

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Alief Independent School District believes that parents/guardians are partners with teachers and other staff in the education of their children and that family engagement and empowerment are essential at all levels throughout the school district. Everyone gains if school and home work together to promote high achievement by our children. Neither home nor school can do the job alone. Families play an extremely important role as their child's first teacher. Families' support for their children, and for the school, is critical to their child's success at every step along the way.

Alief ISD's goal is to provide a strong school-home partnership that will help all students in the district to succeed. The Family Engagement Coordinator may be contacted at 281-498-8110 ext. 29192

Family Engagement in Developing the Policy

The Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Advisory Council annually reviews and revises this written Family Engagement Policy for Alief ISD. The policy is referenced in the District Improvement Plan and is included in the student/parent handbook.

Alief ISD will take the following actions to engage families in the joint development of its district Family Engagement Policy:

- Inform families about the function of the District's Family Engagement Policy.
- Inform families of meetings through text, phone calls, e-mail, website postings, and written communication.
- Actively recruit families to participate in an advisory capacity regarding family engagement.
- Schedule FACE Advisory Council meetings biannually providing space and time for families and stakeholders to participate in a comprehensive review of policy, budget, and programs for family engagement.

- Offer a flexible number of meetings, such as meetings in the morning or evening, and provide childcare as needed.
- Facilitate communication between families and Title I campuses through Family Center resources and communication.
- Post for public comment and review.

The Family Engagement Policy:

- establishes the expectations of all concerned regarding family engagement.
 - ensures that parents/guardians are notified of the policy in a language and format they can understand.
 - is made available to the local community.
 - is updated periodically to meet the changing needs of families and schools.

Family Engagement in District and School

Improvement Activities

State law requires the district and each school to develop a plan each year to improve the achievement of all students. These plans will be:

- developed with the involvement of families through their inclusion on the district Family and Community Engagement Advisory Council, Educational Improvement Council, Families Actively and Meaningfully Engaged campus committees and campus Shared Decision-Making Committees
- approved by the Board of Trustees.

Building Capacity for Strong Family Engagement

Coordination, technical assistance, and other support will be provided by the district to assist schools and families in planning and implementing effective family engagement activities. The district will build the schools' and family's capacity for strong family engagement through avenues such as:

- professional development for staff
- training opportunities for parents/guardians

- electronic communication, including the district website, e-mail, and text messages
- campus Family Engagement Centers and campus events
- campus Shared Decision-Making Committees
- campus Family Engagement Committees
- the district Family and Community Engagement Program
- the district Educational Improvement Council
- the district Family and Community Engagement Advisory Council

Alief ISD shall also:

- provide assistance to families through campus events and district resources in understanding such topics as the state's academic content standards and student academic achievement standards, state and local academic assessments, how to monitor a child's progress, and how to work with educators to improve the achievement of their children.
- provide materials and training to help families work with their children to improve their children's achievement.
- educate teachers, pupil services personnel, principals, and other staff, with the assistance of families, in the value and utility of contributions of families, and in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with families as equal partners, implement and coordinate family engagement programs, and build ties between the families and the school.
- to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate family engagement programs and activities with Head Start and other public preschool programs.
- provide two-way communication that ensures information related to school and family programs, meetings, and other activities is communicated with families in a format and, to the extent practical in a language the families can understand.

- provide such other reasonable support for family engagement activities as families may request.

Alief ISD may also:

- involve families in the development of training for teachers, principals, and other educators to improve the effectiveness of such training by assessing family needs and concerns.
- provide necessary literacy training to families.
- pay reasonable and necessary expenses associated with local family engagement activities, including transportation and child care costs, to enable parents/families to participate in school-related meetings and trainings.
- train families to enhance the involvement of other families.
- seek feedback from families to arrange school meetings at a variety of times, or conduct in-home conferences between teachers and other staff with parents/families who are unable to attend such conferences at school to maximize family engagement and participation.
- adopt and implement model approaches to improving family engagement.
- establish a district-wide family advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to family engagement in programs supported under this section.
- develop appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses in family engagement activities.

Coordination with Other Programs

To avoid duplication of services and to ensure coordination of resources, the district will coordinate family engagement strategies and activities across programs. Coordination will occur with:

- community-based organizations outside of the district, such as Communities In Schools and the YMCA.

- departments within the district.
- district and campus site-based decision making councils.

Annual Evaluation

An annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the family engagement policy will be conducted. The evaluation will:

- seek to determine if implementation of the policy helped to improve the academic quality of schools.
- seek to identify barriers to greater participation by families.
- result in revisions to the family engagement policy, if necessary, to design strategies for more effective family engagement.
- involve the district Family Engagement Advisory Council (FACE).
- be shared with campuses and the community.

Family Engagement in School Activities

Family Engagement in school activities will be encouraged at all levels. Families will have opportunities for engagement through:

- patron presentations at monthly Board of Trustee meetings.
- the district Educational Improvement and Family Engagement Advisory Councils.
- a variety of volunteer and mentor programs at schools.

Schools will seek to engage families by holding annual meetings to inform families of the school's participation in federal programs and of the families' right to be involved, holding a flexible number of meetings for families, providing organized, ongoing, and timely planning, reviewing and improving the academic program at the school, and providing timely information concerning programs on campus, school, and student performance profiles, as well as information about the curriculum.