

ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
10-9 Family and Community Engagement

The Arlington School Board believes that all students, schools and programs are more likely to achieve success when families and the wider community are positively engaged in achieving the mission and vision of Arlington Public Schools (APS).

The Arlington School Board shares a vision for effective family and community engagement to support student learning where:

1. Families, schools, and the community work together toward the common goal of raising healthy, successful, well-educated, caring and responsible citizens.
2. Schools are friendly, welcoming environments that support family and community members and value the talents that they have to offer.
3. Families and the larger community feel connected to, understand, and support APS.
4. On-going, two-way communication among individual schools and programs, the school system, families, and the community is the norm.
5. Family and community engagement programs and strategies are aligned with the APS Strategic Plan.

Definition

Within Arlington Public Schools, family and community engagement is a shared responsibility of families, schools, and the community to support students and their learning and to nurture students' intellectual, personal, social, and emotional development to help them achieve their full potential.

Reflecting a systemic approach to education, this definition of family and community engagement is grounded in the following principles:

1. Shared responsibility in which
 - a. schools and community organizations are committed to communicating with and engaging families in meaningful ways, and
 - b. families are committed to actively supporting their students' learning and development.
2. An enduring commitment, continuous across the student's life, with parent and community roles adjusting as students mature into young adulthood.
3. Effective connection and reinforcement of learning in multiple settings – at home, in school, and in the community.

Standards for Family-School-Community Engagement

The School Board supports family and community engagement that honors the dynamic, multiple, and complementary ways in which students learn and grow. Arlington Public Schools will actively work to achieve the following goals:

1. **Welcoming all families into the school community** - Families are active participants in the life of the school, and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to APS staff, and to what students are learning and doing in school.

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- 2. Communicating effectively** - APS staff and families engage in regular, meaningful, two-way communication about student learning and social and emotional development.
- 3. Supporting student success** - APS staff and families have adequate opportunities to collaborate and strengthen their knowledge and skills to support student learning and social and emotional development at school and at home.
- 4. Advocating for every student** - Families and students are empowered to be advocates, to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities, resources and supports that will ensure their success.
- 5. Sharing Responsibility** APS staff, families and students are partners in decisions that affect students and together inform and influence policies, practices, and programs.
- 6. Collaborating with Community** - APS staff, families, and community members connect students to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

Responsibilities

- 1.** APS will collaborate with families and community members to build effective family and community partnerships.
- 2.** APS will provide information in a variety of forms and offer multiple avenues for input and participation by families, students, and community members. APS will ensure that outreach, communication, and capacity building strategies are varied and responsive to the diversity of APS families and community members.
- 3.** APS will provide resources and training opportunities for families and APS staff in order to build their capacity to work in partnership to support student learning and social and emotional development.
- 4.** Family and community engagement programs and strategies will be systemic, integrated, and sustained with adequate resources and infrastructure support.
- 5.** APS will have a transparent system of accountability, with indicators of the effectiveness of family and community engagement programs and strategies, to ensure that the above standards are met.

References

20-5.300 PIP – Communication: Language Access Services

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), Title I, Section 1118