

**Wickes Elementary**

**Parental Involvement Plan**

**2015-16**

## **Arkansas ACT 307 of 2007 & Act 327 of 2009**

Act 307 of 2007 and Act 327 of 2009 requires public schools to create a parental involvement plan. This allows parents the unique opportunity to work in partnership with their children's schools to ensure that all students are achieving academically. Parent involvement is now defined in the law as "the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academics and other school activities". A child's education is a responsibility shared by the school and family during the time the child spends in school. In order to achieve the goal of effectively educating all children, the schools and parents must work as knowledgeable partners. The parent involvement program shall involve parents of students at all grade levels in a variety of roles. The program shall be comprehensive and coordinated in nature.

### **Parent Involvement Plan**

The Wickes Elementary School understands the importance of involving parents and the community as a whole in promoting higher student achievement and general good will between the district and those it serves. Therefore, the district shall strive to develop and maintain the capacity for meaningful and productive parental and community involvement that will result in partnerships that are mutually beneficial to the school, students, parents, and the community. Students with involved parents have more success in school. Research shows that students earn higher grades and test scores, attend school regularly, have better social skills, and enroll in higher education when parents and teachers work together in a collaborating environment.

It is the mission and expectation of Wickes Elementary School to create an environment that welcomes participation with parents at school and at home. Parent Involvement is not something that only happens when parents are in the school building. The parental involvement plan of the school district is based on six principles of involvement. Types of involvement include:

1. Communication
2. Parenting
3. Learning at Home
4. Volunteering
5. Decision Making
6. Collaborating with the Community

## Actions

1. Annual Evaluation – An annual evaluation will be conducted to ensure the continued improvement of the district’s parental/community involvement program. Wickes Elementary will conduct an annual evaluation in the spring of its parental involvement program to examine their affect on improving academic quality. A committee consisting of parents and other community members, staff of the elementary school and administration shall do the annual evaluation. The evaluation will be in form of a survey. The evaluation will include identifying barriers to greater participation of parents in Title I related activities. The Wickes Elementary will use the findings of the evaluation to design strategies for more effective parental involvement and revise, if necessary, the parental involvement policies.
2. Title I-This policy shall be part of the school’s Title I plan and shall be distributed to parents of the district’s students and provided, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand.
3. Title I funds may be used to pay necessary expenses associated with parent involvement activities, including transportation childcare, or home visit expenses to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions.
4. The Cossatot River School District will convene an annual Title I school meeting in which all parents of participating children are invited and encouraged to attend in order to inform parents of their school’s participation in Title I, the requirements of the program and the right of the parents to be involved.
5. The Cossatot River School District will hold a Public School Meeting. At this meeting the parents of participating children will be provided with information concerning Title I programs, a description and explanation of curriculum in use at the schools, the forms of academic assessment used to measure student progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet.

## **Communication**

Communication is the foundation of home and school partnerships. Wickes Elementary School shall communicate with families about school programs and student progress through effective school-to-home and home-to-school communication. The staff recognizes that communication between home and school should be regular, two-way, and meaningful. The school district will keep parents informed about parent involvement programs, meetings, and other activities they could be involved in. Such communication will be provided in English and Spanish.

### **Actions**

1. Information-Wickes Elementary School will use many forms of communication to keep parents informed. Parents will be receiving information by such means as teacher notes, school newsletters, and student handbooks. Some messages will be posted on the marquee, announced on the radio, or published in the paper. The parent facilitator will distribute a Home and School Connection Newsletter once a month. It will contain tips and activities for parents and students.
2. Collaborative- TAC/HAC is a system to allow the parents and teachers to communicate in a regular, two-way, and meaningful manner with the child's teacher and the school principal. Parents and teachers can communicate daily through the use of student folders (K-2). Parents of children in grades 3-6 can send written communication in the plastic pocket at the back of the student's planner. Parents can request a conference to communicate with the school. Home visits may also be made by the counselor to better communicate with parents. Surveys will be sent home to parents and students to check reactions to school programs and suggestions that will help the school improve their performance.
3. Conferences-Wickes Elementary will provide two Parent-Teacher conferences each year. Parent-teacher conferences are an excellent way to have two-way communication with parents. Translators will be available for Spanish speaking parents who need them. These conferences are important to the parents, child and the teacher. If the scheduled time is not convenient for the parent, a phone conference or alternate time can be arranged with the teacher.
4. School/Parent Compact – As part of the Wickes Elementary parent involvement plan the school will jointly develop with parents of served children a school/parent compact. The compact is made up of students, parents, teachers and administrators' roles in education. The compact outlines how each will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and parents will

build and develop a partnership that will help children achieve the state's high standards.

5. Open House-The Wickes Elementary faculty understands the importance of children and parents sharing the learning environment together. A "Back to School Open House" will be scheduled before the first day of school. The family can visit the student's classroom to meet the teacher and bring in school supplies. This is a wonderful opportunity for teachers and parents to discuss what the children will be learning. Refrigerator curriculums will be handed out at this time for parents to see skills their children will be learning throughout the year. Teachers will send weekly letters home to parents informing them of spelling patterns, reading and math skills, and other information that parents need to know for that week.
6. Informational Packets will be prepared to encourage communication with parents. The packets will be age appropriate and describe issues important to parents. Each parent will be given ways to become involved in the school and his/her child's education including the school's parental involvement program. It will name the activities planned throughout the year to encourage involvement and the recommended role of the parent, student, teacher, and school.
7. Orientation-Each spring, the school will sponsor a preschool day for incoming kindergarten students for the next school year. This will allow students and parents to become familiar with school environment.
8. Wickes Elementary will offer a flexible number of activities and meetings in the day and evening. Some of the activities in the morning or day time include: Grandparents Day, Parent/Teacher Conferences, Veteran's Day Program, Reading Picnic, Awards Ceremony and Parent Involvement Day. Evening activities include: Open House, Fall Festival, Christmas Music Program, Tour of Lights, Archery Night, ESL Parent Night, Parent/Teacher Conferences, and Spring Musical.

## **Parenting**

Wickes Elementary School recognizes that ALL parents want their children to do well. It is the goal of the district to assist parents in common concerns. The district will assist families with parenting and child-rearing skills, understanding child and adolescent development, and setting home conditions that support children as students at each age and grade level. The following practices will be followed to better serve the parents and children.

### **Actions**

1. A Parent Resource Center is located in the Wickes Elementary library. The center contains information on a wide range of important parenting skills and gives specific examples of how to use those skills with children. Parenting books, magazines, and handouts are available. The selection will be advertised regularly, and parents may borrow the materials for review. The parent involvement coordinator is also available to discuss concerns with parents.
2. The counselor will conduct parenting workshops to address parenting concerns. The topic will be determined by a survey administered to parents, but will include such topics as positive discipline strategies, helping with homework, and supporting children through difficult situations. The survey will ask the parents what they feel are the most difficult issues they are faced with at the time.
3. Parents will be able to participate in special events to share their backgrounds, culture, talents and goals with students here at school such as Multicultural Day or Christmas around the world. Parents will also be involved in subject area projects and events at school and home.

## **Learning At Home**

The Wickes Elementary School recognizes that parents play an integral role in assisting student learning. It is the responsibility of the school to show families how to guide their children's learning. The way children spend their time at home predicts their success at school. Schools with highly rated partnership programs made greater gains on state tests than schools with lower-rated programs. Families can be involved with their children in learning activities at home, including homework and other curriculum-linked activities and decisions.

### **Actions**

1. "Parent Involvement Meeting"-Wickes Elementary School will schedule regular "Parent Involvement Meeting" evenings. At these events, parents will be given a report on the state of the school. School employees will explain to parents and the community the State's content and achievement standards. State and local assessments will be examined and the parents will be shown how the district's curriculum is aligned with the assessments. Suggestions will be given on how to improve their child's academic achievement.
2. ACT Aspire Night-In Arkansas, math and literacy test items are based on the academic standards in the Common Core State Standards and measured using the ACT Aspire assessment. The ACT Aspire assessment focuses on achievement of learning that will gauge a student's readiness for college and career. Wickes School's curriculum is aligned with the standards measured on this exam. The district recognizes the importance of helping parents understand the way their children will be assessed. Therefore, prior to the exam, an "ACT Aspire Night" will be held for parents of children in grades 3-6. Teachers will explain the difference in criterion-referenced tests and norm-referenced tests. A contrast between multiple-choice items and constructed-response item will be shown to the parents. Then, parents and teachers will explore together released items from previous years. Parents will be shown rubrics for scoring items on the ACT Aspire Exam.
3. Learning Kits-Wickes Elementary School recognizes that a parent helping at home is involvement. It is the goal of the school to help parents find ways to reinforce the standards based curriculum taught at school. For each grade, the Arkansas Refrigerator Curriculum will be sent home with the student. This will inform parents of the skills to be taught for the year. In addition, grade level specific learning kits are available in the Parent Resource Center to allow parents the opportunity to connect the standards learned at school.

4. Homework – Some academic skills need to be reinforced. Homework prepares students for upcoming lessons and teaches responsibility. Homework helps students develop positive study habits. It is important for parents to be aware of their child's homework. Every student in kindergarten, first, and second grade will be provided with a school folder. It will go back and forth with the child each day to inform parents of assignments. Children in grades 3-6 will be given a student planner. The teacher will write the homework on the board and students will be expected to copy the assignment into the planner. The parent resource coordinator will send home tips to parents for helping children with homework.
5. English as A Second Language – A class will be offered for parents who want to learn English.



## **Volunteering and Involvement**

Wickes Elementary School shall welcome parents in the school and seek parental support and assistance. The school will work to improve recruitment of volunteers so that all families know that their time and talents are welcome.

1. The parent involvement facilitator will survey the parents regarding their interests, talents, and availability so volunteer work will be meaningful. The survey will determine how frequently a volunteer would like to participate, including the option of just one time per year. There will also be an option for those who are available to help at home. The parent facilitator will publish a volunteer resource book listing the interest and availability of volunteers for school staff members' use. The resource book will help match school needs with volunteer interest.
2. The school will provide training for volunteers, and match time and talents with school needs.
3. The Wickes Elementary School will provide flexible schedules for volunteers, assemblies, and events to enable working parents to participate.
4. Wickes Elementary will print statements attesting the school district's commitment to parental involvement and distribute the statements to parents of all students. This will be included in the school's policy handbook which will include a letter stating the school's commitment to parental involvement and the process for resolving parental concerns. At various times, parents will receive tips for fostering their child's success.

## **Decision Making**

Wickes Elementary School recognizes that a parent is a full partner in the decisions that affect his/her child and family. The school shall encourage parents to participate as full partners in the decisions that affect his/her child and family. Parents and the community will be involved in the development of long range planning for the district. In the volunteer survey, parents will be asked if they will be willing to serve on committees such as the Arkansas Consolidation School Improvement Plan. This committee will make decisions about the direction the school district will take in education. The school embraces partnership and wants to share power with families.

### **Actions**

1. **Resolving Concerns**-The school district will publish the school's process for resolving parental concerns in the school handbook. Parents are asked to approach the principal first with concerns. A conference may then be scheduled with the teacher. Parents will be given tips on how to define the problem and develop solutions.
2. **PATT-Parents and Teachers Together (PATT)** is an organization that connects the home and the school. The officers are made up of both parents and teachers. This group meets at least once each quarter to plan fundraisers and make decisions about activities for the children. To inform parents of the meeting times and dates, a note will be sent home, and it will be announced on the local radio station. Since the time may not be convenient for all parents, a copy of the meeting minutes will be sent home with every student. This will insure that all parents are informed about the decisions made by the organization.
3. **Committees**-Parents will be asked to serve on an ACSIP and Title I committee. This committee will consist of parents, teachers, and administrators. The committee will be involved in strategic planning of the school in both literacy and math. The school will also have a Parent Involvement Committee. This committee will consist of parents, teachers, and community members to discuss parent involvement and activities throughout the school year.

## **Collaborating With The Community**

Wickes Elementary School recognizes that community resources strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning. It is the school's goal to increase mutual understanding, trust, and support between the district and parents, business, and the community as a whole. The school will actively seek participation from the community.

### **Actions**

1. **Alumni Committee**-An alumni advisory commission will be created to provide advice and guidance for school improvement. To obtain members, a note will be sent home with all students and notices will be posted in stores. It will also be announced on the local radio stations, KENA and KDQN. Interested alumni will be asked to contact the parent resource coordinator.
2. **Volunteers**-The school will reach out to members of the community to recruit volunteers.
3. **Agencies**-Wickes Elementary will collaborate with outside agencies that work to help parents. The Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters Program (HIPPY) is a home based early childhood education school readiness program for parents of three, four, and five year old children. Parents As Teachers is a free learning program for families with children from prenatal to three years of age. Wickes Elementary will coordinate Title I parent involvement activities with the local Preschool program by sponsoring a transition day from Preschool to kindergarten. This will allow students and parents to become familiar with the school environment.

### **Wickes Elementary Parent Involvement Committee**

Angie Richardson	Wickes Elementary School	Building Facilitator
Elizabeth Dering	Wickes Elementary School	Parent Representative
Alicia Farringer	Wickes Elementary School	Parent Representative
Amanda Williams	Wickes Elementary School	Parent Representative
Gloria Prichett	Wickes Elementary School	Teacher Representative
Maricella Avila	Wickes Elementary School	Teacher Representative
Teresa Miles	Wickes Elementary School	Teacher Representative

