

# Jefferson County High School Parent & Family Engagement Plan 2019-2020

We—the administration, faculty, and staff at Jefferson County High School—recognize the importance of parental and family involvement in education. We know that parents, as well as other family and community members, play an integral role in the achievement and success of our student body. We value the influence these stakeholders provide, as we at JCHS continue to improve our school.

The intent of this “Parent and Family Engagement Plan” is to afford an opportunity for all stakeholders—educators, administrators, staff, parents, family, community members, as well as students—to develop and to build a trusting and collaborative relationship as we continue to strive for excellence. Each year the Parent-Family Engagement Plan is reviewed and updated by a committee that includes parents, family members, teachers, staff members, administrators, and community members. Feedback is sought from all stakeholders. The plan is published electronically on the school’s website and paper copies are available in the school office.

## Welcoming Families

We at JCHS welcome and value our students’ families, regardless of ethnicity, national origin, gender, race, religion or age. We encourage parents and families to become active participants in their child’s education. To enable our parents and families to feel more connected to their child’s involvement at school, we service them in a number of ways:

- As visitors drive onto the JCHS campus, the security guard welcomes them to the school.
- We offer visitor parking spaces and our front office staff is prepared to answer questions and to make visitors feel welcome.
- We have an open-door policy at JCHS. We welcome parents and families to visit the school at their convenience for a conversation with the administration, counselors, or teachers as needed or desired.
- We send home with each student at the beginning of the year an updated *Student Handbook*.
- We provide the *JCHS Curriculum Guide* to students and send it home with each student to review with their parents and families; additionally, it is available on the school’s web site.
- We hold a LINK Day (Freshmen Orientation) at the beginning of each school year for Freshmen to get acquainted with our school and faculty; parents and families are welcome to meet the teachers at the end of the school day.
- We also hold TN Promise Scholarship meetings for the Seniors and their parents and families during the year.
- At the beginning of each semester, teachers make 20+ parental-family contacts to introduce themselves and the course to the family.
- Students enrolled in the following classes have pertinent paperwork delivered to their parents-family: Work-Based Learning, Clinical Internship, and Service Learning.
- Parents-families who have a student that receives Exceptional Children’s Services are invited to come in each year for educational planning/programming meetings.
- The Counseling Department hosts a Financial Aid Night and Scholarship Night for students and their parents-families. At these meetings, the counselors discuss requirements for graduation, requirements for college admittance, financial aid, clubs and organizations available, etc. Basically, these are informational meetings to provide parents-families with information and data to help students make educational decisions.
- The Counseling Office has an “open door policy.” Parents-families are encouraged to meet with counselors at any time, with or without an appointment.
- We welcome all stakeholders each year to our Night of the Patriots (Veterans’ Day program), which showcases the talents of many of the students at JCHS. This event is an opportunity for the veterans of the community to be honored. The event begins with a free Veteran’s chili supper.
- The Advance Placement (AP) program holds an AP Parent Night every fall so that parents-families can meet their students’ instructors.
- Parents-families are welcome to use the resources available in the media center.

## Communicating Effectively

We at JCHS strive to engage in regular, meaningful communication with our parents. From publicized events—using a variety of media—to phone calls, e-mails, conferences, and newsletters, etc., we keep our parents well-informed of student learning and activities. The following examples showcase effective communication with our families:

- We utilize the Blackboard Connect Call system, as well as “text” messages for students who signed up, as methods of communicating to them or their families.
- Each teacher in the school is expected to have an up-to-date website available to anyone with Internet access.
- We also have an Attendance Review committee for students with absentee problems.
- The JCHS sign, next to Highway 92, advertises school events to the community.
- The JCHS website informs parents of school events and information that keep them connected to the activities at the school.
- We send home with the students their mid-term grade reports during the school year. Dates for these events can be found on the web site. Students and parents can access the ASPEN portal to view grades and attendance at any time on any day.
- The ESL (English as a Second Language) Department makes phone calls to parents on a regular basis concerning the progress of students.
- The ESL Department also translates all documents in the student’s home language.
- In addition to the initial twenty contacts mentioned earlier, teachers stay in touch with their parents via phone calls, e-mails, and conferences as the need arises.
- Teachers also use Academic Improvement Plans (AIP) to help their students’ improve their grades; the AIP is mailed to the parent’s address as need arises. Teachers and parents also sit down in a conferencing setting to evaluate student progress at the end of grading periods.
- At the beginning of each semester, CTE (Career Technical Education) faculty members send home safety training information and course competency guides with each of the students in their classes.
- The ECS (Exceptional Children Services) Department holds regular IEP meetings, involving parents in the development of individualized education plan (IEP) for their child.
- The ECS Department makes positive phone calls to parents when students demonstrate good behavior / work ethic.
- The ECS Department also makes phone calls to parents when students struggle with classes, behaviorally or academically.
- The ECS Department invites parents in for positive behavior / academic support meetings.
- CDC teachers send daily progress notebooks home with students. Parents can then respond to the daily notes and return these to the teacher.
- ECS students who struggle with behaviors have daily behavior sheets that are signed by parents each night.
- ECS students each have a case manager who communicates with parents and teachers regarding student progress.
- Patriot Academy publishes a newsletter each nine weeks with information from our Counseling Office and news from each team; the newsletter is available on the Patriot Academy website.
- Teachers communicate with parents before a discipline problem escalates.
- Teachers also send home failure notices on Academic Improvement Plans after the 4 ½ week mark.
- Families are contacted to set up meetings with the counselor and teacher if their student is at risk of failing a course.
- Families are invited to attend Career Open House with their student to learn about post-secondary opportunities.
- Families are invited to attend FAFSA Blitz events to receive aid in completing their student’s FAFSA
- Some teachers invite parents to join their Remind.com notification system.
- All teachers can be contacted directly through the school website or by calling the school office.
- The Counseling Department offers a text alert notification system for each grade level (by graduating class).
- We also have a Twitter account @JCHSPatriots that communicates important school information.
- *Beyond the Books* is a monthly newsletter that highlights events and new resources available in the media center. It is posted on the JCHS website for all students to view.

## Supporting Student Success

- We at JCHS collaborate with our families on a regular basis to support student learning and healthy development here at school, as well as beyond school hours. We offer regular opportunities for students and parents to engage in activities that will do so effectively. We truly recognize the importance of working together to improve our school. The following examples highlight school / parental collaboration to achieve common goals:
- The JCHS Exceptional Children Services Department works with parents / guardians of the students they serve to develop and monitor IEPs.
- The ESL students are monitored regularly (every 4 ½ weeks) to ensure success in the regular curriculum.
- The ESL Department also translates flyers and school documents for all students; these are sent home regularly.
- The Advance Placement (AP) program holds an AP Parent Night every fall so that families can meet their students' instructors.
- The ECS Department makes positive phone calls to parents when students demonstrate good behavior / work ethic.
- The ECS Department also makes phone calls to parents when students struggle with classes, academically, behaviorally, and/or socially.
- The ECS Department invites parents in for positive behavior / academic support meetings.
- CDC teachers send daily progress notebooks home with students. Parents can then respond to the daily notes and return these to the teacher.
- Students who struggle with behaviors have daily behavior sheets that are signed by parents each night in order for direct communication to be maintained.
- The Counseling Department hosts a financial aid night for parents and students to provide them with "how to" information regarding financial aid availability and accessibility.
- School Counselors schedule computer labs to help twelfth grade students complete college applications and the TN Promise applications for College Application week.
- Students may take classes that allow them access to industry certifications. The certifications include OSHA 10 in Structural Systems II and MEP II, OSHA 10 in Healthcare, PMI (Precision Measurement Instrumentation, SNAP-On Tools) MLR IV, TSIC Animal Science (Pilot), TSIC Dietetics and Nutrition (Pilot), and Solidworks CSWA.
- Students may earn a Work Ethic Diploma of Distinction. To earn this diploma, they must accumulate 20 points and setup an online account to verify points.
- Ninth grade students are provided their results from a retired PLAN test and are asked to share this with their parents.
- Tenth grade students are provided their results from a retired ACT test and are asked to share this with their parents.
- Eleventh grade students are provided their ACT results and are asked to share this information with their parents.
- The Math Department provides graphing calculators to all student taking the ACT, free of charge.
- The Blackboard Connect Call alerts parents concerning upcoming events and activities at JCHS.
- The School Counselors coordinate and collaborate with the TN Promise scholarship to host various meetings for parents and students who will be attending a community college or technical school in the fall. This scholarship gives "last dollar" money to these students.
- The Night of the Patriots showcases the talents of many of the students at JCHS. It also utilizes the talents of the construction trade classes who build props and backdrops.
- Athletic teams (football, dance, and basketball) hold youth camps.
- At Patriot Academy, teachers meet regularly to discuss student progress in their classes. Whenever necessary, teachers schedule parent / teacher / student conferences.
- Students who are struggling academically, are placed on an Academic Improvement Plan to reach success. This plan may include tutoring. The lab is open at Patriot Academy in the morning from 7:30 – 8:05. Students may get academic assistance during this time or just use the lab to complete assignments.
- Students who are struggling behaviorally, are placed on a Behavior Improvement Plan to reach success. This plan may include signing out to see a school counselor or just going to the water fountain for a drink to refocus quickly.
- Students who are struggling to have good attendance are placed on an Attendance Improvement Plan to reach success. This plan includes checking in with their school counselor often, checking in with teachers for make-up work, etc.

- Patriot Academy offers tutoring before and after school by teams of teachers.
- Credit Recovery time is also offered on Tuesday and Thursday from 3:30 – 5:00, in Room 219 at the main campus.
- Students from JCHS are regularly featured in the local newspaper for various achievements, including academic, athletic, and community service. For example, in May, many of our honors students received coverage in the Standard Banner for their outstanding achievements and “Student of the Year” recognition.
- JCHS also provides “Starfish” teacher mentoring for its students.
- The media center continues to streamline the user experience for students and to assist them in their personal achievements and successes.
- The media center continually upgrades equipment and instructional materials to meet current standards and technology objectives.
- School Counselors provide resources to students, such as computer access for post-secondary purposes, ACT registration, and scholarship completion.
- Students have the opportunity to take a free ACT prep class during school hours.
- The Counseling Department provides junior and senior students with the opportunity to attend a local college and career fair each fall.
- Patriot Academy offers parenting skills classes and resources for parents and community members.
- The main campus media center is open from 7:30 until 4:00 P.M. to meet the needs of students throughout the day.
- We have two partnerships this school year, one with Niswonger Foundation to work with students that will be first time college attendees and one with Cherokee Health Systems for students with unique behavioral needs that interfere with the school environment and learning.

## **Speaking Up for Every Child**

- We at JCHS truly value each and every student at our school. We endeavor to treat every student fairly and equally, regardless of ethnicity, gender, race, religion or disability. We understand the vital role parents play in their child’s education. We feel that informed parents make better parents; therefore, we welcome parents as advocates of their child’s needs. To support our stance on the intrinsic value of each student, we provide the following services:
- JCHS has two Open Houses each school year for parents to visit the campus and meet with teachers and administrators.
- Resources, such as interpreting and translating, are provided to families that speak other languages.
- The Family Resource Center provides assistance for almost any situation that may arise with a student and their family.
- School Counselors connect families with the Family Resource Center to access services (food, clothing, and shelter, etc.).
- JCHS teachers must sign off on FERPA laws and policies each year, as well as Title IV, Suicide Prevention, Section 504, Bully & Harassment Prevention, Child Abuse reporting, Title IX, Blood Borne Pathogens, and AED Training.
- Peer tutoring and the Patriot Pals programs are support programs that benefit all students that are involved in the experience.
- The ECS Department works with parents / guardians of the students they serve to set up and monitor IEPs.
- The ECS Department also reads parents their IDEA parental rights at each meeting.
- Office space is provided to DCS and other case workers who need to meet with students during the school day.
- JCHS often hosts and promotes School Board meetings that allow the community members to voice their opinion on school policies and actions taken by our School Board.
- Communiqués are sent home at the beginning of each year detailing the rights that parents have in their child’s education, i.e., FERPA.

## **Sharing Power**

We at JCHS welcome a joint partnership in crucial decision-making. We realize that all stakeholders— administrators, teachers, parents, students, and community members—have a voice and are vital in effecting and creating practices and programs. The following examples substantiate our willingness to work alongside other stakeholders:

- Parents, teachers, students, community leaders, and staff are surveyed to gain valuable insight into our programs so that we can plan more effectively.
- JCHS also hosts monthly School Board meetings at Patriot Academy; the public is welcome.
- Community leaders and parents are encouraged to attend School Board meetings and are able to voice their concerns at these meetings.
- All of our sports programs have active and supportive Booster Clubs, composed of both parents and community members.
- Parents, faculty, and other community members work together to plan and to carry out Project Graduation, the annual event for our seniors to celebrate their matriculation the evening before their actual graduation.
- An interpreter is available (if needed) to assist during the IEP development process to allow parents equal participation.
- The yearbook is supported by community sponsors and advertisements each year.
- Teaching as a Profession students complete practicum experiences in other schools. These opportunities allow our students an opportunity to observe the education profession and to represent our school.
- Teachers are encouraged to contact parents before students are sent to the office for a referral in order to work with parents on how to curb potential problems.
- Teacher e-mail addresses are posted on the school website for parents and community members to communicate with teachers on various issues.
- Teachers within Patriot Academy hold frequent team meetings with parents to address behavioral / academic issues.
- Teachers at the main campus also hold frequent meetings with parents to address behavioral / academic issues.
- Teachers also discuss and complete an academic or behavior improvement plan during their frequent meetings. They also send out notices regularly if a student is not performing to expectations.
- At the Financial Aid Night and Scholarship Night, held by the Counseling Department each year, the counselors discuss requirements for graduation, requirements for college admittance, financial aid, clubs and organizations available, etc. Basically, these are informational meetings to provide parents with data to help students make educational decisions.
- Students (and their parents) receiving special education services are invited to attend their IEP meetings to participate in the planning of their program and schedules.

## **Collaborating with Community**

We at JCHS value our community members and their willingness to become joint partners in education. We feel certain that community members, along with parents, have a genuine interest in improving education. We acknowledge the many learning opportunities, services, and civic benefits offered by community stakeholders. To show our support of the community, as well as its support of JCHS, we offer the following:

- Parents, faculty, and community leaders are informed of the JCHS School Improvement Plan.
- Community groups regularly utilize our facilities for meetings and classes.
- Community business leaders serve on a Career and Technical Education Advisory Panel to provide input on how to improve the CTE curriculum.
- Professionals in the community are routinely utilized as guest speakers in classes throughout the high school.
- Faculty and students associated with many clubs and organizations at JCHS, most notably in our Service Learning program, work with groups and citizens of Jefferson County in various community service projects.
- JCHS holds the Night of the Patriots event, open to the entire community. This also includes a chili supper for veterans in our area.
- The annual Senior Play is open to anyone in the area who wishes to buy a ticket. It is a well-received and well-attended program that connects the students, faculty, and staff of JCHS to the community.
- Students in English 12 class job shadow community members as part of their preparation for career I-Search papers.
- The Remote Area Medical (RAM) organization operates a free clinic at JCHS for families in need.
- The flyers from local organizations, such as Appalachian Outreach, i.e., coats for the cold and free backpacks, are translated and sent home with the students.
- JCHS opens up its greenhouses to the public to sell flowers each year.

- JCHS collects fruit to reach a goal of serving 1,400 families in the community. Family Consumer Sciences' Human Services classes pack boxes, and the Leadership class helps to deliver the food.
- During Honors Day, JCHS recognizes a member of the community as the "Community Patriot Recipient." A student from JCHS is recognized as "Student Community Volunteer," after being nominated by members of the community.
- Every senior that receives Special Education services is given an opportunity to fill out an application for vocational rehabilitation.
- Students in the work-based Service Learning Program have the opportunity to work in the community daily.
- Different organizations at JCHS are involved in the following outreaches: Blankets for Babies, Jeans for Teens, Nails at Nursing Homes, Christmas Shoeboxes, Sharing Christmas in Jefferson County, Samaritan House, Humane Society, Safe Space (cell phones), and choir singing at churches.
- Our Patriot Singers and Band perform on Martin Luther King Day and at other community events.
- The JCHS Band participates in community activities, such as local and area Christmas parades.
- JROTC participates in various community events, such as the Veteran's Day parade.
- Our Leadership class assists with the Chamber of Commerce Banquet each year.
- Members of the community mentor JCHS students through the TN Promise initiative.
- Local clubs, churches, and community members encourage students and award them with scholarships.
- The JCHS Family Consumer and Career Leaders of America (FCCLA) participate in the "March for Babies" event through the March of Dimes organization.

Service Learning classes are involved in civic and community activities, including helping public libraries, Glenmore Mansion activities, the Jefferson County Courthouse Christmas decorating, assisting at the Dandridge Ministerial Association's Emergency Food Pantry, delivering the Jefferson County Litter Program to the elementary schools (through the County Mayor's Office), maintaining the Little Free Libraries around the community, participating in the national "Read Across Americ