

**The Nashwauk-Keewatin School District recognizes that effective school-family partnerships are critical to student learning and success in school.**

Research shows that students receive the following benefits from a collaborative partnership with the school, the family and the community: higher grades and test scores, better attendance and homework completion, fewer placements in special education, more positive attitudes and behavior, higher graduation rates and greater enrollment in postsecondary education. The gains for families include: improved understanding of their child's development, improved ability to family/parent, improved ability to assist their children with school and learning, and improved relationships among all stakeholders.

Families/parents, teachers, and staff, as well as the Nashwauk-Keewatin community are involved in the planning and development of the Family and Community Engagement Plan. The Family Engagement Advisory Council Meetings will be held annually (or as needed) for the purpose of planning, implementing, and evaluating the Family Engagement Plan.

2023-2024 Parent and Family Engagement Advisory Council

Shona Brohman, Parent, Paraprofessional

Nina Pleshe, Parent

Brian Gangl, Parent, ADSIS Interventionist

Dr. Rae Villebrun, Superintendent/Keewatin Elementary Principal

Chelsie Belkholm, Instructional Coach

Nick Seppala, Title I Teacher

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## **SECTION I - GOALS**

1. District/school staff will be supported in increasing open communication between families and the school using a variety of strategies and methods.
2. Opportunities for parents/families to be involved in classroom, school, and district activities will be increased.
3. Parents/families will be given increased assistance by district/school staff to gain the knowledge and skills in parenting and fostering conditions to assist and support their children's learning and development at home.
4. Parents/Families and community organizations will be provided numerous opportunities to share in decision-making and to become leaders in the advisory and advocacy roles in the schools including school review and steps for school improvement.

Goal 1: District/school staff will be supported in increasing open communication between families and the school using a variety of strategies and methods.

### Strategies:

Schoolwide Family/Parent - Teacher Conferences will be held at least twice yearly to inform families/parents of their child(ren)'s progress in school, including academic performance and assistance with understanding their child's individual classroom grades and test results to address specific academic needs of their child.

- Family/Parent - Teacher Conferences will be held twice a year
- "Back to School" open house will be held at the beginning of each school year

Keewatin Elementary will hold an annual Title I Meeting in the fall of each school year. Families/parents of all students will be invited and encouraged to attend. Families/parents will be informed of their school's participation in the Title I Program, and the right of the families/parents to be involved. Families/parents will be informed of the following information:

- Teacher/Parent/Family/Student Compact
- Current student assessment scores
- Curricular information including any changes in the curriculum and assessment instructional strategies

A Student Handbook will be available online and in-print in the office. It includes school policies for enrollment, attendance, homework, safety and discipline procedures, bus routes and bus behavior, technology Acceptable Use Policy and Parents Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

A School-Family Compact, a requirement of the Title I Program, will be jointly developed by school staff and the Family Engagement Advisory Council. It outlines how families, the school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and

the means by which the school and families/parents will build and develop a partnership to help children meet the state's high academic standards as measured by standardized tests.

Teachers will share with families/parents classroom information including teacher information (phone number and email address), classroom rules and procedures, grading policy, etc. at the beginning of the school year. This information can also be found on the school website.

Teachers will communicate with families/parents concerning their child's successes and/or problems on a regular basis through reports, notes, letters, phone calls, awards, etc.

- Report cards will be sent to families/parents at the end of each grading period in the elementary school.
- Folders of student work will be sent home weekly to be reviewed by families/parents on a regular basis. Some teachers send folders of work, assignments and other information every day for parents to sign that they have looked at the folders, that the child has practiced reading lessons, etc.
- Teachers will consistently communicate with families using a family/parent informational tool: ie. Class Dojo or another platform.
- Teachers use Infinite Campus allowing families/parents to access student progress.
- School/classroom newsletters and notes will be written and sent to families/parents on a regular basis to keep families/parents informed of school and classroom events and/or activities.

Family/parent surveys and checklists will be used to gain family/parent input and suggestions as to the quality of family/parent engagement activities in the school. All suggestions submitted will be reviewed annually by the District Family Engagement Council which discuss ways to improve family/parent interaction.

A copy of the School Board Parent Involvement Policy and information related to programs, meetings, and activities will be sent to families/parents, placed in the Student Handbook and on the district website at [www.isd319.org](http://www.isd319.org).

Families/parents will be notified in writing that they may request information about their child's course of study and have access to all learning materials by making a request to the principal of their child's school, and sample instructional materials will be displayed for review at Family/parent - Teacher Conferences.

Families/parents will be informed in the Keewatin Elementary Schools' Student Handbook of their right to access their children's official school records.

Families/parents will be informed through various mediums of their right to access the Nashwauk-Keewatin School District Family Engagement Policy and curriculum information on the school or district website located at: [www.isd319.org](http://www.isd319.org).

Teacher certification and qualifications are searchable at the Minnesota Department of Education's website- [www.education.state.mn.us](http://www.education.state.mn.us)

Breakfast and lunch menus will be sent home monthly, and are posted on the District website at [www.isd319.org](http://www.isd319.org) and are also posted in each school.

An "end of the year" ceremony will be conducted at Keewatin Elementary for kindergarteners and for the 6th grade "graduating" classes.

The District Website and Apptegy alerts are family/parent - staff notification systems to give families/parents pertinent information such as school closure for inclement weather.

Also available on the website:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Family Engagement School Board Policy</li><li>• Title I Requirements</li><li>• Assessment Results on all State Tests</li><li>• Accountability Standards</li><li>• Curriculum</li><li>• School-Family/Parent Compact</li><li>• School Policies</li><li>• Teacher Information</li><li>• Family/Parent Rights</li><li>• Future Family Engagement Activities</li></ul>
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Goal 2: Family/Parents' opportunities for involvement in classroom, school, and district activities will be increased.

Strategies:

Many activities will be provided at the district level and at individual schools to allow families/parents to be involved in their child's school and learning. The Family Engagement Advisory Council will identify and develop strategies to remove barriers that prevent families/parents from participating in district/school family engagement activities. Knowing that some families cannot attend during the regular school day, opportunities will be available to participate outside of the regular school day.

1. Open House.

- Keewatin Elementary will host an open house each fall.

2. Family Welcome Nights

- Keewatin Elementary School will hold Family Welcome Nights in the fall and in the spring. Once a date has been set, the schedule will be shared with families through teacher newsletters, social media, and the school website.

3. Families/parents will be invited to become involved in their child(ren)'s education by participating in the following activities and programs:

- Grade level grandparents' days
- Special Student Programs
- Children First! Events
- Annual Christmas Concert
- PTA/Booster Meetings
- Awards/Honors Days
- Families/parents to help with classroom events such as parties, etc.
- Track and Field
- Tug of War, and various sporting events

Goal 3: Parents/families will be given increased assistance by district/school staff to gain the knowledge and skills in parenting and fostering conditions to assist and support their children's learning and development at home.

Strategies:

Because families/parents are a child's first and most important teacher:

- Families/Parents will be invited to support their children through attending various school events including student programs, performances, assemblies, sports events, etc.
- A monthly event calendar will be maintained on each school's website.
- Families/Parents will be encouraged to monitor and/or supervise homework and daily reading activities that reinforce or enrich their child's classroom learning and a list of selected books to read is provided.
- Families/Parents will be encouraged to monitor their children's screen time as well as their use of free time.
- Referrals can be made to the provider for court-ordered parenting-classes for students with excessive absences.

Families/parents participation in projects such as the Christmas Concert, Track and Field Days, Grandparent Days, and monthly events that involve children and teachers will be encouraged and supported.

The District, in collaboration with IASC Community Education, will provide multiple opportunities for families/parents to develop their parenting and child-rearing skills to help their children succeed in school and life.

Goal 4: Families/Parents and community organizations will be provided numerous opportunities to share in decision-making and to become leaders in the advisory and advocacy roles in the schools including school review and steps for school improvement.

Strategies:

The district and school will invite families/parents to participate as partners in decision-making activities.

- One or more families/parents are involved in the development of the District/School Family Engagement Plan, and School Improvement Plan.
- The Parent-Family Advisory Committee to meet annually (at a minimum) with minutes being recorded.
- Keewatin Elementary staff and administration will encourage and support the promotion of a PTA/PTO and Booster Organization.

The District and Schools will collaborate with business and community organizations.

- A handbook containing a list of community resources found in the school district will be provided to give the district/schools information regarding community resources.
- Other collaborations have been established to develop mutual support and appreciation between business, community, and schools.
  - Girl Scouts
  - Hibbing Community College
  - Get Fit Itasca
  - Dental Screenings- Children's Dental Services
  - Kiwanis Club
  - Lions' Club – Vision Screening
  - The DARE Program
  - Local Police and Fire Department
  - 4-H
  - University of Minnesota Extension, SNAP education
- Nashwauk-Keewatin Schools collaborate with Invest Early to provide high-quality preschool programming. The school district provides the space, and Invest Early provides teachers and programming. This collaboration is not only a win for our children and families, but also both organizations.

**SECTION II. – COORDINATION, ASSISTANCE, AND SUPPORT**

I. The School District will provide the coordination, technical assistance, and support through direct participation of business office staff and the Family Engagement Advisory Council to assist in planning and implementing effective Family/parent Involvement activities.

Training for Teachers/Staff on the importance of Family Engagement and “Family Friendly Schools” is a priority.

### **SECTION III. – EVALUATION**

The Family Engagement Advisory Council will annually evaluate the content and effectiveness of the Family Engagement Program in the district and schools.

Family and Community feedback concerning the effectiveness will be received through multiple outlets in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the engagement program. Feedback will be accepted from our website, emails, suggestion boxes, and annually at our Family Engagement Meeting.

Documentation from district/school/family engagement activities including sign-ins with name and position, minutes of meetings, surveys, questionnaires, invitations, agendas, pictures, videos, newsletters, and news releases will be maintained at the school.