

West Hardin Elementary Family Engagement Plan (HQPK Grant)

The family engagement plan (FEP) is a multi-dimensional program which seeks to bind families, the school and the community in an effort to support student learning. Activities and events developed under the FEP will be aligned with the six components described below:

- a. **Facilitate family-to-family support**-Parents of prekindergarten students will be invited to attend an informal back-to-school event in which they will be orientated to the prekindergarten program. During this time, the teachers will encourage families to discuss their fears, questions, and tips for school success with each other. Parents who have students that have completed the prekindergarten program in prior years may be invited to share their experience with the program with new families. The prekindergarten teachers may establish a class facebook page so that parents are instantly connected to the classroom and to other families, enabling them to support one another through social media.
- b. **Establish a network of community resources**-The prekindergarten program will partner with local agencies to educate students and build relationships between the school and the community. The local fire department will visit the campus and provide fire safety tips to the students, an area church will perform character development puppet shows for the prekindergarten students, and a representative from a dentist office in a neighboring town will provide dental hygiene tips to the students. Following these visits, students will be given materials to take home to their parents, which serves as a way to build strategic partnerships between the family, school, and community and leverage community resources. The school will also identify two supportive agencies (i.e. Lion's Club, Pastors Alliance), and ensure good communication between school administrators and the agencies, thus broadening the network of community resources. School administrators will be required to make contact with the two agencies at least twice per year.
- c. **Increase family participation in decision making**-Families will be given the opportunity to provide input on family engagement activities planned by the school (Grandparent's Day, Campus wide Easter dinner, and Field day). Comments, suggestions, and requests will be solicited by sending home a letter with students. The administration will also maintain an open door policy whereby parents are free to provide feedback and input on any issue relating to their student.
- d. **Equip families with tools to enhance and extend learning**-Families will be invited to visit classrooms and meet the teacher before the start of school. They will also be provided with resources on how to support their child through the transition of beginning school. Education City and Starfall are online software programs that are implemented in the classroom. Parents will be given directions, login information, and support in an effort to create home learning opportunities. Teachers will collaborate with families on how to respond to children in a positive, non-punitive way through daily, two way communication through the student's home folders. Students and families will be encouraged to reflect on family experiences throughout the year as the teacher integrates home learning projects based on family activities into the curriculum (family tree project, star student poster, vacation report).
- e. **Provide ongoing professional development opportunities for educators on culturally responsive, evidence-based strategies that support the education of the child**-The district will evaluate the cost and resources necessary to send prekindergarten teachers to the statewide parental involvement conference in December in an effort to educate teachers on how to partner with parents. Prekindergarten teachers will be required to attend parent engagement strategy planning with the curriculum coordinator twice during the school year. As part of their PLC meetings, prekindergarten teachers will be required to meet with kindergarten teachers and collaborate on how to support families in meeting children's learning needs.
- f. **Evaluate family engagement efforts and use evaluations for continuous improvement**-As stated above, the initial step in creating our campus family engagement plan will be to survey parents. Shortly after the survey has been distributed, an FEP committee of teachers, parents, community members and administrators will be formed. The information gleaned from the survey will be used by the committee to create three to five measurable goals that will improve family involvement and positive family attitudes. The FEP will detail the actions required to achieve each of the objectives, and will align with the school vision, curriculum, and Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines. The plan will be put into action at the start of the 2016/2017 school year. The FEP committee will monitor the implementation of the plan throughout the year. Parents will be surveyed in regards to the FEP. The FEP will be evaluated at the conclusion of the school year. Success will be measured by the degree to which the plan was implemented, the follow through for each component, the success or failure of the attainment of the outlined goals of the plan, and the comparative results of the parent survey (from beginning and end of year). The committee will use the data gained from the evaluation of the program to ensure a cyclic process of continuous improvement in the next school year.