

Siebert Pre-K & Head Start Family Engagement Plan

The Eastland ISD Early Childhood Program believes that the education of all students should be a partnership between the school and the parent community. Both the District and the parent community play an essential role in the success of all students.

The Early Childhood Department, in collaboration with parents in the community, has created a family engagement plan that reflects practices that enhance parent and community involvement and reflect the specific needs of early learners.

1. Facilitate family to family support

The EISD Early Childhood Program will create safe and respectful environments where families can learn from each other as individuals and in groups, invite former participants (including families and community volunteers) to share education and career experiences with current families, and ensure opportunities for continuous participation in events designed for families by families such as training on family leadership.

Strategies Include:

- Parent Connection events are provided monthly to families that include a variety of formats, such as large group, play-based, or café style
- Campuses hold special family nights for like-groups to collaborate and build relationships
- Families involved in the home visit program set family goals where the Early Childhood Parent Engagement supports learning outcomes
- Additional training opportunities for families in response to the beginning of year feedback survey
- Provide translations as needed for non-English speaking client

2. Establish a network of community resources

The EISD Early Childhood Program will build strategic partnerships, utilize community resources, monitor and evaluate policies and practices to stimulate innovation and create learning pathways; establish and maintain partnerships with businesses, faith-based

organizations, and community agencies; identify support from various agencies, including mental and physical health providers; partner with local community-based organizations to create a family-friendly transition plan for students arriving from early childhood settings; provide and facilitate referrals to family support or educational groups based on family interests and needs; communicate short- and long-term program goals to all stakeholders; and identify partners to provide translators.

Strategies Include:

- Link families with support systems, peer to peer groups, bilingual translators, and various resources depending on family needs
- Utilizing the Early Childhood Parent Educator as a Liaison for connecting families with available resources
- Partnerships with community-based organizations, such as but not limited to: Community Storehouse, Closet Angels, Catholic Charities, Early Childhood Intervention, The Food Pantry, Crisis Center, Child Care Associates, Eastland Family Health Clinic, Center for Life Resources.
- Make sure that families are aware of services and know about their rights under federal and state laws
- Families participating in the home visit program will also receive support and opportunities for parent resources

3. Increase family participation in decision making using strategies

The EISD Early Childhood, in collaboration with early childhood families, will develop and support a family advisory council; develop, adopt, and implement identified goals within the annual campus/school improvement plan targeting family engagement; develop and support leadership skills for family members and providing opportunities for families to advocate for their children/families; collaborate with families to develop strategies to solve problems and serve as problem solvers; engage families in shaping program activities and cultivating the expectation that information must flow in both directions to reflect two-way communication; develop, in collaboration with families, clearly defined goals, outcomes, timelines, and strategies for assessing progress; provide each family with an opportunity to review and provide input on program practices, policies, communications, and events in order to ensure the program is responsive to the needs of families; and use appropriate tools such as surveys or focus groups to gather family feedback on the family engagement plan.

Strategies Include:

- Establish a Parent Advisory Council for quarterly feedback and input on Family Engagement Plan
- Provide beginning of year feedback opportunity through a survey for families to share needs
- Provide follow up feedback opportunity through an end of year survey on family engagement opportunities and the Family Engagement Plan
- Opportunities for families to serve as advocates and leaders on various campus and district committees and groups to further learning
- Meet the Teacher opportunities.

4. Equip families with tools to enhance and extend learning

EISD Early Childhood Program will provide family engagement opportunities that support parenting skills and activities that support ongoing achievement through educational resources to support learning at home while strengthening the family/school partnership; provide families with information and/or training on creating a home learning environment connected to formal learning opportunities; equip families with resources and skills to support their children through the transition to school and offering opportunities for families and children to visit the school in advance of the prekindergarten school year; provide complementary home learning activities for families to engage in at home with children through information presented in newsletters, online technology, social media, parent/family-teacher conferences, or other school- or center-related events; provide families with information, best practices, and training related to age-appropriate developmental expectations; emphasize benefits of positive family practices such as attachment and nurturing that complement the stages of children's development; collaborate with families to appropriately respond to children's behavior in a non-punitive, positive, and supportive way; encourage families to reflect on family experiences and practices in helping children; and assist families to implement best practices that will help achieve the goals and objectives identified to meet the needs of the child and family

Strategies Include:

- Approach parents as equal partners in their child's education while emphasizing parents as the child's first teacher

- The home visit program is open to all EISD Head Start Prekindergarten families to provide complimentary materials to engage in developmentally appropriate activities in the home
- Parent Engagement classroom provides literacy, math, and science materials available for Prekindergarten families to utilize at home, as well as support from the Early Childhood Parent
- Siebert will host family education nights open to all Prekindergarten families with topics that include: Language and Communication Development, Positive Discipline, Positive Brain
- Developmentally appropriate videos aligned with Prekindergarten Guidelines and focusing on parent interaction to be provided to families based on individual student learning gaps
- Siebert will host Elementary Campus Night for Prekindergarten to Kindergarten transition support
- Meet the Teacher opportunities.

5. Develop staff skills in evidence-based practices that support families in meeting their children's learning benchmarks

EISD will provide essential professional development for educators in understanding communication and engagement with families, including training on communicating with families in crisis; promote and develop family engagement as a core strategy to improve teaching and learning among all educators and staff; and develop staff skills to support and use culturally diverse, culturally relevant, and culturally responsive family engagement strategies.

Strategies Include:

- Ongoing professional development for all early childhood staff in the area(s) of cultural responsiveness and how to connect with families
- Additional professional development to include a simulation to experience families in crisis
- Develop staff skills to support families in meeting their goals
- Gain an understanding of early intervention services to support family inquiries and needs

6. Evaluate family engagement efforts and use evaluations for continuous improvement

Eastland ISD will conduct goal-oriented home visits to identify strengths, interests, and needs; develop data collection systems to monitor family engagement and focusing on engagement of families from specific populations to narrow the achievement gap; use data to ensure alignment between family engagement activities and district/school teaching and learning goals and to promote continuous family engagement; ensure an evaluation plan is an initial component that guides action; use a cyclical process to ensure evaluation results are used for continuous improvement and adjustment; and ensure teachers play a role in the family engagement evaluation process

Strategies Include:

- Eastland Head Start will conduct goal-oriented home visits open to all Prekindergarten families
- Data collected at home visits will monitor the process and goal attainment of the home visit program
- Participation data will be collected at family engagement events
- Quarterly updates will provide parents an opportunity to provide feedback in a cyclical process
- Ensure that parents' voices are heard and acknowledged during the improvement cycle
- Teachers participate in the quarterly feedback cycle