

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## SECTION 6—SCHOOL, HOME, AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS

6.1—COMMUNICATION GOALS/ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE_____	1-2
6.2- RELATIONS WITH SCHOOL SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS_____	3
6.3- PUBLIC GIFTS AND DONATIONS TO THE SCHOOLS_____	4
6.4- VOLUNTEERS/WATCHDOG DADS_____	5-8
6.5- VISITORS TO THE SCHOOLS_____	9
6.6- FUNDRAISING _____	10-11
6.7—COMPLAINTS _____	12-13
6.7.1- COMPLAINT RESOLUTION PROCESS_____	14-18
6.7.2-HEARING and REVIEW PROCEDURES_____	19-21
6.8- DISTRIBUTION OF PRINTED MATERIALS_____	22
6.9—MEDIA RELATIONS AND NEWS RELEASES _____	23
6.9.1- REQUEST FOR RECORDS/INFORMATION_____	24
6.10—SEX OFFENDERS ON CAMPUS (MEGAN’S LAW) _____	25-26
6.11—PARENT, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT - DISTRICT _____	27-37
6.12—PARENT, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT - SCHOOL _____	38-39

**SCHOOL, HOME, AND COMMUNITY  
RELATIONS**

The single most significant factor in student achievement is the teacher. The teacher's effectiveness is greatly enhanced when supported by the school community as a whole, the student's home, and the community at large. The Arkansas General Assembly and the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) have demonstrated their understanding of the importance of involving such groups by repeatedly mandating their inclusion in the educational system and process. Communication with staff, parents, grandparents, legal guardians, business, and community members is fundamental to increasing their concern for, and involvement in, raising student achievement.

Communication should be two-way between the District and the public. The communications program shall strive to:

1. Increase mutual understanding, trust, and support between the District and parents, business, and the community as a whole;
2. Keep District staff regularly informed of upcoming District programs and events as well as noteworthy staff and student accomplishments to enable all the staff to help promote positive public relations;
3. Create and disseminate brochures, flyers, and fact sheets that will help parents and community members better understand school policies and procedures and acquaint them with areas where their volunteer services are most needed;
4. Inform legislators of the accomplishments of the District's students and staff, as well as how proposed legislation could affect the district;
5. Maintain good relations with the news media and provide the media with pertinent news releases; and
6. Increase the participation of parents, grandparents, legal guardians, business, and community members in school activities and programs.

The Board will appoint committees, when appropriate, to help the District examine issues facing it. Such committees may include members of the public, students, parents, and school employees, as well as members of the Board. Members may serve until the committee makes its non-binding recommendations to the Board.

Any committee, which includes among its members a member of the School Board, shall operate according to the requirements of the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act.\*

The District's Board of Directors shall hold a meeting by October 15 of each year to provide a report that systematically explains the District's policies, programs, and goals to the community. The District's report shall detail the progress of the District and the District's schools toward accomplishing program goals, accreditation standards, and proposals to correct any deficiencies. The report shall be made available to the public, including by posting a copy on the District's website under State-Required Information no later than ten (10) days following the meeting. The meeting shall provide parents and other members of the community the opportunity to ask questions and make suggestions concerning the District's program.

Note: <sup>1</sup> These requirements include having to notify the press of the time and place of the meetings; allow the meetings to be open to the attendance of the general public; record the meetings; and retain the recordings of the meetings for a year.

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-15-1005(c), (f)(1)(2)

A.C.A. § 6-16-603 (a) (3)

ACA 6-18-2003

\*A.C.A. § 25-19-106

Standards for Accreditation: 3-B.1, 3-B.2, 3-B.2.1, 5-A.1

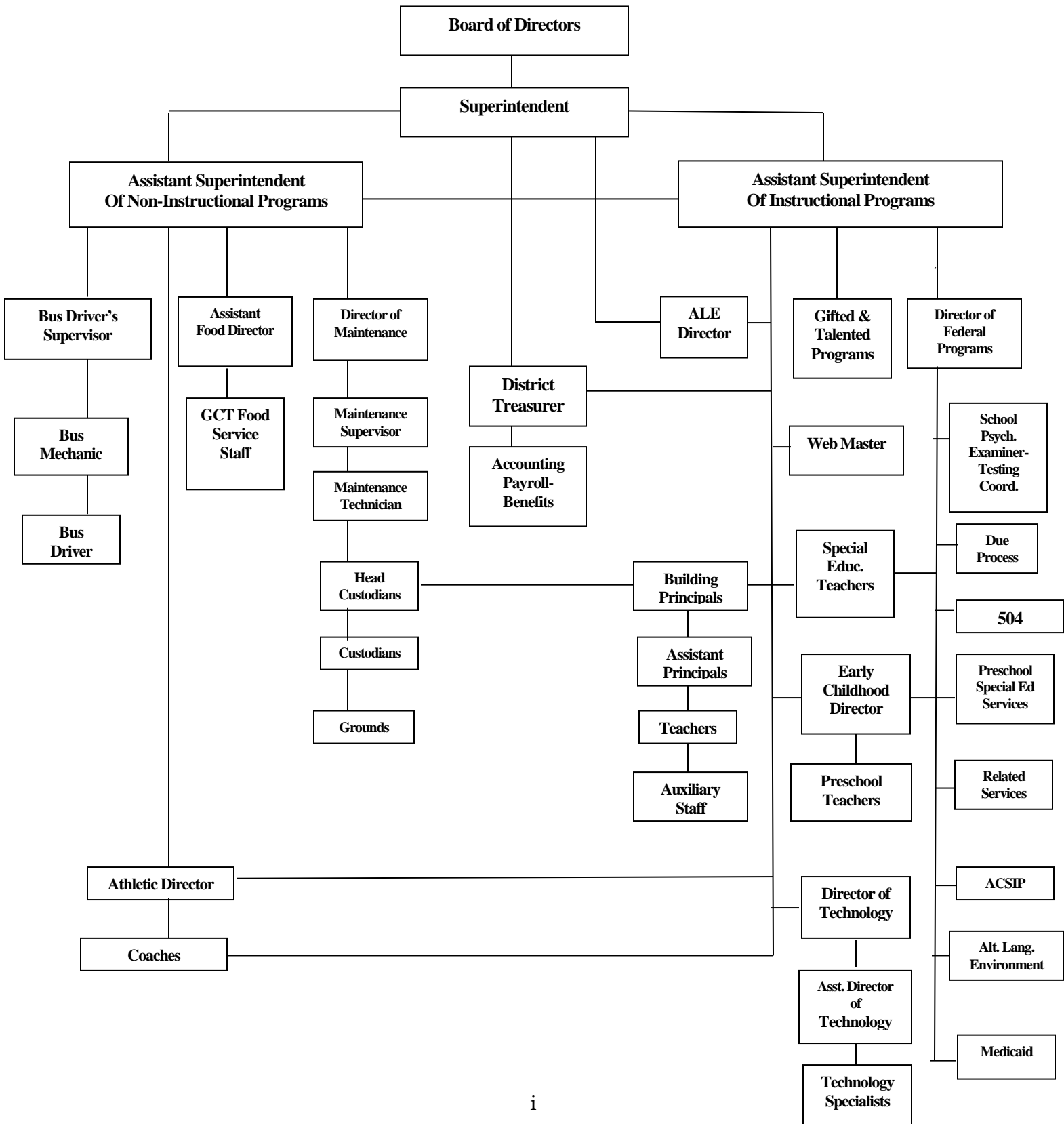
DESE Regulations Governing Gifted and Talented Program Approval Standards: 4.0;  
10.03

Date Adopted: June 18, 2009

Last Revised: June 15, 2015, June 2019

The organizational structure of the Greene County Technical School District consists of the following:

## Greene County Tech Organizational Chart



## **6.2—RELATIONS WITH SCHOOL SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS**

The Board recognizes and values the many contributions support organizations make to the District's schools. Parent/teacher organizations and booster clubs work to augment and strengthen the District's educational and extracurricular objectives through the goods and services they provide.

Groups wishing to be recognized as a support organization must have open membership and have their by-laws approved by the school principal, the Superintendent, and the Board. School personnel shall assist approved booster organizations in their efforts to the extent practicable. Meetings of such organizations, cleared through the principal, shall not be subject to school use fees. School staff members are encouraged to attend and participate.

Fund-raising activities are to be approved in advance by the principal or his/her designee. Prior to the donation of equipment and/or supplies to the school, the organization should seek the advice of the principal to help ensure the compatibility of the donation with present school equipment. All equipment donated to the District becomes the property of the District.

It shall be the policy of the Greene County Tech School District to provide a school person to serve as a speaker to discuss or interpret a school activity or program to any community group upon request. The requesting group should provide the Superintendent such reasonable notice to make arrangements for a person representing the schools to attend.

It shall be the policy of the Greene County Tech School District to cooperate with public welfare authorities in combating case of child neglect and abuse and the local police departments to ensure the safety and well being of all students.

The board of education shall seek to maintain continuing and constructive liaison with members of the legislature. The board of education encourages the Superintendent and other designated employees to join or enroll in such professional organizations or other local civic organizations to benefit from the shared knowledge and community involvement.

The board of education shall comply with federal regulations in sharing of federal funds with private and parochial schools within the community.

(Includes old school board policy KF, KBD, KBF, LDA, LDAF, LDAG, LDAH, LDCA, LD, LB, LA, MGA, MC)

Date Adopted: May 21, 2009

Last Revised:

### **6.3—PUBLIC GIFTS AND DONATIONS TO THE SCHOOLS**

The District and the Board of Education may receive monetary gifts or donations of goods or services which that serve to improve or enhance the goals of the District. Any gifts to the District become the property of the District and are subject to the same regulations as any other District owned property.

It is a breach of ethical standards and a violation of Arkansas law for any Board member, administrator, or District employee to receive a gift of any kind in return for employment with the District or to influence the award of any contract or transaction with the District. All personnel shall examine the “reasonableness” of any gift or donation against its potential for real or perceived violation of the aforementioned ethical standards before accepting any gift or donation in the name of a school or the District.

The Board reserves the right to not accept any gift or donation that would not contribute to the attainment of District goals or that would obligate the District to unacceptable outlays of District resources. The administration shall present for Board consideration and approval any gifts or donations the administration deems could so obligate the District.

The Board will strive to honor the donor’s intent regarding gifts earmarked for a specific purpose; however, laws and District’s needs change with time and the District reserves the right to adjust the use of any gift to meet current needs of the educational program.

The Board authorizes the superintendent, or the superintendent’s designee, to act as the District’s official representative for all school-affiliated online fund raisers.<sup>1</sup>

Note: <sup>1</sup> This is optional language, but is highly recommended if you wish to allow online fund raising as a tool. The intent behind the language, combined with the recommended optional language from Policy 6.6—FUND RAISING, is to provide a standard contact person for any online fund raisers to aid the community in determining if the online fund raiser is official and to help prevent community burnout by having too many school related fund raisers in a given period.

Legal References:       A.C.A. § 6-24-110  
                                  A.C.A. § 6-24-112

(Includes school board policies KHD, KH)

Date Adopted: May 21, 2009

Last Revised: June 20, 2017

Enlisting the support of volunteers is a way the District can expand the scope of resources and knowledge available to enrich the students’ educational experiences, while strengthening the relationship between the school and the community. Volunteers can also perform non-instructional tasks that allow licensed personnel more time to devote to instruction.

**Background Checks for Volunteers**

For the purposes of this policy, “clear background check” shall mean that a background check was performed, as authorized by A.C.A. §§ 12-12-1601 et seq., and that a potential school volunteer has not committed any of the crimes or offenses contained in A.C.A. §§ 6-17-410, 6-17-411 or 6-17-414, as amended, with regard to both the Arkansas and national background check, and whose name is not found on the Child Abuse Central Registry.

A person wishing to volunteer in a capacity that requires a background check may not perform volunteer services requiring a background check until a clear background check is received by the District. Once received, a clear background check is good for \_\_\_\_ years<sup>1</sup>; a background check renewal must be applied for and a clear background check received prior to the time of renewal or an interruption of permitted volunteer service could occur. A clear background check will be accepted of any individual wishing to volunteer provided it was conducted within the timeframe provided for in this policy.

The building principals shall be responsible for establishing and maintaining a program to coordinate the services volunteers are willing and able to contribute with the needs of District personnel. The program shall establish guidelines to ensure volunteers are aware of pertinent District policies and rules. Volunteers who violate school policies or rules, or knowingly allow students to violate school rules, may be asked to leave the school campus. The guidelines should also include provision for evaluation of the volunteer program and a method for soliciting suggestions from both the volunteers and staff for its improvement.

All volunteers may be subject to a criminal history report, which includes: misdemeanors, felony charges, registered sex offenders and persons on probation. Any volunteer with a criminal record will be asked not to volunteer within the Greene County Tech School District.

All volunteers who intend to act as head coaches or assistant coaches must:

- 1) Be at least twenty-two (22) years of age; and
- 2) Meet the requirements adopted by the Arkansas Activities Association (AAA) to volunteer for any athletics program for grades seven (7) through-twelve (12).

A member of the board of directors of the District or the spouse of a member of the board of directors of the District may not be a registered volunteer for the District unless a majority of the disinterested members of the Board of Directors approves a resolution for the board member or board member’s spouse to be a registered volunteer. The resolution approving the board member or board member’s spouse to be a registered volunteer shall be effective for only one (1) school year.



A volunteer may act as a head coach in all varsity junior and senior high sports administered by the AAA except in the following sports:

- Football;
- Basketball; and
- Track and field.

**Background Checks for Volunteers**

For the purposes of this policy, “clear background check” means that:

- A background check was performed on the potential school volunteer in accordance with A.C.A. §§ 12-12-1601 et seq.;
- The potential school volunteer has not committed any of the crimes or offenses contained in A.C.A. §§ 6-17-410, 6-17-411 or 6-17-414 according to both the National and Arkansas background checks;
- The potential school volunteer’s name was not found on the Child Abuse Central Registry; and
- The Arkansas Educator Licensure System does not indicate the potential volunteer to:  
Have a currently suspended or revoked educators license; or

A person wishing to volunteer in a capacity that requires a background check may not perform volunteer services requiring a background check until a clear background check is received by the District. Once received, a clear background check is good for five (5) years<sup>1</sup>; a background check renewal must be applied for and a clear background check received prior to the time of renewal or an interruption of permitted volunteer service could occur. A clear background check will be accepted of any individual wishing to volunteer provided it was conducted within the timeframe provided for in this policy.

Option A: The Application for an initial background check may be made through the District administrative office. The District may charge the potential volunteer the same fee charged by the State of Arkansas for performing the check. For a volunteer who has passed his/her previous background check, the District will incur the fee charged by the State of Arkansas for performing a renewal background check.<sup>2</sup>

A person who failed a previous background check may petition the Board for a waiver from this policy's requirement. The petition shall be accompanied by a signed authorization for disclosure of his or her entire criminal and child abuse registry history. In deciding whether to grant a waiver, the board may take into consideration the circumstance or circumstances under which the act or omission leading to conviction or Child Abuse Registry true finding, or the receipt of the Level 3 or Level 4 Public Notification of Ethics Violation, the age of the person at the time of the act or omission, the length of time that has passed without reoffending, and other relevant circumstances. If the Superintendent recommends a waiver be granted, the Board may, by a majority vote adopt a resolution providing an exception to this policy's requirement for a time period not to exceed five years. The board must consider this matter in open session, and may not confer or deliberate in closed or executive session.

The board shall not have the authority to waive the application of this policy to any potential volunteer who is a Registered Sex Offender or whose educator licensure has been revoked or is currently suspended.

Clear background checks for school volunteers are required for those individuals who are required to be or who seek to become Registered Volunteers, as defined in A.C. A. § 6-22-102 et seq. In addition to volunteers wishing to participate in the registered volunteers program, clear background checks are required for:

- Option 1: School volunteers who wish to accompany students on overnight school trips.<sup>3</sup>
- Option 2: School volunteers who wish to volunteer to work one-on-one or in small groups of five (5) or fewer students, such as a tutor or a mentor.<sup>3</sup>
- Option 3: School volunteers who will volunteer for more than three (3) hours in a school year.<sup>3,4</sup>
- Option 4: School volunteers who will volunteer for miscellaneous volunteer programs.<sup>3,5</sup>
- Option 5: Clear background checks for school volunteers are required prior to any volunteer service to the school district, school, teacher, or classroom, and all clear check volunteers will be issued special volunteer identification to wear prominently when performing their volunteer duties; no person may serve as a volunteer without wearing the provided identification.<sup>3</sup>

No information relating to the application for or receipt of a criminal background check, including that a background check has or has not been applied for, shall be subject to disclosure under the Arkansas Freedom of

Information Act, as provided by A.C.A. §§ 12-12-1601 et seq. Requests for background checks and reports on background checks obtained under this policy shall be retained by the district for a minimum of three (3) years.

The District shall maintain the following information on volunteers:

- a) The total number, location, and duties of all volunteers;
- b) The total number of annual hours of service provided by volunteers; and
- c) Any reimbursements made to volunteers for expenses, transportation, or other costs incurred in connection with volunteer services.

Volunteers will be made aware that the Arkansas Department of Humans Services (DHS) considers volunteers for school districts to be mandated reporters of child maltreatment and will receive training on the responsibilities of a mandated reporter.<sup>6</sup>

NOTE: A model resolution to permit a board member or a board member's spouse to act as a registered volunteer may be found on our Policy Resources Page at <http://arsba.org/policy-resources>.

Notes: With the exception of volunteers in the registered volunteers, program, background checks for public school volunteers are not required by law, but a mechanism exists to provide schools with the results of background checks if the school chooses by policy to require background checks for all or some categories of school volunteers. There are two options offered for payment of the background checks and several options offered concerning the trigger for requiring a background check. In each instance choose the one that most closely aligns with the concerns of the Board and district administration. The potential adverse effects on volunteerism of requiring the background checks can be minimized by either (or both) adopting Option 2 for the payment of the background check, or only requiring background checks of those volunteers who will exercise direct, unsupervised access to students or who will be granted supervisory responsibility over students.

<sup>1</sup> There is no statutory provision for the length of time the check is good for. Arkansas teachers are required to get a new background check each time their license is renewed, which is five (5) years, and all classified employees are required to get a background check at least once every five (5) years. Districts are free to choose a shorter or longer period of time.

<sup>2</sup> Choose the option that your district prefers.

<sup>3</sup> Select the option, or combination of options, that is the best fit for your school district. Balance your desire to take steps to protect students against the potentially negative effect requiring unnecessary background checks will have on parental involvement. In addition, consider the financial burden of the cost of the background check, which A.C.A. §§ 12-12-1609 sets at a maximum of twenty dollars (\$20) for a state background check and includes an additional charge for a Federal background check in an amount set by the FBI. If the parent pays, it could deter them from participating in their child’s education as a school volunteer.

<sup>4</sup> Select a number of hours such as 30, that would work for your district.

<sup>5</sup> Use this option to list specific volunteer programs/services that require individuals to pass a background check.

<sup>6</sup> This paragraph was included because it was brought to our attention that, while volunteers are not specifically listed in A.C.A. § 12-18-402 as a mandated reporter, the policy handbook for the DHS considers volunteers to be included in the “school officials” section of mandated reporters.

<sup>7</sup> This paragraph was included because it was brought to our attention that, while volunteers are not specifically listed in A.C.A. § 12-18-402 as a mandated reporter, the policy handbook for the DHS considers volunteers to be included in the “school officials” section of mandated reporters. We are assuming that the same is true for volunteers concerning the requirements for mandated reporters under A.C.A. § 6-18-110.

Legal References:       A.C.A. §§ 6-17-301, A.C.A. § 6-17-410, A.C.A. § 6-17-411, A.C.A. 6-17-414  
A.C.A. § 6-17-428, A.C.A. § 6-18-110, A.C.A. § 6-22-101 et seq.  
A.C.A. §§ 12-12-1601 et seq. A.C.A. § 12-18-402  
A.C.A. § 12-18-909(g)(21) A.C.A. § 21-13-101 et seq.  
Division of Elementary and Secondary Education Rules Governing Background Checks, Division of Elementary and Secondary Education Rules Governing the Code of Ethics for Arkansas Educators

Date Adopted: June 2007

Last Revised: July 2013, June 2015, May 2016, June 20, 2017, April 2018, June 2019

## **6.5—VISITORS TO THE SCHOOLS**

Parents, grandparents, legal guardians, business, and community members are welcome and encouraged to visit District schools. To minimize the potential for disruption of the learning environment, visitors, for a purpose other than to attend an activity open to the general public, are required to first report to the school's main office. No one shall be exempt from this requirement. Visitors who are Level 3 or Level 4 sex offenders may only enter a school campus under the provisions listed in Policy 6.10.

Parents and legal guardians are encouraged to participate in regularly scheduled visitation events such as school open houses and parent/teacher conferences. Additional conferences are best when scheduled in advance. Conferences shall be scheduled at a time and place to accommodate those participating in the conference. Visits to individual classrooms during class time are permitted on a limited basis with the principal's prior approval and the teacher's knowledge.

Visitors, including parents wishing to speak with students during the school day shall register first with the office.

The District has the right to ask disruptive visitors to leave its school campuses. Principals are authorized to seek the assistance of law enforcement officers in removing any disruptive visitors who refuse to leave school property when requested to do so. Visitors who are disruptive become disruptive become, "trespassers" as defined in A.C.A. 6-21-606. As such, they lose their right to be on campus.

Cross References:       For non-adult visits see Policy 4.16—STUDENT VISITORS  
                              For Level 3 and Level 4 sex offenders see Policy 6.10—SEX OFFENDERS ON  
                              CAMPUS (MEGAN'S LAW)

Legal Reference: A.C.A. 6-21-606 and A.C.A. 6-21-607

(Includes old school board policy KM)

Date Adopted: June 2007

Last Revised: June 2012, June 2015

All fund raising activities held in the District or in the name of the District must be pre-approved in writing by the Superintendent and affected school principal. Approval will be predicated on the potential for return relative to the time and energy to be invested in the fund raising. Fund raising that conflicts excessively with and/or detracts from student or teacher instructional time in either the planning or the execution of the activity will not be approved.

Neither an individual school nor the District shall be liable for any contract between clubs or organizations and third parties.

Student participation in any fund raising activity shall:

- 1) Be voluntary. Students who choose not to participate shall not forfeit any school privileges. It shall not be considered discriminatory to reward those who participate; and
- 2) Not influence or affect the student's grade.

For purposes of this policy, "Door to Door sales" means the selling of merchandise outside of the child's home and off the school grounds.

**Secondary Schools**

Fund raising in the secondary schools may only be done by officially sanctioned student clubs, spirit groups, school PTAs, or parent booster clubs. Student clubs and spirit groups must receive written approval from their sponsor and the school principal before submitting the fund raising proposal to the Superintendent.

Door to door fundraising activities are generally discouraged. If approved, students wishing to participate who are under the age of eighteen (18) must return to their sponsor a signed parental notification and permission form.

**Elementary Schools (K-6)**

Fund raising in the elementary schools may only be done by the school or a school sponsored organization. Door to door fundraising activities are generally discouraged, but there shall be no more than one such activity per school per school year.

Schools must provide written notification of the following to parents or legal guardians of elementary students who participate in fund raising programs.

- 1) Student participation in fund raising programs is voluntary;
- 2) Students who do not participate will not forfeit any school privileges;
- 3) Students may not participate in fund raising programs without written parental permission returned to school authorities;

- 4) An elementary student who sells fund raising merchandise door to door must be accompanied by a parent or an adult; and
- 5) Unless the school provides supervision, parents must accept responsibility for appropriate adult supervision.

Generally solicitation in the school will be prohibited. The following specific activities will require the written approval of the Superintendent of schools. Soliciting for any purpose, which includes exhibiting and selling of an book, paper, map, globe, or any other article. Taking pictures of pupils or school buildings for commercial purpose. Receiving contributions in any school building or on the school premises.

**Online Fund Raisers<sup>1</sup>**

All school-affiliated online fund raisers must be approved by the superintendent, or the superintendent’s designee. The superintendent, or the superintendent’s designee, shall act as the point of contact for all school-affiliated online fund raisers. An employee may be disciplined, up to and including termination, if the employee establishes:

- a. A school-affiliated online fund raiser without the permission of the superintendent, or the superintendent’s designee; or
- b. The employee as the point of contact for a school-affiliated fund raiser instead of the superintendent, or the superintendent’s designee.

For purposes of this policy, a “school-affiliated online fund raiser” includes, but is not limited to, a fund raiser intended to raise funds for a particular teacher’s classroom, grade, student club or organization, or athletic team.

Note: <sup>1</sup> This is optional language, but language covering online fund raisers is recommended. The intent behind the language is to provide a standard contact person for any online fund raisers to aid the community in determining if the online fund raiser is official and to help prevent community burnout by having too many school related fund raisers in a given period. If you would rather not allow staff to establish school-affiliated online fund raisers at all, replace the first paragraph in this section with the following:

*Employees are prohibited from establishing school-affiliated online fund raisers. Employees who are discovered to have established a school-affiliated online fund raiser may be disciplined, up to and including termination.*

Legal Reference: A.C.A. § 6-18-1104, A.C.A. § 6-18-1102

(Includes old school board policy KDC, KDCA, KEBA, JKB,)

Date Adopted: June 2007

Last Revised: June 2015, June 20, 2017

## 6.7—COMPLAINTS

Page 1

It is a goal of the Board and the District to be responsive to the community it serves and to continuously improve the educational program offered in its schools. The Board or the District welcomes constructive criticism when it is offered with the intent of improving the quality of the system's educational program or the delivery of the District's services.

The Board formulates and adopts policies to achieve the District's vision and elects a Superintendent to implement its policies. The administrative functions of the District are delegated to the Superintendent who is responsible for the effective administration and supervision of the District. Individuals with complaints concerning personnel, curriculum, discipline (including specific discipline policies), coaching, or the day to day management of the schools need to address those complaints according to the following sequence:

1. Teacher, coach, or other staff member against whom the complaint is directed
2. Principal
3. Superintendent

Other than in the few instances where statutorily allowed or required, student discipline and personnel matters may not be discussed in Board meetings. Individuals with complaints regarding such matters need to follow the sequence outlined above.

Unless authorized by the Board as a whole for a specific purpose, no individual Board member has any authority when acting alone. District constituents are reminded that the Board serves as a finder of fact, not unlike a jury, in matters such as student suspensions initiated by the Superintendent, expulsions, and personnel discipline. For this reason, the board may not be involved or informed prior to a board hearing on particular disciplinary matters.

Complaints that are related to district use or administration of federal funds generated through specific programs identified by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and authorized in Elementary and Secondary Education Act may be taken directly from a patron or by referral from the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) If taken directly from a patron, the complaint may be submitted by either a signed statement or by a certified, recorded deposition or statement in which the complainant is identified. The complaints shall be addressed in the following manner.

1. The complaint shall be referred to the federal programs director, who shall assemble a team of at least two (2) people to investigate the complaint.
2. Throughout the investigation, sufficient notes and records will be taken and maintained to substantiate the position of the findings of the investigation.
3. The team will interview the complainant and others as necessary to enable the team to make a determination of the validity of the complaint. The team may consult with individuals with knowledge or expertise in the matter which is the subject of the complaint, including legal counsel.
4. The investigation of complaints referred by the DESE shall be completed within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of the complaint, unless a longer time period has been approved by the ADE.<sup>3</sup>
5. The investigation of complaints made directly to the district shall be completed within forty (40) calendar days unless there are extenuating circumstances; in such a case, a preliminary report shall be made within forty (40) calendar days of receipt of the complaint, which shall include an

explanation of the unusual circumstances requiring additional time to complete the investigation. The report of the conclusions of the investigation shall be given to the complainant. It shall contain:

- a. A summary of the allegations of the complaint;
- b. A summary of the investigative actions taken by the team;
- c. A summary of the findings concerning each alleged violation or implied violation; and
- d. A statement of corrective actions needed to resolve the issues involved in each allegation and finding of the complaint.
- e. Notes: <sup>1</sup> The Rules Governing Federal Program Complaint Resolution 1.03 specifies the specific federal programs that are covered by this policy. Be sure the necessary staff are aware of the possible triggers for a complaint and of the existence of the documents offered by the DESE to deal with the resolution of the complaints.
- f. <sup>2</sup> You may change this to reflect the title of the person you wish to be responsible for conducting the investigation.
- g. <sup>3</sup> The Rules Governing Federal Program Complaint Resolution establishes the 30 day limit for complaints that are referred to the district by DESE
- h. <sup>4</sup> The forty (40) day time limit is equivalent to the thirty (30) days allowed for complaints referred by the DESE because the DESE has up to ten (10) days to make the referral.
- i. Legal Reference: DESE Rules Governing Federal Program Complaint Resolution

(Includes old school board policies JCE, IKB, KNEA, KN, KDAA)

Date Adopted: June 2007,  
Last Revised: June 2019



## **6.7.1 Complaint Resolution Procedures for the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvement Act and Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA):**

### **Complaint Resolution Procedures**

A state policy has been established to provide due process for resolving complaints from parents and other individuals or organizations regarding the educational placement of homeless children and youths pursuant to the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvement Act as well as the administration of the following programs contained within the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA):

- (1) Part A of Title I (Improving Basic Programs operated by Local Educational Agencies);
- (2) Subpart 3 of Part B of Title I (Even Start Family Literacy Programs) (other than federally administered direct grants for Indian tribes and tribal organizations, children of migratory workers, Statewide family literacy initiatives, and a prison that houses women and children);
- (3) Part C of Title I (Migrant Education);
- (4) Part D of Title I (Children and Youth Who Are Neglected, Delinquent, or At Risk of Dropping Out);
- (5) Part A of Title II (other than Section 2151);
- (6) Subpart 1, Part D of Title II (State and Local Programs for School Technology Resources);
- (7) Part A of Title IV (Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities) (other than Section 4114);
- (8) Part A of Title V (Innovative Education Program Strategies);
- (9) Title III (Language Instruction for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and Immigrant Students); and
- (10) Section 9503 (Equitable participation of private school students in public school programs).

#### **I. GENERAL**

The Arkansas Department of Education, the State Education Agency (SEA), shall receive complaints directly or review appeals from local education agency (LEA) decisions with respect to complaints concerning violations arising out of the administration of the programs listed above. Complaints may be made in a signed statement or in a certified recorded deposition or statement in which the complainant is identified. Complaints may be received directly from the complainant, referred from other state or federal agencies, or come on appeal from an LEA.

#### **II. REFERRAL AND DISPATCH**

All complaints shall be referred for investigation and resolution to the Federal Programs Liaison (Liaison). Within ten (10) working days from receipt of a complaint, the Liaison shall have arranged to have the complaint investigated either by the LEA in some cases of direct complaint or the SEA in other cases of direct complaints and in all cases of appeal from an LEA decision.

##### **A. Appeals**

The Liaison in consultation with the Coordinator for School Improvement (Coordinator) shall review appeal records. If he/she finds sufficient information to resolve the complaint without further investigation, he/she will draw up the preliminary report described in Part IV and continue the resolution from that point. If he/she finds that records accompanying the appeal

obtainable from the appellant are insufficient to resolve the complaint, he/she shall proceed under Section II B below.

**B. Direct Complaints**

The SEA policy is that complaints received by the SEA which have not been submitted to the LEA or state agency will be referred to the LEA or state agency for processing through its procedures for resolution of complaints if such procedures exist at that level. The Liaison may determine that a direct complaint should be investigated by the SEA if he/she determines that (1) delay in resolving the complaint may result in serious and immediate harm to the complainant, (2) the allegations and supporting information together with readily available crosscheck data in the files of the SEA provide sufficient evidence to show probable success of the complaint on its own merits, or (3) there is evidence that the LEA or state agency probably is aware of the alleged violation and has failed to act to resolve it. When direct complaints are referred to an LEA or state agency for resolution, a transmittal letter shall direct the resolution of the complaint under the adopted procedures of the LEA or state agency within a time period not to exceed thirty (30) days unless a longer period is specified by the SEA due to unusual circumstances. The transmittal shall also provide information on the rights of the complainant to appeal the final written report of the applicant agency to the SEA. A copy of the transmittal letter shall be sent to the complainant.

**C. Investigating Team**

Within ten (10) working days from receipt of a direct complaint to be resolved by the SEA, the Liaison shall have arranged for a team to make an investigation. The team shall include no less than two (2) persons nor more than five (5) persons and shall include either the Liaison or the Education Program Analyst (Analyst) in whose territory the complaint originated or both. Either the Liaison or the Analyst for the area involved shall be named team leader. Other persons on the investigating team may include representatives from any division of the SEA including the Commissioner of Education's Office or any other person whom the Liaison deems can best expedite the investigation and resolve the issue of the complaint. The team leader shall be charged with making a full investigation of the complaint and writing a report of the findings according to the provisions hereinafter set out.

**D. Expenses**

Travel costs and other expenses for members of the investigating team shall be reimbursed by the SEA according to the legal rate set for Arkansas state employees.

**III. CONDUCTING THE INVESTIGATION**

All investigations shall be conducted professionally, ethically and judiciously in a manner to avoid prejudicial statements and confrontations. The SEA shall endeavor to gain the cooperation of the LEA officials and others at the local level. It is not generally necessary that the complainant's identity be revealed before the investigation is completed, but the preliminary report must name the complainant.

**A. Time Limits**

The investigation shall begin within ten (10) days following the team assignment or within twenty (20) days from receipt of the complaint. Unless the investigating team leader can cite unusual circumstances which require additional time, the investigation shall be completed and a preliminary written report of the findings and recommendations made within twenty (20) days after the investigation begins, or no more than forty (40) days following receipt of the complaint. The investigation may be conducted at the SEA if the team leader decides that a site visit is not necessary. Otherwise, an on-site investigation shall be made.

**B. Records**

During the course of the investigation, sufficient notes shall be made or statements recorded on each pertinent conversation with the person interviewed to enable the team leader to write a full report. In cases where complaints are received on appeal, a copy of the unedited records of the LEA proceedings and decision shall be made a part of the SEA report as an attachment or appendix to it.

**C. Team Interviews**

In addition to interviewing and accepting testimony from the complainant and his witness, the team may investigate the allegations further by interviewing and questioning the local Federal Programs Director and staff, the school administrator and faculty, school board members, advisory council members or other persons who may be able to give information to expedite the investigation and resolution of the complaint.

**D. Hearings**

If requested by the complainant or person charged in the complaint and if deemed advisable by the team leader, an informal hearing may be used as a part of the investigation. The team leader or designee must preside with all members of the team being present. The hearing should be conducted primarily for the purpose of trying to bring divergent viewpoints closer together or to clarify and, to the fullest extent possible, resolve issues of disagreement or misunderstanding. The complainant or complainant's representative, or both, may have the opportunity to present evidence and to question parties to the dispute and any of their witnesses. No person, however, shall be compelled to give testimony or answer questions during such an informal hearing.

**IV. REPORTS**

**A. Interim Reports**

In cases where the team is not able to complete the investigation within twenty (20) days, it shall file an interim report with the Coordinator. The interim report shall state the progress made during the twenty-day period and state plans for completing the investigation in not more than ten (10) additional days, or cite exceptional circumstances that may delay the final report.

**B. Preliminary Report**

At the close of the investigation, a preliminary report shall be prepared in cooperation with the Liaison and submitted by him/her to the LEA or other applicant agency and the complainants. The report shall include:

1. A summary of the substance of the allegations in the complaint and the names of the individual, group or agency making the complaint.
2. A summary of the activities engaged in by the investigating team.
3. A summary of the findings concerning each alleged violation or implied violation.
4. A statement of the corrective actions, including a recommendation for an independent audit if deemed appropriate, needed to resolve the issues involved in each allegation and finding of the complaint.

The LEA and the complainant(s) in their responses may accept the findings and corrective actions of the preliminary report or may reject part or all of the report and supply information to support rescinding or altering some or all of the findings and corrective actions. The LEA or other applicant agency and complainants shall have twenty (20) days in which to formulate and submit responses. Failure to respond within the time limit shall be considered by the SEA as an acceptance of all parts of the preliminary report.

**C. Final Report**

The final report to the LEA or other applicant agency shall be made not less than ten (10) days following the response period (unless exceptional circumstances affecting the equity of the LEA or complainant are cited.) This report will be prepared by the Liaison in consultation with the Coordinator of the SEA, reviewed by the director of the SEA and transmitted over his/her signature. It will restate the substance of the preliminary report, include the applicant agency and complainant responses and the final determinations as they may have been altered or rescinded by the SEA after review of the responses to the preliminary report. Should the final report include as a corrective action an audit of the accounts of the LEA or other applicant agency, that part of the resolution of the complaint shall follow the procedures established for audits and audit resolutions.

**D. Dissemination**

**1. Reports**

Copies of the final SEA report shall be sent to the appropriate LEA and the complainant(s). Each copy of the final report and complaint resolution decision shall include information on the rights of appeal.

**2. Procedures**

A copy of these SEA complaint procedures shall be provided to all LEAs as one of the policy statements of the Liaison's Office. Sufficient quantities shall be prepared and be available from the SEA Liaison's Office to any interested person or group upon request. Complete duplicate copies may be produced and distributed by any interested person or group.

**V. APPEALS TO THE SECRETARY OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

## **Policy 6.7.1**

**Page 5**

The complainant has a right to request the Secretary of the United States Department of Education (Secretary) to review the final decision of the SEA, at the Secretary's discretion. In matters involving allegations of violations of Sections 1120 and 9501 (participation of private school children) of the ESEA, the Secretary shall investigate and resolve the appeal within one hundred and twenty (120) days after receiving the appeal.

Reference ADE Commissioner's Memo LS-09-040 Date 5-22-09

Regulatory Authority includes: NCLB Pub. Law 107-110, Section 9304 (a) (3) (c)  
9501 Mc-Kinney-Vento Act of 2001, 722 (g) (1) (c)

Date Adopted: June 18, 2009

Date Revised:

This policy statement delineates the due process procedures for local education agencies (LEAs) and other applicants or recipients (hereinafter, "LEA") who believe and allege that the Arkansas Department of Education, the State Education Agency (SEA) has violated applicable state or federal laws, rules, regulations or guidelines in an action affecting any program administered by the United States Department of Education (USDE) in which funds are provided to or through the SEA in accordance with a plan approved by the USDE.

**I. GENERAL**

An LEA may request a hearing if it is aggrieved by any of the following actions of the SEA:

- A. Failure to approve an LEA's federal programs project application in whole or in part;
- B. Termination of funding of an approved federal programs project in whole or in part;
- C. Failing to provide funds in amounts in accord with the requirements of laws and regulations; or
- D. An audit resolution requiring repayment of expended federal program funds from non-federal sources.

Any LEA, upon request, shall be granted a hearing by the SEA when that LEA believes and alleges that the SEA has violated applicable state or federal laws, rules or guidelines regarding A, B, C or D, above.

The provisions for a formal hearing outlined in this statement are not to be construed as limiting in any way the right of representatives of an LEA and the SEA to work together in an informal manner to comprise or resolve differences of opinion or understanding concerning actions or proposed actions of the SEA. Only final actions taken by the SEA that are no longer subject to negotiation should be resolved under this policy.

**II. REQUESTS FOR HEARING**

**A. Request Format**

A request for a hearing may be made by any person who has been designated by the LEA governing board to administer its federal programs. The request must be in writing on the official forms or stationery used by the LEA for business letters. The request must be postmarked no more than thirty (30) days following the LEA's receipt of the notice of an action by the SEA from which relief is sought. A request for a formal hearing should include at least the following:

- 1. The specific action by the SEA on which a hearing is desired;
- 2. The specific sections, paragraphs or pages of the laws, rules, regulations or guidelines allegedly violated by the SEA actions;
- 3. Copies of the available documents relating to the matter which may support the LEA's position.

The official request for a hearing should be addressed to the Coordinator for School Improvement, Arkansas Department of Education, State Education Building, #4 Capitol Mall, Room 205-B, Little Rock, AR 72201-1071.

**B. SEA Action**

Upon receipt of an official request meeting minimum information requirements of subsection (A) above, the Coordinator for School Improvement (Coordinator) in consultation with the Federal Programs Liaison (Liaison) shall select a hearing date that is less than thirty (30) days from the date of receipt of the request.

The Coordinator shall send a notice of the date, time and place, when and where the hearing is to be held, and such notice shall be mailed at least ten (10) days prior to the date set for the hearing.

The notice to the LEA shall include information such as who may participate from the LEA and from the SEA, what types of materials may be presented and any other pertinent information which he deems necessary to expedite the hearing and the findings.

The Coordinator shall request from the Office of the Attorney General of Arkansas that a hearing officer from his/her staff be named to chair the hearing. Should the Attorney General decline, the Coordinator in consultation with the Commission of Education shall name a disinterested person to chair the hearing.

**III. CONDUCTING THE HEARING**

**A. Hearing Authority**

The hearing officer may act alone or select no more than two other persons to serve as a hearing panel or committee.

**B. LEA Participants**

The LEA coordinator and/or the superintendent of schools, members of the LEA governing body and others not to exceed a total of five (5) persons, not including witnesses, may actively participate in the review hearing. The LEA shall designate a hearing spokesperson to coordinate its presentations who may be an attorney, a teacher, a parent or any other person deemed by the LEA to be able to best represent it during the hearing.

**C. SEA Participants**

The SEA participants shall include the Liaison and the SEA staff person who recommended the SEA action on which the hearing is being held and others not to exceed a total of five (5) persons, not including witnesses. The Liaison or his/her designee shall serve as spokesperson to coordinate the SEA hearing presentations.

**D. Records**

In addition to the hearing participants, the SEA shall arrange to have a non-participating person or persons present who will record and finally transcribe all proceedings of the hearing.

**E. Public Hearing**

All hearings shall be open to the public, except that any testimony relating to privileged matters such as performance of pupils or teachers may be taken in a session closed to the public.

F. Location

The hearing officer may conduct the hearing as he/she deems advisable so long as all participants have an opportunity to present views and information bearing on the matter being reviewed. The hearing may be held in whole or in part at the LEA site if, in the opinion of the hearing officer, this would expedite a settlement of the issue.

G. Ruling and Notice

No later than ten (10) days following the hearing, the hearing officer shall issue a written ruling including the reasons therefore and a copy of the transcript to the aggrieved LEA.

H. Expenses of Hearing Officers

Travel and other expenses incurred by the hearing officer or members of a hearing committee shall be reimbursed from appropriate federal program funds at the rate allowed for employees of the State of Arkansas. At the option of the SEA, a pre-negotiated per diem may be paid in lieu of expenses to persons who are not employed by the State of Arkansas.

IV. APPEALS TO THE SECRETARY OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A. Any applicant or recipient aggrieved by the failure of an SEA to rescind its final action after a hearing as described in Sections I, II and III of this memorandum may appeal such action to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education. An appeal may be taken only if notice of an appeal is filed with the Secretary within twenty (20) days after the applicant or recipient has been notified by the SEA of the results of its hearing. If, on appeal, the Secretary determines the final action of the SEA was contrary to federal law or the rules, regulations and guidelines governing the applicable program, he/she shall issue an order to the SEA prescribing appropriate action to be taken. On appeal, findings of fact of the SEA, if supported by substantial evidence, shall be final. The Secretary may also issue such interim orders to the SEA as he/she may deem necessary and appropriate pending appeal or review.

B. The SEA shall make available at reasonable times and places to each applicant or recipient involved in the appeal all records pertaining to the review or appeal including the records of other applicants.

Reference: Arkansas Department of Education Commissioner's Memo LS-09-040 date 5-22-09  
Regulatory Authority: NCLB Pub. Law 107-110, Sec. 9304 (a) (3) (c), 9501 McKinney-Vento Act of 2001, 722 (g) (1) (c)

Date Adopted: June 18, 2009

Date Revised:



## **6.8—DISTRIBUTION OF PRINTED MATERIALS**

The District shall devise and maintain a system for distributing District communications and other printed materials between the Administration and the schools. Use of the system by employees or employee organizations shall be with prior approval of the Superintendent or his/her designee.

Distribution of printed materials, flyers, photographs, or other visual or auditory materials not originating within District schools to students or staff shall have prior approval of the Superintendent or his/her designee.

(Includes old school board policy KI)

Date Adopted: June 2007

Last Revised:

## **6.9—MEDIA RELATIONS AND NEWS RELEASES**

It is important that the District maintain good relations with the media. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall devise and implement a plan for the release of pertinent information to the media regarding educational programs, awards, or other student and staff achievements, and special events. The plan shall not require schools to clear the release of public service announcements through the District Administration prior to their release, but will require schools to obtain the approval of the District Information Office prior to the release of any statistical type data.

The District shall attempt, within reason, to accommodate media requests for interviews and shall endeavor to be fair and impartial in its treatment of media representatives.

The release of information to the media shall be done in a timely manner, either by written releases or by telephone interviews, to keep patrons abreast of newsworthy District achievements and shall strive to be factual and objective with personal opinions duly noted.

The Board encourages students and staff to participate in academic competitions and programs. Awards earned in such endeavors shall be communicated to the media. Award recipients may also be recognized at Board meetings.

Good communication with parents and other citizens of the district is essential for effective organization.

In order to protect and preserve the rights of students and parents, the school's first responsibility is to the students and their parents. The student's identity is to be protected when necessary. If necessary staff meetings will be held to share factual information and to provide directions.

**ADVERTISING IN SCHOOLS-** commercial advertising shall in no way be allowed in the schools. List of names and addresses of teachers, pupils and or parents shall not be given to any commercial firms for advertising purposes, except in special circumstances cleared by the Superintendent.

(Includes old school board policies JGFAAA, KJ, KL, KBC, KBCA, KD)

Date Adopted: May 21, 2009

Last Revised:

## **6.9.1—REQUEST FOR RECORDS/INFORMATION**

**School District records are public records and are available for inspection by any person at reasonable times during working hours. Certain school documents, (ex. Student health records, discipline reports, report cards, supervisory reports on teachers, employees, and personnel folders) however, are in the category of privilege information and are not public records. A request for records under the Freedom of Information Act must be provided in writing and every attempt will be made to provide a response within 24 to 72 hours. If copying of materials is required a charge of 25 cents per page will be charged.**

**(Includes Old School Board Policy CN, CF, BE)**

Date Adopted: April 16, 1992

Last Revised: May 21, 2009

## **6.10—SEX OFFENDERS ON CAMPUS (MEGAN’S LAW)**

**Page 1**

The Greene County Tech School District shall work with area law enforcement in a manner consistent with applicable state law and Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Rules to communicate the presence of a sexual offender. When necessary, law enforcement may contact building principals to provide information concerning registered sex offenders. The decision regarding the school principals to be notified rests solely with law enforcement officials; law enforcement officials use a rating system to determine who needs to be notified, which is according to the sex offender’s dangerousness to the community.

In turn, building principals should notify any employee who is regularly in a position to observe unauthorized persons on or near the school’s property in the ordinary course of their employment. Employees notified could include any of the following: aides, bus drivers, coaches, maintenance staff, professional support staff, school level administrative staff, security personnel, teachers’ assistants, and teachers.

It is important that school personnel who receive sex offender notifications understand that they are receiving the sex offender notifications in their official capacity and are not to disseminate information about an offender to anyone outside the school. If school personnel are asked about notification information by an organization using school facilities, the organization should be referred to the area law enforcement agency that issued the notice.

Persons not to be notified, except at the specific discretion of area law enforcement officials include: members of parent-teacher organizations, other schools, organizations using school facilities, students, parents or guardians of students, and the press. District personnel may inform the press about procedures that have been put in place and other general topics, but may not reveal the name or any other specifics regarding an offender.

A parent or guardian who is a Level 1 or Level 2 sex offender shall be allowed to enter the school campus to attend parent-teacher conferences or any other activity that is appropriate for a parent, guardian, or community member.

Level 3 and Level 4 sex offenders may only enter the school campus in the following instances:

1. The offender is a student attending school in the district;
2. To attend a graduation or baccalaureate ceremony;
3. It is a non-student contact day according to the school calendar or no school-sponsored event is taking place on campus;
4. The offender is a parent or guardian of a student enrolled in the district and goes directly to the school office to have school personnel deliver medicine, food, or personal items for the student;
5. The offender is a parent or guardian of a student and enters the school campus where the student is enrolled to attend a scheduled parent-teacher conference and the offender is escorted to and from the conference by a designated school official or employee.

A Level 3, but not a Level 4, sex offender may attend a school sponsored event for which an admission fee is charged or tickets are sold or distributed if the sex offender:

## 6.10—SEX OFFENDERS ON CAMPUS (MEGAN’S LAW)

Page 2

- Is the parent or guardian great-grandparent of or is related by blood or marriage within the second (2<sup>nd</sup>) degree of consanguinity<sup>1</sup> to a student enrolled in the public school; and
- Notifies the administration of the school in writing at least twenty-four (24) hours before the start of the event that he or she will be attending the event.

A Level 3 and Level 4 sex offender who is the parent or guardian of a child enrolled in the district and who wishes to enter the school campus in which the student is enrolled for any other purpose than those listed above, must give reasonable notice to the school principal or his/her designee. The principal or designee may allow the sex offender to enter upon the campus provided there is a designated school official or employee to escort and supervise the sex offender while they remain on campus. The sex offender shall not enter upon the school campus until such time as a designated school official or employee is available.

Copies of the notification from law enforcement should be kept in a secure place accessible to teachers and staff, but should not be posted on school bulletin boards or made available to students or members of the community at large.

Note: <sup>1</sup>The method to determine the degree of consanguinity may be found in A.C.A. § 28-9-212 and a consanguinity diagram has been posted at <http://arsba.org/policy-resources>.

<sup>2</sup> Our interpretation is that for a Level 3 sex offender to be admitted to a ticketed event that the Level 3 sex offender must be related to a student enrolled in the public school where the event is being hosted rather than related to a student enrolled in the visiting school.

Legal References: Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Guidelines for “Megan’s Law”, A.C.A. § 5-14-132, A.C.A. § 12-12-913 (g)(3)  
A.C.A. § 28-9-212,

Date Adopted: May 21, 2009

Last Revised: June 20, 2017, April 2018, June 2019

## **6.11—PARENT, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – DISTRICT**

**Page 1**

The Greene County Tech School District understands the importance of involving parents, families, and the community as a whole in promoting higher student achievement and general good will between the district and those it serves. Therefore, the district shall strive to develop and maintain the capacity for meaningful and productive parent, family, and community engagement that will result in partnerships that are mutually beneficial to the school, students, parents, families, and the community. To achieve such ends, the district shall work to:

1. Involve parents, families, and the community in the development of the long range planning of the district;
2. Give the schools in the district the support necessary to enable them to plan and implement effective parent, family, and community engagement activities;
3. Have a coordinated engagement program where the engagement activities of the district enhance the involvement strategies of other programs such as Head Start, HIPPPY, Parents as Partners, Parents as Teachers, ABC, ABC for School Success, area Pre-K programs, and Even Start;
4. Explain to parents, families, and the community the State's academic and achievement standards, State and local student assessments and how the district's curriculum is aligned with the state's academic standards and assessments and how parents, families, and the community can work with the district to improve students' academic achievement;
5. Provide parents and families with the materials and training they need to be better able to help their child achieve. The district may use parent resource centers or other community based organizations to foster parental involvement and provide literacy and technology training to parents.
6. Educate district staff, with the assistance of parents, in ways to work and communicate with parents and to know how to implement parent, family, and community engagement programs that will promote positive partnerships between the school and parents, families, and the community;
7. Keep parents, families, and the community informed about parent, family, and community engagement programs, meetings, and other activities they could be involved in. Such communication shall be, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents and families can understand;
8. Find ways to eliminate barriers that work to keep parents and families from being involved in their child's education. This may include providing transportation and child care to enable parents to participate, arranging meetings at a variety of times, and being creative with parent/teacher conferences;
9. Find and modify other successful parent, family, and community engagement programs to suit the needs of our district;
10. Train parents, families, and the community to enhance and promote the involvement of other parents, families, and members of the community;
11. Provide reasonable support for other parent, family, and community engagement activities as parents, families, and the community may reasonably request.

To ensure the continued improvement of the district's parent, family, and community engagement program, the district will conduct an annual review of its parental involvement policies to examine their effect on promoting higher student achievement. The review shall be done by a committee consisting of parents and other community members, certified and classified staff, and member(s) of the administration.

This policy shall be part of the school's Title I plan and shall be distributed to parents of the district's students and provided, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand.

## **6.11—PARENT, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – DISTRICT**

**Page 2**

Notes: If any school in your district receives Title I aid, Federal law requires you to have a district policy covering parent, family, and community engagement for the parents of students served under the program. Because your district is required to “develop jointly with, agree on, and distribute to parents of participating children a written parent, family, and community engagement policy,” this model policy is designed to be a starting point to be used in the development of your final policy. 20 U.S.C. § 6318 requires the basics of the introduction and the last two paragraphs as well as items #1 – 7 and #11. Items #8 – 10 are recommended options in the Federal law, but are not mandatory. A.C.A. §§ 6-15-1702, 1703, and 1704 require each district to develop a parental involvement plan (rather than a policy) in collaboration with parents. The statutes are very detailed, and full of “shalls” going far beyond the requirements of this policy required by 20 U.S.C. § 6318. Be sure to have the statutes and associated rules handy when working out the details of your district’s parent, family, and community engagement plan.

The US Department of Education has correctly opined that this policy (and policy 6.12) are of no use unless accompanied by an implementation plan. Consequently, the DESE School Improvement office requires districts to have such a plan.

A.C.A. § 6-15-1704(a)(3) requires each school to place a parent-friendly summary of the parent, family, and community engagement plan as a supplement to the student handbook. The parent has to sign a receipt acknowledging receipt of the summary and return the signed form to the school where the student is enrolled.

Legal References:       20 U.S.C. § 6318  
                                  A.C.A. § 6-15-1702  
                                  A.C.A. § 6-15-1703  
                                  A.C.A. § 6-15-1704  
                                  Division of Elementary and Secondary Education Rules Governing Parental  
                                  Involvement Plans and Family and Community Engagement

## **GREENE COUNTY TECH DISTRICT PARENT INVOLVEMENT PLAN**

Kem Drake, District Parent Involvement Coordinator  
Amber Farmer, Primary Parent Involvement Coordinator  
Kim Kellums, Elementary Parent Involvement Coordinator  
Charity Andrews, Intermediate Parent Involvement Coordinator  
Kim Simpson, Middle School Parent Involvement Coordinator  
Sherri McNamara, Jr. High Parent Involvement Coordinator  
Anne Edwards, High School Parent Involvement Coordinator

## 6.11—PARENT, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – DISTRICT

Page 3

*In keeping with the Greene County Tech School District Mission Statement:*

The faculty, administration, and staff of Greene County Tech School District strive to help all students grow in knowledge, ability, and character through study, training, and experience. We believe all students can achieve mastery of essential skills to their maximum potential. We accept the responsibility to teach all students and share with the parents the responsibility to develop positive attitude, discipline, and motivation in each student.

*Agreeing with the definition of Parent Involvement:*

The definition of parent involvement, as adopted by the National PTA, means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring that parents play an integral role in assisting their children's learning, that parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their children's education at school, and that parents are full partners in their children's education including, as appropriate, in decision-making and serving on advisory committees.

*Accepting the current research:*

### **These benefits for students:**

- Higher grades and test scores
- Better attendance and more homework done
- Fewer placements in special education
- More positive attitudes and behavior
- Higher graduation rates
- Greater enrollment in postsecondary education

### **These benefits for parents:**

- Familiarity with the school environment
- A better understanding of the different family situations of their students by teachers
- Greater confidence in themselves as parents and in their ability to help their children learn at home
- Greater opportunities for resources to meet their needs

### **These benefits for schools and communities:**

- Improved teacher morale
- Higher ratings of teachers by parents
- More support from families
- Higher student achievement
- Better reputation in the community.

*Seven key research facts to remember based on some of the most important research findings about parent involvement:*

**The family provides** the child's primary educational environment.



## 6.11—PARENT, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – DISTRICT

Page 4

**Involving parents** in their children's formal education improves student achievement.

**Parent involvement** is most effective when it is comprehensive, long-lasting, and well-planned.

**The benefits** are not confined to early childhood or the elementary level; there are strong effects from involving parents continuously throughout high school.

**Involving parents** in their own children's education at home is not enough. To ensure the quality of schools as institutions serving the community, parents must be involved at all levels in the school.

**Children** have the most to gain when schools involve parents. Parents do not have to be well-educated to help.

**We cannot look** at the school and the home in isolation from one another; we must see how they interconnect with each other and with the world at large.

*Greene County Tech School District is committed to implementing and maintaining the following components of the Parent Involvement Plan for the positive impact on our students, families and community:*

### **STRAND ONE: PARENTING: BASIC RESPONSIBILITIES OF FAMILIES**

Assist families with parenting and child-rearing skills, understanding child and adolescent development, and setting home conditions that support children as students at each age and grade level.

Assist schools in understanding families.

To promote responsible parenting, schools shall:

- 1.1 Purchase parenting books, magazines, and other informative material regarding responsible parenting. Parents will be provided the opportunity to borrow these materials for review.
- 1.2 Publish a notice in the newspaper at the end of the school year honoring parents who attend all parent/teacher conferences scheduled by the school.
- 1.3 Create a parent center.
  - 1.3.1 Provide an accessible parent/family information and resource center to support parents and families with training, resources, and other services.
  - 1.3.2 Link parents to programs and resources within the community that provide support services to families.
- 1.4 Establish policies that support and respect family responsibilities, recognizing the variety of parenting traditions and practices within the community's cultural and religious diversity.
- 1.5 Encourage staff members to demonstrate respect for families and the family's primary role in the rearing of children to become responsible adults.

#### Parent/Family Responsibilities

To support the Parent Involvement Plan, we encourage parents to:

- Attend school sponsored activities (i.e. Open House, Parent/Teacher Conferences, Parents Make the Difference Nights, etc.).
- Respond to teacher communications (notes, phone calls, etc.).
- Become involved in your child's academic growth by reading with your child, monitoring homework, etc.
- Support school policies as stated in the student handbook.
- Communicate with teachers in a timely fashion as the need arises.

#### School/Teacher Responsibilities

## 6.11—PARENT, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – DISTRICT

Page 5

To support the Parent Involvement Plan, we encourage teachers/schools to:

- Provide opportunities for parental involvement through (Open House, Parent/Teacher Conferences, Parents Make the Difference Nights, PTO and booster meetings, etc.).
- Communicate with parents in an ongoing process, using diverse methods.
- Communicate to parents the academic progress of their child.
- Provide parenting resources and make them available to parents.

### **STRAND TWO: COMMUNICATION: BASIC RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOLS**

Communicate with families about school programs and student progress through effective school-to-home and home-to-school communications.

To encourage communication with parents, the schools shall:

- 2.1 Prepare family kits, appropriate for the age and grade of the child, describing
  - a. the school's parental involvement program;
  - b. the recommended role of the parent, student, teacher and school;
  - c. the policies and procedures of the school;
  - d. ways for the parents to become involved in the school and his/her child's education;
  - e. activities planned throughout the school year to encourage parental involvement;
  - f. 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;
  - g. useful educational tips on paycheck size tip cards.
- 2.2 Encourage communication with parents by scheduling no less than two (2) parent/teacher conferences per school year.
- 2.3 Use a variety of communication tools, seeking to facilitate two-way interaction. Examples could include Parent Link, e-mail, web pages, student handbook, notices through mail-outs, television, radio, newspaper, calendars, agendas, weekly class syllabi, Parents Make the Difference Nights, PTO and booster meetings, etc.
- 2.4 Provide information concerning academic and extracurricular offerings as stated in the student handbook.
- 2.5 Send home student work, report cards and progress reports for parental comment and review on a regular basis. Follow-up conferences may be scheduled as needed.
- 2.6 Disseminate information on school policies, discipline procedures, assessment tools, and school goals.
- 2.7 Communicate with parents regarding positive student behavior and achievement as well as student problems and needs.
- 2.8 Provide staff development regarding effective communication techniques and the importance of regular two-way communication between the school and the family.

## 6.11—PARENT, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – DISTRICT

Page 6

### Parent/Family Responsibilities

To support the Parent Involvement Plan, we encourage parents to:

- Attend school sponsored activities (i.e. Open House, Parent/Teacher Conferences, Parents Make the Difference Nights, PTO and booster meetings, etc.).
- Respond to requests and information from school in a timely fashion.
- Support school policies as stated in the student handbook.
- Promote effective verbal and written communication between home and school.

### School/Teacher Responsibilities

To support the Parent Involvement Plan, we encourage teachers/schools to:

- Formulate educational missions and goals using both staff and family input.
- Communicate with parents in an ongoing process, using diverse methods.
- Communicate to parents the academic progress of their child.
- Maintain an open door policy with families and the community.
- Disseminate information using language that is understandable to all parents.
- Regularly monitor communications for effectiveness.
- Involve all school personnel in the communications effort.

## **STRAND THREE: VOLUNTEERING: INVOLVEMENT AT AND FOR THE SCHOOL**

Improve recruitment, training, work, and schedules to involve families as volunteers and audiences at the school or in other locations to support students and school programs.

To welcome parents in the school and seek support and assistance, the schools shall:

- 3.1 Maintain school policies or procedures that would encourage a parent to visit the school.
- 3.2 Develop a volunteer resource book listing the interests, talents, and availability of volunteers for use in promoting and scheduling volunteers.
  - 3.2.1 Survey parents regarding their interests, talents, and availability for use in the volunteer resource book.
  - 3.2.2 Utilize the volunteer resource book to match school needs with volunteer interests, talents, and availability.
  - 3.2.3 Ensure that volunteer activities are meaningful and
- 3.3 Provide appropriate training for volunteers to successfully accomplish their assigned tasks.
- 3.4 Provide a variety of volunteering opportunities including ways to volunteer from home.
- 3.5 Promote school activities and invite parent participation at existing events when appropriate by showcasing successful products, advertising upcoming events, distributing literature, or having sign-up sheets available
- 3.6 Document volunteer accomplishments and hours contributed.
- 3.7 Recognize volunteer efforts and show appreciation for their contributions.

## 6.11—PARENT, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – DISTRICT

Page 7

### Parent/Family Responsibilities

To support the Parent Involvement Plan, we encourage parents to:

- Become actively involved in parent and school organizations, utilizing the available resources for the benefit of the entire school.
- Actively seek information on the needs of students and schools and become familiar with school policies and procedures.
- Seek ways to match busy schedules with school volunteer opportunities.
- Make interests, talents, expertise, and personal experiences known and available to schools and parent organizations and follow through.
- Recruit and encourage others to become actively involved.

### School/Teacher Responsibilities

To support the Parent Involvement Plan we, encourage teachers/schools to:

- Provide a welcoming, friendly atmosphere that encourages meaningful volunteerism.
- Gather information about school needs as well as the interests, talents, and availability of volunteers.
- Develop and maintain a volunteer resource book.
- Develop and maintain records pertaining to volunteer accomplishments and hours contributed.
- Provide training for parents so they can become effective volunteers.
- Support background and security checks if and when necessary.
- Provide recognition of parent efforts. t on volunteer interests and abilities.

## STRAND FOUR: LEARNING AT HOME: INVOLVEMENT IN ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

Involve families with their children in learning activities at home, including homework and other curriculum-linked activities and decisions.

To help parents in assisting students, the schools shall:

4.1 Schedule regular “Parents Make the Difference” evenings where parents are given a report on the state of the school and an overview of:

4.1.1 What students will be learning:

- Inform parents of the expectations for students in each subject at each grade level.
- Provide information regarding how parents can foster learning at home, give appropriate assistance, monitor homework, and give feedback to teachers.

4.1.2 How students will be assessed.

4.1.3 What parents should expect for their children’s education:

- Sponsor workshops and/or distribute information to assist parents in understanding how students can improve skills, get help when needed, meet class expectations, and perform well on assessments.

## 6.11—PARENT, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – DISTRICT

Page 8

- 4.1.4 How parents can assist and make a difference in their children’s education:
- Involve parents in setting student goals each year and in planning for post-secondary education a
  - Encourage the development of a course selection process involving parents.
- 4.2 Provide resources (i.e. old text books, homework tips, web based tutorials, games, etc.) that will help parents be better equipped to assist their children with their education.
- 4.3 Provide information about student assignments, assessments, and activities through a variety of methods (i.e. Parent Link, weekly assignment sheets, syllabi, monthly calendars, returned student work, and tests).
- 4.4 Provide a variety of opportunities for students to obtain academic help (i.e. academy time, tutoring programs, parent center and library resource check-out, etc.).

### Parent/Family Responsibilities

To support the Parent Involvement Plan, we encourage parents to:

- Provide a home environment that is supportive of learning and that places a high value on education by making it a top priority on the family agenda.
- Promote school attendance.
- Request help from schools on learning issues, when needed, and to follow through.
- Treat educators with courtesy, respecting their knowledge and expertise, and to be receptive of their input regarding their children.
- Become knowledgeable about their children’s curriculum, instruction, and the relevant state standards.
- Be aware of and encourage their children to take advantage of educational opportunities, such as scholarships and co-curricular activities.

### School/Teacher Responsibilities

To support the Parent Involvement Plan, we encourage teachers/schools to:

- Expect student responsibility.
- Offer suggestions in a respectful manner.
- Engage in ongoing communications before a child falls behind.
- Recognize and respect a parent’s desire for his/her child to succeed.
- Affirm the idea that all children can learn.
- Provide high quality instruction based on national and state standards.
- Provide supplemental resources and information as needed to assist parents in contributing to their children’s education.

## STRAND FIVE: **DECISION MAKING: PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP**

Include families as participants in school decisions, through PTA/PTO, school committees, and other parent organizations.

## 6.11—PARENT, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – DISTRICT Page 9

To encourage parents to participate as full partners in the decisions that affect their children and family, schools shall:

- 5.1 Frequently publish the school’s process for resolving parental concerns, including how to define the problem, whom to approach first, and how to develop solutions.
- 5.2 Sponsor seminars to inform the parents of high school students about how to be involved in the decisions affecting course selection, career planning, and preparation for post-secondary opportunities.
- Encourage the formation of parent groups to identify and respond to issues of interest to parents.
- 5.4 Provide parents with current information regarding school policies, practices, and both student and school performance data.
- 5.5 Enable parents to participate as partners when setting school goals, developing or evaluating programs and policies, or responding to performance data.
- 5.6 Encourage parent participation in the decisions that affect students, such as student placement and course selection.
- 5.7 Provide opportunities for staff and parents to discuss ideas on collaborative partnering and shared decision making.
- 5.8 Publicize the existence of committees that are in need of parent members:
  - a. keeping the parents and community informed;
  - b. explaining the purpose of the committee;
  - c. spelling out the involvement (i.e. time involved, work to be done, etc.);
  - d. indicating how the committee work/decisions will be used.

### Parent/Family Responsibilities

To support the Parent Involvement Plan, we encourage parents to:

- Define the areas of responsibility for parents as decision makers.
- Become partners with the school in decision making.
- Take the initiative to become involved and to stay involved.
- Participate in a partnership for the improvement of all children.
- Address the specific needs of their children.
- School/Teacher Responsibilities

To support the Parent Involvement Plan, we encourage teachers/schools to:

- Provide an inviting atmosphere for parents.
- Develop clear and understandable procedures that enable all to participate.
- Clearly define areas of responsibility and accountability. Actively recruit parents for decision making and advocacy roles.
- Provide opportunities for staff, parents, and community to share in decision making.

### **STRAND SIX: COLLABORATING WITH THE COMMUNITY**

Collaborate resources and services for families, students, and the school with businesses, agencies, and other groups, and provide services to the community.

## 6.11—PARENT, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – DISTRICT

Page 10

To promote interaction with the community, schools shall:

- 6.1 Contact alumni from the school to create an alumni advisory commission to provide advice and guidance for school improvement.
- 6.2 Develop paycheck size cards with tips about how parents can foster their children’s success and contact employers about including the cards with employee paychecks.
- 6.3 Develop partnerships with local businesses and service groups that benefit both the school and the community partner.
  - 6.3.1 Utilize community facilities, resources, and personnel to enhance learning (such as Kuts for Kids, The Smoke House, hygiene packets, Health Fair, etc.)
  - 6.3.2 Encourage the use of school facilities, resources, and personnel to assist the community in their needs (i.e. offering classes in languages and computer technology, helping workers earn their GED, hosting appreciation luncheons, etc)

### Parent/Family Responsibilities

To support the Parent Involvement Plan, we encourage parents to:

- Be knowledgeable about their community and to become volunteers and participate in community events.
- Educate the community on the need to find alternative funding solutions for education.

### School/Teacher Responsibilities

To support the Parent Involvement Plan, we encourage teachers/schools to:

- Develop partnerships with local businesses and service groups.
- Implement a structured volunteer program which includes an evaluation component.
- Live in and/or become knowledgeable about the district in which one works.
- Communicate information about programs, services, and needs to a broad community.

### Community Responsibilities

To support the Parent Involvement Plan, we encourage communities to:

- Provide opportunities for real-world learning experiences.
- Actively develop opportunities for assisting schools and parents.
- Make their business/organization available as a place of learning.
- Enforce hiring policies that reinforce messages about school attendance, effort, responsibility and accomplishment.

## STRAND SEVEN: PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION

Support the development, implementation, and regular evaluation of the program to involve parents in the decisions and practices of the school district.

To promote the implementation and evaluation of the parental involvement program schools shall:

- 7.1 Designate one certified staff member, in accordance with the law, to serve as a parent facilitator to:
  - a. promote and encourage a welcoming atmosphere to parental involvement in the school;

## 6.11—PARENT, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – DISTRICT

Page 11

- b. organize meaningful training for staff and parents
  - no less than 2 hours of professional development opportunities for teachers, which may be included in the thirty hours required, designed to enhance understanding of effective parental involvement strategies.
  - no less than three hours of professional development opportunities for administrators, in addition to the thirty hours required, including
    - \* effective parent involvement strategies and
    - \* the importance of administrative leadership in setting expectations and creating a climate conducive to parental participation.
- c. conduct regular evaluation of the parental involvement program
  - review and update the districts parental involvement plan
  - file a copy of the districts parental involvement plan with the Department of Education.

Date Adopted: June 2007

Last Revised: June 2013, June 20, 2017, June 2019



## **6.12—PARENT, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – SCHOOL**

**Page 1**

Each School in the Greene County Tech School District School understands the importance of involving parents, families, and the community as a whole in promoting higher student achievement and general good will between the school and those it serves. Therefore, each GCT school shall strive to develop and maintain the capacity for meaningful and productive parent, family, and community engagement that will result in partnerships that are mutually beneficial to the school, students, parents, families, and the community. To achieve such ends, the school shall work to:

1. Involve parents, families, and the community in the development and improvement of Title I programs for the school;
2. Have a coordinated engagement program where the engagement activities of the school enhance the involvement strategies of other programs such as Head Start, HIPPIY, Parents as Partners, Parents as Teachers, ABC, ABC for School Success, area Pre-K programs, and Even Start;
3. Explain to parents, families, and the community the State’s academic and achievement standards, State and local student assessments and how the school’s curriculum is aligned with the state’s academic standards and assessments and how parents, families, and the community can work with the school to improve students’ academic achievement;
4. Provide parents and families with the materials and training they need to be better able to help their child achieve. The school may use parent resource centers or other community based organizations to foster parental involvement and provide literacy and technology training to parents.
5. Educate school staff, with the assistance of parents, in ways to work and communicate with parents and to know how to implement parent, family, and community engagement programs that will promote positive partnerships between the school and parents, families, and the community;
6. Keep parents, families, and the community informed about parent, family, and community engagement programs, meetings, and other activities they could be involved in. Such communication shall be, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents and families can understand;
7. Find ways to eliminate barriers that work to keep parents and families from being involved in their child’s education. This may include providing transportation and child care to enable parents to participate, arranging meetings at a variety of times, and being creative with parent/teacher conferences;
8. Find and modify other successful parent, family, and community engagement programs to suit the needs of our school;
9. Train parents, families, and the community to enhance and promote the involvement of other parents, families, and members of the community;
10. Provide reasonable support for other parent, family, and community engagement activities as parents, families, and the community may reasonably request.

To help promote an understanding of each party’s role in improving student learning, each GCT School shall develop a compact that outlines the responsibilities of parents, students, and the school staff in raising student academic achievement and in building the partnerships that will enable students to meet the State’s academic standards.

Each GCT School shall convene an annual meeting, or several meetings at varying times if necessary to adequately reach parents and families of participating students, to inform parents and families of the school’s

## 6.12—PARENT, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – SCHOOL Page 2

participation in Title I, its requirements regarding parent, family, and community engagement and the parents right to be involved in the education of their child.

Each GCT School shall, at least annually, involve parents, families, and the community in reviewing the school’s Title I program and parent, family, and community engagement policy in order to help ensure their continued improvement.

This policy shall be part of the school’s Title I plan and shall be distributed to parents of the district’s students and provided, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand.

**Each School in the GCT School District shall post their building Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Policy on the District’s Web page and revise it yearly.**

Notes: If your school receives Title I assistance, Federal law requires you to have a school policy covering parent, family, and community engagement for the parents of students served under the program. Because your school is required to “develop jointly with, agree on, and distribute to parents of participating children a written parent, family, and community engagement policy,” this model policy is designed to be a starting point to be used in the development of your final policy. 20 U.S.C. § 6318 requires the basics of the introduction and the last four paragraphs as well as items-#1 – 6 and #10. Items #7 – 9 are recommended options in the Federal law, but are not mandatory. A.C.A. §§ 6-15-1702, 1703, and 1704 require each district to develop a parental involvement plan (rather than a policy) in collaboration with parents. The statutes are very detailed, and full of “shalls” going far beyond the requirements of this policy required by 20 U.S.C. § 6318. Be sure to have the statutes and associated rules handy when working out the details of your district’s parental involvement plan.

The “compact” is also required to be developed jointly with parents of the children served under Title I.

The US Department of Education has correctly opined that this policy (and policy 6.11) are of no use unless accompanied by an implementation plan. Consequently, the DESE School Improvement office requires schools to have such a plan.

A.C.A. § 6-15-1704(a)(3) requires each school to place a parent-friendly summary of the parent, family, and community engagement plan as a supplement to the student handbook. The parent has to sign a receipt acknowledging receipt of the summary and return the signed form to the school where the student is enrolled.

Legal References: 20 U.S.C. § 6318, A.C.A. § 6-15-1702, A.C.A. § 6-15-1703, A.C.A. § 6-15-1704  
Division of Elementary and Secondary Education  
Rules Governing Parental Involvement Plans and Family and Community Engagement

Date Adopted: June 2005

Last Revised: June 2013, June 20, 2017, June 2019