

AMANDA GIST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Cotter, Arkansas

Parent & Family Engagement Plan

Vanessa Thomas Jones, Superintendent
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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)

A virtual open house was held for the 2020-2021 school year to minimize contact and keep teachers, parents, and students safe. Teachers uploaded videos with information about their

classrooms, procedures for the new year, and expectations. These videos are available on the Cotter Public Schools website. Parents are encouraged to contact their child's teacher with any questions about the upcoming school year.

“Parent Involvement Meetings” (Evenings)

Parents are offered various options for attendance of scheduled parent/teacher conferences. These options include: phone call, email, zoom meeting, or in person. Conferences are held twice a year to update parents on student progress and growth.

Previously held parent/students meetings held throughout the year will be considered on a case by case basis to ensure safety of all involved.

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 typically welcomes parents, guardians and visitors into the school and seeks their support and assistance. Due to safety concerns for the 2020-2021 school year, visitors on campus should call ahead and if given permission, must sign-in at the office and be screened.

Volunteers

Amanda Gist Elementary School encourages and welcomes volunteers. Volunteer options for the 2020-2021 school year include options that can be done at home. Until guidelines change, volunteers are not allowed on campus to make copies or work with students. 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 will include:

- Parent survey information so volunteer work will be meaningful.
- How a volunteer is able to help from home.

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

- Attend all Parent/Teacher conferences
- Stay in contact with your child's teacher through the Remind app and email
- Access your child's grades through Home Access Center on our district website
- 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
- Check the district website (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; Angie McNutt, parent.