

Elizabethton City Schools  
Early Learning Center

Family and Community Involvement  
Plan  
2008 - 2009

# Early Learning Center Family and Community Involvement Plan

## **The Mission Statement for the Early Learning Center**

**The mission of the Elizabethton City Schools Early Learning Center is to continue to visibly provide and exemplary, developmentally appropriate, inclusive learning environment that effectively changes the lives of all four to five year-old children in the City of Elizabethton through meaningful learning activities, and to be a mentor site for pre-service early childhood educators throughout the region.**

## **The Philosophy of the Early Learning Center**

**It is the belief of the Early Learning Center staff that a high quality program provides a safe and nurturing environment which promotes the physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and creative development of young children while responding to the needs of families. We believe that:**

- ? All children can learn**
- ? Each child is unique**
- ? Children learn through play, interactions, problem solving, exploration, and discovery.**
- ? Learning is what children do; it is not something that is done to them.**
- ? Children grow and develop at unique, individual rates that are often unrelated to their chronological ages.**
- ? Children's natural curiosity and eagerness to learn are enhanced if children are allowed to develop their natural interests.**

- ? **Children learn through active involvement with people, materials, events, and ideas.**
- ? **Education is an on-going process that involves the child, the parents, the teacher, and the community.**

## **The Goals of the Early Learning Center**

**The goals established by the purposes and philosophy of the Early Learning Center are:**

- ? **To provide a link between home and school.**
- ? **To develop a supportive as well as challenging learning environment.**
- ? **To respect, accept, and respond to each child's feelings.**
- ? **To acknowledge various cultural and ethnic differences by implementing a curriculum this promotes the acceptance of all people and cultures.**
- ? **To develop independent, responsible, and confident students – ready for success in school.**
- ? **To foster a sense of community in learning.**
- ? **To maintain a small class size to address individual needs.**
- ? **To serve as a training site for early childhood college students, child care providers, and parents.**

## **Family and Community Involvement**

**Family member's role in educating children within the household is a vital role. Members are expected to have the valuable skills and knowledge to assist these children with their day to day classroom task. Community leaders are**

involved in educating the children and adults. It is the responsibility of the Early Learning Center to educate family members and educators in providing them with cognitive, social, emotional, and skills necessary to work with children. Through collaboration between community resources, parents, and teacher, children gain a vast knowledge of the tools necessary to adequately prepare them for a smooth transition from prek to kindergarten.

**Family Involvement for each child's success:**

- 1. The school will provide opportunities and information to aid families in working with their child successfully.**
  - ? **System wide newsletters to families giving educational information of various topics.**
  - ? **Student handbook – school policies addressing health, discipline and day to day operation of school.**
  - ? **School website with link to the State of Tennessee Prek web site**
  - ? **Parent Advisory Committee meetings held quarterly- topics dealing with school issues.**
  - ? **Monthly Parent Involvement meetings with topics related to educating family members and students.**
  - ? **Coordination of activities with elementary schools to provide children with introduction to kindergarten transition**
  - ? **Data from Tennessee Department of Education regarding Prek success.**
  - ? **Link to Tennessee Imagination Library with opportunity to enroll children under the age of 5 to receive free books monthly.**
  - ? **PAT (Parents are Teachers) workshops –Parents will be introduced to several approaches to teaching children**
  
- 2. The school will provide open communication between family members, students, and teachers.**

- ? **Handbook for students and parents (updated yearly)**
- ? **Written notes, letters and announcements about daily routine, upcoming events, goals, and objectives.**
- ? **School Web site ([www.ecschools.net/ELC](http://www.ecschools.net/ELC))**
- ? **Parent/Teacher conferences (available any time by appointment or scheduled in accordance with academic calendar)**
- ? **Family Engagement surveys**
- ? **School Calendar**
- ? **Monthly Home Visits – 3 per child per year**
- ? **Orientation meeting – at the beginning of the school year**
- ? **Advisory meetings quarterly**
- ? **Monthly school newsletter**
- ? **Special Education meetings for parents of children with special needs**

## **Family and Community Involvement in the school**

- 1. Family members and community leaders will be encouraged to participate in school functions.**
  - ? **Parent Advisory Committee meeting (quarterly)**
  - ? **Parents serve as officers (chairperson and secretary) of Advisory Board**

- ? **Classroom volunteer(special functions, Room helper, field trips, center time)**
- ? **Parent Involvement monthly meeting (guest speakers)**
- ? **Special Education group meetings for parents of children with special needs**
- ? **Parent Appreciation Tea/Open House (December and February)**
- ? **Donuts for Dad and Muffins for Mom breakfast (January)**
- ? **PAC - Parents and Children Lunch week – Parents are invited to eat lunch with children (October)**
- ? **Graduation/promotion ceremony (May)**
- ? **Elizabethton High School National Honor Society Involvement ( planned activities at the school; Harvest Dress up celebration, Holiday activities, Dr. Seuss birthday party)**
- ? **Local Woman’s Civic Club – representative acts as an active member of Parent Advisory committee, club donates school supplies yearly**
- ? **Book Buddies – members of Woman’s Civic Club read twice per month to children in classroom**
- ? **Local business links – Community credit union holiday tea (children perform holiday carols)**
- ? **Private business donations**
- ? **Carter County Kids Clothing Coalition – donates clothing items to student**
- ? **Elizabethton High School Parenting and Family Education Class (quarterly activities are held at the high school for preschool children)**
- ? **Book Fair – Spring book fair – School will have activities throughout week to promote book fair and reading**
- ? **Performing Arts – children attending school dramas and ballet.**
- ? **System Wide School activities- Homecoming activities and kindergarten**

## **Family and Community Resource Guide**

**The school will be responsible for providing family members with the necessary resources to ensure success in each child.**

- 1. School handbook – outlining all procedures; attendance policies, health regulations, discipline, and transportation policies**
- 2. Local health department – dental, vision, hearing screens administered yearly**
- 3. Carter County Kids Clothing Coalition – clothing items are donated 3 times per year to needy students**
- 4. Public Library – students tour local library – library membership is encouraged**
- 5. The Community Arts Center at the Bonnie Kate – Quarterly handout to parents outlining monthly activities**
- 6. Elizabethton Boys and Girls Club – athletic seasonal sports opportunities**
- 7. Local Fire Department – students are provided with fire safety coloring books and a visit of the fire station**
- 8. Elizabethton Housing & Development**

### **Summary**

**The Early Learning Center is the first introduction into the world of learning in a school system setting for many of the students served. The faculty and staff are dedicated to providing each child with a strong foundation of academic skills necessary to succeed and the opportunity to open a door to the love of learning. These goals may only be achieved through the positive link between the school, home, and community. It is our goal to work together to ensure each child is viewed as an individual.**