COOPER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Parent Involvement Plan

2012-2013

Standard I: Communication

Communication between home and school is regular, two-way, and meaningful.

To encourage communication with parents, the school will:

1. Prepare parent informational packets appropriate for elementary school students describing:
   A. The school’s parental involvement program;
   B. The recommended role of the parent, student, teacher, and school;
   C. Ways for parents to become involved in the school and his or her child’s education;
   D. Activities planned throughout the school year to encourage parental involvement;
   E. A system to allow the parents and teachers to communicate in a regular, two-way, meaningful manner with the child’s teacher and the school principal.

Parent Information Packets

- In order to encourage parents to become involved as partners with the school in their child’s education, a brochure describing Cooper Elementary’s Parent Involvement Program and the various ways parents can volunteer in the school will be designed and distributed to parents in
Cooper Elementary’s parent information packets. The brochure also lists parent involvement opportunities planned during the 2012-2013 school year, and includes the school’s methods of communicating with parents.

- The recommended role of the parent, teacher and student will also be included in the parent information packet. The student handbook, (student agenda planner) which includes the recommended role of the parent, student, teacher, and school, also includes a copy the recommended roles of the parents, teachers and students. Agenda planners are distributed to each student and parents must sign that they have read the portions that apply to them.

- A letter from the PTO president will include an invitation for parents to become involved in their child’s school by joining PTO.

- Important dates of interest for the upcoming year will be included in the school’s weekly newsletter as well as Cooper’s website.

- Parenting tips will be included in the parent information packet, as well as the monthly school newsletter and Tuesday Folders.

**TWO-WAY MEANINGFUL COMMUNICATION**

- In order to establish a routine method for parents to review their children’s work on a regular basis, weekly communication folders, known as Tuesday folders, will be sent home to parents containing student work for parental comment and review along with other school information.
• Grades will be accessible for parents to view as they are posted by classroom teachers via the school’s website. Parents will be given the steps they need to look up their student’s grades.

• Cooper Elementary will publish a weekly newsletter to keep parents informed of upcoming events and other school issues. Each week, the Parent Involvement Coordinator will feature an article of interest to parents, such as parenting tips, information about upcoming parenting classes and workshops, and/or periodically highlight a book from the lending library of the Parent Involvement Center. This information will also be available on the school website for parents who have access to electronic communications. Parents who do not have access to e-mail and the WWW will be invited to use the computer in the Parent Involvement Center, which is designated for parent use. Teachers/counselors will train parents in the use of electronic communications, as needed.

• Each teacher/team will publish a weekly newsletter which will be distributed via Tuesday folders.

• Each teacher/team will communicate via e-mail regarding homework assignments as needed, and will e-mail individual parents when there are concerns. Parents are encouraged to communicate with teachers on a continuing basis through e-mail.

• Teachers will communicate with parents regularly through phone calls, e-mails, and notes in agenda planners and Tuesday Folders.
2. To encourage communication with parents, the school shall schedule no less than two (2) parent-teacher conferences per school year.

- Cooper Elementary School will host two parent-teacher conferences during the school year which will accommodate the varied schedules of adults and language barriers. Parents will be encouraged to share their child’s strengths and learning preferences and emphasize that parent-teacher partnerships will help assure their child’s future career goals.

- During the fall teacher conferences, Academic Improvement Plans and IRI’s will be developed by parents and teachers for those students who did not score at the proficient level on their prior Benchmark Exam.

- Cooper Elementary’s goal is to have 100% parent contact during parent-teacher conferences. Every effort will be made to reschedule and follow-up as needed with parents. Home visits or phone conferences will be made by the teacher, counselor, and/or administrator if a parent is unable to come to school to attend a conference.
3. The school may plan and engage in other activities determined to be beneficial to encourage communication with parents.

- Every staff member’s e-mail address can be accessed through the district’s web-site, which the principal or parent involvement coordinator will advertise at least once in the weekly school newsletter.

- In order to effectively communicate with more parents, Bentonville Schools has established a “Welcome Center” for the parents of ESL students. The center is housed on the LJHS campus, but will be available to all Bentonville Public School parents.
Standard II: Parenting

Parenting skills are promoted and supported.

To promote student learning, schools will:

1. Purchase parenting books, magazines, and other informative material regarding responsible parenting through the school library, advertise current selections, and give parents an opportunity to borrow the materials for review.
   - A Parent Involvement Center has been established for parents and families and will include a lending library that provides information to parents on a wide variety of parent/family information and support materials including family information packets, parenting videos, brochures, and books that focus on parenting the elementary school-aged child.
   - Reading selections from the Parent Involvement Center Library will be periodically highlighted in the weekly school newsletter to increase parent awareness of the available resources.
   - Parenting books, parenting magazines, and parenting videos will be available in the Cooper Library for check-out.
   - Educational materials and games will be available in the Parent Involvement Center on the first floor to assist parents in working with their children. All materials are available for check-out.
   - Parenting Information Sites and a computer are also located in the Parent Involvement Center for parent use.
2. Create parent centers.

- Educational materials and games will be available in the Parent Involvement Center on the first floor to assist parents in working with their children. All materials are available for check-out.
- Parenting Information Sites and a computer are also located in the Parent Involvement Center for parent use.
- A television, VCR, and DVD player are available for parents to view materials in the Parent Involvement Center.
- The Parent Involvement Center will be a resource center to support parents and families with training through workshops such as “Common Sense Parenting and Homes of Honor”.
- A “School & Community Resource Guide” of nonprofit and private community referral sources for families seeking resources outside of the school and families in crisis will be disseminated as needed.

3. Plan and engage in other activities determined by the school to be beneficial to promoting and supporting responsible parenting.

- Community parenting class notifications and schedules will be made available to parents and will be announced in weekly school newsletters, and/or on the school’s web-site on the counselor’s page.
Standard III: Student Learning

Parents play an integral role in assisting student learning.

To help parents in assisting students, the school shall:

1. Schedule regular “Parent Involvement Meetings” in the evening where parents are given a report on the state of the school and an overview of:

   a. What students will be learning;
   b. How students will be assessed;
   c. What parents should expect for their child’s education;
   d. How parents can assist and make a difference in his/her child’s education;

   • School’s agenda planners will contain information regarding homework policies and consequences of not turning in homework. In addition, the agenda planners will provide information regarding how parents can foster learning at home, give appropriate assistance, monitor homework, and give feedback to teachers.

   • Teachers will regularly assign interactive homework that will require students to discuss and interact with their parents about what they are learning in class.

   • Involve parents in the celebration of student achievement, awards assemblies which will be held each semester where students will be recognized for academic excellence, perfect attendance, and citizenship.

   • Staff development for teachers during the school year will focus on successful approaches to engaging parents in their child’s education along with ways to deal with parents effectively.
Standard IV: Volunteering

Parents are welcome in the school, and their support and assistance are sought.

To welcome parents in the school, the school shall:

1. Not have any school policies or procedures that would discourage a parent from visiting the school, specifically including:
   a. Policies requiring parents to pick-up his/her child outside the school building each day; and
   b. Policies prohibiting the parents from visiting a child’s classrooms during school events;

2. PTO & the Parent Involvement Coordinator will publish a volunteer resource book, listing the interests and availability of volunteers for school staff members’ use, and specifically include the following:
   a. The Parent Involvement Coordinator will survey parents at the beginning of the year regarding their interests, talents and availability. The P.T.O. Volunteer Coordinator & Parent Involvement Coordinator will publish a volunteer resource book from the survey results and PTO volunteer forms and match parents’ interest to the needs within the school. Parents who are unable to volunteer within the building will be given options for helping in other ways at home. A copy of the parent volunteer resource book will be disseminated to teachers.
   b. Determine how frequently a volunteer would like to participate, including the option of just one (1) time per year;
      i) Include options for those who are available to help at home;
      ii) Use the resource book to help match school needs with volunteer
interests;

iii) Training will be provided for parent volunteers regarding school protocol, routines and procedures, volunteer expectations and equipment usage.

- Statements attesting to Cooper Elementary’s commitment to parental involvement will be published in the school newsletters and other written material to be distributed to all parents regularly throughout the school year.

- Volunteer sign-in area and visitor badges are in the main office and are readily accessible to parents entering the building.

- To provide recognition and reward to parent volunteers, the school will have a Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon at the end of the year. Parents will also be recognized in awards assemblies and in the school newsletter.
Standard V: School Decision Making and Advocacy

Recognize and encourage parents as full participants in the decisions that affect his or her child and family.

1. Publish the school’s process for resolving parental concerns, including how to define the problem, whom to approach first, and how to develop solutions.
   - In order for parents to feel that the administration is genuinely interested in responding to their concerns, the procedure to be follow for resolving parental concerns will be addressed in a letter to parents sent home in Tuesday folders, and also periodically highlighted in the school newsletter.

2. Sponsor seminars to inform the parents of high school students about how to be involved in the decisions affecting course selection, career planning and post-secondary opportunities.
   - Parents of 4th graders will be informed and involved in the transition to middle school. This includes options in class selections and an informational meeting at the middle school in late spring.

3. Engage in other activities that the school determines will encourage parents to participate as full partners in the decisions that affect his/her family.
   - Parents at Cooper Elementary will be surveyed for their ideas and input on various school decisions.

Standard VI: Collaborating with the Community
Recognize that the community resources strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning. To take advantage of community resources the school shall:

1. **Contact parents and alumni of Cooper Elementary to serve on the Parent Advisory Committee to provide advice and guidance for school improvement.**

   - The Parent Involvement Coordinator will form a parent/alumni advisory committee to meet at least twice during the school year to seek ideas and suggestions for school and parent involvement improvement.

2. **Engage in other activities that the school determines will strengthen ties to the community.**

   - Cooper Elementary has developed a partnership with civic, church, workforce, & other organizations in the Bella Vista Community. Many volunteers donate time to help teachers and staff with many different duties during the school day.

   - The Bronco Buddy Program is in place and utilizes community volunteers to be a buddy to children who need additional support or have been identified as “at-risk.”

3. **Engage in other activities that the school determines will use community.**

   - Parents and community members will be utilized during Career Days to speak to students about their jobs, the importance of education, and the skills necessary to succeed in today’s job market.

   - Kiwanis Club sponsors the character program, “Terrific Kids” at Cooper Elementary. Parents are invited to attend the Friday mornings ROUND-UP to celebrate their child’s award.
• ROUND-UP provides an opportunity to invite many community guests, parents, and organizations to celebrate special holidays, events, or perform special programs.