

Summary of Bridgeport Board of Education's Parent & Family Engagement Policy

On August 13, 2012, the BOE approved a Parent & Family Engagement Policy that was written by a group of nine Bridgeport Public School parents. An English and Spanish version of the policy on the Bridgeport Public School's website: <http://www.bridgeportedu.com/procedures/procedures.html>. We strongly encourage you to take the time to read it.

When parents and families play a positive role in children's education, children do better in school. As stated in this policy "The BOE defines parents and families as mothers, fathers, step parents, foster parents, guardians, grandparents, relatives, and primary and secondary caregivers." "Research tells us that parent and family engagement makes a big difference in improving students' academic and achievement and personal growth." By engaging parents continuously from the time their child enters elementary school through middle school and throughout high school "leads to significant long term benefits such as better school attendance, reduced dropout rates, decreased delinquency and lower pregnancy rates."

"Parents are their children's first and most important teachers." This Policy is designed to be a seven step-by-step plan to create an actively engaged parent community in our schools which will lead to student achievement.

1. The District creates a **WELCOMING SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT** for parents,
2. **CLEAR EXPECTATIONS** of academic and behavior for the District, schools, teachers, and parents are provided.
3. **ROBUST COMMUNICATION** is created through parent surveys, language services, and methods of communication.
4. **EFFECTIVE ACCESS** requires the District to communicate the resources available to parents and provide parents with the knowledge and skills to access these resources which are PowerSchool, a parent engagement calendar and tracker system, Superintendent Forum, Parent Advisory Councils (PACs), School Governance Councils.
5. **PARENT SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE** addresses the need for parents to be trained with the skills and knowledge to participate in a more meaningful level in their children's education. This is done through the services of the Parent Center (Pembroke St. at Boston Ave.), Parent Problem Solving Groups, and the Family Resource Centers.
6. **FAMILY-TO-SCHOOL RELATIONSHIPS** strongly encourages all families to participate in at least ten (10) hours of school and/or district related activities (suggestions are listed in the Policy). The Home School Coordinator is the liaison between the school and parents and with the help of the PAC president helps parents find ways to volunteer at school, and help them get skill training and knowledge, helps implement this Policy.
7. **REPORTING** by the Superintendent or his designee to the BOE twice yearly the status of the implementation of this Policy and the level of parent engagement in the District.

If you need help accessing the Policy online or have questions or want to learn how you can get more engaged at your child's school, please contact your school's Home School Coordinator or PAC President through the school's office, or the Parent Center at 203.275.1751.