



Community-Focused Leadership.
Character Development.
College Preparedness.

Family Engagement Plan 2022-2023

Family members at Inwood Academy can expect to be included in a vibrant community where parents share their individual talents, knowledge, and wisdom to support each other as they raise tomorrow's leaders.

We at Inwood Academy are here to listen and help you achieve your parenting goals. Everything we do is based on your needs and desires. As a primary caregiver, you have the power to influence your child to fulfill his or her potential. During these difficult times of recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic, your voice is particularly valued, and there are many opportunities for you to lead in and be part of the Family Council.

Parents select and/or create their own leadership teams within the Family Council based on need, while we offer teams information, resources, connections and training in relevant areas. Through their teams, parents also encourage one-another to help children grow academically, socially, and emotionally, empowering them to meet the challenges of today's world.

As parent leaders, you will have opportunities to come alongside your child and put the leadership skills we offer into practice. When your child enters college, you will have the peace of mind to know that they have been equipped with IAL's three *Core Components* of College Preparedness, Community-Focused Leadership, and Character Development.

These are our priorities as we all work together as agents of change.

Belong

Priority 1: IAL Families are Informed

Knowledge is power, and we want to make sure you have all the tools and resources you need to make informed decisions about your child's education and social and emotional growth.

We use personal connections and technology to make sure you are well informed. All students have access to Chromebooks in every classroom. You can track your child's attendance and progress, learn about your child's assignments, and keep in touch with your child's teachers through our ALMA system and Class Dojo in our Middle School.

Today's environment presents us with a great opportunity to teach our students empathy and servant leadership. At school, students learn and develop social, emotional, and behavioral competence through a special curriculum designed to stretch their thinking. Our "Character Strong" program provides materials that are engaging and easy to put into practice.

We offer year-round individualized attention to all families. Our Family and Community Engagement team is fluent in Spanish and will always accommodate your needs to the best of our ability.

Priority 2: IAL Families are Engaged

If you have a student at Inwood Academy for Leadership, you are automatically part of the Family Council. The Family Council meetings are held once a month and the themes of the meetings change based on the needs expressed by members of the Family Council.

We will also keep you informed through various means of communication such as our weekly IAL News Bulletins on ZOOM, class dojo (MS) parent whatsapp groups, and blackboard automated calls, emails and text messages to ensure that parents will get news to help foster high academic standards and give feedback on important school-wide decisions.

Grow

Priority 3: IAL Families are Equipped

At Inwood Academy, you are not alone. We gather community partners to guide you through difficult processes and provide consistent check-ins to make sure self-care is never an after-thought.

We have partnered with Inwood Community Services to offer a series of workshops on mental health that are specially geared toward girls, boys and parents. Students ages 13 and over, now

have access to online therapy at no cost to families, through our partnership with TalkSpace, a digital mental health service that connects members to thousands of dedicated providers from a secure, HIPAA-compliant platform. We will be providing resource fairs to help parents be in the know about health-related services, housing, latest changes in immigration laws, emotional supports, sex education and more. Partners and workshops vary throughout the school year based on family interests and needs.

Lead

Priority 4: IAL Families are Empowered

Parents are equipped with knowledge and skills to help them communicate effectively, collaborate, motivate and be great role models for their children. Inwood Academy for Leadership offers many opportunities for families to volunteer based on their interests. For the 2022-2023 school calendar year, parents decided to volunteer in the following IAL Leadership Teams (arranged in alphabetical order):

Advocacy Leadership Team - Parents who are interested in learning and teaching their children how to have their voices heard receive training and opportunities to make a difference in issues that are important to them. Last year, the Advocacy team focused on a public service announcement to promote vaccination. This year the team is working with the office of Assemblywoman Carmen De La Rosa on lobbying for changes in the cannabis laws and ensuring that any new businesses receiving licensing and permissions are not allowed to do business or open near school zones. The team was also chosen to attend the NY Charter Association's annual conference in Buffalo and the annual educational summit with all expenses paid. All IAL families and students are encouraged to sign up to attend NY Charter Association's Advocacy day in Albany (Jan. 31, 2023) with all expenses paid.

College and Career Readiness Leadership Team - Parents receive workshops throughout the academic year from our College and Career Success team. The parent workshop series focus on Credits and Graduation Plan, What Does it Take to Be College and Career Ready, Importance of Exposure to Colleges, FAFSA, Importance of Jobs and Resumes, College Investment (student loans) and Transition to College. Parents team up and share best practices to give students in transition a sense of vision, belonging and mission and stay on track academically.

Community Service Leadership Team - IAL works in conjunction with families to promote initiatives that help our community through our annual Walk for a Cause series. This fall the series focused on Wellness for our "Trailblazer Wellness Walk" from Inwood Academy to Dyckman Plaza. The walk ended with a fair focused on providing physical and mental health resources and connections between community organizations and members of the Inwood community. The team raised funds to donate to Taller Salud for hurricane relief the Breast Cancer Foundation. The team will also be given opportunities to serve in IAL's winter food and

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coat drives, as well as other initiatives that encourage equity and promote the development of leadership skills.

Literacy Leadership Team - Every year, our family council chooses a focus for the academic school year as a way to build community. Last year's focus was wellness and parent connections, and as a result our families held workshops such as Zumba, Yoga, Mindfulness in the home and a monthly coffee hour; as a time for parents to connect with one another for support. This year, the family council is focused on addressing the effects of COVID-19 and learning loss surrounding Literacy by spearheading IAL's Reading Challenge. The challenge kicked off in September and is geared towards encouraging parents to get their children reading every day, outside of school for at least 30 minutes or more. The team has partnered with IAL to ensure all students are connected to e-library learning applications, partner with the New York Public Library to get students library cards and is hosting weekly book club meetings, as of November, for both child and parent where we will read and discuss "13 Things Emotionally Strong Kids Do" via Zoom.

Small Business Leadership Team – The pandemic has greatly affected small businesses in our community, and many of our families are small business leaders themselves. IAL will utilize WhatsApp to form a support group for leaders to share information and resources. The team also encourages mentorship opportunities for students and alumni interested in entrepreneurship.

Social and Emotional Development Leadership Team - Parents receive training on Mental Health, Stigmas of Mental Health, Anxiety, Building Coping Skills, Depression, The Importance of Mentorship, and Support Beyond IAL. We are partnering with Inwood Community Services and TalkSpace to provide group and individual support as needed. Throughout the year, we host weekly Leadership Labs, workshops and training from experts such as: Vince Benevento, founder of Causeway Collaborative, an organization that specializes in empowering young men and Michelle Hoover, Founder and Principal of Baem Leadership, is a leadership-development strategist, facilitator, consultant, and coach for Fortune 500 companies in various industries. Families are also encouraged to participate in a book club. The book is "13 Things Strong Kids Do: Think Big, Feel Good, Act Brave" by Amy Morin.

Together We Can Leadership Team - Parents share resources, encouragement, and tips to support students with individual educational plans, in partnership with Include NYC, Parent to Parent of New York State and The Child Mind Institute. IAL also empowers our families by hosting information sessions throughout the school year to ensure they are in the know about important topics such as Dyslexia.

Families can participate in various teams based on their interests and needs. Leadership teams provide an update on what they are learning at Family Council meetings. Each team decides the best time to meet. The teams are connected through WhatsApp. Families who complete the IAL outfitting workshop series earn a certificate and participate in an annual raffle. Prizes provided by World Vision.