

Engaging Preschool Families

Nebraska Council of School Administrators
Principals Conference

Lincoln Public Schools
Department of Early Childhood

December 1, 2017

Preschool in LPS

- 65 classrooms in 29 sites
 - 3-5 year olds
 - Inclusive classrooms
- Family Educator
 - Preschool session
 - Work with families
 - Builds a strong partnership with families and conducts regular home visits throughout the year.
 - Schedules and plans for family involvement activities.
 - Supervises the activities of families and community volunteers in the classroom.

Principles of Effective Practices

According to NAEYC:

1. Programs invite families to participate in decision making and goal setting for their child;
2. Teachers and programs engage families in two-way communication;
3. Programs and teachers engage families in ways that are truly reciprocal;
4. Programs provide learning activities for the home and in the community;
5. Programs invite families to participate in program-level decisions and wider advocacy efforts; and
6. Programs implement a comprehensive program-level system of family engagement.

Source: <https://www.naeyc.org/principles-effective-family-engagement>

Policy Statement

- Joint statement from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Education
 - *Family Engagement From the Early Years to the Early Grades, May 5, 2016*
- *“Strong family engagement in early childhood systems and programs is central—not supplemental—to promoting children’s healthy intellectual, physical, and social-emotional development; preparing children for school; and supporting academic achievement in elementary school and beyond.”*
- *“When families and the programs where children learn work together support each other in their respective roles, children have a more positive attitude toward school, stay in school longer, have better attendance, and experience more school success.”*



Family Engagement Opportunities

- Home visits
- Family socializations
- School-wide family events
- Parent-teacher conferences
- Classroom volunteers

Home Visit Expectations

- Initial home visit (completed prior to the first day of PK)
- Four additional home visits throughout the year (or one per quarter)
- Home visits must occur in the family home or in the community (only if requested by the family)

NDE Rule 11

005.02C At least two (2) home visits per year between the parent(s) and the teacher to discuss the child's development and learning. If the family decides to have the visit at **another** location other than the home, it must be conducted at a location determined jointly by the family and teacher. **The child's home shall always be the preferred option.**

Initial Home Visit

- Conducted PRIOR to the first day of preschool
- Home Visit Agenda:
 - Program orientation materials to review with the family (e.g., parent handbook, meal application, transportation information)
 - Forms to complete (e.g., Confidentiality Policy, Family Compact)
 - Discuss schedule for upcoming home visits

INITIAL HOME VISIT

<i>Fill in date and times</i>	Date:	Start time:	End time:
<i>Program Orientation Materials to review with family</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Ride Guide ○ Early Childhood Preschool Handbook ○ Completed Social and Emotional Questionnaire ○ Complete Pedestrian Safety Lesson ○ Free/Reduced Lunch Application <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Online <input type="checkbox"/> Paper 		
<i>Forms to be completed</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Family Compact ○ Confidentiality Statement ○ Approved Adults ○ Student Census Information (provided by school registrar) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Copy in family folder - Return original to Registrar 		
<i>Discuss</i>	<p>Determine regular/next home visit time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day of the week _____ • Time _____ 		



Documentation of Visit



Program Orientation Materials



Forms to Complete



Discuss Schedule for Future Home Visits

Family Compact

- A signed agreement between teachers and families of the responsibilities of each in the partnership.
- Signed by the teacher and the family.
- Reviewed annually with input from the district's Early Childhood Advisory

Family Compact

Home Visit Structure

- Focus on relationships to improve child outcomes at home and school
- Developing family driven goals
 - Focus on family strengths and concerns
 - Focus on district social emotional questionnaire completed by parent/guardian
 - Focus on family routines
- Child and family goals
 - Functional and meaningful
 - Developmentally appropriate
 - Observable

Home Visit Record

Documentation and Monitoring of Home Visits

- Home Visits, Parent Teacher Conferences, and Family Socializations documented on a shared Google Doc
- Monitoring completed throughout the school year (3 scheduled checkpoints)

Home Visits												December 22nd					
Family Educator		School										March 10th					
Child's Name		Home Visit 1		Home Visit 2		Home Visit 3		Home Visit 4		P/T		Family Socialization 1					
Initial Visit		Date		Comments		Date		Comments		Fall Date		Spring Date		Date		Summary	Number of people in attendance:

Parent-Teacher Relationship Benefits

Parents are more willing to communicate with the teacher about goals and concerns for their child in a more comfortable setting.

Students see their teacher and parents interact, students start to open up to the teacher and trust the teacher more in the classroom.

The teacher is able to see the family dynamic and truly get to know all the members of the family. This helps make decisions in the classroom about instruction and targeting negative behaviors.



Role of the Building Principal

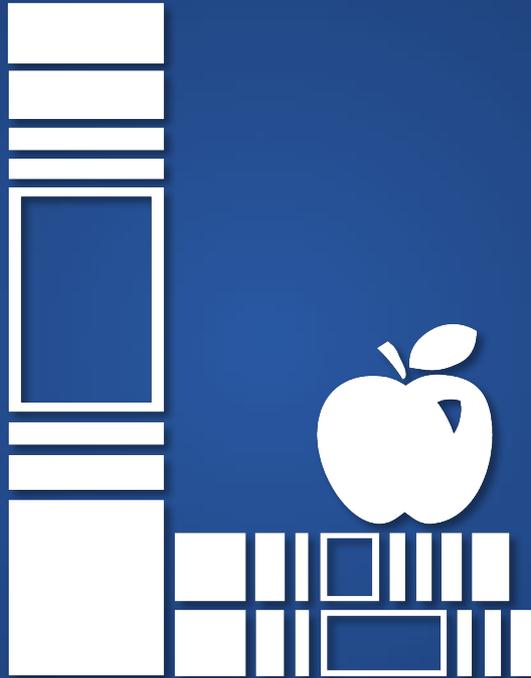
- Assess the welcoming aspects of the school
- Consider the experiences and feelings families bring to school
- Identify the potential barriers for family involvement
 - Problem solve
 - Address
 - Remove
- Partner with the preschool staff
- Greet the families
- Share your stories of community and invite families in
- Encourage and facilitate two-way communication between families and the teacher/school

Role of the Building Principal

- Welcoming and including preschool families in the school community at Holmes Elementary

References

- How do early childhood education programs meet the challenge of engaging families in their child's early learning and development? (2009). National Association for the Education of Young Children. Retrieved at <https://www.naeyc.org/principles-effective-family-engagement>
- Policy Statement on Family Engagement from the Early Years to the Early Grades. (2016). U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved at <https://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/earlylearning/files/policy-statement-on-family-engagement.pdf>
- Kostelnik, M.J. & Grady, M. L. (2009). Getting it right from the start: The principal's guide to early childhood education. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.



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Questions?