



GABRIELA MISTRAL CENTER FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD

Parent and Family Engagement Policy 2020-2021

The Gabriela Mistral Center for Early Childhood is committed to the education of the children in our community. We feel parent involvement is an essential piece in ensuring that our students are successful in school. We believe that when parents are more involved in the academic process, school becomes a priority. Mistral's motto is, "Every Child, Ever Day". It is our mission to produce a community of life-long learners. It is our pledge to maintain a good line of communication from school to home and our goal is to provide ample opportunities for parental involvement each school year.

POLICY INVOLVEMENT

1. Mistral holds several annual meetings and encourages parents to attend through various means including flyers, newsletters, and callouts. Further, Mistral holds Parent Orientation Meetings that includes Title I information every August before school starts each year. At this meeting, and again at our Open Houses, we review with parents the Title I school requirements and the school's Parent and Family Engagement Policy. Mistral also holds monthly parent meetings where the principal allows parents to review the School Improvement Plan. The principal also gives parents updates on school test data, yearly progress data, school events and how to get involved. Parent Academies are also provided to inform them of how they can help their child be successful in school.
2. Parents are invited to participate in a variety of meetings and activities over the course of the school year. Parent Orientations and Meet the Teacher Socials are held both in the early and late afternoon on different dates to accommodate parent schedules and provide them with multiple opportunities to become informed and involved. Also, we have two parent computer stations accessible to parents during school hours. These computers allow parents to register to be volunteers, to check student progress or access any other campus or district online resources. Guided trainings and workshops are provided throughout the year based on parent input. The trainings are held at various times for the convenience of parents. All family members are welcome to attend these events. In cases where transportation is an issue, the administrative team makes special arrangements to link parents to needed resources and events. Parents are also invited to participate in Parent-Teacher Conferences to be held twice during the school year to discuss student progress. Teachers make themselves available to parents during the day, and before and after school per parent-request to accommodate as many as possible. In addition, the principal holds Coffee with the Principal Meetings once of month and collaborates with Head Start to hold parent academies immediately afterwards. Each meeting is informational and has an instructional focus (Literacy, Math, Conscious Discipline, Social Emotional, etc.)
3. Mistral aims to involve parents, in an organized, ongoing, and timely manner, in the planning, review and improvement of programs under Title I, Part A, including the planning, review, and improvement of the school parental involvement policy. Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) Meetings are held four times during the year to give parents an opportunity to examine, discuss, and provide feedback on the School Improvement Plan, the Parent and Family Engagement Policy, the Compact, and other items.
4. Mistral provides parents of participating children timely information about Title I programs, providing descriptions and explanations of the curriculum used at school, academic assessments used to measure student progress and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet. Through the Shared Decision Making Committee (SDMC), Mistral provides opportunities for parents to contribute in the decision making process of Mistral as it relates to the education of their children. Mistral communicates often to parents: the state's curricular and assessment expectations; the schoolwide requirements regarding instruction; techniques utilized to evaluate student work; and individual classroom rituals and routines pertinent to the academic success of students. We use a variety of communicative techniques such as Classroom and School Newsletters, the school website, Communication Folders, the School Messenger phone call system, Parent/Teacher Conferences, RTI Meetings, IEP Meetings, individual notes or calls home, Family Educational Nights, Voice Surveys (paper and phone), parent workshops, Open Houses, Parent Orientations, Mid-Term Report Cards and benchmark results in order to solicit parent participation and deliver important dialogue between home and school concerning student achievement.
5. Through parent meetings and the SDMC, Mistral provides parents opportunities to examine the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and provide feedback. If parents are not satisfied with the SIP, Mistral will forward the parents' concerns to the Houston ISD External Funding Department, await a reply, and act on any recommendations received from the External Funding Department.

6. SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES FOR HIGH ACADEMIC STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

For every child's education to be successful, all parties involved must do their part. For this reason, a Parent-Teacher-Student Compact has been developed and implemented. This document serves as an agreement between all parties to adhere to certain duties and responsibilities that ensure student success. It is reviewed and signed by all relevant parties at the beginning of each school year. These compacts are also used to motivate students and parents to become more involved in the educational process and to let parents know that they are equal partners in their child's learning.

7. BUILDING CAPACITY FOR INVOLVEMENT

a. Mistral will aid the parents of children served by the school, as appropriate, in understanding such topics as: the state's academic content standards; the state's academic student achievement standards; state and local academic assessments; the requirements of this part; and how to monitor their child's progress to work with educators to improve student achievement. Our school will provide for this provision as stated in the Policy Involvement and Shared Responsibilities for High Academic Student Achievement sections of this document.

b. Mistral will provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's achievement, such as literacy training, using technology, etc., as appropriate, to foster parental involvement. Our school will provide for this provision as stated in the Policy Involvement and Shared Responsibilities for High Academic Student Achievement sections of this document.

c. Mistral will educate teachers, pupil services personnel, the principal and other staff, with the assistance of parents, in the value and utility of contributions made by parents, how to stay connected, and build student-centered programs that build ties between parents and the school. Faculty and staff members will be cognizant of research on parental involvement. Parental input will be solicited throughout the year in meetings, surveys and one-on-one conferences. Information derived will be utilized by Mistral's Administrative Team to strengthen the tie between school and home to increase student achievement.

d. Mistral will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parental involvement programs and activities with community-based early learning programs and provide other activities, such as the parent resource center, to encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children.

Our school population includes PALS and Explorer classes. Additionally, Mistral collaborates with Head Start to provide extra teachers in three classes. Together with Head Start, Mistral strives to build strong relationships between home and school. Fieldtrips and on campus activities are plentiful throughout the year and parents are encouraged to attend these events so that they can be active participants in their children's learning.

e. Mistral will 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 extent practicable, in a language parents can understand. Mistral makes it a practice to send home school correspondences in English and Spanish to ensure that all information related to our school is understandable. A system translator assists our school with oral communication when necessary.

8. BUILDING CAPACITY FOR ENGAGEMENT

In carrying out the parental involvement requirements of this part, districts and schools, to extent practicable, shall provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with children with limited English proficiency, parents with children with disabilities, and parents of migratory children, including providing information and school reports in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language such parents can understand.

9. PARENT ACCESSIBILITY

Parents of all students, regardless of English proficiency, mobility or disability, are an important part of our learning community. All parents are afforded the opportunity to be involved in their child's school environment. For this reason, if a special need is identified that would help a parent to more fully understand the educational process and the academic process of his/her child, assistance will be provide to that parent. This type of support often comes in the form of translated school documents in a parent's primary language, having an interpreter on hand to translate important information at schoolwide meetings and events, working with an interpreter to provide translations in parent/teacher conferences, providing parent English and Spanish resources in our center, participating in faculty and staff training to better understand the culture of the students served, and providing easier accessibility to parents and/or students with disabilities, etc.

