



GERVIN COYOTES

George Gervin Academy

Family Engagement Plan

2016-2017

Supporting Family/Student Success

December-2016

George Gervin Academy provides innovative pathways that motivate today's students to become tomorrow's leaders.

Table of Contents

➤ Title Page	1
➤ Table of Contents	2
➤ Overview	3
➤ GGA Family Engagement Strategies	4
➤ Facilitate family-to-family support	4
➤ Establish a network of family resources	4
➤ Increase family participation in decision making	5
➤ Equip families with tools to enhance and extend learning	6
➤ Provide professional development opportunities	7
➤ Evaluate family engagement efforts and use evaluation for continuous improvement	7
➤ Information/Resources	8
➤ GGA Family Engagement Contacts	8
➤ TEA Family Engagement Contacts	8

GGA FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PLAN

2016-2017

OVERVIEW

Family engagement is defined as the mutual responsibility of families, schools, and communities to build relationships to support student learning and family wellbeing. GGA supports the continuous learning and development of children, families, and educators. Family engagement is fully integrated in the child's educational experience and supports the whole child and GGA ensures it to be both culturally responsive and linguistically appropriate on accordance to TAC §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, but rather a mandate, in Texas, with the passage of House Bill 4 in 2015. TEC §29.168, created by HB 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 GGA **Family Engagement Plan** is based on the family engagement strategies established by TEA in collaboration with other state agencies. According to TEA, the goal of TAC §102.1003, High-Quality Prekindergarten Grant Program, is to “provide districts with an opportunity to expand or enhance high-quality prekindergarten programs for qualifying students.” This ruling also outlines school district and charter school eligibility for grant funding and qualifications for students eligible to receive instruction under the grant program. The new High-Quality Prekindergarten Grant Program requires school districts and charter schools to meet the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines (updated 2015). The proposal also identifies in rule the family engagement strategies that districts and charter schools are required to create a **Family Engagement Plan** in order to be eligible to receive grant funding under this program. TEA has identified family engagement strategies which must be incorporated into the local **Family Engagement Plan**. Family engagement is an important component of the grant.

GGA FAMILY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

1. Facilitate family-to-family support

GGA has identified the facilitation of family-to-family support as a need and wants to establish more opportunities for parent to parent training and parent to parent support.

- GGA intends to develop parent to parent networks and programs to expand family and parent engagement activities with qualified volunteers.
- Parent education for parents of children receiving special education services is offered as needed. This provides a forum for communication among parents with mutual interests and concerns.
- Grant resources will be used to expand parent education offerings so that all families of Pre-K children will have opportunities to participate and become engaged in their child's education.
- Parent-to-parent trainers will be recruited and volunteers will be expanded through Pre-K grant implementation.
- Parent Engagement Planning Committees (PEPCo) will be established on campus to offer family-to-family interaction and support enveloping around school activities.
- The GGA monthly Parent Pastries and Holiday Socials offer opportunities for parents and community members to interact and form support networks.
- The Parent Liaison, hired by GGA, will provide activities for parent participants, encouraging family-to-family support.
- GGA family meetings are held in the evenings with child care and family meals provided by community partners and volunteers.

2. Establish a network of family resources

GGA has established multiple family resources through several ongoing collaborative partnerships. This effort is continually growing the network of family resources. Positive collaboration has been established with:

- Community Health Centers of South Central Texas
- Alamo Community Colleges
- City of San Antonio
- San Antonio Chamber of Commerce

- Texas Center for Local Foods
- H.E.B.
- Various local business leaders

Parent/student involvement activities are also offered several times a year during extended library time. This initiative has been well received and the district plans to sustain the program after the grant period ends. An early literacy program designed to involve parents in their child's learning through mini-lessons in everyday settings is available for all eligible Pre-K parents in addition to the entire GGA student body, their families and the surrounding community. GGA intends to use funding from the High-Quality Prekindergarten Grant Program to foster and increase community connections and resources.

GGA has a goal of establishing a parent resource center on campus. The parent resource center will offer parents a comfortable and welcoming place to come for parent meetings, parent education, and educational activities to enhance their child's learning. Resources such as educational games, supplemental materials, and books/periodicals on parenting and childhood education will be offered through a parent lending library.

3. Increase family participation in decision making.

GGA has established a strong foundation of collaboration with parents and community partners. The district offers multiple parent and community involvement opportunities each school year including:

- Latino Family Literacy Project
- Community faith-based partnerships
- Family literacy events
- Community resource services
- Head Start Program housed within our school district
- Strong Community Advisory Committees

Parents are provided an opportunity to discuss school issues and provide input through the campus PEPCo. Parents will be represented on PEPCo and will be involved in the writing of the Campus Improvement Plan. GGA will consult with parents and families to jointly develop/revise and agree upon the District and Campus Parental Involvement Policies. Parents and educators will have the opportunity to provide input through surveys and through postings on the district's website. GGA has a goal of increasing attendance at parent meetings and family events.

4. Equip families with tools to enhance and extend learning.

GGA will continue to offer full day Pre-K to eligible students enhancing and extending socialization and facilitating parent involvement for Pre-K parents. High-Quality Prekindergarten Grant funds will be used to increase family engagement efforts by providing parent training in the Pre-K curriculum and assessment process; and child advocacy. GGA will expand Pre-K family engagement opportunities through this grant so that Pre-K parent participation is increased by 50%. GGA has identified a need for a Parent Resource Center at our Pre-K campus and implementing a functional and effective Parent Resource Center to serve our Pre-K campus is a priority. Workshops for parents will be held at the Parent Resource Center. Parent workshops will be held during the school day as well as afterschool on campus.

Topics could include: Understanding State standards, curriculum as well as, local GGA assessments. How to monitor their child's progress and work with teachers to improve student achievement. Parenting classes, Behavior Management and Parent Literacy. Program suggestions specific to Pre-Kinder from parents and staff include:

- Special Pre-K Meet the Teacher Night
- Parent-teacher conferences with Pre-K parents
- Transitional Kinder readiness establishing Pre-K expectations
- STEAM Fair specific to Pre-K
- A monthly Pre-K newsletter which will include a calendar of events along with other pertinent parent and family information in the home language

GGA will provide outreach to parents and families of LEP/Immigrant students and inform them how they can be involved in the education of their children and assist their children attain English proficiency, not later than 20 days after the beginning of the school year or within the first two weeks of the child being placed in a language instruction program when the child was not identified prior to the beginning of the school year. GGA will promote parental and community participation in programs for LEP, Title III.

5. Provide professional development opportunities for educators on culturally responsive, evidence-based strategies that support the education of the child.

Pre-K teachers' staff development plans will include strands on cultural diversity, evidence-based strategies to involve parents in the education of their children, and family poverty as it

impacts schools. One cannot assume that teachers or parents come to the table with a knowledge and appreciation for cultural diversity or with the skills needed to customize learning to students with diverse cultural backgrounds. These skills can and must be taught, monitored, and reinforced.

GGA staff will be educated in the value and utility of the contributions of parents and in building ties between parents and schools. GGA families will also have opportunities to be included in family engagement training. Cultural, economic, language, and demographic issues will be given attention through the selection of focus groups and advisory councils and committees.

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

GGA currently uses parent surveys to gain information on preferences of programs and parents' perception of program effectiveness. Surveys are completed each spring to gather information to plan for the next school year. Valuable information gathered from family surveys is used to improve programs and increase parent outreach and involvement.

Examples of surveys include:

- Title I Parent Survey
- Family Engagement Survey

GGA will conduct an annual evaluation and review of the content of and effectiveness of the Title I Parent Involvement Program. Parents and families will be involved in this review aimed at improving the academic quality of Title I Schools.

- Comprehensive Needs Assessment
 - Family engagement efforts will be evaluated on a continuous basis at the district and campus levels to determine whether the level of participation has increased and if activities meet the needs of parents. Programs and activities will be constantly monitored, identifying strengths and weaknesses, in order to affect change at the earliest possible date to assure program effectiveness.
- Parents and families will be consulted in the development, review/revision, and evaluation of the Campus Improvement Plan and District Improvement Plan at the end of each school year in order to address needs and goals for the upcoming year.

INFORMATION/RESOURCES

GGA Family Engagement Contacts:

Director: Tracy Carlisle

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