



PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY

At Cottonwood Elementary School, we believe parents and families are crucial for students' academic, social, and emotional development. This policy serves as a guide to ensure that we uphold these standards and promote meaningful partnerships between our school, families, and the community to ensure the success and well-being of every student.

Welcoming All Families into the School Community

- The Cottonwood staff are friendly and willing to help parents and community members in a positive way.
- Student work is displayed in the elementary areas so everyone can view it.
- An open house will be held each year to invite parents and students into school before school begins.

Title I Annual Meeting

Cottonwood Elementary School will convene an annual Title I meeting each Fall at a convenient time to which all parents are invited and encouraged to attend.

At this meeting, the school will:

- Inform parents of the school's participation in Title I, Part A
- Explain the requirements of Title I
- Explain parents' right to be involved
- Review how Title I funds are used to support student learning
- Review the Parent and Family Engagement Policy
- Review the Parent-Student-School Compact
- Provide information about curriculum, academic assessments, and proficiency expectations
- Gather parent input and feedback

Documentation including meeting notices, agendas, sign-in sheets, and minutes will be maintained.

Flexible Meetings and Accessibility

Cottonwood Elementary School will offer a flexible number of meetings, including morning or evening opportunities, to maximize parent participation.

When appropriate and feasible, the school may provide transportation assistance, childcare, or alternative meeting formats such as virtual meetings to support parent involvement.

Communicating Effectively

- Teachers and staff will utilize multiple communication channels to contact parents about information pertaining to their child.
- School Report Cards are shared with parents and the community through the district website and are available upon request.
- Parents will be provided with regular updates on student progress through progress reports, report cards, and parent-teacher conferences that are held in the Fall and Spring.
- Teachers and staff will celebrate achievements of students and their families to foster a sense of pride and community.

Supporting Student Success

- The school will organize at least two family academic nights, workshops, and/or activities to promote parent-child interaction and involvement in school life each school year.
- Every student will receive high-quality instruction aligned with the Kansas State Standards.
- Teachers will use data-driven decision making to inform instructional practices.
- Technology integration will be used in the classroom to enhance learning opportunities.
- Students will be provided with small group instruction and early intervention programs.
- The Student Improvement Team (SIT) will meet each month to review data and assessments to ensure that all students receive the support they need to succeed in school.

Speaking Up for Every Child

- We will strive to make our school environment accessible and inclusive for all parents, regardless of language, cultural background, or socioeconomic status.

- We will provide translation and interpretation services as needed.
- We will actively seek parent representation on school committees, advisory boards, and decision-making bodies to ensure that parent voices are heard and considered in school policies and practices.

Sharing Power

- Parents are encouraged to be involved in their child's education and work with the school to ensure their child receives a quality education.
- Parents are encouraged to attend Cottonwood-Sunflower PTO meetings.
- The Site Council meets monthly and all parents are encouraged to join.
- The Building Leadership Team meets monthly and we encourage parents to volunteer to be on the committee.
- The school will evaluate the effectiveness of our parent involvement policy and make adjustments as needed to better serve the needs of our students and families.
- Parent surveys will be sent out in the spring each year to collect information regarding the effectiveness of our Title I program and how it can better serve our students.

Collaborating with Community

- Our school will collaborate with community agencies and organizations to provide support for students and families during times of crisis or hardship.
- Cottonwood Elementary hosts the Paola USD 368 S.O.S (Serving our Students) community event which partners with multiple community agencies and organizations to help students in need prepare for a successful school year.
- Cottonwood Elementary partners with the Foster Grandparent Program of Miami/Linn Counties. Volunteers dedicate time each week to help students with reading, math, and basic school skills.
- Paola USD 368 partners with "Parents as Teachers" who helps parents understand child development and connect them to the resources they need to make the best choices for their families.

Development and Distribution of This Policy

Cottonwood Elementary School will jointly develop, agree upon, and distribute to parents a written Parent and Family Engagement Policy as required by ESSA Section 1116(b).

Parents will be involved in the review and revision of this policy through surveys, meetings, and advisory opportunities.

This policy will be:

- Posted on the district website
- Available in the school office
- Reviewed annually during the Title I Annual Meeting
- Provided in a language and format parents can understand

Parent-School Compact

Cottonwood Elementary School will jointly develop with parents a Parent-School Compact that outlines how parents, school staff, and students share responsibility for improved student academic achievement.

The compact will:

- Provided during the student enrollment process
- Be discussed at the Title I Annual Parent Meeting
- Be reviewed annually
- Be distributed to parents
- Describe how the school and families will build and maintain a partnership to support student learning

Annual Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

Cottonwood Elementary School will conduct an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the Parent and Family Engagement Policy.

The evaluation will include:

- Identification of barriers to parent participation
- Review of parent survey data
- Review of participation trends
- Discussion of strategies to increase engagement

Findings will be used to revise this policy and improve parent engagement efforts.

For further inquiries or clarifications regarding this policy, please do not hesitate to contact Principal, Brennan Riffel, by emailing brennan_riffel@usd368.org, or by calling (913) 294-8050.