

**DESOTO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM**  
*Family Engagement Plan*

## **Background**

DeSoto ISD (DISD) recognizes the critical importance of family involvement in a child's overall academic success for achieving high-quality Pre-Kindergarten students. The National Institute of Early Education Research reported only 2 out of 10 high-quality benchmarks were met in Texas and Desoto ISD will model high quality Pre-Kindergarten with specified protocols and procedures to meet Pre-K high quality standards. DISD will implement a research-based curricula that focuses on the 10 TEA Pre-Kindergarten domains explicitly addressing social and emotional needs, physical and health development while embedding technology opportunities within Art, Computer, Dance, Library, Music, and STEM/Gardening instruction to develop and nurture an academic culture that is stimulating for positive educational experiences. While engaging pre-kindergarten students and their families in the process and structure with highly qualified teachers and paraprofessionals delivering high-quality instruction in a high-quality learning environment that prepares pre-kindergarten students for kindergarten readiness via the use of Texas School Readiness and CIRCLE Progress Monitoring System/Children's Learning Institute and beyond. DeSoto ISD understands that our youngest learners must be undergirded with a strong academic foundation in the pre-kindergarten years which cannot stop there; aligning instruction vertically from pre-kindergarten through third grade. This belief mirrors the U. S. Department of Education in its October 2016 "Early Learning in the Every Student Succeeds Act" report which states students from birth to third grade benefit from an educational process that is inclusive of aligned standards, curricula, instruction, and assessments which is in place for every student in the district. With an integrated curriculum, students will be able to articulate grade-level expectations from pre-kindergarten through third grade and beyond. The U. S. Department of Education also reported vertical alignment provides greater continuity and better organization of student services and school-family partnerships. Providing a fluid and seamless transition of pre-kindergarten data to K-12 data allowing elementary teachers to tailor instruction that is needs based for the purpose of increasing learning expectations and trajectories across a continuum in the early years.

## **Purpose**

DeSoto ISD's Early Childhood Program Family Engagement Plan was developed to mirror the districts' 2020 Strategic Plan to accelerate expectations in addition to upholding its core values by preparing students academically and socially to be problem solvers and productive citizens. The Early Childhood Program models the districts' beliefs of individualized learning, quality teachers, equal access, joint professional development opportunities for families, teachers and teacher assistants, shared resources for families, and wrap around services which target the needs of each individualized family. The Early Childhood Department is tasked with building collaborative relationships with families, students and community partners to bring forth a culturally diversified learning environment that is child centered, age appropriate and family driven.

The Family Engagement Plan focuses on the following six components: (1) family-to-family support, (2) establishing a network of community resources, (3) increasing family participating in decision making, (4) equipping families with tools to enhance and extend learning, (5) develop staff skills in evidenced-based practices that support families in meeting their children's learning benchmarks, and (6) evaluating family engagement efforts and use evaluations for continuous improvements.

## **Plan**

### **Component 1:** Family to Family Support System

1. Families will have access to technical assistance in parent and child educational development, career readiness, financial empowerment, health and nutritional awareness.
2. Families will have an opportunity to share input and discuss ideas through monthly PTA meetings and family workshops.
3. Families will support each other by attending PAG sessions on enhancing parent/child communication skills, effective techniques for advocating for their child in the educational process, and share resources that are relevant and necessary.
4. Families will have an opportunity to participate in professional development sessions for academic, social emotional and cognitive development for targeting general educational skills and knowledge as well as educational deficiencies in accordance with content, lessons, and activities from the integrated Savvas curriculum.

**Component 2:** Establish a Network of Community Resources

1. Families will benefit from strategic partnerships leveraging community resources from businesses, community agencies, and faith-based organizations for the purpose of building a global learning environment.
2. Families will benefit from strategic partnerships leveraging community resources from mental and physical health providers for the purpose of building a strong healthy family.
3. Families will benefit from strategic partnerships, leveraging community resources within DeSoto ISD for the purpose of preparing pre-school students, ensuring they are “Kindergarten Ready”.
4. Families will benefit from strategic partnerships leveraging community resources which reflect their culture, ethnicity, home language, and diversity.
5. Families will benefit from participation with strategic partnerships but not limited to Child Care Group, Texas School Ready, Prairie View A & M University Cooperate Extension Program, Texas Work Force Commission, City of DeSoto Recreational Center, Youth In View, Dallas County Community College District and other developing partnerships.

**Component 3:** Increase Family Participation in Decision Making

1. Families will have an opportunity to share and provide feedback and updates on Family Engagement activities.
2. Families will have opportunities to complete need assessments for the purpose of implementing programs and activities that meets their needs.
3. Families will have opportunities to complete surveys for assessing the effectiveness of the services delivered through the family engagement initiative from staff and community partners beginning, middle and end of the year.
4. Families will have access to the “Wrap Services” suggestion box for sharing ideas and concerns regarding Family Engagement activities.

**Component 4:** Equip Families with Tools to Enhance and Extend Learning

1. Families will have access to evidenced based research material and trainings that are age and developmentally appropriate on discipline, brain development, language and communication development and other social and emotional development.
2. Families will have an opportunity to check-out literacy, math, and science materials to support learning at home with their child with guidance from campus instructional staff on how to use the materials.
3. Families will have an opportunity to participate in teacher/parent training on appropriate instructional strategies based on the individual child’s reading level based on their CLI assessment data.
4. Families will have an opportunity to participate in DeSoto ISD’s “Parent Academy” to interact and communicate with school administrators, teachers, and staff in the district to explore their academic programs and extra-curricular activities for future enrollment.
5. Families will have an opportunity to participate in Elementary Campus Curriculum Nights that include: Literacy, Math, and Science
6. Families will have an opportunity to participate in “Kindergarten Korral” an open forum where families can speak one on one with Kindergarten teachers and administrators in the district to gain insight on the expectations of Kindergarten Readiness for all students.

7. Families will have access to a monthly newsletter, the district website, the early childhood program website, community resource websites, educational apps, social media, parent/teacher conferences and other school and center-related events.
8. Families will have access to community partners for developing positive parenting skills.
9. Families will have access to resources such as vision screening, hearing testing and other needed services that are age-appropriate to meet the child's social and emotional development along with services to address early intervention supportive services.

**Component 5:** Professional Development Opportunities for Educators on Culturally Responsive Evidence-Based Strategies that Support the Education of the Child

1. Teachers and Paraprofessionals will attend trainings that focus on classroom management, social and emotional development.
2. Teachers and Paraprofessionals will collaborate and participate in PLC trainings that address lesson planning, modeling, peer-to-peer observation, improving parent/teacher conferences, and classroom management.
3. Teachers and Paraprofessionals will attend professional development sessions offered by DeSoto ISD, Region 10 and other educational resources that are culturally relevant with evidence-based strategies that are age appropriate for high quality Pre-Kindergarten.
4. Families will have an opportunity to participate in trainings that address parental and family involvement that are age appropriate for Pre-Kindergarten students and beyond.
5. Families will have an opportunity to participate in trainings that address social and emotional development of Pre-Kindergarten students in addition to trainings that address early intervention supportive services

**Component 6:** Evaluation of Family Engagement Efforts and Use Evaluations for Continuous Program Improvement

1. The School Counselor will coordinate with the Communities in Schools representative for conducting home visits to identify strengths, interests, and needs on behalf of the student and his or her family.
2. The Wraparound Services Facilitator will track data on a monthly basis for each ethnic group who participates in and receives wraparound services at THE EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM.
3. The Wraparound Services Facilitator will maintain sign-in sheets for each activity sponsored at THE EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM or in DISD for their students.
4. Families will receive certificates of participation for each programmatic activity he or she were involved in.
5. Families will have an opportunity to evaluate program activities through surveys, suggestion boxes and other types of feedback.