

McMinn County School District Family Engagement Plan  
2010-11

(Developed by the McMinn County Schools District Family Engagement Committee)

The McMinn County School System recognizes the critical role of families in their children's academic achievement and social well-being. The expectations of the district's Family Engagement plan is to: 1) improve student attendance, 2) foster better student test scores and grades, 3) lower student dropout rate, 4) establish positive parent or guardian and child communications, 5) encourage positive student attitude and behavior, 6) assist parents/families with the development of a good home study environment, 7) increase community support for schools; and 8) promote cultural diversity. With special emphasis for the 2010-11 school year, elementary grades will emphasize and support parents with childhood literacy and instructional math programs/activities, whereas secondary schools will foster parent and student programs that continue to increase the district's high school graduation rate.

The McMinn County School System believes it is the responsibility of every school to create a "welcoming" environment conducive to learning and support of comprehensive family involvement programs that have been developed jointly with families. In order to achieve these goals the system will require all schools to establish a family engagement committee consisting of parents and staff. In order to continue support of our schools in this endeavor the system will maintain on staff a district family engagement coordinator. The coordinator's primary duty will be monitor, maintain, suggest and implement programs and activities that will ensure all schools and the system as a whole is in compliance with the Tennessee Department of Education Family and Community Engagement Initiative.

The System will provide human and financial resources to secure professional consultants who can assist our schools and the district in achieving family engagement initiatives.

The System, in recognizing the critical role of families in their children's academic success, has placed on our website at <http://www.mcminn.k12.tn.us> our curriculum map, homework helps, and other educational tools to assist families in this effort. The District Family Engagement Plan is also available on the district website.

Purposefully, the System will engage parents, both as individuals and as groups to act as advisors and resource people in the following ways:

- Parents with specific talents to complement and extend the instructional services of the classroom teacher;
- To serve as advisors on curriculum development projects;
- To express ideas and concerns by responding to surveys and other information-gathering devices;
- To be actively involved in parent-teacher groups and strategies to improve homework, attendance and discipline;
- To provide input into the planning, design and implementation of the system programs and family engagement plan.

The System will ensure that each school as well as the System will:

- Convene an annual meeting, to which all parents of participating children, including migrant students and limited English Proficiency students, must be invited, to explain the programs, activities and curriculum available;
- Provide parents of participating children, including migrant students and limited English Proficient students, with reports and explanations of their child's progress;
- To the extent practical, conduct a system-side parent/teacher conference day event whereby parents or other authorized care-giver can meet with the child's teacher or teachers and discuss student progress;
- Provide placement, instruction and/or training as methods to be used by parents to complement the child's instruction;
- Permit parents of participating children to observe the educational program activities;
- Provide opportunities for regular meetings with parents to formulate parental input into the educational program;
- Make available to parents with children in the System a copy of the parent involvement policy as well as timely information about the parent involvement programs;

- Inform parents of parent involvement requirements and other relevant provisions of the parent involvement program;
- Provide reasonable support for parent involvement activities as parents may request;
- Coordinate, to the extent possible, parent involvement activities and strategies under the educational programs of the McMinn County School System;
- Develop a student-parent-teacher compact that outlines how parents, the entire school staff and students will share the responsibility for improved student achievement and the means by which the school and parents will build and develop the partnership to help children achieve high standards;
- Provide information, to the extent practicable, on programs and activities in a language and form that parents understand;
- Issue on an annual basis a parent/school survey to solicit the views and opinions as well as demographic information of the students and families the school and our System serves, and
- Annually assess, through consultation with parents, the effectiveness of the parent involvement program and determine what action needs to be taken, if any, to increase parent participation.

The System also recognizes the necessity to accommodate the diverse needs of the students and families we serve by developing jointly, with families, multiple, innovative, and flexible ways for families to be involved educationally with their child. In order to accomplish this goal, the System and our schools will schedule meetings, at various times of the day, in an effort to accommodate parent's schedules.

Linguistically, in an attempt to recognize and address the diverse needs of our students and their families, the System has purchased the TransAct system to translate school documents and information in student and families' native languages.

The System recognizes the rights of parents and guardians to have access to the school, their child's records, and their child's classroom. In order to accomplish this goal, the System has established on the System's school year calendar two parent conference day events; first and second semester. Additionally, the schools are required to send report cards, progress reports, and arrange teacher conference during teacher planning time. The System and school have developed and presently maintain current and up-to-date website information and teacher as well as family engagement email accounts in an effort to sustain open and frequent communication with parents.

The System maintains at the McMinn County Board of Education office as well as each school, a parenting and educational information through Family Resource Centers. To the extent practicable, school family engagement coordinators and the district family engagement coordinator provides a portable Family Resource Center at ballgames, school functions, and community events to share parenting and educational information with families in settings beyond the school grounds and normal school hours. Parent volunteers and faculty members are engaged in participating and assisting with these extra-curricular outings.

The System has developed along with the State Department of Education funded pre-kindergarten program parent involvement initiatives that consist of home visits, parenting classes, and instructional workshops. The System has also developed along with the State Department funded pre-K program a collaboration with Headstart and Tennessee Wesleyan College to develop a pre-K advisory council. This group consists of parents, staff, community, civic and government individuals. The pre-K and Headstart collaborations provide family friendly opportunities for parents new to the public education system.

The System Family Engagement Committee will annually review, evaluate for content and effectiveness, and modify if necessary the School District Family Engagement Plan.

Data obtained from the Parent/School Survey issued in Spring 2010 will be used to develop and implement SMART goals as well as draft a School District Family Engagement Plan for the 2010-11 school year.

Translations in other languages of the District Family Engagement Plan will be made available upon request as well as available for public viewing on the McMinn County Board of Education website at <http://www.mcminn.k12.tn.us>.

Additionally, the parent of a student in a McMinn County School may express their dissatisfaction with the District Family Engagement Plan at the McMinn County Board of Education Office, 216 North Jackson Street, Athens Tennessee 37303.