

Hardy County Schools

Parental / Community Involvement in Student Education

The Hardy County Board of Education believes that students are more successful when parents, and the community, are involved with the schools in the education process. Therefore, it shall be the policy of the Board to recognize the value of parental/community participation, input, support and cooperation by encouraging involvement through volunteer work, participation in decision-making, parent/school organizations, communication, school visitation, home visitation, extra-curricular activities and general support with students' schooling.

The term "parents" as used in this policy, includes those with legal or quasi-legal custodianship (i.e. biological, adoptive, foster, custodial parents). The term "community" as used in this policy includes those individuals living within the community boundaries of Hardy County and close associated geographic areas.

There are many types of services that can be provided to schools by volunteers. Activities which involve direct contact with students include: monitoring activities, listening to a child read, using flash cards, library work, computer assistance, tutoring, etc. Services which do not involve direct contact with students include: clerical duties, making charts and learning stations, using the duplicating machine, chaperoning school activities and/or field trips, etc.

Individuals who have time to share on a regular basis should see the school principal in their community to sign up and to obtain further information. A brief training session is provided before volunteers begin to work in the school, and on-the-job training is provided as needed.

Volunteers work under the direction of a professional educator; the teacher and/or the principal. (See HC Policy KGB)

I. Parent Involvement in Decision Making

It is important that parents be involved in decision making concerning the education of their children. The Board provides this opportunity for participation in decision making (HC Policy KBC): in some of the following ways:

A. School Improvement Councils

A local school improvement council is established at every school, which provides opportunities for involvement of the school community in the operation of the local schools and to support local initiatives to improve school performance. There shall be three parents or local guardians of student enrolled at the school elected by the school's parent teacher organization (if applicable) or all parents at large.

B. Advisory Councils

Advisory councils have the function of providing input on the development of the educational program of their children through regular meetings and activities. Some of these advisory councils active in Hardy County Schools include, the Title One Advisory Council (HC Policy BBIA), the Hardy County Vocational Advisory Council, Textbook Adoption Committee and the Strategic Planning Committee (Dream Team).

C. Special Committees

Parents may be invited to serve on special committees for specific projects set up by the Superintendent and/or the Board of Education (See HC Policy BBI).

II. Parent / School Organizations

The Board supports the establishment of organizations designed to provide cooperation between the school and parents to improve education for the students in Hardy County Schools.

A. Parent-Teacher Organizations:

Parent Teacher Organizations are an important part of the school communities in Hardy County. The Board of Education recognizes the valuable services performed by these groups for the benefit of children and families. (See HC Policy DDFA).

The Board further encourages the formation of parent or community groups in connection with each school in the District. It is understood that these groups will work in harmony and cooperation with the school and will have no administrative authority in connection with the operation of the school.

B. Booster Organizations:

Organizations of parents to support school programs, i.e., Band Boosters, Athletic Boosters, etc., are also encouraged. All groups must receipt and disburse funds according to Hardy County Policy DDFA.

III. Communications

The Board supports all means of communication between parents and schools. For parents to become fully involved in the education of their children, they must be fully aware of school activities and programs as well as classroom activities.

A. Schools are encouraged to send home school bulletins and school newsletters. Schools are also encouraged to develop and use school websites to keep parents informed of activities. Schools and school organizations are encouraged to provide information to the news media regarding activity and developments in their schools.

B. The most significant communications between parents and teachers occur between the parents and the teacher(s) of their own children. The more contact, the better the communication between parents and teacher for the best possibility for success for students. This contact should take the form of letters, telephone calls, and parent-teacher conferences. Regular parent-teacher conferences are scheduled at least twice a year, but encouraged at any time the teacher or parent feels is necessary.

In addition, two hours of the ISE days is designed to be used for parent involvement and communication.

C. Pupil Progress Reports:

Parents should know as much about the process of their child as the school is able to provide. The task of the school is to devise understandable and informative means of communicating with parents. Perhaps the most desirable communication occurs in a parent-teacher conference.

The pupil progress report is used in addition to the parent-teacher conference and is issued each six weeks for all students in grades PK-12.

An interim report may be sent by middle and high school teachers to parent(s) or guardian(s) any time outstanding strengths and/or deficiencies are demonstrated. The purpose of the interim report is to maintain communication with parents or guardians between pupil progress reports.

IV. School Visitation

Parents are invited to visit schools. Arrangements should be made with the school principal prior to the visit. All visitors are required to report to the office upon arrival at the school and sign in. (Hardy County Policy KBF).

V. Home Visitation

The Board of Education encourages teachers, and other school personnel to visit homes of parents to foster understanding and communication. Due to the nature of education very young children, preschool teachers schedule regular home visits with their students.

VI. General Support of Students Schooling

Parents can support their child's schooling by:

- attending school activities and functions
- initiating direct communication with their child's teacher concerning progress and/or any problems or concerns
- responding to communications from the teacher and/or the school concerning their child's progress
- helping their child improve their school work by providing encouragement, arranging for appropriate study time and space, modeling desired behavior (such as reading with pleasure), monitoring homework, actively tutoring their children at home, and any other activities suggested by their child's teacher(s).

VII. Involvement of Other Interested Persons

All of the above activities are encouraged for other persons significant to a child, including grandparents and other family members. Community members are also encouraged to participate in any or all of the activities above. The only exception is where "parents" are legally required, i.e., School Improvement Councils, etc.

VIII. Parent / Educational Liaison

Funding is provided to hire a part-time, temporary position of parent coordinator liaison for the county. These individuals serve as liaison between school and home. They coordinate activities such as, but limited to: parent workshops, help arrange Title I meetings, Special Education training workshops, ESL training workshops, write and distribute newsletter with site development and up-dates, summer program coordination and other home and school communications.

SOURCE: Board of Education Minutes

DATE: July 3, 2006