

Brazos Independent School District Early Childhood Family Engagement Plan

“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.

Brazos ISD, in accordance with the House Bill 3 High-Quality Prekindergarten guidelines, created a High-Quality Prekindergarten Family Engagement Plan to promote partnership between our school, families, and community to ensure the successful outcomes for our youngest learners in prekindergarten programs. Collaboratively, we all share the responsibility to encourage and support initiatives, activities, and practices that enhance the success of student learning and achievement.

In accordance with the Commissioner's Rule 102.1003 (f), Brazos ISD will establish the following family engagement strategies that are based on best practices research to support student learning, achievement and family well-being. These practices are proven to demonstrate positive short-term and long-term outcomes for early childhood education. This document highlights the various examples of the multitude of strategies that each campus will select to participate in, based on the individual needs of the students and parents of that campus, The following articulates strategies within each of the six domains:

A. Facilitate family-to-family support

Brazos ISD’s Pre- Kindergarten/Early Childhood program creates a safe and respectful environment where families can learn from each other as individuals and in groups by ensuring opportunities for continuous participation in events designed for families.

- Providing a safe environment at each campus to promote family engagement, considering the different barriers that hinder family involvement. (“Meet The Teacher,” Parent Conferences, and Family Nights)

- **Establishing a network of community resources**

Brazos ISD's Family Engagement Plan will build strategic partnerships with community organizations to leverage community resources for caregivers through the community resources handbook and ongoing district-wide events. Provide written information on community resources on a regular basis to parents.

- Partner with mental health organizations to provide support and family training; Texana, TCHAT
- Partner with local organizations for support and services for students and families.
- Partner with mentor programs to provide resources for children and families.
- District personnel will provide families with informational resources.

C. Increase family participation in decision-making

Brazos ISD increases/promotes family participation in decision-making by developing and supporting opportunities related to district and campus 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 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 or focus groups to gather feedback on the Family Engagement Plan. Examples of family participation in district and campus decision-making opportunities include:

- Families will be given the opportunity to give input on campus climate surveys, beginning and end of year surveys, surveys about future programs, surveys about their needs, surveys about family engagement, etc.
- Parents will have the opportunity to participate in our parenting and family professional development sessions.
- 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
- Create and maintain an environment that values and affirms parent leadership.
- Share strategies with parents on how to advocate for themselves and their children appropriately

D. Equip families with tools to enhance and extend learning

Pre-Kindergarten educators in Brazos 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 newsletters, 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 Brazos ISD equips families with tools to enhance and extend learning include:

- Parents will have access to programs and resources that enhance student learning in the home.
- Parents will have the opportunity to conference with their child's teacher to determine appropriate goals for their child to support learning.
- Student's report card will be sent home each grading period with strategies in math and early reading emergent skills to support their child's learning at home
- Family members will be encouraged to volunteer in the classroom, using the time to foster enhanced communication regarding their child's development
- The schools will provide parents with resources to support academic growth and social emotional wellbeing.
- Parents will have access to programs to enhance their own learning in programs such as Rosetta Stone.

E. Developing Staff skills in evidence-based practices that support families in meeting their children's learning benchmarks

Brazos ISD believes in a continuous improvement philosophy. We provide essential professional development for educators in understanding communication and engagement with families. Strategies include:

- All prekindergarten teachers will attend a minimum of 30 hours of professional development during the 2024-2025 school year.
- Provide knowledge based on the importance of family engagement and promote it district-wide.
- Continuous professional development achieved through training opportunities from Region 6 & Brazos ISD.
- Utilization of resources available in CLI Engage and Circle Progress Monitoring platforms

F. 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 develops a data collection system that 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; employs an evaluation plan to guide action; uses a cyclical process to ensure evaluation results are used for continuous improvement and adjustment; and ensures educators and parents play a role in the family engagement evaluation process. Efforts contributing to the evaluation process include:

- The district will survey parents annually on the effectiveness of the prekindergarten experience for their child and their family and use this data to self-evaluate and provide a high quality pre-k program.
- Brazos ISD will conduct a self assessment to evaluate the effectiveness of the Early Childhood Program.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Brazos Independent School District hopes to use this Family Engagement Plan

to promote shared responsibility to increase and enhance the collaboration of district staff with parents. Brazos ISD is committed to ensuring that the youngest scholars of the district are given extensive and rigorous scholastic opportunities that are supported by an educational partnership of district staff and parents that will assist students in being fully prepared for future academic endeavors. All efforts will be focused on improving the educational foundation of all students in an innovative way that will help them write their success stories in an ever-changing world.

Early Childhood & Family Engagement Contacts:

Teresa Ressler, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, 979-478-6070, tressler@brazosisd.net

Katherine Allison , Director of Specialized Learning, 979-478-6016, kallison@brazosisd.net

Kimberly Etheridge, Brazos Elementary Principal, 979-478-6610, ketheridge@brazosisd.net

Stacy Hudgins, Brazos Elementary Counselor, 979-478-6610, shudgins@brazosisd.net