

2018-19

HCMS Family/Community Engagement Plan

Standard #1

HCMS welcomes all families into the school community.

Houston County Middle School has a Family/Community Engagement Plan advisory committee composed of the following:

Anita Gray: HCMS Principal

Nicole McCollough: HCMS Staff

Tabetha Baggett: Parent/Community Representative

David R. Ross: HCMS staff/Title I Coordinator & Family/Community Engagement Coordinator

Along with this advisory committee, other school committees involve family and community members who add input and participate in decision-making and implementation of strategies designed to strengthen student learning at HCMS.

HCMS faculty and staff meet as a team to review all components of all committee recommendations regarding family/community engagement projects. Each faculty member has an opportunity for input, to ask questions and to ask for clarification, if needed. For example, staff meets to plan, promote and implement the annual HCMS Family/Community Activities Night. All students and family members are invited and encouraged to attend the event that allows for socialization and for parents and students to communicate with HCMS staff to gather vital information for the upcoming school year and to share information with HCMS faculty. Members of the community, like Erin Fire Department, local churches, local civic groups, local health organizations and professional organizations like the Tennessee Education Association participate in the annual event.

All students, faculty and staff at HCMS are involved in the school orientation sessions held at the beginning of each school year. Students and parents are given an overview of procedures and expectations at the school and are allowed to visit classrooms and ask questions of teachers and staff. During orientation, parents and students are also given an in-depth explanation of how Title I funds and programs are administered at HCMS. . After the preliminary overview, which is held in the gym, students and parents then go with the individual homeroom teachers for an overview of expectations and students/parents then get a chance to fill out required paperwork for the school year. Teachers explain to students and parents of the various opportunities for family/community involvement and all are allowed to ask questions. An overview of the school's Title I program is also given at this time.

Students, parents, faculty and staff participate in annual Eighth Grade Appreciation night and week where many student athletes and participants in other activities are publicly recognized. Parents and community members are involved in activities including: "See You at the Pole" sponsored by the HCMS FCA; Parents prepare meals for athletic teams, including the football team and cheerleaders, for many home and away games; the HCMS band boosters assist with various aspects of the program. The Eighth Grade Appreciation nights involving students, parents, staff, and community members are held twice per year. In the fall the appreciation night is held during halftime of the final HCMS football game and in the winter the appreciation night is held between the boys' and girls' basketball games, usually during the final home game of the season.

The HCMS Family/Community Engagement plan involves family members of HCMS students and allows parents/community members to have input in planning for the benefit of students, parents faculty/staff and the community. Family members of HCMS students are a vital and active part of the district's Family/Community Engagement Plan, as well as the HCMS school plan.

This plan has been formally adopted by all staff at HCMS and the HCMS Family/Community Engagement Plan Advisory Committee. Documentation of adoption is located in HCMS Library in the current HCMS Family/Community Engagement Plan file and in Mrs. Gray's office.

Communication with parents include all of the different strategies and measurements as described in the district's plan, to include: HCMS website, emails to parents and community, local and area news media, surveys, handbooks, brochures, Title I briefing during orientation, dissemination apps, to include "Remind," progress reports, report cards, yearbook/picture communication via Lifetouch, local health organization handouts, parent visits during orientation, events, conferences, school visits, etc.

All objectives, strategies, measurements, completion dates and responsible parties for implementation as outlined in the district's plan for this goal are included in the HCMS plan. HCMS staff and administration work to welcome all families into the HCMS school community. Families of our students are active participants in our school. HCMS faculty, staff and administration work to make certain families, stakeholders, community members and collaborative partners all feel welcome and valued and are connected to each other, to school staff, and to what HCMS students are learning and doing in class.

Standard #2

HCMS communicates effectively.

HCMS provides the following technical assistance and support for effective community engagement. HCMS has a working parent/community engagement plan that involves stakeholders and school personnel system-wide. These technical assistance and communication strategies at HCMS include those outlined in the district's Family/Community Engagement plan and in the HCMS School Improvement Plan. Documentation of meetings is included in sign in/sign out logs for each meeting and are kept in Mrs. Gray's office and HCMS Library and are available for inspection. Funds from Title I, General Fund, BEP, etc., are used to provide technical support. Strategies and measurements of this standard include all of those outlined in the district's plan, to include the HCMS School Improvement Plan Committee, (SIP updated annually) Title I Committee, Family/Community Engagement Plan committee collaborate, etc., for comprehensive family/community engagement. All teachers and staff meet to review and approve the SIP, Title I, Family/Community Engagement Plan. These committees share information and plans. (Documentation of these meetings are found in library and principal's office.) HCMS family members and HCMS faculty and staff engage in ongoing, regular, two-way, meaningful communication about student learning. Effective and ongoing two-way communication between family/community and HCMS faculty/staff is a key element of the ongoing operations at HCMS.

Standard #3

HCMS supports student success.

HCMS families and school staff collaborate in the following ways to support students' learning and development both at home and school. The community is informed about the school's progress. Ways in which support of student success at HCMS occurs include all of the measurement, strategies and objectives as outlined in the district's plan. Strategies at for communication from and with HCMS include grade, school and content area meetings to understand, utilize and improve reciprocal communication with parents. Via progress reports, teacher websites, Skyward, Remind, Google Classrooms, etc., teachers explain to parents throughout the school year what students are learning. Examples of good work as measured by state standards and by students' age and grade level are included. Parent/Teacher conferences are held twice per year for collaboration and questions of student progress. All students and parents attend an initial orientation at the beginning of the school year to have expectations and goals relayed in a forum of mutual exchange of ideas and information. HCMS provides parents and stakeholders many after school learning and recreational opportunities to include, sports, band, yearbook, etc. Progress is measured and provided via progress reports every three weeks to parents and report cards every nine weeks; constant and immediate accessibility to Skyward, phone logs to parents, surveys, handbooks provided during orientation and throughout the school year, message applications like Remind, student portfolios, teacher/parent contracts, formative and summative assessment results shared with parents on a regular basis, lesson plans, classroom handouts, websites, media, parent letters. Parents are encouraged to visit HCMS and observe students in social and academic environment. HCMS families and school staff continuously collaborate to support students' learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and HCMS has regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and to increase their skills for effective development.

Standard #4

HCMS speaks up for every child.

HCMS ensures parents are aware of school system and school operations regarding programs, policies and activities. Parents and students receive orientation, to include school rules, expectations and Title I information during orientation sessions that all students and family members attend yearly during initial orientation. Strategies, objectives and measurements for advocating positively for each HCMS student include all of those as outlined in the district's plan. Parents receive school information on a regular basis regarding local, state and federal requirements. HCMS faculty and staff work to support appropriate resources to support families and at risk students and provide information on ways to access helpful resources to include referrals to and collaboration with stakeholders and community and area collaborative partners. Documentation includes websites, progress reports, phone logs, newsletters, media, active collaborative partnerships (example: working with Bethesda Mission, Centerstone, local and state governmental entities and offices, local and area churches, etc.) A Centerstone staff member is assigned to HCMS and is available to students, parents, faculty/staff during each school day. HCMS faculty/staff/administration work to empower all HCMS families to be advocates for their own and other children. We work to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that support their success.

Standard #5

HCMS Shares Power.

HCMS involves family and community involvement in decision making and governance. Strategies, objectives and measurements include all listed in the district's plan, to include: surveys (phone, web-based, paper), websites (including school site), suggestion box, HCMS Needs Assessment, Parental committees, to include Family/Community Engagement, band boosters, cheerleading, athletic teams, Parent/Teacher organization, participation in creating and updating School Improvement Plan, Newsletters, news media outreach to civic organizations. Documentation includes: (meeting dates, agendas, sign in-out sheets.) Notice of school and school system, to include school board governance meetings, are advertised in local media and on the school system's website. HCMS families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families. We work with families, community members, stakeholders and collaborative partners to inform, influence and create policies, practices and programs that positively benefit all students, families, HCMS and the community.

Standard #6

HCMS collaborates with the community.

HCMS is committed to professional development and collaboration with the community while building capacity for family/community engagement. Strategies, objectives and measurements include all of those listed in the district's plan, to include: HCMS teachers participate in meaningful and ongoing professional development. These professional development strategies involve professional and support staff at HCMS and target strategies to actively involve the community. The strategies also provide professional development activities targeting families that are traditionally not actively engaged in their child's education. Strategies include all of those in the district's plan, to include: Professional development activities at the school and system level; grade level discussions, faculty meetings and administration meetings. Those participating in these meetings regularly identify methods of reaching families not typically engaged through traditional means. Documentation of measurements include: in-service organization meetings, in-service professional handbooks, faculty meeting agendas, School Improvement Plan and school system documentation. Also included are progress reports and report cards to students, faculty emails to parents, phone logs to parents, etc. Also documented are identification of families not communicating with the school system; identification of reaching at-risk families, attendance teacher documentation of truancy concerns; HCMS initiative to encourage students to improve (or maintain) good attendance through various documented means, including rewards; grade level strategies for communicating with at-risk families, including rewards; Communication efforts to include, funding for in-service, mileage/home visits, websites, school website, electronic notifications, special school event announcements. HCMS participated in creative involvement in the annual School Attendance Awareness month held annually in September. Regular morning announcements during the month emphasized the importance of regular school attendance. Other documentation of good attendance, by home room, was posted for student, staff and parental view in the lobby of HCMS. Rewards and encouragement were provided to students for their attendance in September and throughout the school year. HCMS is continuing to work and communicate with the school system's many collaborative partners, to include: Highland Rim Economic Corporation; Centerstone; Coordinated School Health; Houston County Health Department; Houston County Agriculture Extension Agency. HCMS strives to expand and strengthen collaborative partnerships and stakeholder partnerships. Families and HCMS faculty/staff collaborate with community members to connect students, families and staff to expand learning opportunities, community service and civic participation.