

## Ward Central Family and Community Engagement Plan

**School Name:**

Ward Central Elementary

**Facilitator Name:**

Emily Taylor

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**Plan Review/Revision Date:**

May 2020

**District Level Reviewer, Title:**

Terena Woodruff, Director of Counseling

Jordan Boris, District Social Worker

**District Level Approval Date:**

PENDING CHANGES 5/26/2020

**Committee Members, Role:**

Casey Adams, Classroom Teacher

Kaycee Ford, Classroom Teacher

Melissa Gasaway, Instructional Facilitator

Charlie Gastineau, Community Member

Teresa Richardson, Asst. Principal

Brandi Harbour, Classroom Teacher

Brittney Holland, Classroom Teacher

Cara Loe, Classroom Teacher

Tiffanee Miller, Community Member

Mike Ostrowski, Parent, Community Member

Connie Reed, Principal

Emily Taylor, Parent Involvement Coordinator, School Counselor

Kristin Williams, Parent

### ***1: Jointly Developed***

*(Describe/List how parents will be involved in the development of the school parent and family engagement plan and how parents will be involved in the planning, review, and improvement of parent and family engagement programs.)*

Parent input will be sought in the creation of the Family and Community Engagement Plan through electronic means, due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Ward Central will involve parents and community members to serve on the School Improvement Planning Committee each school year. This committee will meet in July before school starts to review and make revisions to the School Compact in order to prepare for the new school year. If unable to meet in person due to restrictions, technology such as e-mail and virtual platforms will be utilized to collaborate effectively.

All family and community members will be invited to join Ward Central's Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) for involvement opportunities and to assist in the evaluation and review of the Family and Community Engagement Plan annually. This invitation will be posted on Ward Central's Facebook page and advertised at Open House. A suggestion box and sign up sheet will be available at Open House for any family or community members who would like to be represented in a variety of roles throughout the school. Parents can also make requests about opportunities for regular meetings and family nights. These endeavors will allow ample opportunities to engage traditionally less engaged populations. Ward Central will also consider additional means of participation such as virtual platform meetings. (Emily Taylor-ongoing)

Ward Central will have the second annual September Parent Advisory Committee meeting in the fall of 2020. All decision making processes regarding the school's Title I, Part A program will be reviewed and discussed. If face-to-face meetings are not possible due to COVID-19 restrictions, technology such as e-mails, Google Forms, and virtual platform meetings will be utilized to ensure appropriate input opportunities are available.

Ward Central will administer the "High Reliability Schools Level 1 Survey" offered through DESE. Parents will be asked if they feel that Ward Central provides them opportunities for input regarding optimal functions of the school. For all core survey items last year, respondents were asked to rate their agreement on a five-point scale, from "strongly disagree to strongly agree." The mean response was a score of "4"

meaning that parents agreed that Ward Central provided them opportunities to review, update, and contribute. (Connie Reed-September 2020) Ward Central collected input through surveys from teachers in the spring of 2020, and will survey parents in the fall of 2020 to ensure a wide range of contributions into family and community engagement efforts. (Emily Taylor-August 2020)

Ward Central wants parents and families to be involved in their child's education. Research shows when schools, families, and community groups work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, attend school more regularly, stay in school longer, and enjoy school more. Parents may contact the District Family and Community Engagement Facilitator if the Title I plan is not satisfactory. (Terena Woodruff-ongoing)

## **2: Annual Title I Meeting**

*(Describe/List when (provide the month/year or month/day/year) the school will hold the Annual Title I meeting to inform parents of the requirements of Title I and the school's participation as well as the parents' rights to be involved. The Annual Title I meeting should not be used to ask for parent input, but provided as an opportunity to disseminate information and distribute copies of the revised parent and family engagement policy.)*

Ward Central Elementary will hold the second annual Report to the Public/PAC meeting in September 2020. All decision making processes regarding the school's Title I, Part A program will be reviewed to inform parents of the requirements of Title I and the school's participation as well as the parents' rights to be involved. Parents will complete the School-Parent Compact if they do not previously complete it during Open House. Ward Central will distribute informational packets during this Title I meeting that includes a Ward Central Volunteer Application form and a brochure that lists 72 WAYS VOLUNTEERS CAN HELP AT WARD CENTRAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL. If face-to-face meetings are not possible due to COVID-19 restrictions, technology such as a virtual platform meeting or posting a recording to social media will be utilized in order to ensure parents have an opportunity to access the information. (Connie Reed)

### ***3: Communications***

*(Describe/List how the parent and family engagement policy will be distributed to parents and how the school is going to communicate with parents including information about how the school will provide information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities to parents in a format, to the extent practicable, and in a language that parents can understand.)*

The Family and Community Engagement Plan will be distributed at Parent/Teacher Conference nights in October. Parents will be informed of the plan at their conferences and will be encouraged to speak with the Family and Community Engagement Facilitator if they have any questions, comments, or concerns regarding the plan. The Ward Central parent facilitator will be available on Parent/Teacher Conference nights and upon request throughout the year. Ward Central has a designated certified staff member who is serving as the Ward Central Family and Community Engagement Facilitator:

Emily Taylor

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Printed copies of the Family and Community Engagement Plan will be available upon request and in the Parent Resource Center during school days. The plan will be posted on the district website by August 1. Parent signatures will be collected electronically with Registration Gageway during new student and back to school online registration. (Emily Taylor-August 1)

Ward Central Elementary will provide a Family and Community Engagement Packet that contains a description of the Family and Community Engagement Plan, recommended roles and ways for families to be involved, a survey of volunteer interests, a schedule of activities, and a system of regular two way communication. Family and community engagement does not stop at the school doors. Ward Central encourages parents to help at home (e.g., planned home reading time, informal learning activities, and/or homework contracts between parents and children). The school will provide a calendar and list of volunteer opportunities in the packet and solicit ideas for other types of volunteer efforts during Open House and through surveys. If parents are unable to attend Open House to receive this packet, the information will be sent home with the student, through the mail, or through electronic means.

Teachers will explain the requirements to parents and encourage them to become involved in the school. Meetings will be offered at various times and in various

formats to promote optimal participation. The district and school will provide training sessions for parents and community members with the information they need to participate as school volunteers in order to put them at ease and make the experience successful. Parents may communicate with staff through email, conferences, and phone calls. Ward Central wants parents to be involved in their child's education. (Connie Reed, Emily Taylor-ongoing)

#### ***4: School-Parent Compact***

*(Describe/List the process the schools will follow to jointly develop with parents a school-parent compact.)*

Ward Central will use school staff and parents to jointly develop a School-Parent-Student Compact. This committee will review the parent surveys and the faculty needs assessment to help with outlining this new compact. The committee will address how parents, school staff, and students share the responsibility for improving student academic achievement and the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve the state's academic standards.

Ward Central is responsible for providing high quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment. The school will hold Parent/Teacher Conferences twice a year, at minimum. (Connie Reed-October 13th and 15th, March 16th and 18th) Parents will also have access to staff through meetings, phone calls, or other technology. Teachers will frequently report progress and communicate with parents, along with facilitating opportunities for parents to be involved in the classroom.

Parents are responsible for maintaining meaningful two way communication by responding appropriately. Parents are also responsible for supporting the school and teachers in their efforts to provide the best education possible for each student. Ward Central wants parents and families to be involved in their child's education. Research shows when schools, families, and community groups work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, attend school more regularly, stay in school longer, and enjoy school more. Students are responsible for being respectful, being obedient, listening, working hard, being prepared, showing self-control, and being responsible for their behavior.

Ward Central believes that meaningful two way communication is important including Parent/Teacher conferences, progress reports, reasonable access to staff, opportunities to volunteer, and observation of class activities. If a parent wishes to observe class activities, the process includes speaking with the teacher and setting the date and time with the administrators. Parental involvement does not stop at the school doors. Parents are encouraged to help at home (e.g., planned home reading time, informal learning activities, and/or homework contracts between parents and children). The school will provide a list of volunteer opportunities and solicit ideas for other types of volunteer efforts during Open House and through parent surveys. Information from the volunteer survey will be compiled into a volunteer resource book for staff. Some examples of volunteer opportunities include chaperoning field trips, mentoring, and assisting with the Ward Central Veterans Day Celebration. Training sessions will be provided for parents and community members with the information they need to participate as school volunteers in order to put them at ease and make the experience successful. (Connie Reed-Fall 2020)

The Ward Central School-Parent-Compact will be distributed in August. All stakeholders will sign the compact. If face-to-face meetings are not possible due to COVID-19 restrictions, technology such as e-mails, Google Forms, and virtual platform meetings will be utilized to ensure appropriate collaboration opportunities are available. Ward Central hopes that building and developing a partnership with parents, families, the community, and students will help students achieve State Standards. (Connie Reed, Emily Taylor)

### **5: Reservation of Funds**

*(Describe/List how the district and/or school will coordinate with other organizations, businesses, and community partners to provide additional supports and resources to families.)*

Ward Central will engage parents in decisions about the allocation of its Title I, Part A funds for parental involvement and decisions made to create the school improvement plan. This will be assessed in the Parent Needs Assessment distributed in the fall of 2020. Ward Central will invite two community members to serve on the Parent Advisory Committee. Ward Central has a very active Parent/Teacher Organization that fosters parental and community involvement within the school. The Title I budget will be allocated from the input from these committees. The budget will also be reviewed at the Annual Title I meeting in September with an opportunity for parents to give input and ask questions.

During the 2019-2020 school year, funds were used at a “Desserts and Discussion Night” where teachers partnered with parents to work on academics and build relationships. This event had an impact on families, but the numbers were not as strong as they could be. Funds were also used for a STEM Parent Night that was unable to occur due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

## ***6: Coordination of Services***

*(Describe/List how the district and/or school will coordinate with other organizations, businesses, and community partners to provide additional supports and resources to families.)*

- Ward Central will coordinate with a local church to connect students with resources at the Back to School Fair. (Emily Taylor, Jenie James-May 2020)
- Ward Central will coordinate with outside mental health agencies to ensure that students receive outpatient or inpatient mental health services as needed. (Emily Taylor, Jenie James-ongoing)
- Ward Central will coordinate with Lonoke County Safe Haven when families flee domestic abuse situations and help to ensure that the students have what they need physically and academically. Extra measures will be taken as families transition into other housing and may have extra needs. (Emily Taylor, Jenie James-ongoing)
- During Christmas Alliance, Ward Central will coordinate with businesses and generous individuals in the community to sponsor children for Christmas. (Emily Taylor, Jenie James-October to December)
- Ward Central will collaborate with community resources to integrate family and community engagement activities with early childhood programs and college/career readiness skills. (Emily Taylor, Jenie James-ongoing)
- Teachers and staff will celebrate and help to prepare students as they transition from Pre-K to kindergarten and from 4th grade to middle school. (Classroom teachers, staff-May 2021)
- Ward Central will coordinate with Cabot Middle School South and Cabot Middle School North to help provide a smooth transition from one school to the next by raising parental awareness. Ward Central Elementary, Cabot Middle School South, and Cabot Middle School North will work together to allow 4<sup>th</sup> grade students to visit and attend an orientation. (Emily Taylor, Jenie James, classroom teachers, Connie Reed-April and May 2021)

- My Future Story Day will encourage students to dream and plan for their possible future careers. Parents, family members, and community members will be invited to speak about their career field. (Emily Taylor, Jenie James-May 2021)
- Ward Central will consider creating an alumni advisory commission. (Connie Reed-ongoing)
- Ward Central will support the PTO. (Connie Reed-ongoing)
- Parents, family members, and the community are invited to join the PAC at any time throughout the year. (Connie Reed, ongoing)
- Ward Central will promote and support responsible parenting through the Parent Resource Center. (Emily Taylor-ongoing)
- Local churches donate clothing for students in need. (Emily Taylor, Jenie James-ongoing)
- Businesses and various organizations donate coats for students who need a winter coat. (Emily Taylor, Jenie James-ongoing)
- Local churches and organizations donate food and money to help support the Backpack Buddies Program. (Emily Taylor, Jenie James-ongoing)
- PTO volunteers help pack the Backpack Buddies bags. (Emily Taylor, Jenie James-ongoing)
- During the COVID-19 public health crisis, Ward Central met the needs of students and parents virtually with:
  - ❑ Zooms weekly
  - ❑ Frequent communication through phone calls and e-mails
  - ❑ Class communication systems (such as Dojo or Remind), Facebook, and other online applications
  - ❑ Google Classroom
  - ❑ Arkansas PBS AMI to further students' education with teacher assistance
  - ❑ Students who did not have access to a computer were able to check out a Chromebook to facilitate AMI work. There were also WiFi hotspots available across the district.
    - 157 Chromebooks were distributed to Ward Central students. Although the district went to great lengths to help with technology distribution to students, several students still did not participate in class Zoom meetings, did not have access to PBS shows, and did not have access to Wifi. Please see the table below for Ward Central's COVID-19 access and usage report.



	Total Students Reported:	Students who have not participated in Zoom	Students who do not have access to PBS shows	Students who do not have access to Wifi
April 14	562 (including PK)	178	29	38
April 20	480 (does not include PK)	186	44	45
April 27	165 (does not include PK)	33	7	7

- ❑ This information will be taken into consideration if future distance learning should be required due to state regulations. (Connie Reed)
  - ❑ 29 students received food delivery due to a lack of transportation to access daily meals that were served at school during the COVID-19 public health crisis. (Emily Taylor, Jenie James)
  - ❑ Families had the opportunity to engage in a virtual fitness frenzy. The Physical Education Teacher sent out the list of activities, videos explaining the activities and scorecards to each family. (Lauren Stewart)
- Due to the delay related to the pandemic, the Ward Central Elementary needs assessment will be reviewed upon return to school in the fall. The plan may be adjusted based on the data received at that time.

### ***7. Building Capacity of Parents***

*(Describe/List activities, such as workshops, conferences, classes, online resources, Academic Parent-Teacher Team meetings, and any equipment or other materials that may be necessary to support parents in helping their student's academic success.)*

Ward Central will conduct PAC meetings during the 2020 – 2021 school year. If face-to-face meetings are not possible due to COVID-19 restrictions, technology such as e-mails, Google Forms, and virtual platform meetings will be utilized to ensure appropriate input opportunities are available. During the September Parent Advisory Committee Meeting, the following topics will be addressed: a description and explanation of the curriculum Cabot Public Schools uses, Arkansas Academic Standards, results of ACT and MAP testing and how to interpret these results, Title I, Part A requirements, and how to use the DESE website and toolkit for parents <http://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/>. (Connie Reed, Emily Taylor-ongoing)

To promote and support responsible parenting, the school shall, as funds are available: purchase parenting books, magazines, and other informative materials regarding

responsible parenting through the school library, advertise the current selection, and give parents the opportunity to borrow the materials for review. Ward Central has a Parent Resource Center that is always available for parents. (7:15 a.m.– 3:40 p.m. Monday-Friday) This resource center has books and backpacks that can be checked out by parents to take home to use with their children. There are also resource materials available for parents to check out that can support social, emotional, academic topics, and assist with nutritional meal planning and preparation information. If COVID-19 restrictions persist, these resources will still be available for use. Ward Central will push out information regarding what resources are available and find ways to connect the resources to a parent who shows interest. (Emily Taylor-ongoing)

- Ward Central will provide instruction to parents on how to incorporate developmentally appropriate learning activities in the home environment, including without limitation: role play and demonstration by trained volunteer, the use of and access to the Department of Education website tools for parents, assistance with nutritional meal planning and preparation as part of the Health and Wellness plan and other strategies or curricula developed or acquired by the school district for at home parental instruction approved by the Department of Education. (Connie Reed, ongoing)
- Ward Central will conduct a Literacy Family Night and Science/Technology Family Night. Teachers will share strategies with parents to support their child's academic progress. Teachers will also share with parents how to incorporate developmentally appropriate learning activities at home. If social distancing guidelines restrict such activities, Ward Central will be innovative in finding ways to share strategies using technology such as e-mails, Google Classroom, videos, and virtual platform meetings. (Connie Reed, Emily Taylor-ongoing)
- Hallway Heroes training is offered and advertised at Open House to encourage volunteer participation. Possible activities for Hallway Heroes are greeting students as they arrive, assisting with lunch and/or recess duty, monitoring hallways, entrances, parking lots, playgrounds, assisting office personnel and teachers with daily support tasks, eating lunch or playing on the playground with students, etc. (Michael Byrd-ongoing)
- The school will distribute informational packets each year that includes a description of the school's Family and Community Engagement Plan and how to access it, a survey for volunteer interests, recommended roles for and ways for parents to be involved, family and community engagement activities planned for the current school year, and information about the system that will be used to allow parents and teachers to communicate such as Remind and Dojo. If parents

are unable to attend Open House to receive this packet, the information will be sent home with the student, through the mail, or through electronic means. (Connie Reed-ongoing)

- Parent/Teacher Conferences are held a minimum of twice a year. These conferences are scheduled to develop a partnership with teachers and parents to support student's academic achievements. Teachers will discuss individual student assessment results. If face-to-face meetings are not possible due to COVID-19 restrictions, technology such as virtual platform meetings, e-mails, or phone calls will be utilized. (Connie Reed-October 2020, March 2021)
- Teacher's planning periods are used to conference with parents, as needed. If face-to-face meetings are not possible due to COVID-19 restrictions, technology such as virtual platform meetings, e-mails, or phone calls will be utilized. (Connie Reed-ongoing)
- Grade-levels will schedule an activity this school year with their parents to discuss how the parents can help their children at home. If social distancing guidelines restrict such activities, Ward Central will be innovative in finding ways to share strategies using technology such as e-mails, Google Classroom, videos, and virtual platform meetings. (Connie Reed, classroom teachers-ongoing)
- Events such as Cookies with Santa and Family Track Night are scheduled to provide parents with ideas to help their students academically as well as further develop school-family partnership. If social distancing guidelines restrict such activities, Ward Central will be innovative in finding ways to share strategies using technology such as e-mails, Google Classroom, videos, and virtual platform meetings. (Connie Reed, Emily Taylor-ongoing)
- Ward Central will provide opportunities for parents and community members to support the instructional program through such programs as tutoring and mentoring. Ward Central has had success from using parents as tutors and mentors in the past. This program will continue each year. (Connie Reed, Emily Taylor-ongoing)
- In the district's policy handbook, the school's process for resolving parental concerns, including how to define a problem, whom to approach first, and how to develop solutions can be found. (Michael Byrd-ongoing)

## ***8: Building Capacity of School Staff***

*(Describe/List activities such as workshops, conferences, trainings, webinars, online resources, and Academic Parent-Teacher Team meetings that will be used with school staff to build their capacity to work with parents as equal partners. Describe/List methods of parents' assistance for building staff*

*capacity. Describe/List actions the school will take to provide other reasonable support for parent and family engagement activities. )*

Ward Central's teachers received two hours of professional development to enhance their understanding of effective parental involvement strategies during the 2018-2019 school year. The principal and assistant principal received three hours of professional development designed to enhance understanding of effective parental involvement strategies and the importance of administrative leadership in setting expectations and creating a climate conducive to parental participation. In the district's policy handbook, the school's process for resolving parental concerns, including how to define a problem, whom to approach first, and how to develop solutions can be found. (Michael Byrd-ongoing)

Ward Central will continue to follow state guidelines for family and community engagement professional development requirements. Training will include recognizing the integral role of parents in student learning, how to communicate with parents to support student learning as equal partners, coordinating parent programs to strengthen ties between home and school, and welcoming parents to the school community. Staff will be trained to provide information in ways that parents will readily understand and to value the contributions of parents. Ward Central will respond to parent requests for family and community engagement activities. (Connie Reed, Emily Taylor-ongoing)