



Ark Community Charter School Parent Involvement Policy

The Board of the Ark Community Charter School (ACCS) believes that all parents and families want the best for their children and acknowledges research showing that children do best when parents are enabled to play four key roles in their children's learning:

- Teachers (helping children at home)
- Supporters (contributing their skills to the school)
- Advocates (helping children receive fair treatment)
- Decision-makers (participating in joint problem-solving with the school at every level).

The Board recognizes parents/guardians are full partners with educators, administrators, and the Board to achieve the best possible learning experience for each child. A strong program of communication between home and school must be encouraged, continually evaluated and maintained so the school and community are connected in meaningful and productive ways.

In order to institute and maintain this program of communication with parents and to facilitate and maintain active parental involvement, ACCS will:

- Continue to involve parents in the joint development of the plan under No Child Left Behind Part A — Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies Subpart 1 — Basic Program Requirements Sec.1112, LEA Plans commonly referred to as the Consolidated Application and the process of school review and improvement under Sec. 1116, Academic Assessment and LEA and School Improvement. If the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Consolidated Application (section 1112) is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, ACCS will submit any parent comments with such Consolidated Application when it submits the Consolidated Application to the New York State Education Department.
- Plan, implement, assess and, as necessary, revise effective parent involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance.
- Build the school's and parents' capacity for strong parental involvement through collaborative school-parent planning, ongoing parent-school communication and integration of parents into professional development and other school activities.
- Coordinate and integrate parental involvement strategies under Title I, Title II and Title IV with parental involvement strategies under such programs as the Head Start program, Reading First program, Early Reading First program, Even Start program, Parents as Teachers program, the Home Instruction Programs for Preschool Youngsters and public preschool and other programs, and conduct other activities, such as parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children
- Conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the parent involvement policy in improving the academic quality of ACCS, including identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in authorized activities (with particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background). The findings of such evaluation will be published and

made available for review by parents, and will be used to design strategies for more effective parental involvement, and to revise, if necessary, the parental involvement policy.

ACCS will distribute the Parent Involvement Policy to parents of all of its students. The Principal of ACCS will develop a School Plan for Parental Involvement that will explain the means by which the bulleted items above will be implemented and maintained. The Principal will convene a separate panel comprised of parents and school personnel for the purpose of developing the School Plan for Parental Involvement. Parents will be notified of the Policy and Plan via letter written in an easily understandable and uniform format. ACCS will also provide such notice in languages other than English to parents who require it. The Policy and Plan will also be made available to the local community through the school's website and will be updated periodically to meet the changing needs of parents and the school.

As a component of the School Plan for Parental Involvement, ACCS will jointly develop with parents of all children served by programs described in the Consolidated Application a school-parent/student compact that outlines how parents, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve New York State's high standards. The compact will:

- (1) describe the school's responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables the children to meet the State's student academic achievement standards, and the ways in which each parent will be responsible for supporting their children's learning.
- (2) address the importance of communication between teachers and parents on an ongoing basis through:
 - a) parent-teacher conferences at least bi-annually, during which the compact shall be discussed as the compact relates to the individual child's achievement;
 - b) frequent reports to parents on their children's progress; and
 - c) reasonable access to staff, opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class, and observation of classroom activities.
- (3) be reviewed and updated annually.

In addition, ACCS will:

- (1) Convene an annual meeting, at a convenient time, to which all parents will be invited and encouraged to attend, to: a) inform parents of the school's participation in programs described in the NCLB legislation; b) to explain the requirements of these programs; and c) to explain and answer questions about the rights of parents to be informed about and involved in these programs.
- (2) Offer meetings throughout the year, to which all parents will be invited, to promote parent-school communication and increased parent involvement in their children's education. These meetings will be scheduled at times that are convenient to parents, including mornings and evenings. To the degree practicable and permitted by law, the school will use NCLB program funds to provide transportation, child care, or home visits, as such services relate to parental involvement.
- (3) Involve parents, in an organized, ongoing, and timely way, in the planning, review, and improvement of programs under NCLB including the planning, review, and improvement of the school parental involvement policy and the joint development of plans required by the NCLB.

- (4) Provide parents:
 - (a) timely information about programs supported by NCLB and included in the Consolidated Application;
 - (b) a description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the school, the forms of academic assessment used to measure student progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet; and
 - (c) if requested by parents, opportunities for regular meetings to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their children, and respond to any such suggestions as soon as practicably possible.
- (5) Provide assistance to parents, as appropriate, in understanding such topics as the State's academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards, State and local academic assessments, the requirements of the Consolidated Application, and how to monitor a child's progress and work with educators to improve the achievement of their children.
- (6) Provide materials and training to help parents to work with their children to improve their children's achievement, such as literacy training and using technology, as appropriate, to foster parental involvement;
- (7) Educate ACCS staff, with the assistance of parents, in the value and utility of contributions of parents, to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, implement and coordinate parent programs, and build ties between parents and the school;
- (8) Adopt and implement model approaches to improving parental involvement;
- (9) Provide other reasonable support for parental involvement activities as parents may request.