

Leander ISD PreKindergarten Family Engagement Plan
2016-2017

Leander ISD's vision is that students will exit our system with the same passion for learning they had when they entered, without economics determining success, having every option open.

The Leander ISD Prekindergarten program believes in developing partnerships with families based on mutual respect. Our program embraces the individuality and uniqueness of families, and promotes a culture of learning that is child centered and age appropriate. We believe family engagement is the mutual responsibility of families, schools, and communities to build relationships that support student learning and achievement, 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, supports the whole child, and is both culturally responsive and linguistically appropriate. Building partnerships between educators and families with a family engagement plan ensures that every student is encouraged, supported, and challenged to achieve the highest levels of knowledge, skills, and character.

1. The district facilitates Family-to-Family Support by:

Leander ISD's PreK program creates a safe and respectful environment where families can learn from each other as individuals and in groups; invites former program participants, including families and community volunteers, to share their education and career experiences with current families; and ensures opportunities for continuous participation in events designed for families.

Strategies Include:

- Each elementary campus posts a [Campus Improvement Plan](#) that includes a Comprehensive Needs Assessment of Family and Community Involvement.
<http://survey.k12insight.com/survey.aspx?k=RRsYQWYsTsPsPsP&lang=0&data=>
- Each campus' Climate Survey is given to parents, students, and staff members and includes questions relating to student safety.
- LISD elementary schools participate in the Anti-Defamation League's No Place for Hate Program as well as other anti-bullying programs in Leander ISD including C-Squared.
- Current parent volunteers and former PreK parents will speak to incoming PreK families from the district's Parents as Teachers program in April 2017.
- Leander ISD Watch D.O.G.S. (Dads of Great Students) program invites all male family members to volunteer in all elementary schools.

2. The district's network of community resources:

In Leander ISD, our PreK program builds strategic partnerships by leveraging community resources; establishing and maintaining partnerships with businesses, faith-based organizations, and community agencies; monitoring and evaluating policies and practices to stimulate innovation and create learning pathways; identifying support

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from various agencies, including mental and physical health providers; partnering with local community-based organizations to create a family-friendly transition plan for students arriving from early childhood settings; providing and facilitating referrals to family support or educational groups based on family interests and needs; communicating short- and long-term program goals to all stakeholders; and identifying partners to provide translators and culturally relevant resources reflective of home language.

Strategies Include:

- [LISD Community Resources link on website](#), Community Resources Guide ([English](#)) ([Spanish](#)), phone service or App [211 Texas](#) to find resources on food, health, housing, and more, Parents as Teachers referrals, [Child Find](#), [Leadership Leander](#), [Literacy Partners](#) from [Education Connection](#)
- “Bridges Buzz” Newsletter from [Bridges to Growth Resource Center at the Georgetown Project](#)
- Coordinated school health through the [School Health Advisory Committee](#)
- Community Education Opportunities include [Student Wellness Series](#), [Adult ESL/EL Civics](#), [GED and Citizenship Program](#), [Love and Logic Parent Classes](#)
- [School and Community Relations](#)
- Early open house for PreK families only at each PreK Community campus
- Graduates of Parents as Teachers program participate in a visit and tour of PreK Community campus as incoming PreK students
- Parent-Teacher Conferences to communicate long-term goals of school success and family engagement in addition to short-term goals of academic, physical, social and emotional development.
- [Leander ISD Translation Services Department](#) is dedicated to translating materials for teachers and families.

3. Increase family participation in decision-making.

Leander ISD increases family participation in decision-making by developing and supporting a family advisory council; developing, adopting, and implementing identified goals within the annual campus/school improvement plan 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; and using appropriate tools such as

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surveys or focus groups to gather family feedback on the family engagement plan.

Strategies Include:

- [Site-Based Planning Committees](#) are composed of district employees, community members, parents, business representatives. Each campus within Leander ISD has a SBPH to provide input to the principal such as planning, curriculum budgeting, staff development, staffing patterns, and school organization, all with the aim of improving the achievement of all students.
- [District-wide Educational Improvement Council](#) is a committee of parents, business and community members, teachers, principals and other district staff to advise the Board in establishing and reviewing the district's educational goals, objectives, major district-wide classroom instructional programs and to approve staff development of a district-wide nature.
- [Leander ISD Growth Management Community Workshop](#) provides an opportunity for parents to share their input regarding managing district growth through their "[Growth Management Community Input](#)" survey.

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

PreKindergarten teachers in Leander ISD recognize the families of our students as the first and best teachers. In order to equip families with tools to enhance and extend their child's learning, our teachers 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 prekindergarten school year; provide complementary home learning activities for families to engage in at home with children through information presented in newsletters, online technology, social media, parent/family-teacher conferences, or other school- or center-related events; provide families with information, best practices, and training related to 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.

Strategies Include:

- [School Ready Parent Guide from E3 Alliance](#) given to all PreK Students (English and Spanish available)
- PreK & K Registration in April 2017 and throughout summer and school year, registrars give tours of school at registration
- Parents as Teachers registration and elementary school visits

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- Early open house for PreK families only
- [Vroom App](#)
- Teacher's websites include recommend learning links ([Example 1](#), [Example 2](#))
- Family engagement events
- Parent Teacher Conferences
- Daily communication from teacher & school; in-person communication; weekly or monthly newsletter; daily & Wednesday folders, phone calls, emails,
- [Love and Logic classes](#)

5. Develop staff skills in evidence-based practices that support families in meeting their children's learning benchmarks.

Leander ISD Prekindergarten believes in a continuous improvement philosophy. We provide essential professional development for educators in understanding communication and engagement with families, including training on communicating with families in crisis; promoting and developing family engagement as a core strategy to improve teaching and learning among all educators and staff; and developing staff skills to support and use culturally diverse, culturally relevant, and culturally responsive family engagement strategies.

Strategies Include:

- PreKindergarten Summit for all Leander ISD PreK teachers, June 7th, 8th, and 9th 2016 including "Authentic Family Engagement"
- Conscious Discipline professional development June 2015, February 2016, June 2016, and February 2017
- [Leander ISD Professional Development program](#)

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

A part of Leander ISD's continuous improvement philosophy includes self-assessment for program improvement. Our PreK program develops data collection systems to 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 teachers play a role in the family engagement evaluation process.

Strategies Include:

- PreK Community Family Feedback Survey
- PreK Program Family Feedback Survey (End of Year)
- Families transitioning from Parents as Teachers to PreKindergarten or Kindergarten conduct goal-oriented home-visits
- [Texas Education Agency High Quality PreKindergarten Program Self-Assessment](#)