

Union Grove ISD High-Quality Prekindergarten Family Engagement Plan

Purpose: UGISD strives on achieving and maintaining high levels of family involvement and positive family attitudes toward education. The family engagement plan will allow a foundation for the collaboration of mutual partners, the embracing of the individuality and uniqueness of families, and promote a culture of learning that is child centered, age appropriate, and family driven.

Definitions of Family and Family Engagement

Definition of family:

Family includes adults and children significant in the child's life who support the early learning and development of the child.

Definition of family engagement:

Family engagement is the mutual responsibility of families, schools, and communities; which builds relationships to support student learning and achievement and to support family well-being, family-student relationships and on-going learning and development of children, families and educators. Family engagement is fully integrated in the child's educational experience and supports the whole child. It is culturally and linguistically responsive and is continuous through a child's life.

Components and Strategies:

- 1. Creates a foundation for collaboration of mutual partners.**
 - a. Creating a safe and respectful environment
 - b. Foster a collaborative exchange of information
 - c. Encourage family participation in decision-making
 - d. Support the development of families as leaders and child advocates
 - e. Establish partnerships with faith-based community and other organizations
 - f. Provide ongoing services/support

2. Embraces the individuality and uniqueness of families

- a. Incorporate voices of all families across race, cultural background, and socio-economic status
- b. Promote a variety of home-educational resources supporting learning at home while strengthening the family/school partnership
- c. Develop family support principles to build relationships and acknowledge and respect family
- d. Use a variety of means to welcome and communicate
- e. Create cross-cultural networks
- f. Invite family feedback on activities
- g. Incorporate experiences for families that provide a variety of activities and observations
- h. Identify support from mental/physical health and other agencies
- i. Provide resources reflective of home language and translators

3. Promotes a culture of learning that is child-centered and family driven

Culture

- a. Promote the value of education as a pathway to success
- b. Create a safe and respectful environment where parents can learn from each other as individuals and in groups and ask for information that they find helpful
- c. Create an environment that nurtures an assets-based rather than deficit approach
- d. Use positive parent practices such as attachment and nurturing that complement the states of their children's development
- e. Provide a welcoming environment that reflects on parent experiences, practices, and new strategies
- f. Support parent-child relationships in a way that values the culture and language of families and recognizes how different cultures may influence family development
- g. Develop staff skills to support families to meet their learning goals

Child-centered

- a. Foster a learning environment that supports social-emotional learning
- b. Talk together with families about children's signals to help family's interpretation and response
- c. Work together to help children overcome behavioral challenges
- d. Provide complementary learning activities for families to engage in at home with children
- e. Share home learning activities with families through newsletters, at parent-teacher conferences, and at other school events
- f. Equip families with resources and skills to support their children through the transition to school

Family-driven

- a. Provide families with training in parent leadership, support, and advocacy
- b. Provide parents with developmental expectations
- c. Provide information or training on creating a home learning environment connected to formal learning opportunities
- d. Encourage staff to respond to family members in a timely, respectful, and culturally appropriate manner.
- e. Encourage parents and families to reflect on parent experiences and practices in helping children.

4. Establishes and articulates expectations

- a. Create systems and supports to eliminate barriers to parent participation that address quality, equity, and accessibility
- b. Develop systems to monitor (data collections) who is engaged in the program towards inclusion of all stakeholders. Focus on engagement of families from different/specific populations to narrow the achievement gap
- c. Focus on using student data to promote continuous family engagement
- d. Develop, in collaboration with families, clearly defined goals, outcomes, timelines, and strategies for assessing progress
- e. Articulate short and long term program goals to all stakeholders
- f. Help parents and families understand the types of involvement that will help achieve the goals and objectives identified to meet the needs of the child and family
- g. Encourage parents to participate in shaping program activities and cultivate the expectation that information can flow in both directions
- h. Provide each family with the opportunity to review and provide input on program practices, policies, communications, and events in order to ensure the program is responsive to the family's needs
- i. Provide supports and opportunities for parents to establish leadership skills and advocate for their children
- j. Ensure that parent training is culturally responsive, sensitive to diversity, and addresses varying needs of families.
- k. Establish routines that allow parents to serve as problem solvers and be involved in addressing issues that arise

5. Evaluates and Improves family engagement efforts

- a. Provide essential professional development for educators in understanding communication and engagement with families
- b. Ensure that the evaluation plan is an initial component that guides action, not an "add on"

- c. Instill the belief in educators/staff that family engagement is a core strategy to improve teaching and learning
- d. Use a cyclic or recurrent process to ensure evaluation results are used for continuous improvement and adjustment

Union Grove is committed to families and children and providing a well-rounded education. These components in the family engagement plan are critical in the development of a child. Possible activities to fulfill our commitment would be monthly newsletters to explain upcoming events, developmental and health resources as well as websites to engage your child in educational sites, grade level parties to promote social wellbeing, field trips that offer families a variety of ways to learn, parent training opportunities that are provided at Region 7, and parent-teacher conferences to discuss educational goals and plans.