

**Girard Intermediate School
Parent and Family Engagement Plan 2021-2022**

Girard Intermediate School 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 post-secondary education. The gains for families include: improved understanding of their child's development, improved ability to parent, improved ability to assist their children with school and learning, and improved relationships among all stakeholders.

The Girard Intermediate School Parent and Family Engagement Committee will be held for the purpose of planning, implementing, and evaluating the Family Engagement Plan.

The Girard Intermediate School Parent and Family Engagement Committee members are listed below:

- Zann Stewart, Parental Involvement Specialist
- Charlotte White, Attendance
- Carrie Southern, Counselor
- Jenny Barkley, Teacher
- Christi Lapham, Teacher
- Parent TBD
- Parent TBD
- Parent TBD
- Dr. LaVonda Senn, Assistant Principal
- Beth Bouchard, Principal

GOALS

I. Open and two-way communication between families and the district and school both verbally and in writing using a variety of strategies and methods will be supported and increased.

Strategies:

A. Schoolwide Parent/Teacher Conferences will be held twice yearly to inform parents of their child's progress in school including: academic performance; assistance with understanding their child's individual classroom grades; explanation of test results; and specific academic needs of their child.

Parent/Teacher Conferences will be held at the end of the first nine-weeks and the end of the third nine-weeks for all the schools.

B. An 'Open House' event will be held at the start of each school year to introduce students, parents, and families to their teachers and school administration. The *Open House* will be followed the next month by a 'Back to School Night' to provide details on the school's curriculum, and policies regarding attendance, behavior, state testing, homework, grading and other topics.

C. An annual Title I Meeting in which all parents of all students will be invited and encouraged to attend. Parents/families will be informed of their school's participation in the Title I Program, and the right of the parents/families to be involved. Parents will be informed of the following information:

- Teacher/Parent/Student Compact
- Parent's Right To Know notification
- Current student assessment scores

D. The DCS Code of Conduct will be sent home at the beginning of each school year to inform parents of district and school policies for enrollment, attendance, homework, safety and discipline procedures, bus behavior, uniform policy, and the technology acceptable use policy. Parents are required to sign and return to the child's teacher the appropriate form attached in the handbook stating that they have read and discussed the handbook with their child.

E. A School-Parent Compact, a requirement of the Title I Program will be jointly developed by the Parent and Family Engagement Committee, outlines how parents, the school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership to help children demonstrate academic growth and student achievement.

F. Teachers will send home classroom and school information (using multiple forms of communication) to families/parents including teacher information (phone number and e-mail address), classroom rules and procedures, grading policy, etc., at the beginning of the school year.

G. 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. A weekly folder will be sent home to connect parents with the teacher and their student's academic learning. Teachers have a phone app for communication with parents (such as Remind)

1. Report cards will be sent to parents at the end of each nine-week period.

2. A mid-nine-week progress report will be sent home to make parents aware of student progress. Progress reports provide current information on student averages and help parents make decisions regarding the need to request conferences. Additional information provided at conferences help build rapport and understanding between faculty and families to increase student learning and support academic achievement.

3. Folders of student work will be sent home weekly to be reviewed by parents on a regular basis. Parents will sign the appropriate form stating they have reviewed the work and will return the folder to school on Thursday (Wednesday Folders). 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, spelling words, etc.

4. Teachers will document parent contacts and the method by which the contact was made by phone, note, home visit, etc., indicating the date and information discussed.

5. Parents have access to the Parent Portal on the DCS website or the Girard Intermediate School website to check student progress.

6. The Transportation Department provides a bus form to parents that includes bus routes, driver name, and bus number at the beginning of the school year. It is located on the Parent Portal of the DCS website.

H. School/classroom newsletters and notes will be written in students' native language and sent to parents/families on a regular basis to keep parents informed of school and classroom events and/or activities.

I. Parent/family surveys and checklists will be used to gain parent input and suggestions as to the quality of parent engagement activities in the school. A suggestion box will be set up as a means to receive suggestions from parents on how to better serve children and to improve parent/family interaction.

J. A copy of the School Board Parent and Family Engagement Policy and information related to programs, meetings, and activities will be sent to parents/families, placed in the Student Handbook and on the district website at www.dothan.k12.al.us.

K. Parents/families 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 Parent-Teacher Conferences.

L. Parents/families will be informed in the Dothan City School's Student Handbook of their right to access their children's official school records.

M. Parents/families will be informed through various mediums of their right to access the Dothan City Schools District Family Engagement Policy and curriculum information on the school or district website located at www.dothan.k12.al.us. Curriculum information may be obtained from the Alabama Department of Education website, www.alsde.edu

N. Teacher certification and qualifications will be available for parent review and can be obtained by clicking on the link to the State Certification site at www.alsde.edu and going to Office of Teaching and Leading and Educator Certification for teacher License Lookup or by addressing questions to the Central Office.

O. Menus will be published posted on the district website at www.dothan.k12.al.us and are also posted in each school.

P. An end of the year ceremony will be conducted that includes special activities such as Awards Day, Learn-A-Thon, etc.

Q. The school district system and school websites provide information for parents.

R. The School Reach System through Blackboard (Robocall) is a parent/staff notification system to give parents/staff pertinent information such as school closure for inclement weather

II. Family/Parents' opportunities for involvement in school activities will be increased.

A. Many activities will be provided at Girard Intermediate School to allow parents/families to be involved in their child's school and learning:

1. Open House.

Girard Intermediate School will hold an Open House during the school year.

2. Back to School Night

Girard Intermediate School will hold a Back to School Night during the school year.

3. Family Reading Nights

Girard Intermediate School will hold Family Reading Nights throughout the school year. The Family Reading Nights will be scheduled and published on the school's website.

4. Parent Volunteer Program

Parents will be encouraged to volunteer in the school with activities such as reading with children, tutoring, designing bulletin boards, or clerical work. A log will be maintained documenting parent volunteers and the number of hours of parent/family volunteer time.

5. Volunteer Recognition Program.

Girard Intermediate School will host a Volunteer Appreciation Day during the school year.

6. Transition/Orientation activities will be developed to assist students/parents/families in the transition between K-2 and Girard Intermediate School, Grades 3 – 6.

7. Parents will be given the opportunity to become involved in their child's education by participating in the following activities and programs:

- Grandparents / Special Persons Day
- Special Student Programs
- Pinwheels for Peace event
- Veterans' Day Program
- Girard Intermediate School's Parent Organization Meetings
- Awards/Honors Day
- Black History Celebration
- Earth Week Celebration
- Attendance Recognition/Incentive Program
- Academic Activities (such as a School Spelling Bee, Science Fair)
- Parent Appreciation Day to be scheduled sometime during the school year
- Friday Assemblies

- Clubs

III. Parents/families will be given increased assistance by 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.

A. Since parents are a child’s first and most important teacher, they will be given parental support for their child’s academic success in school.

1. The “Parents Make the Difference” newsletter will be distribute quarterly to each students containing information on how parents can help their child with homework, discipline, etc.
2. Parents will be invited to support their children through attending various school events including student programs, performances, assemblies, events, etc.
4. A monthly event calendar will be maintained on each school’s website and through newsletters and school’s digital sign.
5. Parents will be provided with pamphlets and brochures with suggestions for successful parenting skills. The Dothan City School District website has a link to additional parenting education resources.
6. 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.
7. Parents will be encouraged to monitor their children’s television and computer viewing as well as their use of free time.
8. Referrals are being made to the provider for court-ordered parenting-classes for students with excessive absences.
9. Family Reading Night and other academic activities will be held quarterly at the school.
10. A room in the school has been designated as a Parent Center where our Parental Involvement Specialist will be located. This room will be an inviting area for parents to visit. The Parent Center will include a food bank and clothes closet. Parent workshops will be offered on topics such as: *Join Our Team: Parents as Partners; The Girard Way, our School-wide Positive Behavior Program; Attendance – Be There!; Reading at Home; Math in Action; Anger Management; Health and Nutrition; A Guide to Understanding Testing;* etc. Our Parental Involvement Specialist, school counselor, and community agencies will offer workshops for parents and continue to network with parents to strengthen the connection with school.

B. Parents/families participation in joint academic projects and activities such as the Science Fair, Math Fair, and read-a-thons that involve children and teachers will be encouraged and supported.

C. The school will provide an “Active Parenting” program throughout the year coordinated by the school counselor and the parent involvement specialist to give parents information on providing a positive home environment for their child that:

- Is safe, drug-free and positive
- Fosters a positive self-confidence/self-esteem
- Provides developmentally appropriate behavior
- Holds high expectations
- Establishes clear rules and boundaries
- Has a balanced and nutritional diet along with quality health care

IV. 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.

A. Girard Intermediate School will invite parents to participate as partners in decision-making activities.

1. One or more parents will be involved in the development of the school’s Parent and Family Engagement Plan, School Improvement Plan, Parent Organization committee, etc.
2. Girard Intermediate School will establish a Parent/Family Advisory Committee to meet quarterly with minutes being recorded.
3. Girard Intermediate School will encourage the organization and promotion of the Parent Organization.

4. A Suggestion Box will be set up in the office to give parents/families an opportunity to give suggestions for improvement.

B. Girard Intermediate School will collaborate with business and community organizations.

1. Girard Intermediate School staff will collaborate with the community and businesses to link parents/families to school and community resources.

3. Community and business partners will be recruited to provide incentives for good attendance, etc.

4. Collaborations will be established to develop a mutual support and appreciation between business, community, and schools.

V. A Yearly Parental Evaluation of the school-wide program will be provided.

A. Girard Intermediate School will annually evaluate the content and effectiveness of the Parent and Family Engagement Plan.

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 Parent and Family Engagement Meeting. Parent interest surveys will be evaluated by the Parent and Family Involvement Committee. The information/feedback given will be used to plan the events for the next school year.

B. Documentation from school and family engagement activities will include 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.

C. The Parent and Family Engagement Committee will develop strategies to address respondent concerns.

1. To improve open and two-way communication between families and schools/teachers as listed in Goal I.

a. Update each school's website.

b. Provide teacher contact information (phone number, e-mail address, and planning time) for parents/families.

1. Place contact information on the welcome letter that is sent home at the beginning of the school year.

2. Place contact information on each correspondence that is sent home to parents throughout the school year.

c. Send a newsletter home to parents regularly.

D. The Parent and Family Engagement Committee will identify and develop strategies to remove barriers that prevents parents from participating in district/school parent and family engagement activities.

1. Some of our parent/family members work and cannot attend during the school day, or do not have transportation.

a. Provide more activities at night.

b. Combine parent trainings with Family Reading Night.

c. Find ways to provide transportation and to hold meetings at the community rooms of the housing authority.

E. An Annual Title I Meeting will be planned by the school and conducted separately, not in conjunction with any other meetings or activities, to ensure that there is ample time to provide a description/explanation of school curriculum, information on forms of academic assessments used to measure student progress, and information on proficiency level students are expected to meet.