



**LA FE PREPARATORY
PARENT ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM &
POLICY**

...BECAUSE A PARENT IS A CHILD'S FIRST TEACHER...

DEAR PARENT,

WE ARE HONORED THAT YOU HAVE CHOSEN LA FE PREPARATORY SCHOOL FOR YOUR CHILD'S EDUCATION AND WE ARE SO EXCITED ABOUT BEING YOUR PARTNER. AT LA FE PREPARATORY SCHOOL, WE BELIEVE THAT PARENTS AND FAMILIES ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT TEACHERS A CHILD CAN HAVE. WE BELIEVE IN THE POWER OF PARENTS TO SHAPE, BUILD, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY INSPIRE THEIR CHILDREN THROUGH LESSONS OF LIFE.

BECAUSE WE BELIEVE DEEPLY IN THE POWER AND THE KNOWLEDGE THAT PARENTS HAVE WITH REGARD TO THEIR CHILD'S LIFE AND LEARNING, WE HAVE DESIGNED A PROGRAM THAT ASKS YOU TO BE ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN YOUR CHILD'S EDUCATION AT LEAST FIVE HOURS A MONTH. HERE IS WHAT WE MEAN BY ENGAGEMENT:

ENGAGEMENT IS WHEN PARENTS, GRANDPARENTS, AND OTHER CAREGIVERS ACTIVELY SUPPORT THEIR CHILD'S LEARNING EXPERIENCE IN THE HOME, AT THE SCHOOL, AND IN SPACES BETWEEN.

WE ASK THAT YOU RECORD YOUR HOURS ON THE PARENT ENGAGEMENT LOG THAT YOU RECEIVE DURING EVERY PARENT NIGHT AND THAT YOU RETURN THE LOG AT THE FOLLOWING PARENT NIGHT. WE HAVE ASKED YOU TO KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR ANY CHALLENGES OR SUCCESSES OR ENJOYMENTS THAT YOU WITNESS AS YOU ENGAGE WITH YOUR CHILD.

BELOW, WE HAVE LISTED VARIOUS EXAMPLES OF PARENT ENGAGEMENT. REMEMBER, WE BELIEVE LEARNING CAN HAPPEN ANYWHERE — WHETHER YOU SHOW YOUR CHILD YOU CARE ABOUT HIS/HER SCHOOL BY HELPING OUT IN THE PARENT CENTER, ATTENDING A CLASS HERE ON CAMPUS, OR SPEND TIME READING TOGETHER EVERY NIGHT.

Examples of Parent Engagement

AT LA FE PREPARATORY SCHOOL, PARENTS ARE WELCOME AND URGED TO BE INVOLVED IN THE CHILD'S EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE ON MANY LEVELS, IN WIDELY RANGING WAYS. WE RECOGNIZE THAT THERE ARE VARIOUS WAYS THAT PARENTS CAN BE ENGAGED IN THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION, FROM AT-HOME LEARNING ACTIVITIES LIKE COOKING, MAKING A GROCERY LIST, OR READING, TO PARTICIPATING IN A MAKE IT –TAKE IT LAB IN THE PARENT CENTER, TO CLASSROOM VISITS WHERE PARENTS ARE INVITED TO SHARE STORIES AND/OR DEMONSTRATE SOME OF THEIR OWN TALENTS AND SKILLS, TO HELPING ORGANIZE SCHOOL EVENTS AND/OR TO PROVIDE INVALUABLE ASSISTANCE TO TEACHERS. ***WE STRONGLY BELIEVE THAT PARENTS AND FAMILIES TEACH THEIR CHILDREN VALUABLE LESSONS ON DAILY BASIS AND WE URGE PARENTS TO DOCUMENT THOSE AND SHARE THEM WITH US!***

THIS LIST OF EXAMPLES BELOW IS ONLY A STARTING POINT, BUT IT OFFERS USEFUL IDEAS ABOUT HOW PARENTS MIGHT WANT TO ENGAGE IN THEIR CHILD EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE. BECAUSE PARENTS ARE THEIR CHILDREN'S FIRST TEACHERS, WE ENCOURAGE THEM TO HELP US BUILD THIS LIST BY SHARING THEIR OWN EXPERIENCES AND IDEAS.

EXAMPLES OF PARENT ENGAGEMENT

PARENTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO ENGAGE IN AT LEAST 2 HOURS OF SCHOOL BASED PARTICIPATION. HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES:

- ☺ PARTICIPATE IN A MAKE IT-TAKE IT LAB: COME IN TO THE PARENT CENTER TO LEARN HOW TO MAKE FUN GAMES AND ACTIVITIES FOR AT HOME LEARNING! MAKE IT-TAKE IT LABS ARE TAUGHT BY LA FE TEACHERS AND THE PARENT COORDINATOR DURING THE WEEK, ON PARENT NIGHT, AND DURING SATURDAY SCHOOL.

- ☺ PARTICIPATE IN D.E.A.R. TIME EVERY MORNING!

- ☺ PARTICIPATE IN WELLNESS WEDNESDAYS: EXERCISE WITH YOUR CHILD AND GET HEALTHY TOGETHER!

- ☺ ASSIST IN HOMEWORK HUT: WITH THE SUPPORT OF AN AMERICORPS VOLUNTEER, YOU CAN HELP YOUR CHILD MASTER READING, MATH, OR OTHER SKILLS.

- ☺ PARTICIPATE IN THE CLASSROOM: SHARE A STORY ABOUT YOUR FAMILY, DEMONSTRATE A TALENT; READ A BOOK TO YOUR CHILD'S CLASS; HELP CHILDREN IN CLASS WITH THEIR WORK; HELP TEACHER WITH TASKS: MAKE COPIES, FILE PAPER WORK, ORGANIZE BULLETIN BOARDS, OR PREPARE TAKE-HOME MATERIALS.

- ☺ ATTEND ANY QUALIFYING PARENT EDUCATION COURSE.

- ☺ INSTRUCT A PARENT EDUCATION, LEADERSHIP, AND/OR SKILLS DEVELOPMENT COURSE

- ☺ CHAPERONE A CLASS FIELD-TRIP.

- ☺ BE A FUNDRAISER: PLAN A BAKE SALE, BOOK FAIR, CELEBRATION, OR ANY OTHER CREATIVE FUND-RAISING EVENT.

- ☺ BE A SCHOOL PLANNER: HELP MAKE EVERY EVENT PERFECT! BE ON A PLANNING COMMITTEE FOR SCHOOL HOLIDAY FUNCTIONS, PLAYS, AND OTHER EVENTS, ETC....

- ☺ BE A DECISION MAKER: VOLUNTEER FOR A COMMITTEE; SIT ON THE CAMPUS EDUCATIONAL INSTRUCTION COMMITTEE; ORGANIZE A PARENT DISCUSSION GROUP TO VOICE OPINIONS ON SCHOOL MATTERS.

- ☺ VOLUNTEER FOR EVENTS: BAKING, COOKING, DESIGNING MATERIALS, SETTING UP BOOTHS, CLEAN UP.

- ☺ **TEACH AN AFTER-SCHOOL CLASS LIKE SOCCER, BASKETBALL, FOLKLORICO, ART, CHESS, ETC...**
- ☺ **OTHER SCHOOL BASED PARTICIPATION: HALL MONITORING DURING SCHOOL AND FOR AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM, ANSWERING PHONES, ETC...**

PARENTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO DOCUMENT AT LEAST 2 HOURS OF *At-Home Learning* PER MONTH. HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES

- ☺ **READ AT HOME: READ TOGETHER AT LEAST 15 MINUTES AT NIGHT. REMEMBER TO ASK YOUR CHILD QUESTIONS ABOUT THE STORY. ASK HIM/HER TO IDENTIFY LETTERS, COLORS, AND SHAPES AS YOU READ! ASK THEM TO TELL YOU ABOUT THE STORY AS YOU READ.**
- ☺ **SHARE YOUR HISTORY!: TELL YOUR CHILD A STORY ABOUT YOUR FAMILY, YOUR CHILD HOOD, ANY FAVORITE MEMORY OR VALUABLE LESSON. THEN, ASK HIM OR HER TO RE-CREATE A PICTURE OF THE STORY. BRING THIS STORY TO SCHOOL FOR DISPLAY IN THE HALLS OR IN THE PARENT NEWSLETTER.**
- ☺ **HOMEWORK HELP: MAKE SURE YOUR CHILD HAS A SPACE AND TIME FOR HOMEWORK. TURN OFF THE TELEVISION, FIND A SNACK AND CLEAR OFF THE KITCHEN TABLE SO YOU CAN WORK ON THE HOMEWORK TOGETHER!**
- ☺ **TEACHING YOUR CHILD THROUGH DAILY TASKS: COUNT TOGETHER WHEN YOU COOK; LET YOUR CHILD MEASURE AND COUNT WHEN YOU BAKE; ASK YOUR CHILD TO DRAW AND WRITE OUT A GROCERY LIST. MAKE SURE THAT S/HE USES LOTS OF COLORS WHEN DRAWING FOOD AND TRIES TO SOUND OUT THE WORDS.**
- ☺ **MAKE IT – TAKE IT LABS: ATTEND A MAKE-IT TAKE IT LAB TO EXTEND CLASSROOM LEARNING INTO AT HOME LEARNING. THE MAKE-IT TAKE IT LABS BRING PARENTS TOGETHER TO MAKE AND LEARN ABOUT GAMES AND ACTIVITIES THAT CAN EASILY BE DONE AT HOME!**
- ☺ **PAINT, COLOR, DRAW, AND WRITE STORIES TOGETHER ABOUT A FAVORITE MEMORY, FAVORITE FOOD, OR FAVORITE THING TO DO.**
- ☺ **TREASURE HUNT IN THE HOUSE, NEIGHBORHOOD OR PARK: ASK YOUR CHILD TO FIND AND COUNT ITEMS INSIDE YOUR HOUSE, IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD, OR IN THE PARK. TALK ABOUT COLORS AND SHAPES AS S/HE COUNTS.**

- ☺ VISIT WEBSITES TOGETHER SUCH AS WWW.PBSKIDS.ORG OR WWW.KIDS.NATIONALGEOGRAPHIC.COM AND SHOW YOUR CHILD THE WORLD. SEE THE LIST OF WEBSITES FOR MORE TIPS!

LEARNING IS FUN AND IT CAN HAPPEN ANYWHERE! PARENTS SHOULD AIM FOR AT LEAST 1 HOUR OF *FUN LEARNING* EACH MONTH. TRY THESE:

- ☺ VISIT THE ZOO: LEARN ABOUT ALL KINDS OF ANIMALS AT THE EL PASO ZOO. ADMISSION IS FREE FOR CHILDREN UNDER 2! \$3.00 FOR CHILDREN 3-12 YEARS OLD, \$5.00 FOR PEOPLE 13-61, AND \$4.00 FOR ADULTS 62+.
- ☺ VISIT THE EL PASO DOWNTOWN LIBRARY TO CHECK OUT BOOKS AND ATTEND FAMILY STORY-TIME ON SATURDAYS AT 11:00 A.M.
- ☺ VISIT THE INSIGHTS MUSEUM: ADMISSION IS FREE FOR CHILDREN 3 AND UNDER, \$4.00 FOR CHILDREN 4-11, AND \$5.00 FOR STUDENTS, MILITARY AND SENIORS, \$6.00 FOR ADULTS.
- ☺ FIND THE SEASONS!: GO ON A WALK TO EXPLORE WHAT EACH SEASON BRINGS. HAVE YOUR CHILD DRAW OR WRITE ABOUT WHAT S/HE SEES.
- ☺ ENROLL YOUR CHILD IN A SPORT OR CLUB AND SUPPORT HIS/HER EFFORTS BY WATCHING HIM/HER PLAY.

THE FOLLOWING EXAMPLES DO NOT COUNT AS PARENT ENGAGEMENT:

- DROPPING CHILD OFF AT SCHOOL IN THE MORNING
- DROPPING CHILD OFF AT SATURDAY SCHOOL
- DROPPING CHILD OFF FOR FIELD-TRIPS OR EVENTS
- WATCHING BUT NOT *JOINING IN* FOR WELLNESS WEDNESDAYS, SATURDAY SCHOOL OR CLASS ROOM VISITS.
- TALKING IN THE HALLS OR IN THE PARENT CENTER.

NOT ONLY DOES LA FE PREPARATORY SCHOOL WANT YOU TO BE INVOLVED, WE WANT TO SUPPORT YOUR EFFORTS AS MUCH AS WE CAN. THE FOLLOWING TABLE IS AN EXPLANATION FOR EVERY PIECE OF THE LA FE PREPARATORY SCHOOL PARENT ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM. WE WELCOME YOU AND HOPE THAT YOU JOIN US AT SCHOOL VERY SOON. WE BELIEVE IN YOUR POWER AS PARENTS AND LOOK FORWARD TO A LONG, SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP FOR YOUR CHILD!

LA FE PREPARATORY SCHOOL PARENT ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

LA FE'S PARENT ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM IS GROUNDED IN A SCHOOL-WIDE STUDY WHERE ADMINISTRATORS, TEACHERS, SCHOOL FACULTY AND PARENTS WERE INTERVIEWED AND SURVEYED. OUR DATA COLLECTION EFFORTS RESULTED IN THE IDENTIFICATION AND CONSTRUCTION OF SEVERAL PROGRAM COMPONENTS.

LA FE PREPARATORY SCHOOL PARENT ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

Component	Purpose
1. School-Parent Contract	Establish expectations for parents in terms of their parent participation.
2. New Parent Orientation	Establish expectations for parents regarding their on-campus and in-classroom participation; a thorough introduction to the school, its programs, and policies.
3. Parent Handbook	Provide parents with information about the parent engagement program, teacher and administrator contact information, the school's programs & policies.
4. Parent Website	Provides parents with contact information for school, teachers, and local service agencies. Features on-line links to educational activities and has downloadable activities.
5. Parent Newsletter	Provide an additional and uniform stream of communication with important updates. Parents are invited to contribute to the Newsletter.
6. Parent Engagement Log	Document hours and activities in which parents engage their children in the learning process. The participation log features guiding questions for parent reflection because we believe we have a lot to learn from parents about their children!
7. Helping Hand	Provides parents with 5 specific ideas about how they can participate each month. The Helping Hand is part of the Parent Newsletter.
8. Parent Nights	Intended to provide parents with important information about upcoming school events; Twice a year, Parent Focus Groups where parents will be asked for feedback on a number of issues; On occasion, Make It – Take It Labs will be offered so that parents can learn tips, activities, and games to use with their children at home. Teachers are charged with carrying out the Make It –Take Its for Parent Nights.
9. Make it –Take it Labs	Provide parents with examples of at home learning lessons and examples that can be easily replicated at home. These labs are informed by current classroom instruction and curriculum and coordinated by parent coordinator based on information gathered in planning meetings. Parents can be invited to demonstrate Make It Take Its at a later date.

10. Homework Huts	An opportunity for parents to help children with academic needs with the support of Americorps staff.
11. Parent Educational, Leadership and Professional Development	Develop the education, professional, and leadership capacity of parents through practical and professional course offerings, which include GED, ESL, Computer Classes, Reading, Writing, Financial Literacy, Office Skills Training, Job Search and Resume Workshops, Small Business Development and Proposal Workshops, and Social Service Resource Education.
12. Americorps Parents as Partners Classes	Support and educate parents about communication with teachers and administrators, potential academic hurdles, preparation for their child's academic future, especially college.
13. Campus Educational Instructional Committee	Provide decision-making opportunities to parents regarding school wide policy and programming.
14. Parent Center	Provide a space for parents to feel welcome at school. Parents are encouraged to use the space to conduct their own classes/activities for other parents, especially those that are related to Micro-Society, and also to carry out projects for teachers.
15. Micro-Society for Parent Entrepreneurs	Support parents as they learn and improve a craft that enhances self-sufficiency by earning money.
16. Social Calls for Funds of Knowledge	Intended to enrich the cultural component of La Fe Preparatory School's bi-cultural, bi-national mission. Teachers and staff get to know their students and their families within the context of their homes and to facilitate a new way of thinking about students, to "dig" knowledge out of the child's history, home, family and implement a culturally grounded curriculum that is shaped by teachers, parents, the local community, and action-research.
17. Talent Bank for Teaching	To utilize parent knowledge, background and talents in the classroom for teaching in the classroom or after-school program.