

# Elmer H. Cook Elementary School, Fort Smith School District

## Parent & Family Engagement Plan 2024-2025

By Leslie Stewart, Parent & Family Engagement Facilitator

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### 1. Jointly Developed Expectations and Objectives

Describe how the School works with parents and families to develop and review relevant plans, policies, and strategies related to engagement.

Guiding Questions

1.1: How does the School - in collaboration with parents - establish an engagement plan that reflects the specific academic improvement needs of the School, and that includes programs and practices that enhance engagement and address the specific engagement needs of students and their families?

[A.C.A. § 6-15-1702(a)]

1.2: What efforts have been made to ensure adequate representation of parents and families of participating children in the process (Title I families)?

[ESSA § 1116(c)(3)]

**A committee of parents, teachers, and administrators will meet each year to review the Parent and Family Engagement plan. They will analyze data gathered throughout the year (Parent Orientation/ Open House sign-in sheets, Report to Public, P/T Conferences, Title I meeting, STEAM, Booster Club meetings, and parent surveys) to determine parent involvement, participation and needs. Collecting evidence about satisfaction with the program and the school's efforts to increase parental involvement will be a part of the evaluation, the data will also collect specific information on the (1) growth, in number, of parents participating in workshops and meetings; (2) specific needs of parents; (3) effectiveness of specific strategies; and (4) engagement of parents in activities to support student academic growth.**

### 2: Communication

Describe how the School will communicate with and distribute information to parents and families.

Guiding Questions

2.1: How does the School distribute an informational packet appropriate for the age and grade of each child annually, ensuring to include:

- description of the engagement program
- recommended roles for parents, students, teacher, and the School
- ways for a family to get involved
- survey regarding volunteer interests
- schedule of activities planned throughout the school year
- regular, two-way, and meaningful system for parents/teachers to communicate

[A.C.A. § 6-15-1702(b)(3)(B)(1) ]

2.2: How will the School ensure information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities is provided to parents in a format and in a language that parents can understand (to the extent practicable)?

- how is relevant information provided in a variety of ways? (For example, paper copies made available, as well as social media posts, website links, parent apps, etc.?)

[ESSA § 1116(e)(5)]

2.3: How does the School offer flexible opportunities for meetings with families?

[ESSA § 1116(c)(2)] Teachers will send home a weekly folder containing student papers and various notes for parents.

**An online weekly newsletter will be sent home, developed in collaboration with the Booster Club, teachers, administrators, staff, and volunteers, including school news, calendar, and parenting tips related to school achievement. Mid-term reports and quarterly report cards are sent to parents regarding student academic progress. The school will maintain a Website to house school and district information, staff names and grade/subject taught, menus, contact information, and important parent links. Blackboard, a phone system, and a weekly Principal newsletter will be utilized to share important**

information and dates with parents. Parents and teachers may use e-mail, telephone, and Dojo messaging to communicate with each other concerning student information. The FSPS student handbook, signage at school entrance, and Booster Club meetings will provide appropriate information such as: procedures, dates, events, Title 1 plan, etc. Electronic sign in front of school displays current and upcoming school events. Social media: Facebook and Instagram will be utilized for information, celebrations, and school happenings. Class Dojo, a behavior management tool, which connects parents to positives and negatives in the classroom and specialty area classes. Class Dojo offers messaging between parents and teachers and places to upload pictures. The report to the public will be held August 2024 to explain assessment standards, accountability measures, and student achievement. Also, a Title I meeting is held August 2024 to explain the program and provide information. All will be virtual when necessary.

### 3: Building Staff Capacity

Describe activities that will be used with School staff to build their capacity to work with parents as equal partners .

Guiding Questions

- 3.1: How does the School build staff capacity to work with parents as equal partners? This may include workshops, conferences, trainings, webinars, and online resources that will be used to ensure ALL School staff (including teachers, specialized instructional personnel, principals, and other School leaders) are aware of:
- the value and utility of contributions of parents [Title I schools]
  - how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners [Title I schools]
  - how to implement and coordinate parent programs and build ties between home and the School [Title I schools]
  - how to respond to parent requests for parent and family engagement activities [Title I schools]
  - that parents play an integral role in assisting student learning [all schools]
  - how to welcome parents into the School and seek parental support and assistance [all schools]
  - the School's process for resolving parent concerns as outlined in the School handbook, including how to define a problem, whom to approach first, and how to develop solutions [all schools] [ESSA § 1116(e)(3);14); A.C.A. § 6-15-1702(b)(5-7)]

**Courses are offered through I.D.E.A.S. Training on the ADE website. The following is available for teachers and school personnel: PIB22001 From Extra to Essential: Family Engagement in Arkansas Schools. The school counselor will work with the Community Clearinghouse and United Way to ensure students and families' needs are met. Teachers can use resources from the Fort Smith Public Library to enhance lessons with books, videos, and other resources offered. Access to resources can be gained through the school Media Specialist. The school will also provide, in the district's policy handbook, a process for resolving parental concerns: how to define a problem, whom to approach first, and developing solutions. Teachers will send home a weekly communication folder containing student papers and various notes for parents. Community information, such as family events through the Parks and Recreation, Public Library, and various community agencies will be shared via newsletters, Dojo, and social media.**

### 4: Building Parent Capacity

Describe how the School provides opportunities to build parents' capacity to play a role in their children's academic success. This may include conducting workshops, conferences, classes, online resources, Academic Parent-Teacher Team meetings or providing equipment or other materials.

Guiding Questions

- 4.1: How does the School provide timely information about the following :
- a description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the School
  - the forms of State and Local academic assessments used to measure student progress, including alternate assessments
  - the achievement levels of the challenging State academic standards students are expected to meet [ESSA § 1116(c)(4)(B) ]
- 4.2: How does the School provide assistance to parents in understanding the following:
- the requirements of Title I, Part A
  - how to monitor their child's progress
  - how to work with educators to improve the achievement of their children. [ESSA § 1116(e)(1)]
- 4.3: What types of materials and training does the School provide to help parents work with their children to improve their children's achievement? This may include:
- literacy training
  - technology training, including education about copyright piracy and safe practices
  - resources that describe or assist with the child's curriculum
  - other activities such as workshops, conferences, online resources like tutorials or webinars, and any equipment or other materials, including parent resource centers

[ESSA § 1116(e)(2)]

4.4: Involve parents of students at all grade levels in a variety of roles, including without limitation:

- involvement in the education of their children
- volunteer activities
- learning activities and support classroom instruction
- participation in School decisions
- collaboration with the community
- development of School goals and priorities
- evaluating the effectiveness of the School-level Improvement Plan [A.C.A. § 6-15-1702(b)(1); ADE Rules Governing Parental Involvement Section 3.03]

4.5: How does the School promote and support responsible parenting? The School shall, as funds are available:

- purchase parenting books, magazines, and other informative material regarding responsible parenting through the School library, advertise the current selection, and give parents an opportunity to borrow the materials for review
- Create parent centers

[A.C.A. § 6-15-1702(b)(4)(A) ]

4.6: How does the School provide instruction to parents on how to incorporate developmentally appropriate learning activities in the home environment, including without limitation:

- role play and demonstration by trained volunteers
- the use of and access to Department of Education website tools for parents [<https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov>]
- assistance with nutritional meal planning

[A.C.A. § 6-15-1702(b)(5)(B)(ii)(a-d)]

**Teachers will send home a weekly folder containing student papers and various notes for parents. A Principal's weekly newsletter will be sent home, developed in collaboration with the Booster Club, teachers, administrators, staff, and volunteers, including school news, calendar, and parenting tips related to school Achievement. Mid-term reports and quarterly report cards are sent to parents regarding student academic progress. The school will maintain a Website to house school and district information, staff names and grade/subject taught, menus, contact information, links to the ADE State Standards, and other important links for parents. Blackboard, a messaging system, will be utilized to share important information and dates with parents. Parents and teachers may use telephone, e-mail and Dojo messaging to communicate with each other concerning student information. The FSPS student handbook, signage at school entrance, and Booster Club meetings will provide appropriate information such as: procedures, dates, events, Title 1 plan, etc. A Cook Elementary handbook will be given to parents and families to provide specific information such as: procedures, behavior expectations/consequences, dates, events, etc. Social media: Facebook and Instagram will be utilized for information, celebrations, and school happenings. Class Dojo, a communication and behavior management tool, which connects parents to positives and negatives in the classroom and specialty area classes will be utilized by teachers and the school. Dojo offers messaging between parents and teachers, uploading of pictures, and schoolwide family communication. The school and Booster Club will provide a list of volunteer opportunities and solicit ideas for other types of volunteer efforts in the informational packets at the beginning of the year. Brief training sessions will provide parents and community members with the information needed to participate as school volunteers in order to put them at ease and make the experience pleasant and successful. The school will provide opportunities for parents and community members to support the instructional programs through mentoring, tutoring, Partners In Education, and STEAM nights. Maintain a parent information center with important school information. The school will also provide, in the district's policy handbook, a process for resolving parental concerns: how to define a problem, whom to approach first, and developing solutions. The school will provide resources for parents through tutoring, online resources, Partners In Education, and community members. The school will provide literature on parenting and family needs, which can be checked out through the school's counselor and school library. All will be virtual when necessary.**

## 5: Coordination

Describe how the School will coordinate with other organizations, businesses, and community partners, including alumni, to provide additional supports, services, and resources to families..

Guiding Questions

5.1: How does the School investigate and utilize community resources in the instructional program? [ADE Rules Governing Parental Involvement Section 5.06]

5.2: How does the School coordinate and integrate programs and activities with other Federal, State, and local programs? Some examples include:

- public preschool programs such as Head Start
- organizations/activities to help students transition to elementary, middle, high, and postsecondary schools or careers
- wraparound services that allow families to send their children to school ready and able to focus on learning [ESSA §1116(e)(4) ]

5.3: In what ways does the School enable the formation of a Parent Teacher Association or organization and ensure leaders of said organization will be included in appropriate decisions?

[A.C.A. § 6-15-1702(b)(8)(B)(ii)]

**The school and Booster Club will provide a list of volunteer opportunities and solicit ideas for other types of volunteer efforts in the informational packets at the beginning of the year. Brief training sessions will provide parents and community members with the information needed to participate as school volunteers in order to put them at ease and make the experience pleasant and successful. The school will provide opportunities for parents, including pre-K families, and community members to support the instructional program through such programs as mentors, tutoring, Partners In Education, and STEAM nights. The school will provide resources for parents through tutoring, online resources, Partners In Education, and community members. The Partners in Ed program will be utilized to sponsor, financially and with supervision, Crusader of the Month Celebrations, provide funds and resources for various school functions, and mentor students. The school will maintain a Booster Club, fostering parental and community involvement within the school. The school will send a Family School Survey to parents to stay updated on morale, issues, positives, needs, and ways to involve more families.**

## 6: Annual Title I Meeting (Title I schools)

Describe the details regarding the Annual Title I meeting used to inform parents of the requirements of Title I, the School's participation, and the parents' rights to be involved.

Guiding Questions

6.1: How and when (month/year) does the School conduct the Annual Title I meeting, ensuring parents are informed of the following? (\*Include a link to the detailed agenda, meeting minutes, and/or slide deck for this year's Annual Title I Meeting, if available.)

- the requirements of Title I and the School's participation
- the parents' rights under Title I (The Right to Know Teacher Qualifications, Right to Request Meetings) [ESSA § 1116(c)(1) ]

**The school will conduct an Annual Title I Meeting for parents of the students who participate in the Title I Program in August 2024. This meeting will be separate from any other meetings or activities to ensure ample time is provided for a description/explanation of school curriculum, information on forms of academic assessments used to measure student progress, and information on proficiency levels students are expected to meet. The agenda, sign-in sheet, and minutes will be kept on file in the school's office.**

## 7: School-Parent Compact (Title I schools)

Describe the process School will follow to jointly develop with parents a School-Parent Compact as required under Title I, Part A. Guiding Questions

7.1: How does the School jointly develop a School-Parent Compact which does the following:

- Outlines how parents, the entire School staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement
- Addresses the importance of regular two-way, meaningful communication through:
  - conferences (no fewer than 2 each year)
  - frequent reports on progress
  - reasonable access to staff
  - opportunities to volunteer
- observation of classroom activities [ESSA § 1116(d) ]

7.2: How do families access the compact in order to understand the shared responsibility for improved student academic achievement?

- Including parent-teacher conferences in elementary Schools, at least annually
- Include a link or insert the language of the compact to demonstrate this requirement has been met. [ESSA § 1116(d)(2)(A)]

**School staff, parents, and students have developed a school-parent-student compact. This compact will outline how parents, school staff, and students share the responsibility for improving student academic achievement and the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a**

**partnership to help children achieve the state's high academic standards. All stakeholders will sign the compact. It will be distributed with the student handbook. Parents are required to sign the compact and return it to school. Parents are encouraged to volunteer and lead in various roles throughout the year: Book Fair helpers, Grandparents' Day, Awards day presentation, Field day volunteers, STEAM, Open House, Music productions, Booster Club meetings, Ice Cream Social, Great Pumpkin Party, Art Extravaganza, Donuts with a Grown-up, Cookies with Santa, Spring Carnival, and Crusader Celebrations. A Multicultural Night (February, 2025) and STEAM night (April 2025) will be held, providing an opportunity for parents and children to share the different cultures with the school in a positive, accepting manner, while school staff and volunteers provide information and learning games.**

### **8: Reservation of Funds (Title I schools)**

Describe how the School uses Title I, Part A funds set-aside for parent and family engagement programs and activities.

Guiding Questions

8.1: If the School is a recipient of set aside funds for parent and family engagement (as part of receiving a Title I, Part A allocation greater than \$500,000):

- How is the School spending those funds?
- How does the School determine the priority of how funds are spent?
- Who is involved in determining that?

[ESSA § 1116(a)(3)(A)]

8.2: How does the School provide opportunities for parents and family members to be involved in providing input into how the funds are used? [ESSA § 1116(a)(3)(B); ESSA § 1116(a)(3)(C); ESSA § 1116(a)(3)(D)(i-v)]

**In the Spring of 2025, a committee of parents, teachers, and administrators will meet to plan and allocate Title I monies for the 2024-2025 school year. The focus of the money is going toward parent communication and family nights. The school is in constant communication with our Booster Club to stay abreast of parent and student needs regarding this topic.**

### **Assurances**

\_\_A.1:The School understands that annually by August 1, the public School's Engagement Plan shall be developed, or reviewed and updated.

[ADE Rules Governing Parental Involvement Section 3.02.3]

\_\_A.2:The School understands that the following must be made available to families and the local community on the School or District website no later than August 1st:

The School Engagement Plan

A parent-friendly explanation of the School and District's Engagement Plan

The informational packet

Contact information for the parent facilitator designated by the School.

[A.C.A. § 6-15-1704(a); ADE Rules Governing Parental Involvement Section 3.02.4]

\_\_A.3:The School understands that a parent-friendly summary/explanation of the Engagement Plan should be included in the current student handbook.

[A.C.A. § 6-15-1704(a); ADE Rules Governing Parental Involvement Section 3.02]

\_\_A.4:The School understands its obligation for ensuring professional development requirements related to parent and family engagement are met and that records are maintained accordingly.

[A.C.A. § 6-15-1703(a); A.C.A. § 6-17-709]

\_\_A.5:The School understands its obligation to obtain signatures for each parent acknowledging receipt of the District's Engagement Plan summary/explanation.

[A.C.A. § 6-15-1704(a)(3)(B)]

\_\_A.6:The School Principal understands their obligation to designate and pay a licensed staff member to serve as Parent Facilitator:

to help organize meaningful training for staff and parents,

to promote and encourage a welcoming atmosphere, and

to undertake efforts to ensure that engagement is recognized as an asset to the School.

[A.C.A. § 6-15-1702(c)(1)]

\_\_A.7:The School understands its obligation to encourage school staff to use volunteer surveys to compile a volunteer resource book..

[A.C.A. § 6-15-1702(b)(6)(B)(ii)]

\_\_A.8:The School understands its obligation to conduct no fewer than two parent-teacher conferences per school year.

[A.C.A. § 6-15-1702(b)(3)(B)(ii)]

\_\_A.9:The School understands its obligation to incorporate the Engagement Plan into the School Improvement Plan.

[ADE Rules Governing Parental Involvement Section 3.02.2]

\_\_A.10:The School understands its obligation to schedule regular parent involvement meetings at which parents are given a report on the state of the School and an overview of:

what students will be learning

how students will be assessed

The informational packet

what a parent should expect for his or her child's education

how a parent can assist and make a difference in his or her child's education.

[A.C.A. § 6-15-1702(b)(5)(B)(i)(a-d)]

\_\_A.11:Any School serving high school students understands its obligation to educate parents about their role in decisions affecting course selection, career planning, and preparation for postsecondary opportunities.[A.C.A. § 6-15-1702(b)(7)(B)(ii)]

\_\_A.12:The School understands its obligation to welcome parents into the School, and more specifically, not have any school policies or procedures that would discourage a parent from visiting the School or from visiting a child's classrooms. [A.C.A. § 6-15-1702(b)(6)(B)]

\_\_A.13:The School understands that all Title I, Part A funded engagement activities and strategies should remain consistent with all information set forth in this parent and family engagement plan.

[ESSA § 1116(a)(3)(D)]

\_\_A.14:The School understands its obligation to submit to the State any comments from parents who deem the Title I Schoolwide Plan unsatisfactory. These comments can be sent to

[ade.engagementmatters@ade.arkansas.gov](mailto:ade.engagementmatters@ade.arkansas.gov) [ESSA § 1116(b)(4)]

\_\_A.15:The School understands its obligation, if requested by parents, to provide opportunities for regular meetings to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their children, and respond to any such suggestions as soon as practicably possible.

[ESSA § 1116(c)(4)(C)]

### Committee Members. Role

Leslie Stewart, P&FE, Teacher

Nicole Shaffer, Principal

Cedra Flake, Asst. Principal

Melody Priester, Teacher

Ashley White, Teacher

Bradley Hargis, Parent

Brockette Minnick, Parent

Brittney Hall, Booster Club President, Parent