



# **Gilmer ISD Parent and Family Engagement Policy 2018-2019**

## **PARENT ENGAGEMENT, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND RIGHTS:**

Education succeeds best when there is a strong partnership between home and school, a partnership that thrives on communication. Parents are partners with teachers, administrators, and the Board and are encouraged to:

1. Encourage your child to put a high priority on education and commit to making the most of the educational opportunities provided.
2. Attend Board meetings to learn more about District operations, including the procedure for addressing the board when appropriate. Regular board meetings are scheduled for the third Monday of each month at the Central Office located on Trinity Street.
3. Review the information in the Student Handbook, including the attached Student Code of Conduct, with your child, and sign and return the acknowledgement form(s). Parents with questions are encouraged to contact the school office.
4. Become familiar with all of your child's school activities and with the academic programs offered in the district. Discuss with the principal any questions, such as concerns about placement, assignment, or early graduation, and the options available to your child. Monitor your child's academic progress and contact teachers as needed.
5. Exercise your right to review teaching materials, textbooks, and other aids, and to examine tests that have been administered to your child.
6. Review your child's student records when needed. You may review attendance records, test scores, grades, disciplinary records, counseling records, psychological records, applications for admission, health and immunization information, teacher and counselor evaluations, reports of behavioral patterns, and state assessment administered to your child.
7. If an instructional activity in which your child is scheduled to participate interferes with your religious or moral beliefs, you may temporarily remove your child from the classroom. The removal cannot be for the purpose of avoiding a test and may not extend an entire semester. If your child is removed, your child must satisfy grade-level and graduation requirements as determined by the school and by TEA.
8. Become a school volunteer. For further information, contact the campus of your student.

9. Participate in campus parent organizations. For further information, contact the school office.
10. Any student who becomes a victim of a violent criminal offense while on the grounds of a campus, the parent is entitled to transfer their child to a safe campus under Legal/Local Policy FDD.

### **Statement of Purpose**

Gilmer ISD is committed to providing a quality education for every child in our district. To this end, we desire to establish partnerships with parents and the community.

We believe that everyone gains if the school and home work together to promote high achievement by our children. Neither segment can do this task alone. Parents play an extremely important role as a child's first teacher. Their support for their children and the school is vital to their children's success.

We offer an integrated curriculum that is taught by an innovative staff and supported by engaged parents and community members. All students are expected to work toward mastering the objectives established by the state curriculum (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills). We recognize that some students will need extra assistance to achieve their full potential. A Title I Schools receive federal assistance to supplement and expand the required curriculum and services as mandated by the Texas Education Agency. Any student on a Title I campus is eligible for this extra assistance if he/she meets the selection criteria.

This parental engagement policy is developed to support our partnership with our parents. This policy represents input from parents and is available to all parents of our children.

### **Parent and Community Input in Policy Development**

Our Parent Advisory Council (PAC) is comprised of parents, community members and staff members. They have the responsibility of annually reviewing and revising this policy. Any changes are shared with the District Team to receive input from this group. The District Team consists of parents, community and business representatives, teachers and administrators. They meet at least three times each year.

The district actively recruits volunteers for each of these committees through various forms of publicity. Committee selections provide a diverse group of stakeholders that is representative of the community.

Meetings are held at times and locations convenient to all members. If a translator is needed, one will be provided when possible. A copy of the District Parent Involvement policy is available on the district's website.

### **Parent Engagement Activities to Improve Achievement and School Performance**

One of the functions of the PAC and District Team will be to identify means for the district to provide assistance and support for the campuses to create effective parent engagement. The administration will assist schools in understanding the requirements of Title I, Part A and in planning for effective programs to assist parents in improving academic achievement.

District assistance may also consist of the distribution of informational handouts which explain state academic standards, assessments and curriculum. The district will promote and encourage staff development on establishing effective relationships with parents as a means to increase academic achievement.

## **Building Capacities for Strong Parent Engagement**

The district will support a variety of parental engagement strategies as it strives to develop and maintain an optimum learning environment.

### **A. Annual Parent Meeting**

An annual meeting is held to review Title I guidelines and services provided by the district. Copies of the current Parent Engagement Policy are available at the meeting. Parents are encouraged to become involved in revising and updating the policy as necessary, and parent volunteers are invited to become members of the PAC and the District and Campus Teams. The meeting is held at a convenient time and location. Notice of the meeting is published in the local newspaper and is posted on the district's website. If necessary, a translator will be available.

### **B. Home/School Compact**

In accordance with Title I regulations, each campus has developed a home/school compact which is reviewed annually. The compacts explain how students, parents and staff share responsibility for student performance and success, and will enable them to do so. Each Campus Team is responsible for reviewing and providing revisions as needed. All parents are given a copy of the compacts and an annual Title I meeting is held on each campus to discuss the contents at the beginning of the year. Teachers, parents and students are encouraged to discuss the contents of the compact. They are also encouraged to sign that they have received a copy of the compact.

### **C. Staff/Parent Communication**

Parents are informed of school activities through a variety of different means of communication throughout the school year. Newsletters, conferences, notices on the district's website, articles in the local newspaper, personal contacts and written notices are used to establish and maintain an open line of communication. Staff development includes strategies to promote effective parent engagement activities and to foster two-way communication with parents and the school.

### **D. Parent Training**

Each year the district provides parents opportunities for training. Topics covered in the training sessions are based on interest expressed by parents. Surveys are sent home each year so that parents can provide input into topics that are of interest to them.

### **E. Evaluation**

A meeting is held near the end of the school year where parents are encouraged to review and evaluate all aspects of the parent engagement policy on each campus. These suggestions are collected and presented to the PAC to be incorporated into the policy. Other information made available are results of the annual parent survey, student survey and any other pertinent findings. The PAC makes revisions to the policy as needed.

## **District Initiated Communication and Meetings**

1. Campuses notify parents of their children's eligibility for special programs and educational services.
2. Gilmer ISD News on the district webpage is updated weekly, the Superintendent's Corner on Facebook, and the GISD newsletter is published quarterly.
3. Progress reports are sent to parents during the 4<sup>th</sup> six weeks of each grading period.
4. Report cards are issued at the end of each nine weeks grading period for grades PK-6 and each six weeks grading period for grades 7-12.
5. Access to student grades and attendance through the use of the web-based program accessible through the district website.
6. Teachers email address listed on the school website under "Staff Directory."
7. Teachers are available for conferences with parents. These may be scheduled by calling the office of the appropriate school.

8. At the first meeting of the Gilmer Parent Teacher Association at the Elementary campus, parents will be provided an opportunity to ask questions about any of the district's programs for its students.
9. Notices are also posted on the district's website [www.gilmerisd.org](http://www.gilmerisd.org).
10. Other communications consist of notices, mailings, phone calls, and meetings.

## **Opportunities for Engagement**

1. A volunteer program has been established at Gilmer ISD. Persons interested in serving as volunteers should contact Jeff Hamilton at 903-841-7400 ext. 1408.

2. Membership in Advisory Councils/Committees

- \*Parent Advisory Council (PAC)
- \*Senior Parents
- \*Local Health Committee: SHAC
- \*District and Campus Teams
- \*LPAC (if their own children are currently in the program)

Persons interested in serving on one of these groups should contact a building principal or the Administration Building. Parents will have an opportunity to be involved in the development of policies and practices through activities such as participation on one of the councils/committees, teams, meetings and/or suggestions emailed to the parent Involvement Coordinator. The PAC has the responsibility of evaluating the effectiveness of the district parent involvement policy. The District Team evaluates the effectiveness of federal and other programs. Meetings are held periodically to accommodate and encourage greater parent involvement. A meeting is held near the end of the school year to allow parents to provide input concerning the effectiveness of the Title Programs and to plan for them for the following year.

3. Participation in Booster/Parent Organizations such as:

- \* AFJROTC Booster Club
- \* Athletic Booster Club
- \* Band Booster Club
- \* Choir Booster Club
- \* FFA Alumni Association
- \* GHS Drill Team Booster Club
- \* Parent/Teacher Organizations

Membership is open to anyone interested in any of these organizations. Information may be obtained by contacting the appropriate school office.

4. Participation in annual parent surveys conducted by the district.

5. Participation in Family and Community Education courses.

## **NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER FERPA FOR GILMER ISD:**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, provides parents and students over 18 years of age (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the student’s education records. They are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student’s education records within 45 days of the day Gilmer ISD receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or student of the time and place the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate or misleading. Parents or students may ask Gilmer ISD to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. Parents should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If Gilmer ISD decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or the student, Gilmer ISD will notify the parent or student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or student when notified of the rights of a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interest. A school official is a person employed by Gilmer ISD as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member, including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel; a person serving on the school board; a person or company with whom Gilmer ISD has contracted to perform a special task, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, Gilmer ISD discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. [Note: FERPA requires a school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the students of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records in request.]
4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failure by the District to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA are:

**Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
600 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-4605**

**Gilmer ISD School-Parent-Student Compact  
2018--2019**

**Student Pledge**

1. I pledge to come to school on time every-day unless I am ill.
2. I pledge to enter my school and classroom ready to perform the tasks that my teacher asks of me.
3. I pledge to read outside of school time;
4. I pledge to complete all the homework by making sure I understand the assignment before I leave school.
5. I pledge to encourage my parent/guardian to attend and support school functions.
6. I pledge to take responsibility for my own learning and actions.
7. I pledge to spend time with my family discussing my future goals.
8. I pledge to believe that learning is a life-long process that takes place at school and home.

Student

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Pledge**

1. I pledge to make sure my child attends school and is on time each day unless he/she is ill.
2. I pledge to communicate to my child that I expect him / her to give others the same respect he/she expects from them.
3. I pledge to ensure that my child has completed his homework every day.
4. I pledge to spend time listening to and talking with my child on a one-to-one basis about their day.
5. I pledge to be involved in my child's school by attending events and parent -teacher conferences to learn what the school is trying to do for my child.
6. I pledge to encourage my child to read something every day.
7. I pledge to praise my child often.
8. I pledge to model the belief that learning is a life-long process that takes place at school and home.

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**School Pledge**

1. We pledge to do all that we can to see that your child has a positive school experience each day.
2. We pledge to notify you of all occurrences that we believe may have contributed to any negative school experience for your child.
3. We pledge to keep parents/guardians informed of student progress on a regular basis by sending home 3 week progress reports, sending home report cards every 9 weeks for grades PK-6 and every 6 weeks for grades 7-12 and sending home the results of State assessments annually.
4. We pledge to provide translations of written notifications and interpreters at parent conferences, meetings and training sessions for non-English-speaking parents/guardians as much as possible.
5. We pledge to be available to meet with parents/guardians and students when necessary by providing parents with teacher conference periods at the beginning of school, scheduling at least one Open House event annually, and posting the GISD contact information on the school's website.
6. We pledge to model the belief that learning is a life-long process that takes place at school and home.
7. We pledge to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables children to demonstrate mastery on all required State assessments by following the State mandated curriculum; responding to student academic difficulties in a timely, effective manner; hiring only highly-qualified personnel; and providing on-going professional development to instructional personnel.
8. We pledge to do all we can to have parents realize that we have an "open door" policy, and that you are always welcome at Gilmer Schools!

Staff Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

