



## **A. W. Brown Leadership Academies**

### **Family Engagement Plan**

### **2017-2018**

High-Quality early childhood education can profoundly affect a child's school readiness. Early learning experiences lay the foundation for future learning and success in school.

Here at A. W. Brown Leadership Academies, we believe that both parent and community support play a key role in the success of our students. The Pre-Kindergarten Department has worked to develop an engagement plan that promotes collaboration between teachers, parents, and our local community to foster an environment where students feel safe and supported to take risks, work hard, and grow as scholars.

#### **I. Facilitating Family-to-Family Support**

*A. W. Brown Leadership Academies will create a safe and respectful environment where families can learn from one another, share their experiences, and participate in family leadership trainings.*

Strategies Include:

- Campuses hold a variety of parent events including: Meet the Teacher, Staff, and Families Night to meet each other and build relationships for the upcoming school year; subject related fair nights in the areas of reading, math and science where families can ask questions, learn strategies to use at home, participate in activities, and share ideas for learning; Mother/Daughter Tea and Father/Daughter Dance where students learn social skills and build family relationships; and the Block Party where families in the community can learn more about the school, participate in educational games, tour the campus, watch extracurricular performances, and have the opportunity to register
- Coaches facilitate “Make and Take” sessions where parents can learn new ideas and work together to create materials to be used at home to support school instruction

#### **II. Establishing a Network of Community Resources**

*A.W. Brown Leadership Academies will build strategic partnerships; utilize community resources; monitor and evaluate policies and practices that stimulate innovation and create learning pathways; establish and maintain partnerships with businesses, faith-based organizations, and community agencies; identify support from various agencies, including mental and physical health providers; partner with local community-based organizations to create a family-friendly transition plan for students arriving from early childhood settings; provide and facilitate referrals to family support or educational groups based on family interests and needs; and communicate short- and long-term program goals to all stakeholders.*



Strategies Include:

- Partnerships with community-based organizations, including but not limited to: Dallas Public Library, Dallas Police Department, Dallas Fire Department, local churches, non-profit organizations, World Vision, and the National Panhellenic Council
- Make sure families are aware of services and are aware of their rights under current law
- Occupational therapists, special education teachers, the school nurse, and the school counselor work together with families to identify and address student needs
- Utilize the Director of Operations to oversee parent support services, perspective parent orientations, and community fairs

### **III. Increasing Family Participation in Decision Making**

*A. W. Brown Leadership Academies will develop and support leadership skills for family members and provide opportunities for families to advocate for their children; collaborate with families to solve problems; engage families in shaping program activities and cultivating two-way communication; and provide families opportunities to give feedback about the school, programming, communication, and responsiveness.*

Strategies Include:

- Parent-Teacher conferences held twice a year where teachers and families share student data, discuss progress, and set goals
- Teachers use phone calls, emails, and weekly newsletters to communicate and collaborate with families
- Families have a variety of volunteer and leadership opportunities, including but not limited to: Daddy Daycare Program, Campus Beautification Projects, Extracurricular Activity Sponsors
- Family Forums held throughout the year where parents are encouraged to voice concerns that are then shared with the school board
- End of Year Parent Survey

### **IV. Equip Families with Tools to Enhance and Extend Learning**

*A. W. Brown Leadership Academies will share resources to support learning at home while strengthening the family/school partnership; provide families with information and/or training on creating a home learning environment connected to formal learning opportunities; equip families with resources and skills to support their children through the transition to school and offer opportunities for families and children to visit the school in advance of the prekindergarten school year; provide home learning activities for families to use at home with children through information presented in newsletters, online technology, social media, parent/family-teacher conferences, or other school- or center-related activities; provide families with information, best*



*practices, and training related to age-appropriate developmental expectations; emphasize benefits of positive family practices such as attachment and nurturing that complement the stages of child development; collaborate with families to appropriately respond to children's behavior in a non-punitive, positive and supportive way; encourage families to reflect on family experiences and practices in helping children; and assist families in implementing best practices that will help achieve the goals and objectives identified to meet the needs of the child and family.*

Strategies Include:

- Conference with parents to collaborate and set goals
- Foster the mindset that parents are a child's first teacher and teachers are working in partnership with parents
- Instructional Coaches share innovative ways to increase family engagement at home
- Principal updates and Parent Connect newsletters include tips and strategies to be used at home
- Instructional Coaches create and disseminate flyers with research-based information on developmental milestones, family engagement tips, and instructional practices

## **V. Develop Staff Skills in Evidence-Based Practices that Support Families in Meeting Their Children's Learning Benchmarks**

*A. W. Brown Leadership Academies will provide essential professional development for educators in understanding communication and engagement with families, including training on communicating with families in crisis; promote and develop family engagement as a core strategy to improve teaching and learning among all educators and staff; develop staff skills to support and use culturally diverse, culturally relevant, and culturally responsive engagement strategies.*

Strategies Include:

- Professional development through Region 10 Service Center
- Ongoing professional development with Instructional Coaches to address skills in working with families and family engagement
- Use of developmentally appropriate curriculum that helps children understand differences in families, cultures, and traditions
- Train students in how to greet parents, fellow students, and teachers as a way to show respect to all participants in learning community
- Provide a collaboration room where teachers and parents can meet privately



## **VI. Evaluate Family Engagement Efforts and Use Evaluations for Continuous Improvement**

*A. W. Brown Leadership Academies will use data to ensure alignment between family engagement activities, teaching, and learning goals to promote continuous family engagement; use a cyclical process to ensure evaluation results are used for continuous improvement and adjustment; and ensure teachers play a role in the family engagement evaluation process.*

Strategies Include:

- Beginning of Year Parent-Teacher conferences to set child-centered goals
- Middle of Year Parent-Teacher conferences to check in and discuss progress
- Ongoing positive parent contact logs to maintain communication
- Parent Forums
- Weekly grade level extended planning meetings to discuss instruction, data, family engagement, and goals
- Annual parent survey to evaluate effectiveness of the prekindergarten experience on the child and family
- Use of survey results in planning for upcoming year

The mission of A. W. Brown Leadership Academies is to produce smart, effective, efficient, disciplined scholars by creating an environment in which teachers feel safe and free to teach and scholars feel safe and motivated to learn. With the implementation of the family engagement plan, A.W. Brown Leadership Academies will create an environment where teachers, families, and the community work together to promote a learning environment that is child-centered, developmentally-appropriate, and family-driven.