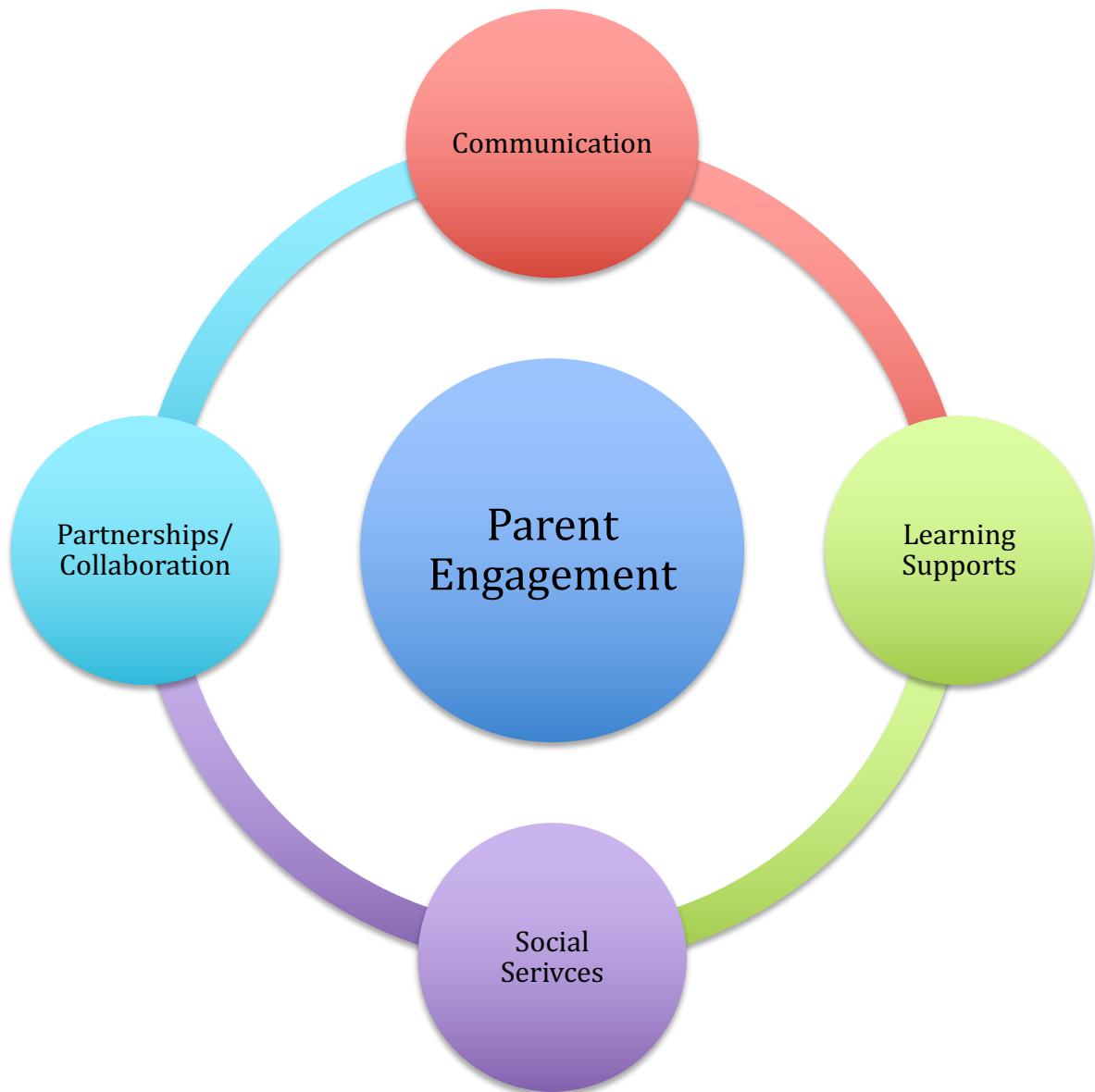


# Auburn City Schools Parent Engagement Plan 2020-21



## **Introduction**

Research is very clear that the extent to which parents are engaged in the education of their children is a key indicator to the overall success of the child. With that fact in mind, it is the goal of Auburn City Schools (ACS) to develop and implement a comprehensive system of parent engagement activities and support structures that will create a dynamic interaction between families and schools.

The foundation of this parent engagement system is communication with parents and the formation of partnerships between parents, schools and community agencies. ACS has the good fortune of being in a community with a rich heritage of engagement on many levels, between its local land grant university, its city agencies, the school district and its many community support structures. The overarching goal of this plan is to facilitate the enhancement of those already existing structures and to help in the creation of new partnerships that will aid in progress toward the goal of engaging parents in all levels of the educational process.

An important aspect of this systematic plan for parent engagement is the acknowledgement of ACS staff that parents are a child's first teacher. As such, their ongoing involvement, in meaningful ways, is essential to the student thriving in academics, social areas, extracurricular activities and career/college preparedness. This acknowledgement will keep district staff focused on the necessity of involving parents in meaningful ways so that they can support students in every aspect of the programs that ACS provides in Pre-K through twelfth grade.

The ACS Parent Engagement Plan will focus on four key areas. Each area is supported by a coherent system of measurable action steps. These four key plan components are:

1. Communication
2. Learning Supports
3. Social Services
4. Partnership/Collaboration

In each of the four key areas, or strategies, a number of action steps will be included which will form the basis for the activities and structures that the district will utilize to engage parents in the education of their children. These action steps will be reviewed annually by a Parent Involvement Committee to review the effectiveness of the steps and to determine the need for additions, deletions of other modifications to the plan.

Within each strategy will be activities that will target parents as participants in multiple ways but it is important that the engagement framework also addresses ways in which the district can reach parents who may not, for a variety of reasons, be likely to attend such “traditional” events and activities. In order to reach those constituents, each program area will ultimately have a “non-traditional” action step designed to provide parents with alternative options for engagement.

Strategy 1: Communication. The schools within ACS will strive to provide frequent, meaningful communication in all key areas of the student’s programming with a focus on academic support.

- Action Step 1.1. Schools will provide systematic communication to parents through weekly newsletters, planners, PTO newsletters and other means of written communication.
- Action Step 1.2. Schools will provide communication about school events, activities and academic matters through a variety of technology-based tools and mediums. These may include Facebook, Twitter, school websites, communication apps, and telephonic mass communications.
- Action Step 1.3. Schools and other district entities will communicate to parents at organized meetings designed to share information and build a sense of community with parents through shared experiences. These may include PTO meetings, Family Nights, parent conferences, and other opportunities to meet and discuss how parents and schools can work together.
- Action Step 1.4. Schools and district staff will collaborate to create “non-traditional” opportunities for parents through alternate venues and/or methods of sharing information. The use of technology for communication will play an important role in this area as will having meetings at times and locations other than the traditional night-time meeting at the school.

Strategy 2: Learning Supports. Schools will provide frequent and varied activities designed to assist parents in helping their children complete assignments, master standards and increase overall readiness to learn.

- Action Step 2.1. Schools will develop and implement periodic parental engagement activities to inform parents about the curriculum, grade level standards, academic expectations and assessment programs. This will be accomplished through Curriculum Nights, Family Math and Family Reading and Family Literacy Nights and other similar activities focused on explaining

academic content and ideas of how parents can help their children master the content.

- Action Step 2.2. Schools will develop and implement an organized structure to have parent conference opportunities where instructional staff can share, in a one on one or small group setting, how their child is performing on curriculum-based work and various academic assessments. Included in these activities will be formal reporting structures that show student progress, including progress data for those students who are struggling to master grade level content and are receiving tiered intervention services.
- Action Step 2.3. School personnel who work with English Language Learners will develop and implement activities designed to help parents whose first language is not English understand the academic program and what supports are available to their families and their children. District ESL staff, including parent liaisons, will focus efforts on providing academic information, tutoring opportunities and other supports for parents of English Learners.
- Action Step 2.4. Schools will provide activities scheduled at various times and locations to meet the needs of parents who are unable or unlikely to access the traditional “school night” activities. Examples of such activities are “lunch and learn” activities, meetings in local churches or restaurants, breakfasts for parents, and other activities designed to offer parents alternative venues and means for learning about their children’s academic progress and needs.

Strategy 3: Social Services. Schools and the LEA will provide support to families through a comprehensive Social Services system to enable parents, and their children, to successfully navigate the complexities of learning and thriving in the community.

- Action Step 3.1. Schools will utilize the services of the Auburn City Schools Social Services/Counseling Department to deliver direct services to parents regarding needs for attendance/residency/behavior information and supports. In addition, Social Services/Counseling staff will work with parents on how to help their child be more successful in school.
- Action Step 3.2. Schools and district staff will collaborate with East Alabama Mental Health, Auburn University Psychological Services, The Auburn City Schools Dental Clinic, and other school counseling providers to help parents and their children deal with mental health, medical and dental issues that can make their children better prepared to succeed in school.
- Action Step 3.3. ACS staff, including ESL teachers, will collaborate with local educational institutions (Auburn University and Southern Union State Community College), faith-based organizations and Esperanza House to provide community information, academic supports, and cultural awareness

and participation activities for parents and their children. Included will be family dinners and outings sponsored by external organizations where parents and their children are provided meals, school information and connections to community agencies.

- Action Step 3.4. ACS staff, including School Resource Officers, Social Services Staff and other support staff, will provide information to parents about challenges that students face in school, in peer interaction and in the community. Topics and services related to drug and alcohol awareness and education, suicide awareness education, and community supports will help families engage with and be supported by schools as they try to connect to the community in which they live.

Strategy 4: Partnerships/Collaboration. Schools and the LEA will create, maintain and enhance partnerships with community agencies and support structures within the community.

- Action Step 4.1. Schools will collaborate with public institutions whose mission is to deliver educational services in order to provide learning opportunities for parents and their children. Engaging parents in the schools through partnered access to educational services will help improve the overall educational acquisition of students. Auburn University, Southern Union State Community College and other educational entities will collaborate with schools in these educational programming offerings.
- Action Step 4.2. Schools will collaborate with public agencies in order to offer parents opportunities to support their children through mental health, educational and social services. Examples of such collaborations are East Alabama Mental Health, who offers school-based counseling services, the Lee County Boys and Girls Club, who offers a variety of educational and family services, and various other community agencies whose mission is to support families. Schools may engage parents more effectively by making connections through these collaborations.
- Action Step 4.3. Schools will collaborate with local non-profit organizations and faith-based organizations that provide services to parents and children in the community. There are multiple local foundations that provide food, educational services and other supports for families through collaboration with schools. In addition, a number of faith-based organizations actively engage parents and children, through their partnerships with schools, in providing tutoring services, meals and other supports to parents. Some of these programs are designed to address the specific needs of parents of special needs children and those for whom English is a second language. Meetings

and services in these situations may be at non-traditional locations and at varying times in order to maximize the impact of parental engagement in these programs.

- Action Step 4.4. Schools will partner with organizations whose mission is to provide supports for parents of diverse populations. These organizations assist the schools in achieving the goal of providing a comprehensive support system for families so that students can experience success and receive supports both inside and outside of the school experience. Organizations such as Esperanza House, Auburn University's Office of Professional and Continuing Education, and Auburn University's Center for Health Ecology and Equity Research focus on providing services to students with a variety of special needs and will be important partners for ACS in providing a comprehensive support system for our diverse population of learners.

**Auburn City Schools  
Student Engagement Plan  
Auburn High School Tiger Connect**

**Mission Statement**

Tiger Connect is a safe place that provides each student with an adult advocate and leads to greater student self advocacy.

**Outcomes**

- Each student is known well by at least one staff member on campus
- “At-risk” students are more quickly identified and appropriate supports are put in place
- All students have the opportunity to engage in staff supported, personalized planning for their future
- All students will practice peer leadership and mentorship
- All students will feel connected to Auburn High School
- Staff members are able to work with a group that is representative of the diversity at Auburn High School
- Student accomplishments will be celebrated more frequently across campus
- Students will have opportunities to discuss issues that affect them on campus and in the community

**Implementation Plan**

- Structure of the Program
  - Groups will meet once per week, on Wednesdays, for approximately 35 minutes. The exception to this is that at the beginning of the year, groups will meet the first 5 days of school.
  - Groups will be set by grade level and will contain a diverse representation of gender, race, ethnicity, and achievement level (as determined by class rank). Groups will be less than 20 students and one Tiger Connect leader.
  - Each group will be a member of a family, and each family will consist of a 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> grade group. Families will occasionally work together—for example, the 12<sup>th</sup> grade family members may take the

10<sup>th</sup> grade family members on a school tour during the first week of school.

- All teachers will have a group. Classified staff who would like to be a part of a group will be able to join.
  - Administrators will not have a group, but will instead sit in on a different group each week to monitor implementation of the curriculum.
  - Students will remain with the same group/leader during their time at AHS.
- Meeting Schedules and Activities
    - There will be a four-week rotation. Week 1 will consist of family oriented and service oriented activities. Weeks 2 and 3 will be implementing a career exploration curriculum that was created by Kuder (the career assessment that is given to all students in Career Prep), and Week 4 will focus on advising and character education.
    - Lessons will be scripted for group leaders who like structure, but will allow for some freedom for those group leaders who prefer to get a little more creative. This time may also be used to handle the “business” of school-----voting for prom king and queen, filling in Scantron forms, etc.
    - Every TC leader will receive a binder with everything he/she needs for the upcoming year. The leaders will get this binder on the first day of school planning in August.
- Advising
    - TC leaders will embody the role of advisor and act as an extension of the counseling center.
    - Students and TC leaders will monitor academic progress, discuss course options, and seek outside assistance when needed. Counselors will continue to handle credit checks and scheduling.
    - As one student put it during a TC planning meeting, “The TC leaders will sound the alarm when something seems off and offer advice. But if they don’t know what to do, they can recommend a person for the student to go see.”
- Other Program Components
    - A mandatory professional development session will take place during the back-to-school planning week that will lay out everything that leaders need to know.
    - Parents will be educated about the role of the TC and the TC advisor. Advisors will be another point person for parents and will also contact parents if a student’s grades or behavior are slipping. Advisors will be able to provide information about after-school tutoring and who to contact for further assistance.