

## Aventura Community School Family Engagement Policy SY24.25

Plan revised 06/25/2024

### Parent and Family Engagement

Parent and community engagement is a central focus of our school vision. Aventura Community School (ACS) aims to be a school with the feeling of a second home, or a second family, for our school community. We commit to honoring all parent voices, intentionally structuring our learning activities to address challenges and needs of our local community, and actively engaging community-based organizations in the work of the school each year.

### Connections 360 Approach:

Our approach to parent and community engagement at ACS is guided by the Connections 360 program, a framework drawn from research-supported best practices for establishing strong community-school partnerships.\*

This program comprises the following six goals:

1. ACS fosters a welcoming, cooperative, and mutually supportive climate for all families.
2. ACS supports the academic interests and addresses the academic needs of students.
3. ACS meets the broad array of social and health needs of families.
4. ACS establishes diverse and flexible volunteer opportunities for parents and community members.
5. ACS communicates with parents regularly, efficiently, and in a variety of ways
6. ACS establishes formal events and activities designed to celebrate family-school partnerships.

\*See detailed explanation of these goals on the last page of this document.

Governance Roles: The governing board of ACS includes members representing community organizations that support and inform the mission and vision of ACS, as well as parent representation to ensure the interests of families are prioritized in board-level governance decisions. A school-based Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) brings together school staff and families in making important decisions about school programs, resource allocation, and community events, and also serves to share crucial information with the school community. We anticipate that PTO participation may disproportionately reflect more advantaged demographic groups, and thus will engage in targeted outreach to engage diverse parent voices in the PTO generally and in PTO leadership roles. To further facilitate participation we will hold meetings at a variety of times and provide childcare, and have bilingual school staff in attendance at all meetings in order to ensure equitable communication opportunities.

### Communication:

It is our goal to foster meaningful communication with parents and caregivers to ensure family participation and engagement to enhance their student academic achievement and overall wellbeing.

We will provide a range of communication channels (all-school emails, classroom newsletters, parent teacher conferences, progress reports, quarterly report cards, social media, virtual meetings and in person events). The majority of our staff is bilingual (English, Spanish) and we can provide accommodations for families with other languages as needed.

### Parent Participation

We encourage and expect all parents and caregivers to engage as partners in their child's education and provide a range of opportunities for parents to support the learning program at ACS.

These include:

- Teach guest lessons related to curricular projects
- Tutor or help in classrooms
- Support students in completing homework and extending learning activities at home
- Lead a committee or participate in on our PTO
- Lead an afterschool club
- Facilitate or support parent education nights
- Facilitate or support community events
- Chaperone field trips or service projects
- Care for the school garden
- Complete at-home or at-school materials preparation requested by teachers (copying, cutting, binding books, etc.)
- Participate in activities that promote bilingualism like conversation clubs
- Participate in beautification efforts for our school grounds
- Keep open lines of communication with teachers and staff through different media channels (in person meetings, talking points, email, social media)
- Support ACS student recruitment efforts by recommending the school, preparing mailers, canvassing, or phone banking

Back-to-School Night serves as an opportunity for classroom teachers to talk with parents to identify ways that each family can best support the learning program at ACS over the course of the year. In addition, each family meets with their child's classroom teacher (lower school) or mentor teacher (upper school) before the start of the school year, which is the ideal time to explore the Student Handbook together and identify opportunities for collaboration.

### We value your feedback.

Aventura will survey families (digitally/ paper) each Spring to determine the need for any additions, changes or amendments to this policy for the following school year. We will host a meeting before the end of school to debrief and draft our action plan. See school calendar for more details.

### We are a Community School!

It is important that our students and families have access to the tools and resources that will help them be successful. Our student support team and PTO (Parent Teacher Organization) will work together to coordinate the best use of our resources and provide opportunities for parent training (Language, Nutrition, Parenting Classes). They will also help coordinate our academic and social events, as well as other learning opportunities such as enrichment clubs, camps, etc. We always look for ways to partner with organizations in our community.

What is next?

- Stay connected by adding us on social media FB/IG @aventuranashville
- Participate or support our PTO committees (information attached)
- Join our volunteer list by emailing [daguilar@aventuranashville.org](mailto:daguilar@aventuranashville.org)
- Attend our school events (Event calendar will be shared the first week of school)
- Connect us with community organizations/programs to enhance our students educational experience

Who can I contact if I have questions or would like to know how to get involved?

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### Community Engagement Programs

The six overarching goals of the Connections 360 framework guide parent engagement at ACS in a manner that supports our mission and vision and the academic program of the school. Table 36 details specific school structures and programs aligned with each goal.

1. ACS fosters a welcoming, cooperative, and mutually supportive climate for all families.
  - Parent engagement opportunities and expectations are clearly shared at the beginning of each school year at Back-to-School night and first semester conferences.
  - ACS PTO crafts annual family-school partnership statement and displays the statement centrally in the school.
  - ACS has a designated parent space for meetings, gatherings, and learning activities.
2. ACS supports the academic interests and addresses the academic needs of students.
  - ACS provides home learning activities that promote family learning and support the educative role of parents by keeping homework tasks consistent each week.

During Back to School Night and first semester conference teachers guide parents in supporting these tasks, such as word sorts, daily reading, or math facts practice.

- ACS offers quarterly learning opportunities for families at school targeting academic skills including math games or creative writing.
  - Parents are invited to volunteer to tutor and help in classrooms as schedules allow.
- ACS provides a parent-friendly breakdown of learning standards on report cards.
3. ACS meets the broad array of social and health needs of families
    - The capacity of special area staff matches the needs of the school (school counselor, school nurse, social worker, special education teachers, EL certified teachers)
    - ACS regularly collaborates with community organizations to meet the needs of the school, including educational activities for students and collaboration on community-based learning and service projects.
    - ACS has instructional support roles that conduct home visits and provide referrals to social agencies as needed.
  4. ACS established diverse and flexible volunteer opportunities for parents and community members.
    - ACS offers volunteer opportunities at varied times including before school, during school, after school, and during school breaks.
    - ACS offers volunteer opportunities in varied places including classrooms, library, playground and garden, main office, or hallways.
    - ACS offers volunteer opportunities in varied areas including reading, art, greeting, coaching, chaperoning, landscaping, cooking, or school committees.
  5. ACS communicates with parents regularly, efficiently, and in a variety of ways
    - Written communication is translated to reflect languages spoken in families' homes.
    - School communication reflects a variety of modes such as written notes, phone calls, websites, and social media.