

Parent Involvement Policy

In the ECPS Parent/Student Handbook the Parent's/Guardian's Responsibility is as follows:

Parents or guardians should share with their children the importance of a quality education. They should encourage their children to develop self discipline and to accept responsibility for learning.

Parents need to teach their children a sense of respect for themselves, others, and their school environment.

It is important for parents to work closely with teachers and school officials for the benefit of their children. This should include an effort to attend school functions when possible. At a minimum, parents should try to meet their children's teachers early in the school year. Parents should respond immediately to requests for conferences.

At home, parents should provide a time and place for their children to study. Parents should enhance their children's learning by preparing them mentally, physically, and emotionally

I. POLICY INVOLVEMENT

The Tappahannock Elementary School Parent Involvement Policy is jointly developed with, school administration, teachers, educational leaders, school board members and parents. This plan will be distributed to the parents/guardians of participating children of Tappahannock Elementary school. We will, to the extent possible, provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, and parents with disabilities. Furthermore, we will coordinate and integrate parental involvement programs and activities at the school level with other federal, state, and district programs. The Parent Policy is presented for discussion and approval with parents and the community during the initial open house meeting. The policy is updated as needed and reviewed annually by a team of people – including parents, community members, school and district administrators, and school faculty and staff members – in order to continuously meet the changing needs of our parents, students, and the school.

II. SHARED RESPONSIBILITY: PARENT-SCHOOL COMPACT

Parent-School Compact will be distributed to all parents at the open house. This compact describes how parents, students, and the entire school staff share in the responsibility for high student achievement. A team of people, including parents, community members, school and district administrators and school faculty and staff will annually review the School Compact.

III. BUILDING CAPACITY FOR INVOLVEMENT

To ensure effective involvement of parents, and to support a partnership among the parents, community and school to improve student achievement, we will:

1. Assist parents in understanding Virginia's academic and achievement measurements called the "Standards of Learning" (SOLs) by disseminating any pamphlets, hand-outs, holding 2 annual parent-teacher conferences, parent workshops offered through the school and the Community Service Board (CSB), Open Houses, SOL PEP nights and Literacy Nights.
2. Communicate and monitor a child's progress through interim reports, report cards, IEP meetings, weekly/monthly telephone calls, weekly/monthly newsletters, parent-teacher conferences, dissemination of PALS and BENCHMARK information with a letter offering an explanation of these scores, and our School Improvement plan.
3. Assisting parents by helping them to improve their child's achievement through parenting workshops from the CSB, SOL PEP nights, literacy night, Accelerated Reader nights, monthly newsletters that provide activities and suggestions, student's weekly folders, technology training and orientation with Parent Portal and our Instant Alert system. Each grade level sends home study guides before tests, Summer Literacy Initiative.
4. Provide professional development opportunities to faculty and staff to improve skills in the areas of reaching out to parents, establishing relationships with parents and working with parents in the PTO.
5. Send information to the parents about various school programs and activities such as teacher generated newsletters, PTO meetings, School Improvement Plan Agendas, School Improvement Plan, school calendar, parent/student handbook, student planner and web site. The information that is sent home will be composed of clear language that is easily understood.
6. Provide opportunities for parents to communicate with the school through open door policy with the administration, communication folders, and designating time and making appointments to meet with the teachers and other school professionals.
7. The school shall provide other activities to promote parental involvement and in accordance with Part III, #5 all activities will be given a brief, easy to understand explanation of the activity as follows:
 - A. **Literacy Night** – Once a year the school will set aside a 1-2 block where literacy and how it is taught in the school will be explained to the parents. A Meal is usually provided to the families that attend.
 - B. **Honeywell Instant Alert System** – TES and ECPS have a free mass communication system where we will sign up parents to be notified through email, text or phone on issues ranging from emergency closings to general information or event announcements.
 - C. **PTO – Parent and Teacher Organization** – An organization in which the parents can be involved with various activities and meetings at the school for fundraising, and organizing fun activities for the students.
 - D. **Accelerated Reader (AR) Nights** – These are nights set aside for parents to bring their child to the school to read books to their child and have the student take a comprehension test on the computer for the student to earn points to go toward our AR incentives.

E. **Award Ceremonies** – At the end of every quarter a day is set aside that we invite parents to come and see their child get an award they earned throughout that quarter. Awards are for Principal List, Honor Roll, citizenship, AR, and Best efforts.

F. **Open House** – Before school opens parents are invited to come into the school and get their child's school schedule and meet the teachers. This is where the Parent Involvement Policy will also be available.

G. **Back to School Night** - A night set aside shortly after school begins where parents can come to the school and their student can show them around, visit teachers, and understand more about the school and PTO.

H. **Title I Meetings** – Essex County Public Schools will set aside times each year where parents and students can meet to discuss Title I and how the Title I funds are used. It is a time for information and questions.

I. **SOL PEP Night** – in the Spring before the SOL tests are administered parents are invited to have dinner and listen to an explanation of the SOL tests, take a small practice quiz with their child and write a positive uplifting note to their child that the child will read right before the SOL tests.

J. **SAFE/SAIL Family Nights** – Several times a year parents are invited to attend a night where dinner is provided and children explain to the parents what they have been doing in our After School Program.

K. **School Improvement Plan** – a plan that is created using a state model to help our school improve and test out of school improvement.

L. **Field Day** – A day at the end of the year where parents are invited to spend a few hours with their child playing various games.

M. **Santa Shop** – A service that the PTO provides to the students and parents where small inexpensive gifts can be bought for the Christmas Holiday.

N. **Book Fair** – A book sale that students and parents can use to buy books and supplies.

O. **Summer Literacy** – a program that encourages learning throughout the summer. We try to provide books and activities for EVERY child.

P. **Mentoring programs** – volunteering parents can come to the school and visit a student assigned to them, to boost self esteem and achievement in school and in the community.

Q. **ESD (Effective School-wide Discipline) Events** – Events that recognize students who are showing positive character traits. We focus on a different character trait every month. Students caught “practicing” a positive character trait are awarded a fish chip. After they receive a certain amount of fish chips they are invited to an ESD fun event. Their Parents are invited to attend also.