

Stewart County Schools Family and Community Engagement Plan

Purpose: The Stewart County School System developed the Family and Community Engagement Plan for the following reasons:

- To fulfill Tennessee Department of Education policy
- To create a common vision to increase student achievement and success by involving family and community in the education process
- To set guidelines for all schools in the district
- To increase family involvement
- To encourage individual schools to make a concerted effort to involve family and community on their campuses and in the homes of students

Culture Statement: The Stewart County Board of Education strives to maintain good family/community involvement in the school system by keeping citizens informed about policies and procedures, involving citizens in planning, encouraging parents and community members to visit our schools, and promoting our system in the newspaper and public events.

District Leadership Committee:

- Leta Joiner, chairperson, Supervisor of Instruction, Stewart County Schools
- Nancy Spiers, grandparent, Director of Stewart County Family Resource
- Gayle Lee, Assistant Director of Stewart County Family Resource
- Melissa Parker, parent, Director of Stewart County Center for Teaching and Learning
- Tracy Watson, Director of Special Education and Federal Projects, Stewart County Schools
- Betty Humphrey, Parent
- Gayla Grise, parent, Guidance Counselor, Dover Elementary School
- Carla Wallace, parent, Guidance Counselor, Stewart County Middle School
- Karen Anderson, Stewart County Health Department Representative
- Elaine Jackson, Coordinated School Health, Stewart County Schools
- Eileen Smith, Assistant Principal, Dover Elementary and North Stewart Elementary
- Faculty Representative from each school
- Eileen Cameron, Coordinator of the Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition

Goals:

- To create a welcoming environment on each school campus
- To improve parent involvement in student achievement

- To improve community communication and input into school system policies

Process:

- The formulation of this plan began in May 2005 with guidance from the Stewart County School System Family Resource Office. Dr. Barbara Prescott conducted a training workshop with follow-up sessions as the process continued. The school system mailed surveys to all parents in the school district and divided responses by schools. There was a 21% return rate on the surveys. The survey used was the Association for Effective Schools – Effective School Survey.
- The Stewart County School System Family Involvement Standards are based on the overwhelming body of research that confirms the positive impact family involvement has on student achievement. These standards are also based on best practices already in use by principals, teachers, families, and others nation wide and in our school district.
- These standards are for those who have a vested interest in ensuring that all students achieve their fullest potential. They were launched in the fall of 2005 as part of the Stewart County School System Family Involvement Campaign: "Team up for Learning – Do Your Part!" This campaign has been continued annually at opening of school events. Every parent, teacher, administrator, Board Member, or district employee who reads these standards will know his/her part in helping to increase the level and quality of family involvement in education.
- Every school has received a copy of these standards, along with indicators for implementation. Since these standards are most effective when integrated into comprehensive school improvement plans, a district expectation, our principals and other staff receive training and support to this end.

Standards:

District Level

Q: Who is responsible for making it happen?

A: The district leadership defined as the Board of Education, Director of Schools, and School Leaders.

Standard D1: There is a district policy adopted by the Stewart County Board of Education that identifies clear and measurable goals for family involvement.

1. There is a written document that is made public through intentional, thorough, and frequent notifications.
2. The district's family involvement policy document is clear and understandable by all family members, and staff.
3. The district's family involvement policy is written and disseminated in English and other languages.

Standard D2: The district leadership actively supports staff and promotes efforts that increase the level and quality of family involvement.

4. Measurable goals for increasing the level and quality of family involvement are required as part of every School Improvement Plan.

5. All district-level departments, offices, and staff are expected to be friendly, knowledgeable, and open points of contact for all families.

6. The district has adequate staff and resources to implement the family involvement standards.

7. Funding is provided to schools to increase the level and quality of family involvement.

8. Schools that make significant progress in increasing the level and quality of family involvement are recognized.

9. Staff development is provided for teachers, families, administrators, staff and others on how to increase the level and quality of family involvement.

10. There is a clearinghouse to gather best practices, ideas, materials, new approaches, research, and other program information in order to help schools improve their family involvement programs.

Standard D3: The district helps schools understand and implement school and classroom level family involvement standards.

11. The district has established processes for schools to access training, technical assistance, and information.

12. The Family Resource Center, with help from other school district staff, provides information to schools to help them become familiar with and understand the school, classroom, and home level standards for family involvement.

13. Schools are satisfied with the level of support they receive from the district for their efforts to implement the school level family involvement standards.

Standard D4: The district leadership actively raises the community's awareness of how important family involvement is to students' success and academic achievement.

14. The Family Resource Center, in conjunction with school leaders, organizes and holds a family involvement public information campaign.

15. There are district –level communications (speeches, newsletters, workshops, etc.) that stress the importance of family involvement in education.

16. The district works in collaboration with community agencies to express and encourage the importance of family involvement.

Standard D5: Schools' efforts to increase the level and quality of family involvement are documented, monitored, and evaluated, and best examples of what works are shared.

17. The Family Resource Center and school leaders work collaboratively with schools to document, monitor, and evaluate family involvement initiatives.

18. Technical assistance is provided to schools by the Family Resource Center and other district level leaders as appropriate to monitor and evaluate family involvement strategies that produce specific results for students, parents, teachers, school staff, and others.

19. Annual conferences or events are held to allow parents, teachers,

administrators, students, community members, and others to share ideas and progress that is made each year, solve problems, share best practices, and plan for the future.

Standard D6: The district has a regular process for involving a wide range of families in district-level efforts such as setting policy and planning.

22. The district had district-level, decision-making and advisory committees dealing with district concerns such as budget, curriculum, and assessment, and each committee includes parents and/or guardians.

23. The district provides different ways for individual families to voice concerns, raise issues, and resolve problems.

24. The district has "beyond-the-building" general interest groups where families representing schools can receive information, discuss issues, and make policy recommendations.

Standard D7: The district has two-way communication with families that is regular, timely, and meaningful.

25. Families are well-informed and up-to-date on important district issues and understand the major goals of the district.

26. The district has a variety of publications and other regular communications with families.

27. Written communications are clear, understandable, and available in languages other than English as appropriate.

28. The district has several ways of listening to parents and engaging them in two-way communication (for example, giving time to families at Board meetings, holding open forums).

School Level

Q. Who is responsible for making it happen?

A. Members of the school community including the principal, teachers, clerical and support staff, educational assistants, family and community staff, family members, students, and community representatives.

Standard S1: Family involvement is incorporated as a strategy to achieve any goal in the School Improvement Plan.

29. Goals in the School Improvement Plan have action items and desired outcomes related to family involvement that are measurable.

30. The School Improvement Plan is developed with input from school staff, teachers, families, and community members. Parents should be represented on each committee working with the School Improvement Plan.

Standard S2: Everyone who works at the school strongly believes that family involvement is important to students' success and academic achievement.

31. The school has formal, written policies or vision statements describing its commitment to increase the level and quality of family involvement in appropriate languages.

32. The school has a family liaison responsible for promoting family involvement and school-family-community partnerships.

33. Funding is allocated to family involvement initiatives.

34. There is staff allotment to work on increasing the level and quality of family involvement.

35. The school provides and clearly defines multiple opportunities for all families to be involved in their child's education at home and at school. Home visits are made as appropriate.

Standard S3: School staff use creative ways of reaching out to families who have not been involved in their children's education.

36. There is a family liaison to make contact and develop relationships with families.

37. Resources are committed to boost involvement such as childcare, transportation, weekend and evening meetings at school and in the community, and stipends.

38. Resources are committed to pursue the involvement of families from diverse cultures.

39. There is a comprehensive family education program to meet the changing needs of families.

40. Parent education is made available for family members in parenting roles.

41. The school actively experiments with off-site neighborhood-based activities that meet families' needs.

Standard S4: There is a strong partnership among school staff, students, families, and community members that increases the students' success and academic achievement.

42. Everyone who works at the school is expected to be knowledgeable and friendly towards all families and treat them with respect.

43. There is a group of people – teacher, administrators, school staff, family members, students (as appropriate), and others – who work together on increasing the level and quality of family involvement (for example, site council sub-committee, family involvement action team).

44. Family members are included as trainers, presenters, and participants in staff development activities as appropriate.

45. Resources and services from the broader community (e.g. parks, agencies churches, etc.) are identified and drawn upon to strengthen student learning and development.

46. Activities are held at varied times to accommodate families' needs.

47. Everyone who works at the school is expected to understand, value, and encourage the many ways that families support their children's learning.

Standard S5: The principal and site council provide active leadership in increasing the level and quality of family involvement in children's education.

48. The principal and site council direct adequate resources (financial, time, human) toward family involvement initiatives.

49. The principal and site council set high expectations of staff and families to work together to increase student success and academic achievement.

50. The principal and site council monitor the results of the school's initiatives to increase the level and quality of family involvement.

51. The principal and site council are approachable and provide opportunities for dialogue with families (for example, monthly breakfasts with the principal).

Standard S6: The school is responsive to the needs of its families.

52. Handbooks, newsletters, report cards and other communication are easy to understand and translated as appropriate.

53. Information is provided to families on how to meet their basic obligations such as providing shelter, proper nutrition, clothing, and creating a home environment that supports academic success.

54. Guidance and information is provided to families on how to help students at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions, and

planning.

55. School staff are familiar with options and resources available through the district (e.g., parent education, adult literacy, work skills enhancement) and actively connect families with these resources.

Standard S7: School staff, families, and community members work together to plan, put into action, and evaluate family involvement efforts.

56. The school has a plan and process in place to identify and implement those family involvement standards that are given highest priority and communicates this plan to the larger school community.

57. In-service education and staff development opportunities related to working effectively with families are provided for school staff, family and community members (for example, making schools family-friendly, working with diverse cultures, communicating with families, designing homework that engages families).

58. Family involvement initiatives are based on identified needs and desired outcomes.

59. There is a group of people – teachers, administrators, school staff, family members, students (as appropriate) and others – who work together on increasing the level and quality of family involvement (for example, site council, family involvement action team).

Standard S8: Everyone who works at the school draws upon the knowledge and expertise of all families to support the school as a whole.

60. Everyone who works for the school is expected to be knowledgeable and friendly towards all families and treat them with respect.

61. Parents or other family members serve on school committees and have meaningful decision-making roles.

62. The school provides a variety of well-planned and well-communicated volunteer opportunities for family and community members.

Classroom Level

Q: Who is responsible?

A. Classroom teachers, educational assistants, and other staff who directly engage in instruction.

Standard C1: Families are seen and treated as partners in their children's education by teachers and other instructional staff.

63. Teachers and instructional staff provide families with clear information on the school curriculum content standards, class syllabi, class schedules, programs, policies, and procedures.

64. Family members are welcome in the classroom and volunteer opportunities, responsibilities, and expectations are made clear and agreed upon by the teacher and family member.

65. Families are encouraged to support their children's learning at home and given specific suggestions on how they can best do this in order to complement and reinforce what is being taught at school.

66. There is a communication between the family and teacher that is regular, two-way, and focuses on building trust and creating a relationship.

tr. Families are kept up-to-date on their children's progress through regular communication such as notes sent home, phone calls, newsletters, report cards, and conferences.

68. Teachers are open to feedback from families.

69. Feedback given to families on their child's progress balances the positive and negative.

Standard C2: Each family's experience, knowledge, and culture are respected and valued by teachers and other instructional staff.

70. Interpreters are provided as necessary.

71. Teachers and other instructional staff are knowledgeable about families' culture,

background, and experience.

72. Families are invited to share their experience, knowledge, and culture with school

staff.

73. Teachers and instructional staff work to develop partnerships with all families, not just those who volunteer, attend meetings, or are similar in culture, race, or socioeconomic background.

74. Teachers and instructional staff are trained in multi-cultural, gender-fair, and disability-aware practices and use them in working with families.

Home Level

Q: Who is responsible for making it happen?

A: Parents, guardians, family members, and others who are in parenting roles and the child's primary caregivers.

Standard H1: The family supports lifelong learning for its members, particularly children.

75. The home environment actively supports learning through reading, writing, conversations, and discussions among family members.

76. There is a family routine that supports learning such as a set time for studying, watching television, and going to bed.

77. There is positive communication between family members and children.

78. Parents and family members encourage children by asking about schoolwork and

providing an appropriate atmosphere for doing homework.

79. Parents and family members encourage learning and the love of learning.

80. Reading is encouraged.

81. Parents and family members meet their basic obligations such as providing shelter, proper nutrition, and clothing for children to the best of their ability.

82. Parents and family members know what community resources exist and utilize them to meet their family and children's needs.

Standard H2: The family has high but reasonable expectations of each child's educational achievement and makes these expectations clear.

83. Children's development and progress in school are encouraged through family discussions, positive reinforcement, and modeling appropriate behavior such as love of learning and discipline.

84. There is a genuine interest in the child's growth and positive development.

85. The family has clear rules and consequences.

86. Parents and family members make sure their children get to school on time and

attend school regularly.

Standard H3: Parents and family members understand what is expected of them in supporting their child's success in school.

87. Parents and family members are friendly towards and respectful of school staff

and treat them as partners in their children's education.

88. Parents and family members respond to communication set home in a timely manner by sending notes back, returning phone calls, and responding to other requests.

89. Parents and family members regularly attend parent/teacher conferences in a timely manner and ask questions related to their child's academic progress.

90. Parents and family members communicate to school staff what they expect of the school in an appropriate and respectful manner.

Standard H4: Parents and family members actively support the school and the district's efforts to provide quality education to all students.

91. Parents and family members are actively involved at the school (for example, volunteering in the classroom, serving on committees, attending parent/teacher conferences regularly, organizing events, and helping school staff in other ways.

92. Parents and family members are actively involved in district initiatives (for example, serving on district level committees.

Goals: Stewart County Schools will

1. Create a welcoming environment on each campus:

Strategies:

- Post welcome signs at main entrances.
- Personally invite parents of struggling students (those performing on a D or F level) to conferences.
- Communicate with parents in their home language.
- Conduct school "Open House" or "Orientation" each fall inviting parents and community leaders to attend.
- Conduct a district-wide "Open House" for ELL students and their parents.
- Promote and participate in parent-teacher organizations which support the school and its activities.
- Solicit parent volunteers for various school activities.
- Promote parent reading nights of elementary stakeholders.
- Encourage parents and grandparents to visit schools and participate in certain activities with their children and grandchildren.
- Include family engagement strategies in Administrative Council Meetings with all Principals.
- Conduct informational tours of the CTE program areas and facilities on Orientation Night or Back-to-School Night.

1. Improve parent involvement in student achievement:

Strategies-

- Expand system-wide parent conferences from nine hours to twelve hours per year on non-school days.
- Stagger high school and elementary parent-teacher conferences to avoid conflicts for parents
- Offer translation services at parent meetings (where appropriate)
- Institute an informational program for parents as their children transition from elementary to middle school and from middle school to high school
- Provide parents/students with 3-week student progress reports at the elementary level each 9 weeks.
- Provide parents/students with student progress reports at the mid nine weeks at the Stewart County Middle School.
- Due to a high school trimester schedule, parents/students will be provided with progress reports every 4 weeks prior to receiving a trimester report card.
- Request parent signatures on 9-week progress reports.
- Provide after-school tutoring which promotes regular parent communication regarding student progress.

- Conduct parent/student orientation for all newly enrolled freshman students.

1. Improve community communication and input into school system policies:

Strategies-

- Advertise meetings in the newspaper (when practical), on the district and school websites, and send letters home to parents.
- Arrange to have school board meetings at each school site at least once each year.
- Regularly showcase positive aspects of our school system at monthly meetings.
- The school system will appoint a Family and Community Advisory Council which will review system family involvement policies annually and based on input from the local community recommend changes as needed.
- The Advisory Council will report the system's progress toward reaching these goals to the Stewart County School Board at least once each semester.

In an attempt to communicate with parents, individual schools use many of the same procedures. For example, teachers send letters home at the beginning of the school year to acquaint parents with course of study, rules, procedures, and upcoming events. Each student in the Stewart County System receives a handbook from his particular school which explains school admission requirements, policies concerning parents' visiting schools, grading system, honor roll guidelines, promotion and retention policies, code of behavior and discipline code, student attendance and tardiness procedures, Positive Behavior Support, Tennessee State laws pertaining to schools, library, fees, tuition, food service, grievance procedures, communicable diseases, discrimination, permission slips. Handbooks are also posted on line at www.stewartcountyschools.net. Also listed on that website are the following: District Information; School Information; Teacher Information; Curriculum Information and Updates; Report Card Information; Technology Information; and much more. Parents are able to access teachers' e-mail addresses as well as lunch menus, TCAP information, information about Adult Education, District Calendar, among many other topics pertaining to school. Our webmaster posts information on our district website when administrators from the individual schools and supervisors from the central office staff send it. Likewise, teachers send home in notes to the parents their schedules, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses so that parents will know both when and how to contact them at school and at home. We publish pertinent information, such as Parent-Teacher Conferences, changes in the calendar, etc., in the local newspapers and in addition to placing a running banner on the district website detailing the information.

Also we provide up-to-date textbooks to all students in all classes, bought yearly as adopted on a six-year cycle. Upon request from parents, we supply textbooks on CD to students who require them. In addition to syllabi supplied by individual teachers, we provide a link on our district website www.stewartcountyschools.net to the Tennessee State Board of Education where parents/community members can access state standards for all courses taught in our county schools, including student performance indicators for parents to gauge their children's success.

Our elementary and middle schools have active Parent-Teacher Organizations which meet regularly to discuss needs of the school. All presidents of these organizations coordinate efforts with administrators at the beginning of the school year to identify needs and possible ways to meet the needs of the students with monetary donations or time donated by parents in the schools. High school vocational classes have in the past and continue to have active community advisory councils to support efforts of both teachers and students in the different classes.

Also our new pre-school classes at both elementary schools have an advisory council. That council met and set up guidelines for the classes before the system made application for the grant to fund the pre-school class. This program is coordinated with the local Head Start in Stewart County. Head Start has a family advisory council made up of parents whose children attend classes. This council meets monthly to review progress and give input on improvements. This class serves children who otherwise would not have access to a pre-school class.

The Stewart County School System encourages parents/community to be involved in school activities by approving and supporting parent-teacher organizations and booster clubs in our schools. Both elementary schools have a strong PTO as does the middle school; high school has athletic booster clubs and band booster clubs which financially support students and their endeavors, both athletically and scholastically. These organizations are led by parents, independent of the school's financial obligations. Officers submit bylaws, fundraisers, and activities to encourage students to excel. All schools have business sponsors in the community that provide financial help as well as other types of support.

Title 1 involvement in the Parent and Community Engagement is delineated in Board Policy 4.502. This includes parent input in planning, design, and implementation of the Title 1 program and consultation of parents of participating children. The school system holds an annual meeting of parents to explain the programs, activities and curriculum available under Title 1; provides parents with reports and explanations of their children's progress; conducts conferences with the parents to discuss placement and training in methods the parents can use to complement the children's instruction; permits parents to observe Title 1 program activities; provides parents with a copy of the parental involvement policy as well as timely information about the program; develops a school-parent compact that outlines how parents, the staff, and students will share the responsibility of student achievement; and annually assesses the effectiveness of the

program. This assessment is conducted with surveys and feedback from individual parents.

The leadership team for family involvement evaluated the results of the Effective Schools survey given to parents/stakeholders concerning their opinions of the school system. Strengths of the system included high academic and behavioral expectations for all students, a focus on desired student learning, and safe and orderly environments on all school campuses. Areas to strengthen include home-school relations, instructional leadership, and opportunity to learn or time on task. Both the general plan and the Title 1 plan are adjusted to reflect parental input on a yearly basis.

In an effort to keep parents informed, our teachers send home a syllabus of the class (high school) or a weekly newsletter (elementary) to let the parents know what the child will be learning that week so that parents can reinforce the teachers' efforts. Email, notes home and phone calls are utilized to keep parents informed. Attendance and discipline policies are clearly spelled out in the handbook, which each child receives at the beginning of the school year with a page in the front for parents to sign and return to the school as a check to make sure that parents actually see and have the opportunity to read policies and procedures in a number of categories. We have an attendance supervisor who monitors attendance carefully and contacts parents at the first sign of a problem. We also have a disciplinary hearing committee to deal with serious discipline problems that unfortunately arise occasionally in our schools.

This family engagement plan is a living document, subject to review and change as needs dictate. We welcome comments/suggestions concerning this plan. Stakeholders are encouraged to email letajoiner@stewart.k12.tn.us or call 931-232-5176 to provide input. Teachers and administrators strive to involve parents/community in the educational process. With that support we can ensure success for our children.

Evaluation

The Family Engagement Plan is required at all school sites. Schools will develop a Family Engagement Plan much as they develop a School Improvement Plan. Schools will select a faculty Family Engagement Team with a representative to the District Family Engagement Team. The faculty team shall be responsible for developing the school plan and submitting it to the District Office for review and evaluation. The school team will also be responsible for monitoring and evaluating the school's Family Engagement Plan. The school team shall establish a procedure as part of the plan whereby parents can assist in the development of the school plan, view the plan, and make comments. Schools will continue to survey their parents/community members so as to promote continuous improvement of the engagements of all families. The Association for Effective Schools – Effective Schools Surveys will be given to all parents annually. Results will be used in the realignment of goals.

The District shall use the larger District Family Engagement Team to monitor and evaluate the District's Family Engagement Plan. Parents and community members shall

have the opportunity to view the plan and have various methods to make comments regarding the plan and its facilitation. Comments thus submitted will be reviewed by the team and possible adjustments made. The District Family Engagement Team shall meet monthly to discuss matters relating to Parental Involvement and Family Engagement, or more frequently as required.

Additional Information

General Expectations for All Schools at the District Level

A – Parents will be involved in the Family and Community Engagement Planning Process through the following:

- membership on the Family and Community Engagement Planning Committee which meets bimonthly
- feedback through the Effective Schools Parent Survey which is administered annually to all parents in the school district
- responding to newspaper information that specifically solicits parental input
- responding to the Stewart County Schools website which specifically solicits parental input
- membership on individual school’s Advisory Councils

Additionally, parents will be asked to review specific changes or additions to the plan and make suggestions and recommendations throughout the entire process.

B. Annual training for the following school personnel on Family and Community

Engagement will take place:

- administrators and supervisors
- teachers and certified personnel
- support staff

Information and training will be provided annually for parents concerning the following:

- helping their child with homework
- helping their child learn to read (K-3)
- curriculum standards
- discipline policies and procedures
- making the most of parent teacher conferences
- interpreting their child’s test report card and test scores

- attendance
- maneuvering on the Stewart County School's website
- attending Stewart County High School
- the Family Resource Center and available school services
- tutoring and remedial assistance

C. The school system will build the schools' and parents' capacity for strong

parent involvement through the following:

- monthly newsletters at each school
- meetings
- workshops
- expanding the system's volunteer program
- continuing to improve the system's website
- voicemail and email for each staff member
- designating funds for programs, newspaper articles, and other necessary supplies

D. The school district works with the following agencies to integrate parent involvement strategies and programs:

- Family Resource Center
- Adult Literacy Program
- The Center for Teaching and Learning
- Head Start
- PreK Council
- Individual School's Parent Teacher Organizations and Advisory Councils
- Dover Police Department, Stewart County Sheriff's Department, District

Attorney's Office

E. Each year every parent or family member with a child in a Stewart County

School is sent The Effective Schools Parent Survey along with a cover letter

describing the survey and a self-addressed, stamped envelope in which to

return the survey. The survey results are compiled and analyzed by Central

Office staff, administrators, faculty members and parents. This information

is used in all planning processes for the next school year.

Additionally, a Family Engagement Survey has been developed for use at school. This survey will also be given annually to parents on the school's Advisory Council, PTCO, Family Engagement Planning Committee, school volunteers and community representatives. The results will be used in all planning processes for the next school year.

F. The school system, through the Family and Community Engagement Planning

Process, has identified the following district barriers that prevent parents from

participating in school activities. Additionally, ways to address these barriers

have been recognized and are being implemented at the district level as well

as the school level:

- **Time** – parent/student/teacher schedule many times are incompatible and parents work and cannot come in during the school hours

Ways to address:

- 1. Voicemail available for all staff members**
- 2. Email available for all staff members**
- 3. Newsletters**
- 4. Meetings scheduled at night (as needed)**
- 5. Trainings and workshops for parents at night**
- 6. Think Wave Communication**
- 7. School Websites**

- **Parental Attitudes** – some parents have a negative attitude about the school or school system, they are at times apathetic, and reluctant to visit school or get involved.

Ways to address:

1. **Send home positive information to parents early in the school year**
 2. **Keep all parents informed of their child's behavior and academic achievement**
 3. **Invite parents to fun, positive, school activities**
 4. **Involve parents in the planning processes**
 5. **Train all staff to be parent friendly and provide excellent customer service**
 6. **Deal with parental complaints in a timely manner**
- **Money** – many parents in our school system live at or below the poverty level and cannot find the funds adequately provide schools supplies, communicate with school personnel, afford telephones, or internet.

Ways to address:

- **Allocation of personnel, such as the Family Resource Coordinators to assist families with needs**
- **Counselors at school to provide assistance to students in need**
- **Coordinated School Health Program provides free health screenings, hygiene supplies, dental supplies, RID, free health training for parents**
- **Nurses at each school help coordinate with parents to meet their child's medical needs**
- **Parenting Workshops**
- **Free brochures and educational games sent home to parents for use with their child**

G. The school district has continued to meet monthly with the Family and Community Engagement Planning Committee and make additions and changes to the plan. The Advisory Councils at each school continue to make suggestions also. The results of the Effective Schools Parent Survey will be analyzed and strategies will be implemented to address areas of need.

H. School Activities are outlined in each school's action plan

The Family and Community Engagement Planning Committee Findings

- **Homework:** It was found by the Family and Community Engagement Committee that the board policy concerning homework was a good policy, but not followed by all teachers. It was established that the following strategies would be implemented to help with homework at all schools:

1. Training for all teachers on the board policy concerning homework.
 2. Homework policies established by schools, grade levels, or individual teachers must follow the board policy.
 3. Grade levels or individual teachers must submit a homework policy to the principal for approval and then send a copy of the policy home to parents for a signature. If a school-wide homework policy is used, that policy should also be sent home to all parents for a signature.
 4. Training sessions for parents dealing with homework will be implemented at all grade levels at the beginning of the school year.
 5. SCHS will implement and monitor its new school-wide homework policy and survey parents at the end of the first semester to determine parental attitudes toward the policy.
- **Discipline:** It was found by the Family and Community Engagement Committee members that the policies implemented in all four schools were sufficient, but rewards for good behavior needed to be increased. NSES was commended for its use of Positive Behavior Support in dealing with discipline. It was established that the following strategies would be implemented to help with discipline at all schools:
 1. Increase rewards for good behavior at DES, SCMS and SCHS.
 2. Continue the implementation of Positive Behavior Support at DES, SCMS and SCHS.
 3. Grade levels or individual teachers must submit a discipline policy to the principal for approval and then send a copy of the policy home to parents for a signature.
 4. Schools should have a copy of the school-wide discipline policy in the handbook that is sent home to parents.
 5. Continue to monitor the use of various discipline consequences and continue to strive to match the behavior with the most appropriate consequence.
 6. Teachers should contact parents early with a positive comment about their child.
 - **Attendance:** Attendance was discussed by the Family and Community Engagement Committee members. The following recommendation was made:

Strive to implement a system at each school that allows for a telephone call to be made to the home of any student that is absent. The telephone call will be made the day of the absence.

Ways for Parents to Learn about the Curriculum

- Parent meetings for each grade level to discuss the curriculum for their child. These meetings will be conducted by the team of grade level or subject area teachers.
- Access to the State website containing the Curriculum Standards and A Blueprint for Learning is linked to the school district website as well as the individual schools' websites.
- Informational sessions are held at each PTCO meeting to discuss the curriculum used in Stewart County Schools.
- The school district is currently working to make a copy of all textbooks used available at the Stewart County Public Library.
- Access to the Family Resource Center, which provides learning materials directly to parents, is available on the school district website or by contacting any of the district's schools.

Request for Meetings

It is the desire of the Stewart County School System to provide parents with opportunities to request meetings, to formulate suggestions, and to participate in decisions relating to the education of their children. If you would like to request a meeting with the administration of your child's school or with your child's teacher please contact the school administration and a meeting will be scheduled. You may contact your child's teacher, directly by clicking on the school's link and then the teacher's name, or by leaving the teacher a voicemail at the school.

Stewart County High School - 931-232-5179

Principal: Chris Guynn

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Stewart County Middle School – 931-232-9112

Principal: Steve Nolen

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Dover Elementary School – 931-232-5442

Principal: Bryan Saunders

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North Stewart Elementary School – 931-232-5505

Principal: Deborah Grasty

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