**Walcott ISD**

**PK Family Engagement**

Family engagement is defined as:

“The mutual responsibility of families, schools, and communities to build relationships to support student learning and achievement, support family well-being, and the continuous learning and development of children, families, and educators.  Family engagement is fully integrated in the child’s educational experience and is both culturally and linguistically appropriate.”  Texas Administrative Code §102.1003.

It has long been recognized by both researchers and practitioners that family engagement plays a non-negotiable role in education.  It is no longer a suggestion, rather a mandate, in Texas with the passage of house Bill 4 in 2015.  Texas Education Code §29.168, created by House Bill 4, 84th Texas Legislature, 2015, requires a school district or charter school to develop and implement a Family Engagement Plan to assist the district in achieving and maintaining high levels of family involvement and positive family attitudes toward education. The local Family Engagement Plan shall be based on the family engagement strategies established by Texas Education Agency in collaboration with other state agencies.

The Walcott ISD Prekindergarten program embraces the individuality and uniqueness of families, and promotes a culture of learning that is child centered and age appropriate.  Building partnerships between educators and families, by way of the Family Engagement Plan, ensures that every learner is encouraged, supported, and challenged to achieve the highest levels of knowledge, skills, and character.

The six Walcott ISD Family Engagement Plan strategies are based on empirical research and are proven to demonstrate positive short-term and long-term outcomes for early childhood education.  This plan expresses what is contained in the Commissioner’s Rule (102.1003(f)) in addition to specific examples of how each of the family engagement strategies will be accomplished in our high quality PK program.  The following articulates strategies within each of the six domains.

**Facilitate family - to - family support**

* Facilitating environments where families feel comfortable and respected.
* Establish a regular and meaningful communication between home and school. (Walcott website, weekly folder of student work, Facebook page)
* “Back to School Burger Night” one night the week before school starts that creates a welcoming space for parents to gather and talk informally with one another before and/or after the event. They have an opportunity to meet the staff, see the classroom and get to know the school.
* Room moms and volunteers to support parents and classroom activities
* “Book Fair” where families can get to know one another and share community and school experiences
* “ZipSlip App Implementation” meeting held during open house to provide parent training along with family to family support, dialogue, experiences that encourage parents to establish mutual support mechanisms
* PTO meetings and sponsored events encouraging parent volunteer opportunities allowing parents to work collaboratively and designed to match families who have similar interests, goals, or challenges and providing opportunities for families to have ongoing connections
* Identifying needs during parent-teacher conferences and facilitating communication between parents when appropriate.
* Parents are welcome to come and visit classroom and observe PK students.

**Establish a network of community resources**

The Walcott ISD PK Family  Engagement Plan builds strategic partnerships by leveraging community resources; establishing and maintaining partnerships with businesses and community agencies; monitoring and evaluating policies and practices to stimulate innovation and create learning pathways; identifying support from various agencies, including mental and physical health providers; partnering with local community-based organizations to create a family-friendly transition plan for students arriving from early childhood settings; and identifying partners to provide translators and culturally relevant resources reflective of home language.  Examples include:

* Providing each family with a school contact list for help with finding community resources such as help with school supplies, clothing, and food banks.
* Partnership with local businesses to provide vision checks for PK learners and other vision resources as needed
* [Community Health & Wellness Resource List](https://www.coppellisd.com/Page/8494)
* [Child Nutrition Information](https://www.coppellisd.com/Page/14916)
* [Immunization Information](https://www.coppellisd.com/Page/8396)
* [Health & Attendance Guidelines](https://www.coppellisd.com/Page/8445)
* Concealed Carry Campus
* Local Area Fire visits and speakers that share resources with students, families, and the school promoting safety and overall well-being
* Local partnership to provide food, school supplies, and back to school backpacks for learners in need
* Establishing and maintaining partnerships with business and community agencies.
* Providing translators when needed.

**Increase family participation in decision-making**

Walcott ISD increases/promotes family participation in decision-making by developing and supporting opportunities related to district goal-setting efforts targeting family engagement;  developing and supporting leadership skills for family members and providing opportunities for families to advocate for their children/families; collaborating with families to develop strategies to solve problems and serve as a problem solvers; engaging  families in shaping program activities and cultivating the expectation that information must flow in both directions to reflect two-way communication; developing, in collaboration with families, clearly defined goals, outcomes, timelines, and strategies for assessing progress; providing 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.

Utilize appropriate tools such as surveys to gather feedback on the Family Engagement Plan. Examples of family participation in district and campus decision-making opportunities include:

* Meeting with the Walcott ISD Family Committee to update and discuss family engagement plan for our campus.
* Send home notes for Pre-K activities that parents would like to do and be a part of as needed.
* Teacher will provide reports with data from CLI Engage and provide home learning activities through the CLI Engage parent page.
* Having a space for feedback on progress reports and report cards. (Ex: What is working? What would parents like to see reflected on these reports?)
* Educate families regarding their rights under State and Federal law regarding the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) and [Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act](https://www.coppellisd.com/Domain/64)
* Using parents as equal partners with staff in reviewing family engagement results and making decisions regarding plans for continuous improvement
* LPAC parent representation
* Regularly held parent/teacher conferences

**Equip families with tools to enhance learning**

Walcott ISD recognize the families of our learners as the first and best teachers in the child’s life.  In order to equip families with tools to enhance and extend their child’s learning, our educators work with families to design or implement existing home 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 pre-kindergarten school year; provide complementary home learning activities for families to engage in a home with children through information presented in online tech tools, social media, parent/family-teacher conferences, or other school-related events; provide information focusing on age-appropriate developmental expectations; collaborate with families to appropriately respond to children’s behavior in a non-punitive, positive, and supportive way; 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.  Examples of how Walcott ISD equips families with tools to enhance and extend learning include:

* Walcott ISD offers a high-quality full day PK program to eligible learners, enhancing and extending socialization and facilitating parent involvement for Pre-K families
* Providing the opportunity for families to visit the school in advance before the prekindergarten school year. (Meet the Teacher Night)
* Twice a school year students and families are encouraged to attend field trips which may include Tri-State Fair, Clovis Zoo and WOW Programs
* Providing families with skills to support students during the transition from Pre-K to Kindergarten.
* Providing different events that promotes literacy and provides skills and resources to support children’s learning. (Ex: Book Fair)
* Providing opportunities for parents to attend Dad’s & Donuts and Muffins with Mom where parents are encouraged to join the class and participate with their child in class activities.
* Teacher/parent conferences held throughout the school year and collaborating with them in setting goals for their children while in the PK program
* PK registrations and throughout the summer and school year that include campus tours and school/program information
* District webpage that shared information supportive of enhancing and extending learning for children participating in the PK program
* Parents are provided with learner progress by way of regular report cards, weekly teacher communication, etc.
* BOY, MOY, and EOY benchmarking
* Walcott ISD Code of Conduct

**Develop staff skills in evidence-based practices that support families in meeting their children’s learning benchmarks**

Walcott ISD believes in a continuous improvement philosophy.  We provide essential professional development for educators in understanding communication and engagement with families, including training on communicating with families in crisis; promoting and developing family engagement as a core strategy to improve teaching and learning among all educators and staff; and developing staff skills to support and use culturally diverse, culturally relevant, and culturally responsive family engagement strategies. Strategies include:

* The Pre-K teacher will also attend professional development trainings that will increase knowledge of how to support our students and their families.
* Develop educator skills to support and use culturally diverse, culturally relevant, and culturally responsive family engagement strategies
* Promoting and developing family engagement as a core strategy to improve teaching and learning among all educators and staff
* Continuous professional development achieved through training opportunities from Region 1
* Train educator about the resources that are available in the community that support families’ interests and needs
* Educators will participate in professional learning that focuses on strength-based approach to family engagement
* Implementation of the Walcott ISD Discipline Policy
* Continuing membership in the ESC 16 as a means of professional learning, program effectiveness, and practices associated with HQPK implementation

**Evaluate family engagement efforts and use evaluations for continuous improvement**

Self-assessment will be a cornerstone to the overall process of evaluating for program effectiveness and to support future improvements.  Our PK program will monitor family engagement; uses data to ensure alignment between family engagement activities and district/school teaching and learning goals and to promote continuous family engagement; and ensures educators and parents play a role in the family engagement evaluation process.  Efforts contributing to the evaluation process include:

* Promoting feedback through short surveys or phone calls to parents after a Pre-K family event and using this data to improve these events.
* Sending home activities with families to do with their children that the students will return the following school week for display in the classroom.
* Child-centered goals setting collaborations with parents will continue at the BOY. Progress monitoring and reporting will occur at the BOY, MOY, and EOY
* Survey parents at least annually on the effectiveness of the prekindergarten experience for their child and their family
* Utilize the “High Quality Checklist” for Family Engagement Plan provided by Region 16 ESC.
* Utilize the “High Quality Pre-Kindergarten Self-Assessment” instrument created by the TEA to include results indicating strengths, opportunities to grow, and next steps for continuous improvement.