

# School-Family Partnerships Advisory Committee Description and Charge



## The School- Family Partnerships Policy

In the fall of 2004, the Seattle School Board unanimously adopted a policy and procedure that underscores the critical importance of family engagement in student success. The Board and Superintendent place a top priority in creating and maintaining a District-wide climate that encourages parent and family engagement. The goal is to develop and sustain partnerships that support student learning and positive child and youth development in all schools. The documents, Board Policy E10.01 and Board Procedure (which are available at [www.seattleschools.org/area/board](http://www.seattleschools.org/area/board)), incorporate a series of procedures that set out expectations for the way that schools, and the School District, will relate to parents and families.

Among other provisions, the policy establishes an on-going “School-Family Partnership Advisory Committee” to advise the Superintendent in the implementation of the School-Family Partnership Policy.

## School-Family Partnership Advisory Committee Charge

The responsibility of the School-Family Partnerships Advisory Committee is to advise the Superintendent on the implementation of the School-Family Partnerships Policy. The committee will:

1. Update the District’s School-Family Partnership Plan and align it with the themes and key objectives of the *Excellence for All* strategic plan. The School-Family Partnership Plan provides a clear roadmap to help schools integrate and institutionalize family engagement best practices to increase student academic achievement. The plan pays particular attention to the engagement of families in student learning, regardless of race, creed, color, religion, marital status, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age or disability.

The plan includes:

- A Framework
- Guidelines
- Measurable Outcomes
- Accountability Measures
- Learning Opportunities for all staff

This plan takes into account the School Board’s mission, vision, values, and goals and aligns with the strategic themes and key goals of the **Excellence for All** strategic plan.

3. Assess the effectiveness of the plan each year and develop recommendations to the Superintendent on modifications and updates. The assessment will include measures of parent/family engagement, barriers to greater engagement, utilization of resources, and effect on student achievement.

### **Committee Membership**

The committee will be comprised of up to thirty (30) parents/guardians/family members. Collectively, the committee will **represent the diverse population of Seattle Public Schools**.

**Selection criteria** – the committee will be diverse in terms of:

- Ethnicity
- Language
- Race
- Gender
- Sexual Orientation
- Socio- Economic Status
- Type of family (For example Single-Parent, Foster Care, Kinship)
- Geographic location – residence and/or school attendance
- Student Program – regular education, special education, advanced learning, bilingual, and alternative.
- School level – the committee will include at least one representative from pre-school, elementary, middle, and high school levels

**Committee member qualifications** - To make effective progress during the first year of the committee’s work, committee members are asked to make a commitment to:

1. Attend each advisory committee meeting and the initial orientation training
2. Work cooperatively and respectfully with committee members
3. Actively participate in the updating process of the School-Family Partnership Engagement Plan
4. Participate in family engagement “learning walks” at school buildings
5. Value and respect the cultural diversity of Seattle Public Schools

### **Term of Committee and Length of Term**

The Advisory Committee is a standing committee. The initial term of membership is October 2009—October 2010. In future years, it is expected that one-year to two year terms (October through October) will apply. *Over time, the goal is to recruit family members who have historically not been involved in district-level committees.*

### **Staff Support and Reporting Relationship**

The School Family Partnership Advisory Committee members are appointed by the Superintendent. The Director of School Services will be the Superintendent's representative for the committee. Staff support will be provided from the School Services Department.

1. Training – Committee members will be offered training in leadership, team building, parent engagement best practices and other pertinent topics identified by the group so that those who have typically not been involved in district and school- level committees will acquire the skills to be effective team members and advocates.
2. Support for committee members will be provided as necessary.
3. Committee Leadership and Structure: The advisory committee will be led by co-chairs and will include working sub-committees.

### **Process for Soliciting Nominations and Appointing Committee Members**

Nominations for the committee will be sought via public notices and program contacts. Calls for nominations will be disseminated via: website, email contact lists (including key communicators), school newsletters, and bilingual staff. A slate of recommended candidates will be submitted to the Superintendent, who will be the final appointing authority.

A letter of appointment describing the scope of work, committee members' responsibilities and time commitment will be sent to prospective committee members by the Superintendent's office.

Nominations will be sought during July and the first two weeks of September 2009.