

Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School
Policy O1: Parent Involvement
Adopted: October 22, 2020

The Board of Directors recognizes and values parents and families as children's first teachers and decision-makers in education. The Board believes that student learning is more likely to occur when there is an effective partnership between the school and the student's family. Such a partnership generally result in higher academic achievement, improved student behavior, and reduced absenteeism.

The term "families" is used in order to include children's primary caregivers, who are not their biological parents, such as foster caregivers, grandparents, and other family members.

Through this policy, the Board directs the establishment of a Parental Involvement Plan by which a school-partnership can be established and provided to the parent of each child in the Academy. The plan must encompass parent participation, through meetings and other forms of communication. The Parental Involvement Plan shall reflect the Board's commitment to the following:

I. Relationships with Families

- a. cultivating school environments that are welcoming, supportive, and student-centered;
- b. providing professional development for school staff that helps build partnerships between families and schools;
- c. providing family activities that relate to various cultures, languages, practices, and customs, and bridge economic and cultural barriers;
- d. providing coordination, technical support and other support to assist schools in planning and implementing family involvement activities.

II. Effective Communication

- a. providing information to families to support the proper health, safety, and well-being of their children;
- b. providing information to families about school policies, procedures, programs, and activities;
- c. promoting regular and open communication between school personnel and students' family members;
- d. communicating with families in a format and language that is understandable, to the extent practicable;
- e. providing information and involving families in monitoring student progress;
- f. providing families with timely and meaningful information regarding academic standards, State and local assessments, and pertinent legal provisions;
- g. preparing families to be involved in meaningful discussions and meetings with school staff.

III. **Volunteer Opportunities**

- a. providing volunteer opportunities for families to support their children's school activities;
- b. supporting other needs, such as transportation and child care, to enable families to participate in school-sponsored family involvement events.

IV. **Learning at Home**

- a. offering training and resources to help families learn strategies and skills to support at-home learning and success in school;
- b. working with families to establish learning goals and help their children accomplish these goals;
- c. helping families to provide a school and home environment that encourages learning and extends learning at home.

V. **Involving Families in Decision Making and Advocacy**

- a. involving families as partners in the process of school review and continuous improvement planning;
- b. involving families in the development of its school-wide parent involvement policy and plan, and distributing the policy and plan to families.

VI. **Collaborating with the Community**

- a. building constructive partnerships and connecting families with community-based programs and other community resources;^{1,2}
- b. coordinating and integrating family involvement programs and activities with Academy initiatives and community-based programs that encourage and support families' participation in their children's education, growth, and development.