

**AMANDA GIST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**  
Cotter, Arkansas

# **Parent & Family Engagement Plan**

Vanessa Thomas Jones, Superintendent  
Airl Cheek, Elementary Principal

## **OVERVIEW**

The administration, faculty, and staff of Amanda Gist Elementary School believe that a student's education is a responsibility shared by the school and the family during the entire time the child attends our school. Our school and parents/guardians must work as knowledgeable partners to support the goal of the school to educate all students effectively.

The parent/guardians of students attending Amanda Gist Elementary School are diverse in culture, language, and needs. They are an integral component of the school's ability to provide for the educational success of their children.

Parental involvement is essential to ensuring the improvement of student achievement. The school should foster and support actual parent/guardian involvement in its educational endeavors by:

1. Involving parents/guardians of students at all grade levels in a variety of roles
2. Being comprehensive and coordinated
3. Recognizing that communication should be regular, two-way and meaningful
4. Promoting and supporting responsible parenting
5. Acknowledging that parents/guardians play an integral role in assisting student learning
6. Welcoming parents/guardians into the school and seeking parental support and assistance
7. Recognizing parents/guardians as full partners in the decisions that affect his or her child and family
8. Recognizing that community resources strengthen school programs, family practices and student learning.
9. Supporting the development, implementation and regular evaluation of the program to involve parents in the decisions and practices of the school district

The purpose of this Parent & Family Engagement Plan is to describe programs and practices in place at Amanda Gist Elementary that foster and support active parental involvement and reflect the specific needs of students and their families. Copies of this program will be provided to families at the beginning of each school year. Copies are also available through the school office or through the Parent Center. Families may contact the school at 435-6655 with questions regarding parental involvement.

## **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT PLAN**

### **“Parent Involvement Meeting” (Open House)**

An open house will be held annually near the beginning of the school year. It is an opportunity for students and parents/guardians to visit the school, meet with the principal or the

superintendent and talk with student's teachers for the upcoming year. The superintendent or principal will give a report on the state of the school. Also provided will be an overview of:

- What students will be learning
- How students will be assessed
- What parents/guardians should expect for their child's education
- How parents/guardians can assist and make a difference in his or her child's education

Attendance is highly recommended for parents/guardians wishing to acquaint themselves with the campus and staff.

### **“Parent Involvement Meetings” (Evenings)**

“Parent Involvement Meetings” will be held periodically throughout the school year. These fun-filled evenings will focus on various parts of the curriculum and are designed to promote parental involvement in their child's learning experience.

### **Informational Packets**

To encourage communication with parents/guardians, Amanda Gist Elementary School will prepare “Informational Packets” which will contain:

- The school's Parent & Family Engagement Plan
- Ways for parents/guardians to become involved in the school and his or her child's education
- A Student Handbook
- Volunteer survey in which parents/guardians/alumni/community members can volunteer to share their strengths or skills with the students/school
- A school campus map

### **Parent Center**

A Parent Center has been established to provide parenting materials such as books, magazines, pamphlets, videos, and other informational material regarding responsible parenting. These materials are available for review and/or checkout. A list of current selections will be included in the Informational packets. Free parenting materials are available on the Parenting Information Shelves located near the office.

### **Cotter Update Newsletter**

Cotter School District will post an Update newsletter to the school district website. This newsletter includes an updated school calendar and articles about students and their activities or honors.

## **Welcoming Visitors to School**

Amanda Gist Elementary School welcomes parents, guardians and visitors into the school and seeks their support and assistance. For the safety of the students, we ask that all visitors sign in at the main office in the elementary building.

## **Volunteers**

Amanda Gist Elementary School encourages and welcomes volunteers. The school will compile a volunteer resource book each year. The resource book will be used to help match school needs with volunteer interests. It will be developed from the volunteer surveys completed and returned to school and will include:

- Parent survey information so volunteer work will be meaningful.
- How frequently a volunteer would like to participate, including the option of just one (1) time per year.
- Options for those who are available to help at home.

## **Ways to be Involved in the School and in Your Child's Education**

- Attend all Parent/Teacher conferences
- Volunteer in the classroom or help from home
- Attend "Parent Involvement Meetings"
- Set aside a specific time to review your child's work
- Schedule daily homework time
- Praise and encourage your child
- Read to or with your child on a regular basis
- Keep in touch with the school
- Check the district website ([www.cotterschools.net](http://www.cotterschools.net)) for upcoming activities

## **Annual Review of Parent & Family Engagement Plan**

This plan will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Parent & Family Engagement Plan committee. Committee members are: Airl Cheek, elementary principal; Keri Raycraft, elementary parent facilitator; Jena Adams, 5th grade teacher; Stephanie Sperry, Kindergarten teacher; Monica Springfield, parent; Breanna Cowart, parent; Connie Koenen, parent; Angie McNutt, parent.