

Family and Parent Engagement Policy 2024 - 2025

Revised July 31, 2024



ATLANTA AREA SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

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Our mission at the Atlanta Area School for the Deaf is to provide a language-rich student-centered learning environment through American Sign Language and English for the purpose of empowering our students to live independent, fulfilling lives and to become productive, contributing members of society.

AASD's Family Engagement Policy

What is it?

This Family Engagement Policy outlines opportunities for families to support student learning and social-emotional health. AASD values the contributions and involvement of family members and believes meaningful partnerships with families are key.

How is it revised?

In the 2024 Policy Review meetings, parent surveys, and School-Parent Council meetings, stakeholders looked closely and suggested revisions to last year's policy which were then considered by school staff as they created this year's Family Engagement Policy.

Who is it for?

All AASD families are invited to participate fully in the opportunities described in this plan. AASD provides full access for families with limited English, parents, or guardians with disabilities, and those of migratory children.

Where is it available?

It is distributed to all students at the start of the school year. Copies are available in our Family Resource Room and on our website, www.aasdweb.com.

What is Title 1?

Atlanta Area School for the Deaf is a Title I school as identified by the, **Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015** (ESSA). Title I support state and local school reform efforts tied to challenging state academic standards to reinforce and enhance efforts to improve teaching and learning for students.

Title I program must be based on effective means of improving student achievement and include strategies to support family engagement. All Title I schools must jointly develop with all parents, a written Family and Parent Engagement Policy.

Families as Partners

The Atlanta Area School for the Deaf believes in the participation of parents and guardians in regular two-way, meaningful communication to ensure that

- Parents play a crucial role in assisting their child's learning at home.
- Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school.
- Parents are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child.

AASD 2024-2025 SCHOOL THEME:

LEARN ~ GROW ~ THRIVE

As we incorporate our school motto *“Excellence Everyday...That’s the Panther Way!”* we will strive to build students’ deep-rooted language base in ASL. A rich language base is essential to reading and literacy, and leads to understanding in all academic areas.

Research shows that children’s reading ability is linked to their foundational language skills. This means that students’ reading level cannot exceed their foundational language level. For this reason, we work to increase the American Sign Language level of every student and work closely with families to nurture this language at home.

AASD SCHOOL GOALS FOR 2024 – 2025

- Students will increase their American Sign Language (ASL) expressive skills by a minimum of half of one level growth as measured by the American Sign Language – Expressive Skill Test (ASL-EST) during the 2024-2025 school year.
- Students will increase their independent reading level by a minimum of half of one year growth.

Family Input

All family perspectives and viewpoints matter. We offer private and group meetings, live and virtually, at various days and times to accommodate family schedules. Meetings are interpreted in ASL, Spanish or other home languages. Individual and group conversations offering us feedback are always welcome.

Family Resource Room

Just off the front lobby at AASD is our Family Resource Room offering space to relax, work, meet with staff and/or find resources families may need.

Parent and Family Engagement Standards

The National PTA Standards for Family-School Partnerships guide our family engagement.

- Welcoming All Families
- Communicating Effectively
- Supporting Student Success
- Speaking Up for Every Child
- Sharing Power
- Collaborating with Community

AASD partners with families by:

Providing professional learning and coaching opportunities for staff to build skills as they work with families to support children's learning.

Providing academic support materials, in a language families can understand, to help families work with their child to improve their child's achievement. These include digital and printed materials that support language, reading, math, and social emotional health.

Sharing information in English and Spanish with all families in a timely fashion, regarding school events and activities, through our website, email, phone calls and social media.

Collaborating with Babies Can't Wait (BCW) and Georgia PINES and offering specialized toddler and pre-school programs, including ASL classes and family support groups, to help prepare families and children for kindergarten and improve school transition.

Working with all parents and families to develop a working knowledge of American Sign Language, offering regular classes, on-line resources, and support materials.

Building capacity in families to assure confidence and readiness regarding their child's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Engaging families of high school students in transition to college and/or career programs through partnership building with the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency.

Events and Family Learning

- Each department – Elementary, middle, and high school will host events specific to families during the school year.
- The Family Engagement Team will also offer virtual family empowerment sessions on assorted topics.
- We welcome your input on topics and guest speakers.

Annual Title 1 Meeting

Each year AASD hosts an Annual Title 1 Parent and Family meeting. A video version is also sent to all families and housed on the school website. The meeting explains AASD's Title 1 program, the nature of Title 1 programs, parental requirements, our Family Engagement Policy, the School-Parent Compact and our schoolwide plans for the new school year. The meeting also shares our school curriculums, state and local assessments measuring student growth, and AASD's performance profile, showing our school's progress toward meeting the learning goals of the Georgia Department of Education. Families will be notified about this meeting in advance in a variety of ways. Interpretation in ASL and Spanish is provided.

School – Parent Compacts

As part of this plan, AASD and our families develop a department-based **School-Parent Compact**, which is an agreement that specifically explains **how** parents and teachers will work together to ensure students reach grade-level standards.

Compacts are updated annually based on feedback from parents, students and teachers during our Annual Policy Review, Spring School Council Meeting, and family school climate surveys. Families receive revised Compacts each year, which are reviewed at parent-teacher meetings in the fall.

AASD, A Unique Learning Community

All AASD families are part of our special learning community.

We offer a rich bilingual education in both American Sign Language and English where experienced Deaf professionals, teachers of the deaf, coaches and administrators serve as active daily role and language models for our students.

Family participation in all IEPs, increased home use of American Sign Language, regular reading support, and intentional life skills training at home, are central to the achievement of our mission.

Let us know how we can support you this year!

Contact Us

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