

Unicoi County Schools

Parent/Family Involvement Plan

The Unicoi County School System recognizes the importance of the family and their involvement in the student's school experiences. We encourage each parent to seek every opportunity provided to become immersed in the partnership between home and school.

- The Unicoi County School Board has adopted a parent involvement policy developed by parents, teachers and administrators. The policy is in section four of the school board policy manual, policy #4.502 and is available at each school. This policy has been followed in the development of this plan.
- Parent Involvement is an expectation in our schools. Therefore, to assure that the School Board policy is effectively utilized and that families and community members have an opportunity to be involved in the exact planning of strategies to be utilized, this system-wide Parent Involvement Plan has been developed jointly with these stakeholders.

Building Capacity

- Building capacity for both school and parents for strong parent involvement is a responsibility of all stakeholders. Working through the parent involvement coordinator, we will review current practices, as well as investigate new practices and strategies that will address the specific needs of stakeholders to develop their capacity and strengthen parental involvement. Strategies are addressed further in this document. The district will support the chosen methodology of schools for promotion of parent involvement.
- All programs under the jurisdiction of the Unicoi County School System such as Even Start, Home Bound Instruction, Pre-School programs, have been involved in developing this plan through their attendance at meetings, written communications, surveys and review of the plan.

Barriers

- We recognize there are many barriers that prevent effective engagement of groups such as economically disadvantaged, disabled, minority or limited English speaking parents. Some barriers are as follows:

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| * Preconception of school | * Miscommunication |
| * Education not valued. | * Children not living with parents. |
| * Curriculum | * Lack of medical and dental care for parent. |
| * Number of Teachers | * Teacher/Family attitudes |
| * Proximity & Size of School | * Adolescence |
| * Peer Relationships | * Time |
| * Culture | * Parental & Family uncertainty |
| * Transportation | |

Recognition of these barriers and acknowledgment is necessary in planning strategies to overcome them.

Opportunities for Involvement

We encourage the involvement of parents as individuals and groups to act as advisors and resource people in some of the following ways:

- Serve as a member of the Family and Community Advisory Council (FCAC).
- Serve on committees associated with school improvement planning, parent involvement plans, learning compacts, curriculum development projects, Title I planning teams and others as needed.
- Complete reviews, surveys, evaluations, and other information gathering devices.
- Volunteer in various capacities at the school/district level.
- Become actively involved in parent-teacher organizations/groups.
- Share questions, concerns and ideas in a respectful manner to appropriate school personnel.
- Participate in parenting workshops that may be offered.
- Support your child in his/her educational experiences utilizing effective and proven strategies.
- Attend parent – teacher conferences.

Plan Development, Review, and Evaluation

Parent Involvement in the Development of the Plan

The Family and Community Advisory Council (FCAC) will annually assess, through consultation with parents, the effectiveness of the Parent /Family Involvement Plan and program, and determine what action needs to be taken, if any, to increase parental and community participation. The FCAC will be composed of representatives from parents of students in elementary, middle, and high schools, community business leaders, a member of the school board, and representatives from the school district.

- Evaluation of the plan will be conducted annually in April of each year, with review and feedback occurring semi-annually. The core team will meet with stakeholders from each school to conduct this evaluation determining the content and effectiveness of the plan.
- All parent involvement activities utilized create data. This data is analyzed at the district level to provide information to design strategies for more effective parent involvement and to determine the level of success of the strategies that are in place.
- The school district Parent/Family Involvement Plan will be renewed and reviewed as necessary following the annual evaluation of the plan.

Data Gathering for the FCAC and Making Changes

- Parents will be sent a copy of the plan with a request to review the plan and make comments. Those returned will be considered by the council.
- The website will be utilized for comments and ideas.
- Surveys will be conducted at the district and school level.
- Minutes from PTA/ PTO meetings will be reviewed.
- Any other meetings minutes available will be reviewed.
- Parent Conference Reports will be reviewed.
- The Family Friendly Schools-District Family Assessment and Development Rubric will be used as a self evaluation for federal and state compliance of the plan.
- The FCAC after considering all the data available will make necessary changes to the plan.
- The corrected plan will be posted to the website and copies distributed to parents with an opportunity for comments.
- If the plan is not satisfactory to the parents, the school district will submit any parent comments with the plan to the State Department of Education when the plan is submitted.

Parent Involvement Planning at the School Level

- All schools will develop a Parent Involvement Plan.
- Coordination and technical assistance in the development of the School Level Plan is provided by the Core Family Engagement Planning Team members.
- The Core team is to provide support necessary to assist the schools in planning and implementing effective parent involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance.
- Parents will be involved jointly in the development, review and revision of the school level Parent Involvement Plan.
- Each school will provide to parents information concerning the course of study in use at the school. Information about the forms of assessment used and required proficiency level of students will also be provided.
- Parents will be notified of their right to access all learning material through handbooks and newsletters.
- Each school is charged with the task of posting TVAAS (Tennessee Value- Added Assessment System) report cards in their schools, and disseminate student achievement to all parents. Additionally they are to provide parents with school performance information, programs, meetings and activities through newsletters, newspaper announcements, phone calls, email, website and other forms of communication.

Distribution

§ This district level parent involvement plan is to be distributed to all parents in April of each year. A copy will be posted on the school website in January 2006 and each successor school year as corrections and additions are made.

Summary

§ The Unicoi County School District involves parents in the activities of the schools. Programs, activities, and procedures have been planned and operated with meaningful consultation with parents. Surveys are conducted to determine the effectiveness of programs and activities. Meetings are also held at the district and school level to seek input.

§ Strategies designed by parents, teachers, and district officials address items such as homework, attendance and discipline. The Learning Compact: Home-School Agreement is provided to each student and parent in each Title I school. Voluntary participation in this activity provides guidance in each of these areas.