

Academic and Career Education Academy Parental Involvement Policy

ACEA believes that the education of students is enhanced by the involvement of parents in their children's education. We advocate strong connections between the home, school and community. The Board of Education believes that positive parental involvement is essential to student achievement, and thus encourages such involvement in school educational planning and operations.

ACEA Parental Involvement Plan:

ACEA recognizes that a child's education is a responsibility shared by the school and family for the entirety of a student's school career. To support the goal of the schools to educate all students effectively, the schools and parents must work as knowledgeable partners. Parents are an integral component of a school's ability to provide for the educational success of their children. The school endeavors to meet the diverse needs of parents and children. ACEA acknowledges that engaging parents is essential to improve student achievement and that schools should foster and support active parental involvement. **School improvement is an ongoing process.** Parent input is a critical determinant of improvement priorities. When schools know what parents want and expect they are better able to meet families' needs.

The Parent Involvement Plan involves parents of all students in a variety of roles. Faculty and staff will encourage all parents to be involved---not just the ones that are always visible. Administrators, teachers, and parents will develop a parental involvement plan addressing the diverse needs of the students and their parents to increase the school's ability to provide for the educational success of their children. Families of diverse cultures will be respected and valued for their contribution to the community. Support, including disability and communication barriers, transportation, and child care needs, will be provided.

ACEA's Board of Education is committed to providing coordination, technical support and other support to assist ACEA in planning and implementing family involvement activities.

As part of the ACEA Parent Involvement Plan, a Parent Involvement Compact will be given to parents and students demonstrating a shared responsibility between students, parents and the school in our commitment to engage youth in positive behavior and academic success. The school-parent compact was developed by working with an ESA consultant as well as parents, students and ACEA staff. Each group contributed information regarding the Six Types of Parent Involvement referenced in Joyce Epstein's work. All of their input gave the school a comprehensive chart that clearly identifies commitments of each stakeholder group.

ACEA will involve parents in their child's learning process in the following ways:

Communication:

ACEA recognizes that open, continuous communication between home and school should be regular, two-way, and meaningful. Parents are encouraged to call staff, write notes and/or email the teachers, counselor, principal and other staff throughout the school year. If a parent calls the school office with a message for the teacher about their student, the office staff notifies the teacher.

ACEA will strive to ensure that information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities is sent to the parents of participating children in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand.

To encourage communication, ACEA requests that every student guardian fill out a "parent communication" form to ensure that ACEA has the most up to date and relevant information in regards to contacting and communicating with parents.

A "Parent Orientation" will be held each year in the fall to inform parents about important information about the upcoming school year as well as other helpful information, such as good study skills, testing and assessments, Michigan's academic standards, college choices and scholarships. Information about student activities, tutoring, grades and parent involvement activities will also be shared both at the orientation as well as the ACEA website.

Handbooks will be given to all parents that include: the parent involvement plan, a school calendar, information about the school's website, school personnel contact information, and information on school policies and procedures.

Materials and supplies will be utilized to enhance parent involvement by advertising, informing, and encouraging parent attendance at the high school level.

ACEA will hold Parent Teacher Conferences during the year; one in the fall and one in the spring. In order to encourage as many parents as possible to attend, several measures will be taken. These include:

1. informing families of the conference dates on the school calendar and website
2. announcing to students that conferences are coming soon
3. publishing a school newsletter that gets sent directly to each students' home with explicit invitations to attend parent teacher conferences
4. having a volunteer call each students' parent or guardian with a verbal invitation to the conferences
5. providing refreshments at conferences
6. supplying gas cards

Staff explains the requirements and rights of parents to be involved and provides parents with timely information, description and explanation of the curriculum used, forms of academic assessment used to measure student progress, proficiency levels the students are expected to meet and opportunities for decision-making related to the education of their children.

ACEA teachers strive to meet the varying needs of parents by providing flexible times to meet. Teachers and other staff meet with parents before, during and after school, at lunch and in the evenings. When necessary, teachers communicate over the phone and through email.

ACEA will strive to incorporate parent representation within committees, including (but not limited to):

- special education committee
- school improvement committee
- schoolwide process committee

ACEA also has several programs in place to support parent involvement. These programs include:

- Box Tops for Education
- Parent involvement survey
- Target Take Charge of Education Program
- sporting events
- ACEA website
- ACEA newsletter
- parent/teacher conferences
- parent orientation
- graduation/ awards ceremony

The ACEA website has been updated in order to make navigation and information gathering easier for parents/guardians.

ACEA creates a newsletter to send home to parents at the end of every marking period (every six weeks.) Newsletters are written in parent-friendly language, contain information pertaining to ACEA school happenings and provide parents with a variety of resources.

ACEA will host a Title I parent meeting to cover Title I Services offered to students. ACEA will use Title I parent involvement funds to provide the annual Title I meeting. Parents will complete an evaluation of the meeting annually to determine if it was informative, ask questions or concerns and submit ideas for future meetings. A meeting with all stakeholders will be held at least annually to discuss the findings from the survey. ACEA also hired a person to conduct an evaluation of our overall Title I services. Meetings will be scheduled to get input from all stakeholders including, students, parents and staff.

ACEA will also assess parents' perception of the school wide plan. Results of this assessment will be compiled and submitted to the school improvement team. Comments critical of the schoolwide plan will then be submitted to the LEA when the school submits the plan for district approval.

In order to keep parents informed of students' progress academically, 6 week progress reports will be sent out at the end of every marking period. Report cards will be sent home every 18 weeks. ACEA has also implemented online grading software to give parents access to student progress and grades throughout the school year. Parents are encouraged to monitor student goals at home - they are given a copy of the student's goals via mail or email upon request.

Local assessment results will be sent home and/or shared with parents at conferences. Results of assessments such as MEAP and MME will be distributed to parents. Parents will also have the opportunity to meet with ACEA staff to interpret results as needed.

ACEA will continuously pursue training opportunities that will help build partnerships between families and school. Professional development opportunities will provide ACEA staff with strategies to effectively involve parents in their student's education.

Resources will be available to parents regarding general child development, parenting skills, test interpretation and information specific to the curriculum and instructional policies. This will provide opportunities to become involved in their child's educational process.

If a parent requires assistance due to language needs, ACEA would work with the adult education ESL program that is housed in the same building as ACEA to get parents the help and resources they need. More frequently, parents of students at ACEA may have limited reading proficiency. In these cases, teachers communicate through phone calls and in-person. Notes sent home are printed using basic vocabulary. If a parent has a disability, ACEA will provide full opportunities for participation through flexibility and providing needed resources.

Although there are currently no parents in our community with limited English or migrant children, special care would be taken if the need arose. For economically disadvantaged students, ACEA works closely with the Youth Works program - a program designed to help students at risk of dropping out to remain in school. Many of our parents work long hours, night shifts, etc and are not able to provide transportation for their child. ACEA may provide transportation or gift cards. ACEA also makes the community Christmas closet and the Sharing Tree available to all students and families as well as Kings Daughters gift certificates to aid in clothing needs. ACEA has also begun working with the Caregiving Network - a nonprofit clothing closet and food bank that provides assistance to the community.

Volunteer Opportunities:

ACEA continually contacts parents via email, phone and/or letter to seek interest as parent opportunities arise. Parents will be asked to complete a Volunteer Survey at each Parent orientation to determine how they can use their talents and interests to volunteer at school. The sheet will help match school needs with volunteer interests. The following list of activities in which parents and/or volunteers can be involved in the educational process of our students are:

- Academic Conferences
- Awards Assembly
- Behavior Conferences
- Calendars
- Clothes Donations
- Tutoring

- Discipline Committee
- Financial Aid Workshop
- Guest Speakers
- Handbooks
- Job Shadowing
- News Releases
- Parent Conferences
- Parent/Teacher Conferences
- Fundraisers
- Progress Reports
- Field Trips
- School Board
- Special Education Activities
- Special Education Conferences
- Web page

The results will be summarized and reviewed by staff.

Community Involvement:

Students and their families will be encouraged to build partnerships and connections with community-based programs and other resources that can encourage and support the student’s education, growth and development. ACEA staff offer a flexible schedule to provide resources and information for parents through school and other community providers.

Decision Making and Advocacy:

ACEA will involve families as partners in the process of school review and improvement planning. ACEA will also involve families in the development and distribution of its parent involvement policy and plan.

Learning at Home:

ACEA will provide suggestions for parents to use at home to assist in the educational progress of their student at school:

- To promote and support responsible parenting, ACEA will make available informative material regarding responsible parenting. Some topics may include proper health, safety and well-being of your student. Parents will have access to this information via the ACEA website (<http://aceaofmidland.weebly.com/>) as well as through the school counselor.
- Parents will be provided with information about tutoring.
- ACEA will post "Tips" and "Activities" on the school web page to help create a home environment that encourages learning and extends learning at home. Some topics may include guidance to parents about communication, testing strategies, completing assignments and scholarship information.

By involving more parents in their child's learning, ACEA will have more parent involvement at parent/teacher conferences and parent night activities as well as in increase in graduation rate. Evidence will be parent sign-in sheets and graduation completion data.