How Family-Friendly Is Your School?

Please complete Column 1 before the session begins.

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How Family - Friendly Is Your School?

Part of the Georgia Family - Friendly Partnership School Initiative
A partnership between Georgia Department of Education and Georgia Parental Information and Resource Center (GA PIRC)

Before viewing the Georgia Virtual Family - Friendly Partnership Schools, take a minute to complete this self-assessment. **How family-friendly is your school?** In column one place a check mark beside the items you feel represent your school. Then, after viewing the Georgia Virtual Family - Friendly Partnership Schools review your choices. **Do you still think your school is family-friendly in those areas?** Now using column two place an X beside the items you would like to improve or implement in your school.

1. The school is easy to find within the community and the front entrance of the building can be easily identified.
2. The front of the school depicts a welcoming environment that naturally makes families and visitors feel accepted and at ease.
3. The school provides various guest badges upon sign in representing either a parent, a volunteer, or a visitor.
4. The front office staff is friendly and helpful. They assist and recognize visitors immediately, as well as answer the phone and treat visitors politely.
Welcoming Environments: Is Your School Family-Friendly?

National ESEA Conference
February 4, 2020
Session Objectives

By the end of the session, participants will be able to:

- Gain ideas to use with schools;
- Network and exchange resources with other participants; and
- Identify online resources from Georgia and other states and organizations.
Today’s Agenda

- Why Family-Friendly Schools?
- Georgia’s Initiative
- Forsyth County Schools
- Gwinnett County Public Schools
- Georgia Cyber Academy
- Scenarios
- Resources
Georgia’s System of Continuous Improvement

[Diagram with the following components:
- Identify Needs
- Select Interventions
-Plan Implementation
-Implement Plan
-Effective Leadership
-Family & Community Engagement
-Coherent Instruction
-Healthy Child
-Safe Child
-Supported Child
-Engaged Child
-Challenged Child]
Why Welcoming Environments?

*Welcoming environments* provide parents with a reciprocal relationship where not only do they feel that they belong to the school, but also that the school belongs to them.

The focus is not what schools should do to involve parents—it is what parents, schools, and communities can do together to support student success.
2010-2017 Awards Program

- Partnerships with Georgia Foundation for Public Education, The Ritz-Carlton Hotels of Georgia, Georgia Association of Educators
- Applications
- Surprise School Visits
- Awards Presentation By State School Superintendent
- Awardees Network Meeting

2017-Current Professional Development Program
Family Engagement in Forsyth County Schools: Title I Schools
• Metro Atlanta, Georgia School District
• ~51,000 students; 38 schools
• 5 Title I Schools (4 Schoolwide Schools, 1 Targeted Assistance)
  – Chestatee Elementary
    • Family Friendly School 2015
  – Cumming Elementary
    • Family Friendly School 2014
-Midway Elementary
  • Family Friendly School 2014
Is your school Family Friendly?

• Evaluation- unannounced visit
  – school system created checklist
  – new enrolling parent phone call
  – review of website and school’s social media

• Reflection and Action Steps
  – feedback session
  – “Glows and Grows” poster left for staff
Welcoming ALL Families

Little Mill Middle School invites you to

Math-ELA Family Night:
Thurs., November 14

Free Dinner  6:00 pm
Activities  6:30 pm

- Free dinner for all (provided by Partners In Education)
- Free Spanish translation and childcare
- Free Parent Raffle – Gift Baskets and a $50 Walmart Gift Card (provided by Partners in Education)

Please RSVP so that we can provide enough dinner for all.

- Learn more about Math and ELA standards
- Learn strategies to support your student at home
- Receive a take home game packet
- Eat, learn, and spend quality time with your family!
January Newsletter 2020
Chesatee Elementary School

A Letter From Dr. Tennes, Our Principal
Today was a beautiful January day in Georgia. My dogs appreciated the walk in the sunshine. The highs might have reached 60 degrees, but I am guessing we will see a swing in temperatures this month. Winter in Georgia can be unpredictable. Snow is not uncommon and driving on slick, icy roads should be avoided. I am happy to report we are ready in case of foul weather.

School will be moving online in the event of a cancellation for weather. For up to the minute information on cancellations, you can hear school announcements on your local news stations or through student messenger (email).

Several years ago Forsyth County Schools began replacing cancelled school days with an opportunity for online learning. Teachers in all grades, K-12, posted assignments for students to complete and even held "office hours" to be there for questions. This alternative seemed to receive a lot of support from families that did not want to alter the school calendar by extending this year's...
Supporting Student Success

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Chattahoochee Elementary
March 7, 2019

Tomorrow is Early Release! We will dismiss at 11:30 A.M.

Forfith County Schools
March 7, 2019

Reminder: March 8 is an Early Release/Parent Conference day for all students. Release times are posted at http://earlyrelease2019/
Speaking Up for Every Child

Chestatee Elementary
October 18, 2019

Parent/Teacher Conferences are Here! FB Friday
Meet two of our new teachers, Hanna Fyle and Dana Zimmerer, and hear what to expect at your parent/teacher conference.
You're invited to stop by the Family Resource Room for extra practice too. We appreciate our amazing volunteers and family involvement with all of our events lately. Thank you for your partnership!

Dual Language Immersion
Parent Night
Cumming Elementary
January 16, 2020
6 PM

Get Connected at Chestatee!

PTO
Classroom Volunteer
Room Parent
Watchdog Blvd
Kindergarten Parents
Champs! General Champs!

Become a member, sign up for volunteering, help coordinate parties, special events, communicate needs with families.
Comes 1 time a year. Visit during the school, car line, buses, lunch, classrooms.
Read to kids and listen to readers. Practice sight words or letters.
Read 1 on 1 with children. Build skills and relationships.

Contact PTO
Contact Classroom teacher
Contact Classroom teacher
Contact Lori Cox
Contact Mag Killingsworth

Contact Lori Cox
Contact Sarah Whipple
Contact Amanda Pruitt
Contact Cheryl Elliott
Contact Kathy Johnson
Contact Lela Fendley
Family - Friendly School Parent Survey
Part of the Georgia Family - Friendly Partnership School Initiative

Please help us as we strive to make our school the best it can be! We are asking all families to complete the Family-Friendly School Parent Survey. This survey will give us valuable information in how to best serve our students and families.

The survey is available through the attached link in the Cougar Chronicle posted below.

Thanks for joining our family Right! Don't forget to fill out a feedback form so that we can continue to improve and expand our family engagement opportunities at Little Mill Middle School.

Cumming Elementary School
March 23, 2012

Sharing Power
Collaborating with Community

There was so much to celebrate today at the Celebration of Excellence Luncheon! Our partner in education, First Redeemer Church, was honored with the "Friend of the School" Award. Emily Flack was also honored as Chestatee Teacher of the Year.
Contact Information

Amy Chang
Title I Part A, Title I Part C, and Title IV Part A Director
Forsyth County Schools
770-887-2461 ext. 202246
amychang@forsyth.k12.ga.us
Vision

Gwinnett County Public Schools will become a system of world-class schools where students acquire the knowledge and skills to be successful in college and careers.

Our Schools

- 80 Elementary Schools
- 29 Middle Schools
- 23 High Schools
- 7 Specialty Schools
- 2 Charter Schools

180,324 Students

Our students come from 181 countries and speak 100 different languages.

Racial/Ethnic Distribution

- African American: 32%
- Asian/Pacific Islander: 11%
- Caucasian: 21%
- Hispanic/Latino: 32%
- Multiracial: 4%
Federal Programs Office & Family Engagement Professionals

• Federal & Special Programs Staff
• Family & Community Engagement (FACE) Team
• FACE Advisory Committee
• Parent Instructional Coordinator (PIC)
• Parent Outreach Liaison (POL)
Georgia’s Family-Friendly Partnership School Awardees and Finalists
2012-2017

- Hopkins Elementary School
- Norton Elementary School
- Peachtree Elementary School
- Sweetwater Middle School
- Harris Elementary School
- Moore Middle School
- Shiloh Middle School
- Snellville Middle School
- Shiloh High School
- Britt Elementary School
Welcoming All Families

• Hiring and Retaining Staff
• Bilingual / Multilingual Staff or Volunteers
• Not only front office staff but entire staff
• “Neighborhood Walks”
• Visitor Parking Signs
• Signs in Multiple Languages

Create a Family-Friendly Culture
Communicating Effectively

- Range of Social Media
- Apps for cell phones
- Emails
- Weekly newsletter or Friday folder for elementary schools
- Schools encourage teachers to call their students’ parents

Communicate with Parents in a Language They Understand
(Not Only Language But Also Reading Level)
Supporting Student Success

• Academic Parent-Teacher Teams
• Parent Capacity Building Sessions focused on Outcomes
• Volunteer Training
• Elementary School Volunteers to Read with Student One-on-one

Build a Parent’s Capacity to Help Their Child
Speaking Up for Every Child

• Local School Council
• Parent Organizations
• Planning Meetings
• Parent Mentors for families and children with special needs
• Building Parent Capacity Activities
• Parent meetings such as Parent-Teacher Conferences, Individualized Education Program (IEP), Student Success Team (SST), Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

Empower Parents to Advocate for their Child
Sharing Power

- Spring Planning Meetings with Parents and Other Stakeholders
- Family and Community Engagement Plan
- School-Family Promise aka Compact
- Local School Plan for Improvement (LSPI) aka school plan

Value Parents are Our Equal Partners
Collaborating with Community

Gwinnett County Public Library

Local school partners

Network with Your Colleagues and Friends

DIVISION OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT & OPERATIONS
Offering a holistic education to each and every child in our state.

2017-Current Professional Development (PD) Program

- Reviewers and Site Visitors comprised of Georgia Department of Education Teams, State Parent Advisory Council Alumni, Community Based Organizational Partners

- Applications
- 1st Surprise School Visit
- PD Goal Setting and Network Meeting
- 2nd Surprise School Visit
Family Engagement at Georgia Cyber Academy
About Us

• Georgia Cyber Academy is a 100% tuition-free, online, accredited, Georgia public charter school.

• Georgia Cyber Academy offers the benefits of a traditional brick and mortar school without the building.

• Students access lessons and live classes via an online learning management system.

• Parents and students are partnered with certified teachers who instruct and guide student progress and achievement. In the virtual classroom, students participate in real-time, direct instruction from their teachers.

• During the school day, parents provide support and guidance to their student while in the safety and security of their own home.

Who We Serve

• General Education

• Special Education

• LIFE/504/English Learners

• Bullied/Safety Concerns

• Failing School System

• Gifted/Advanced/Dual Enrolled

• Homeless/Pregnant/Working

• LGBTQ

• Actors/Athletes/Jetsetters

• Religious/Spiritual

• Homeschool
WELCOMING ALL FAMILIES

Welcome Resources and Continuous Support

- New Family Onboarding & Returning Family Welcome
- Welcome Calls and Emails
- Online and In-Person Orientations
- Open Offices
- Online and In-Person Training Resources
- Personal Family Support Staff

Ensure that aspects of the school community reflect, respect, and value the diversity of all families:

- Be mindful of potential conflicts such as meetings times, religious holidays, etc.
- Branding and imaging that reflects the school community
- Translate communications, provide resources, and offer involvement opportunities for Limited English Proficient families
Ensure communications are simple, concise, and effective.

Engage in positive communications with families.
- Provide personal touch point communications
- Grade/Department/School/District Updates

Staff Trainings on Communicating Effectively with Parents.

Provide and publicize open office hours for the principal, teachers, and staff.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT STAFF TRAINING
How to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners

Georgia Cyber Academy
2019-2020
Develop student, parent, and teacher contracts
  • Outline the responsibilities of parents, teachers, and students

Host parent workshops throughout the school year
  • House information and recordings online

Online resources for families
  • Pinterest
  • Website
  • Social Media Groups

Academic and social outings
Develop parent leaders. Create opportunities for parents to develop leadership skills so they can become strong educational advocates not only for their child, but for all children at the school.

- Parent Trainings
- PTSO (Parent Teacher Student Organization)

Ensure transparency to parents:
- School Board Meetings
- District Town Hall/Parent Meetings
COLLABORATING WITH COMMUNITY

- Build trust and understanding with your community partners.
- Ensure community partnership activities link to learning and socialization.
- Bring community partners in for input and feedback on the school.
Kristy Howard
Family Engagement Coordinator
Georgia Cyber Academy
khoward@georgiacyber.org
404-334-4790 Ext. 2076
Scenarios—Small Groups

- Form small groups of 4-6 people.
- Read the scenario.
- Discuss with your small group what are some changes that can be made to improve the welcoming environment.
- Be prepared to summarize what your group discussed.
Scenarios—Whole Group Share Out

- Summarize your scenario to the whole group.

- Report on what your small group decided to change.

- What strategies will you use in your school system? Either from small group or pre-workshop assessment.

Download elementary and middle-high scenarios.
Resources

- National PTA Standards for Family-School Partnerships
- Project Appleseed "Red Carpet Treatment"
- New Mexico Public Education Department
- Georgia Department of Education
Download Online Resources

Georgia’s Family-Friendly Partnership School Initiative

Contact

Dawn Scott
Family Engagement Specialist
Phone: 404-994-4209
Email: dscott@gadoe.k12.ga.us

Family-School Partnership Program
Contact List

# Where to Start: Data Based Decision Making

## Family - Friendly School Parent Survey

Part of the Georgia Family - Friendly Partnership School Initiative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>NOT SURE</th>
<th>DOES NOT APPLY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I feel welcome and accepted at my child’s school.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I enjoy visiting my child’s school.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The school has parking spaces for parents.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I am able to find my way easily around the school.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The school has opportunities that allow me to meet and speak with the staff at my child’s school.</td>
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<td>My child’s principal and assistant principal are available and easy to approach.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am comfortable going to the front office when visiting my child’s school.</td>
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Take the Virtual Tour

What Are Georgia’s Virtual Family-Friendly Partnership Schools?

To help schools, families, and communities work together in creating a Family-Friendly Partnership School, the Georgia Department of Education created Georgia’s Virtual Family-Friendly Partnership Schools. Georgia’s Virtual Family-Friendly Partnership Schools takes viewers on a virtual journey of an elementary and a middle-high school to show what makes a school family-friendly.

The intended audience includes educational leaders, teachers, school staff, parents, community organizations, and local business partners. Click on the handout materials on this webpage as a supplemental tool for building family-friendly schools.

To view Georgia’s Virtual Family-Friendly Partnership Schools and begin your virtual tours, please click on the button below to download the program to your computer.

![Download Virtual Tour Button]

If you have trouble downloading the program to your computer, contact your Information Technology Specialist.

Although the Georgia Virtual Family-Friendly Partnership Schools Program (hereinafter “Program”) is intended for public use, the Georgia Department of Education reserves all rights to the information, materials, graphics or logos appearing in this program. These materials are protected by copyright and other intellectual property laws.

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If referencing the Georgia Virtual Family-Friendly Partnership Schools Program in printed materials, please cite as: Georgia Department of Education. (2010). Georgia Virtual Family-Friendly Partnership Schools. [Computer software]. Atlanta, GA: Engauge. Retrieved (date).
Questions
Session Objectives

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✓ Gain ideas to use with schools;
✓ Network and exchange resources with other participants; and
✓ Identify online resources from Georgia and other states and organizations.
Georgia’s Contact Information

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