

Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School - District # 4201
Parent and Family Engagement Plan
2020-21 School Year

Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School/District 4201 is committed to the goal of providing quality education for every child in this district. We want to establish partnerships with parents and with the community. Everyone gains if school and home work together to promote high achievement by our children. Neither home nor school can do the job alone. Parents and families play an extremely important role as children's first teachers. Their support for their children and for the school is critical to their children's success at every step along the way.

Part I. District Expectations

Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School will put into operation programs, activities and procedures for the engagement of parents and family members consistent with section 1116 of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School/District 4201 agrees to implement the following requirements:

- Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School/District 4201 will put into operation programs, activities and procedures for the involvement of parents with Title I programs. Those programs, activities and procedures will be planned and operated with meaningful consultation with parents of participating children.
- Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School/District 4201 will work to ensure that the required school-level parent and family engagement plan meets the Title I requirements, and includes, as a component, a school-parent compact.
- Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School/District 4201 will incorporate this district-wide parent and family engagement plan into its district plan.
- In carrying out the Title I parent involvement requirements, to the extent practicable, Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School/District 4201 will provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with children with limited English proficiency, parents with children with disabilities, and parents of migratory children, including providing information and school reports in an understandable and uniform format and, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand.
- If the Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School/District 4201 plan for Title I is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, the school district will submit any parent comments with the plan when it submits the plan to Minnesota Department of Education.

Part II. District/School Parent Involvement Plan Required Components

1. Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School/District 4201 will take the following actions to involve parents in the joint development of its district/school parent involvement plan:
 - a. How will parents be included in writing the parent involvement plan?
On September 21, 2020 we will conduct a meeting prior to the first Schoolwide Parent Partnership Event.
2. Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School/District 4201 will involve parents in the process of district and school plan, review and improvement [i.e. district plan, section 1112, schoolwide section 1114, and/or school improvement section 1116];
 - a. How will the school/district inform parents of the school report card?
We will post the school report card on our Website with a link to the MDE website.
 - b. How will the district/school notify the parents that their child's school has been identified as needs improvement?
We would host a meeting/discussion and send a letter.
 - c. How will the school identify students who qualify for Title I services?
We have a schoolwide plan, so all students benefit.
 - d. How will the district/school involve parents of students in the identified sub-groups as part of the school support team?
We involve all parents, and we invite parents of children receiving Special Education Services and English Language Learner instruction to be part of meetings and discussions specifically related to those components of our program.
 - e. How will the district/school conduct staff development for implementing effective strategies for parental involvement?
On October 15-16, 2020, the staff will participate in professional development aimed at giving conferences that engage the parents as partners in their child's academic progress and social emotional development, as a two-way exchange of expertise and information about the child. Staff will also be trained in the presentation and signing of the Title One School - Parent Compact.
3. Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School/District 4201 will involve parents, in an organized, ongoing, and timely way, in the planning, review and improvement of programs under this part, including planning, review and improvement of the school parent and family engagement plan.
There will be opportunities during our District Advisory Committee Meetings for parents to receive updates to our progress relative to this plan and be invited to give input to said plan.
4. Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School/District 4201 will offer a number of flexible meeting options, such as meetings in the morning or evening, and may provide, with funds provided under this part, child care or home visits, as such services relate to parental involvement.

5. Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School/District 4201 will provide the following necessary coordination, technical assistance and other support to assist in planning and implementing effective parent involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance.

Parents receive weekly news via NotifyMe and updates via the school website, and are invited to participate in quarterly Parent Partnership events that directly address Montessori philosophy and student achievement, often with students presenting their work or presentations.

6. Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School/District 4201 will build the schools' and parents' capacity for strong parental involvement, in order to ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the school involved, parents and the community to improve student academic achievement, through the activities specifically described below.

As Cornerstone enters its tenth year, we have been able to assess constructive parent meetings and involvement and time that has been spent in less productive ways. We have held planning meetings to discuss moving forward in light of what we've learned; we will not have more meetings, however we have found ways to increase attendance and have a more formal system of taking and reviewing minutes to increase follow through and genuine improvement.

7. If the schoolwide program plan is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, submit any parent comments on the plan when the school makes the plan available to the local educational agency.

8. Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School/District 4201 will provide support to parents of children served by the school district or school, as appropriate, in understanding topics such as the following.

- the state's academic content standards,
- the state's student academic achievement standards,
- the state and local academic assessments including alternate assessments,
- the requirements of Title I,
- how to monitor their child's progress, and
- how to work with educators.

We have a Back to School Information Fair, Parent Orientations, monthly Parent Partnership Events, and we partner closely with the Montessori Center of Minnesota to provide access to Parenting and education workshops. Perhaps most importantly, we host parent observations of regular school days and provide de-briefing discussions following the observations to increase parent understanding of the Montessori philosophy and their child's progress. When staff attends seminars or workshops this information is shared with parents as well.

9. Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School/District 4201 will provide parents of participating children, if requested by parents, opportunities for regular meetings to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their children, and respond to any such suggestions as soon as practically possible.
10. Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School/District 4201 will provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's academic achievement, such as literacy training and using technology, as appropriate, to foster parental involvement.

Cornerstone's Literacy Specialist will provide parents with strategies for reading with their children as well as on-going mentoring during the school year. Parents will receive training on the use of FASTBridge for on-line math instruction for children.

11. Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School/District 4201 will educate its teachers, pupil services personnel, principals and other staff, in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to implement and coordinate parent programs and build ties between parents and schools.

In addition to the specific training to engage parents as partners in conferences, staff will participate in trainings from outside experts around issues that affect our families, such as poverty, inequity, homelessness, implicit bias and other crises. We have implemented a School Based Mental Health program for all children. We also invite parents to speak at parent events about their own areas of expertise relative to our community and school.

12. Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School/District 4201 will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parental involvement programs and activities with Head Start, Reading First, Early Reading First, Even Start, Home Instruction Programs for Preschool Youngsters, the Parents as Teachers Program, and public preschool and other programs, and conduct other activities, such as parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children.

Cornerstone partners closely with the Montessori Center of Minnesota and hosts events of all types to support parent engagement, such as the Early Childhood Screening that happens on site each year.

13. Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School/District 4201 will take the following actions to ensure that Title I information related to the school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities, is sent to the parents of participating children in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand.

Cornerstone has made huge strides forward in our effort to make sure all of our documents and communications are translated into the languages our families use. Cornerstone's website is updated on a regular basis as new resources and information are developed. We continue to improve the site to provide more opportunities to distribute information to our community about programs and events.

14. Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School/District 4201 will coordinate and integrate parental involvement strategies under Title I with parental involvement strategies under the following other programs:

We partner with our local Head Start in placing or receiving children; we also partner with

the Montessori Center of Minnesota's Birth to Five Program to serve families in our community.

15. Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School/District 4201 will take the following actions to conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this parental involvement plan in improving the quality of its Title I schools. The evaluation will include identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in parental involvement activities (with particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background). The school district will use the findings of the evaluation about its parent and family engagement plan and activities to design strategies for more effective parental involvement, and to revise, if necessary (and with the involvement of parents) its parental involvement plan.

We conduct an annual survey offered on line and in paper format. We support parents having on line access here at school and make sure that the survey is in their language. We have also provided support in offering to read the surveys to parents who need that support.

16. Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School/District 4201 will convene an annual meeting, at a convenient time, to which all parents of participating children shall be invited and encouraged to attend, to inform parents of their school's participation under this part and to explain the requirements of this part, and the right of the parents to be involved,

Our meeting will convene on September 21, 2020 prior to the first Parent Partnership Event; dinner and childcare are provided to support strong attendance when in person gatherings are allowed.

Part III. Shared Responsibilities for High Student Academic Achievement

As a component of the school-level parental and family engagement plan, each school shall jointly develop with parents for all children served under this part a school-parent compact that outlines how parents, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement.

- Conduct a parent/teacher conference in elementary schools, twice annually during which the compact shall be discussed as the compact relates to the individual child's achievement;
- Provide frequent reports to parents on their children's progress by way of classroom blogs, philosophical news letters, parent-come-to-school nights, and other meetings and discussions as requested.
- Provide parents with reasonable access to staff, opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class and observation of classroom activities.

Part IV. Discretionary District/School Parent Involvement Plan Components

The Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School/District 4201 Parent and Family Engagement Plan may include additional paragraphs listing and describing other discretionary activities that the school district, in consultation with its parents, chooses to undertake to build parents' capacity for involvement in the school and school system to support their children's academic achievement, such as the following activities:

- Provide necessary literacy training for parents from Title I, Part A funds, if the school district has exhausted all other reasonably available sources of funding for that training.

- Pay reasonable and necessary expenses associated with parental involvement activities, including child care costs, to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions.
- Train parents to enhance the involvement of other parents.
- In order to maximize parental involvement and participation in their children's education, arrange school meetings at a variety of times, or conduct in-home conferences between teachers or other educators, who work directly with participating children, with parents who are unable to attend those conferences at school.
- Adopt and implement model approaches to improving parental involvement.
- Establish a district parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parental involvement in Title I, Part A programs.
- Develop appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses, including faith-based organizations, in parental involvement activities.
- Provide other reasonable support for parental involvement activities under section 1118 as parents may request.

Part V. Accessibility

In carrying out the parental involvement requirements of this part Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School/District 4201, to the extent practicable, shall provide full opportunities for the participation of parents of children with limited English proficiency, parents of children with disabilities, and parents of migratory children, including providing information and school reports in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language such parents can understand.

Cornerstone's mission directly embraces diversity and remains committed to taking all measures necessary to allow all families to participate in an equal way.

Part VI. Adoption

The Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School/District 4201 Parent and Family Engagement Plan has been developed jointly with, and agreed on with, parents of children participating in Title I programs, as evidenced by meeting minutes and sign-in sheets.

On September 21, 2020, the Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School/District 4201 Parent and Family Engagement Plan will be in effect for the period of the 2020-21 School Year.

The Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School/District 4201 will distribute this plan to all parents of participating Title I children *on or before September 21, 2020.*

Title I Authorized Representative

Alyssa Schwartz, Head of School
September 2020