

# ELIZABETHTON CITY SCHOOLS

## PARENT/FAMILY INVOLVEMENT PLAN

The Elizabethton City School Board of Education adopted a parent/family involvement policy on July 21, 2005. The Director of Federal Projects, along with the Central Office Administrative Team, developed a matrix of activities to fulfill the requirements of the Parent/Family Involvement Policy.

The Elizabethton City School System has always encouraged parents to have an active role in the education of their child(ren). This process was accelerated in the spring of 2005. At that time, a comprehensive Family-Friendly Schools Survey was administered at each school in the Elizabethton City School System. Survey results were used to facilitate the development of a family involvement plan at each school. In addition, for the first time in education history, the city and county systems met in a joint session with Dr. Steven Constantino, Founder of the Family-Friendly Schools Institute as the keynote speaker, to intensify efforts to take Family Engagement or Involvement to another level.

In a 2009 legislative session Senate Bill No. 293 was enacted which required the Tennessee Department of Education to develop parental involvement standards in public schools. The Tennessee Standards listed below are based on the PTA's National Standards for Family-School Partnerships. These standards were adopted by the State Board of Education on July 30, 2010.

During the 2010 – 2011 school year, this plan was updated to include the state standards in an effort to increase collaboration and promote community ownership. It is our intent to meet (or exceed) the goal(s) outlined in each standard. The standards are:

- 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 and school.
- 2: Communicating Effectively**—Families and school staff engage in regular, meaningful communication about student learning.
- 3: Supporting Student Success**—Families and school staff continuously work together 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.
- 4: Speaking Up For Every Child**—Families are informed and enabled 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.
- 5: Sharing Power**—Families and school staff are equal partners with equal representation in decisions that affect students and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.
- 6: Collaborating With Community**—Families and school staff work together with community members to connect students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

The Elizabethton City School System will use a variety of methods to focus on increased parent and community involvement. Some methods include:

- The school district shall incorporate activities and strategies that support this district-wide family and community engagement plan into its Tennessee Comprehensive System-wide Planning Process (TCSPP).
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- Individual schools shall develop a school-level plan to address parental support, collaboration, and foster parental involvement that specifically focuses on the needs and issues surrounding each individual school. They shall also utilize parents and community partners to complete the school-level planning process, aka: Tennessee School Improvement Planning Process (TSIPP).
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- Parents are to be represented on the LEA and building-level parent/family involvement committees. These committees must focus on building the capacity of the schools and parents in activities and partnerships.
- The district and each building level parent/family involvement programs will be evaluated annually. Parents will complete surveys, fill out evaluation forms concerning activities, and/or participate in committees to update Parent Involvement Plans. Parents will always be involved in the process of school review and improvement.
- The LEA Parent Involvement Plan will be posted annually on the school system website. The website will be updated regularly with useful information for parents.
- The district-level parent/family engagement coordinator (John Hutchins) will be available to provide coordination, technical assistance, and other support as necessary to assist schools in planning and implementing effective parental involvement activities. Improving student academic achievement and school performance should always be the focus of these activities. Building principals and Parent Involvement Coordinators (Elementary schools only) will be available to explain achievement standards, assessments, programs of study, and course and curricular materials as needed.
- The district and/or each school will report to parents, in a timely manner, standards to be taught and information concerning school-level report cards. These will be placed on the school system website.
- Each school will maintain a copy of the board policy manual in a convenient location for use by parents.
- Each school, as well as the district, will maintain parent/family resource materials to assist in the distribution of information to all parents.
- Parents will be extremely involved in the activities of all Title I schools. Parents will be involved in Title I meetings, the driving force for all school goals and programs. This will include an annual evaluation of the content of the parental-involvement

policy and it's effectiveness in improving the academic quality of the schools. These include:

- Identifying barriers that prevent parents from participating in activities will be a focus at each school. These barriers could be economically disadvantaged, disabled, English language learner, racial or ethnic minority, etc.;
  - Utilizing the findings of this evaluation to design strategies for more effective parental involvement and revising, if necessary, the LEA's parental involvement policies.
- Title I schools will coordinate parent-involvement activities and strategies with other programs, such as state-run pre-school programs.
  - Title I schools will track designated financial costs using federal funds for parent activities and the promotion of parenting skills.

