute a volunteer survey with opportunities to get involved throughout the year. The school will help match school needs with volunteer interest.

### **3: Building Staff Capacity**

Multiple staff development opportunities are provided for teachers throughout the school year with a focus on successful ways to engage parents in their child's education as well as ways to communicate with parents effectively. Topics discussed but are not limited to the following:

- The value of Parental Involvement in all aspects of a student's education.
- The importance of communication with parents and the systematic ways for teachers to communicate with parents and families regularly.
- Responding to various parent concerns and resolving these concerns with solutions based on the school handbook.
- Providing teachers with ideas to involve parents and guardians in their student's learning process.
- Training for the office staff, support staff, and educators on how to make parents and families feel welcome without compromising school safety procedures.

### **4: Building Parent Capacity**

The school works to provide timely information for all activities and involvement opportunities such as scheduling Open House, Math and Literacy Curriculum Nights, and PTO Meetings where parents are given a report on the state of the school and an overview of what students will be learning, what should be expected from their child's education, how parents can assist to help make a difference in their child's education, how to access the district curriculum, methods of how students will be assessed, a review of student data from MAP and ACT Aspire, and a review of the school's ACSIP plan with how the school plans to improve student achievement. Parents will provide input after this information is shared in order to provide parents with a chance to share their concerns about the information delivered. Parents will also be involved in the celebrations of students at Elm Tree through the Rise and Shine assemblies, where Student Awards for behavior and leadership in the classroom are recognized as well as Lexia level completion and other academic successes are celebrated for student growth.

At the September PTO meeting, the Elm Tree Elementary administration will provide training and information to parents on the requirements of Title I, Part A, how to monitor their child's grades and progress in our grading platform on TeacherEase, and how to work alongside with the Elm Tree Elementary educators to improve their child's achievement.

Materials and trainings will be provided to help parents work with their children to improve their children's achievement includes:

- A Literacy Curriculum Night will be held throughout the school year to help further inform parents about the curriculum content as well as showcase what their child is learning.
- A Math Curriculum Night will be held during the school year to enhance the knowledge of the parents of the Elm Tree community about the math curriculum as well as display what their child is learning.
- Weekly newsletters that provide standards and learning targets being taught to their children.
- A minimum of two face-to-face parent-teacher conference opportunities throughout the school year to discuss each student's academic progress and social-emotional progress.
- Technology tips and information about their child's technology use during the school day and obligations and responsibilities when their device is being used off of school premises will be provided to parents.
- Community parenting class notifications and schedules will be made available to parents and posted in the school newsletter.

Elm Tree Elementary will involve parents and guardians of our students of all grade levels in various ways. Parents are always welcome in the school, and their support and assistance are encouraged.

Some ways Elm Tree Elementary ensures this includes:

- Not having any school policies or procedures that would discourage a parent from visiting the school or from visiting a child's classroom.
- Have written procedures allowing parents to visit their child's classroom during school events (handbook)
- Training for office staff so that interaction with parents creates a climate in which parents feel valued and welcomed.
- Providing a Volunteer Orientation in the Fall and a Volunteer Appreciation Celebration in the Spring. A volunteer survey sent home via email and Tuesday Folders with opportunities to volunteer throughout the year which includes options for those who are available to help at home. The school will help match school needs with volunteer interest.
- A Literacy Curriculum Night and Math Curriculum Night will be held throughout the school year to help educate parents on the different learning activities and classroom instruction happening for their child.
- Parents are involved in many decisions including planning, reviewing, and improving educational programs. Elm Tree Elementary gathers parent feedback through parent surveys taken in the Spring of each year. This survey ensures that the Elm Tree Parent Engagement Committee gains meaningful insight into issues, concerns, and celebrations that Elm Tree parents would like to see addressed or see continued within the school. Students are often surveyed throughout the year that aid the committee in including the student population's input in school engagement opportunities. This information drives the school's goal setting throughout the year as well as provides insight on the effectiveness of the school-level improvements.

To support the learning, classroom instruction, and overall involvement parents and guardians can actively participate in the following:

- Open House- August 7, 2025
- Grandparents' Day Lunch- September 5, 2025
- Curriculum Night- September 25, 2025

- Fourth Grade Musical- October 23, 2025
- Veterans' Day Assembly- November 7, 2025
- Fall Carnival- November 14, 2025
- Girl Talk- March 17, 2026
- Volunteer Appreciation- May 13, 2026
- Senior Walk- May 13, 2026
- Fun and Field Day- May 15, 2026
- Second Grade Musical- May 21, 2026
- Kindergarten and Fourth Grade Celebrations- May 2026
- Fourth Grade Final Walk- May 22, 2026
- End of Year Celebration- May 22, 2026
- Rise and Shine assemblies- every other Friday morning
- PTO Meetings- second Tuesday of the month

Parenting skills are promoted and supported at Elm Tree Elementary. To promote responsible parenting Elm Tree will:

- Purchase parenting books and magazines as funds are available and advertise selections in newsletters.
- Have a parent center located in the library with items available for check-out.
- Plan and engage in other activities determined by the school to be beneficial to promoting and supporting responsible parenting, such as: weekly classroom newsletters, monthly Wildcat Newsletters, school website links to resources (education/parenting), provide families with information on child and adolescent development; Girl Talk for girls and a female adult with the school nurse, communicate with parents in an ongoing manner, using diverse methods all of which reflect a respect for parental and cultural differences and inform parents of other opportunities to attend parenting training as needed.

Elm Tree Elementary will provide instruction opportunities to parents on how to incorporate developmentally appropriate learning activities in the home environment, including but not limited to:

- Schedule regular Parent Involvement Meetings where parents are given a report on Kindergarten Orientation and Open House prior to school starting in the Fall, back to School Night in the Fall, Parent/Teacher Conferences both Fall and Spring semesters (informing what students will be learning, will inform parents of student expectations in each grade level, how they can assist them at home, foster learning at home, how students will be assessed, will inform parents of assessments both computerized and paper/pencil and will create an understanding of the standardized testing process, what a parent should expect for his or her child's education; distribute information to assist parents in understanding, how students can improve skills, get help when needed, and meet class expectations, and how a parent can assist and make a difference in his or her child's overall education).
- Provide instruction to parents on how to incorporate developmentally appropriate learning activities in the home environment (Trainings provided through the Bentonville School District and outside agencies with Arisa Health, use of and access to departments website tools for parents, assistance with nutritional meal planning and preparation with Aramark, other

strategies or curricula acquired by the school district for at-home parental instruction with Bentonville Public Library programs).

- Engage in other activities determined by the school to help a parent assist in his or her child's learning.

## 5: Coordination

Elm Tree Elementary will recognize that the community resources are an asset and help strengthen school programs, family practices, and overall student learning.

To take advantage of community resources, Elm Tree will:

- Consider recruiting alumni from the school to create an alumni advisory commission to provide advice and guidance for school improvement
- Enable the formation of the PTO that will foster parental and community involvement within the school. (Leaders of the PTO will be used in appropriate decisions affecting the children and families of our school.)
- Engage in other activities that the school determines will use community resources to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning. (Bright Futures, Elm Tree Gives Back, Sharing and Caring, Snack Pack Program, Bentonville Police Department, Bentonville Fire Department, Clayton Scott, Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas, Arisa Health, Trike Theatre, Bentonville Schools Foundation)

Elm Tree Elementary will coordinate and integrate programs and activities with other federal, state, and local programs by:

- Encouraging families to take advantage of the district preschool (Tennie Russell) and other preschool programs available through federal and state funding (Headstart). This information will be found on the district website of wrap-around services that can be accessed through district social workers.
- Provide incoming kindergarteners an opportunity to attend the "Kick Start Kindergarten" program two weeks prior to kindergarten beginning to aid students that may struggle with transitioning into kindergarten (academically, socially and/or emotionally).
- Parents of 4th graders will be informed and involved in the transition to middle school. This includes options in class selections and an informational meeting at the middle school in late spring during a Middle School Transition Night.
- Elm Tree Elementary will respond to the educational and personal success challenges military-connected children face during their transition to a new school and keep them on track to be college, workforce, and life-ready. Also, we will coordinate any additional services needed with the district and/or state military liaison.

Elm Tree Elementary will continue to form a Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) and ensure leaders of the PTO will be included in the appropriate decisions through the following activities, but not limited to:

- Provide an appropriate area for the PTO to meet
- PTO will vote and elect the PTO board each year
- PTO will keep its own budget and yearly audit

- PTO will be under the PTO guidelines and the district PTO
- A beginning of the year planning session with PTO will take place to determine activities throughout the school year.
- Monthly PTO Board Meetings with administration
- PTO Board will schedule meetings for the year in August, so they can be published to the school calendar to provide advance notice.
- Meetings will be held during the day and/or in the evening to meet the needs of all parents.
- Teachers will be encouraged to attend PTO meetings, when possible, to assist with PTO events and fundraiser decisions.
- PTO will plan and determine ways to spend funds they have collected through fundraisers that will benefit students at ETE.

## **6: School-Parent Compact**

### **ETE Student responsibilities:**

- Attend school every day and be on time to all classes
- Come to school prepared with books, paper, pencil, and any materials and assignments as directed by teachers
- Obey the directions of all ETE staff members and treat them with respect
- Maintain a positive attitude toward learning and believe in my ability to succeed
- Respect myself and the rights and property of others
- Do homework daily and ask for help when needed
- Read daily outside of school time
- Give parent/guardians all notices and information from the school daily or in Tuesday folder

### **ETE Parent responsibilities:**

- Send my child to school each day on time, prepared with all necessary materials, well rested, and properly dressed
- Check my child's work and homework on a regular basis
- Monitor attendance
- Provide my child with suitable study conditions at home (desk or table, lights, books, and supplies)
- Communicate with my child's teachers when I am concerned about my child's work or health
- Send an email, doctor's excuse, or a note when my child is absent

### **ETE Staff responsibilities:**

- Provide a quality instructional program in an integrated setting for each student
- Provide a safe school environment

- Develop programs and activities which will respond to the social, emotional, personal, and physical developmental needs of each student
- Assist parents in helping their children develop good character traits necessary to participate in school as a responsible member

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