

SCHOOL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Introduction

Ecole Française Internationale Auckland is dedicated to delivering the French curriculum in both French and English, ensuring that every student who spends several years at the school becomes fluent in both languages. This approach enables students to benefit from the best of both worlds: the rigour of French academic education combined with the innovative and student-centered teaching practices of New Zealand.

Research consistently shows that meaningful family and community engagement plays a critical role in supporting student success. Our School Community Engagement Plan emphasizes the importance of collaboration between families, the community, and local cultures in shaping the school experience. Recognizing parents as the first and most influential teachers of their children, we aim to involve the broader community in all aspects of educational planning, implementation, and evaluation.

Our goal is to foster a strong culture of trust and partnership between families, community members, and educators. By working together, we strive to create an environment that nurtures successful, well-rounded, and happy students.

Impact of Community Engagement on Student Success

The Six Components of Successful Community Engagement

The Community Engagement Plan is designed around the following key components that are essential for fostering student success and achievement through strong community involvement:

1. Welcoming Every Community Member

Every community member who interacts with the school feels valued and welcomed.

2. Two-Way Communication

School staff and community members engage in regular, meaningful, and two-way communication about student learning and development.

3. Shared Decision-Making

Community members and school staff work together as equal partners in decisions that affect students, contributing to the development of policies, practices, and programs.

4. Supporting Student Success

School staff and the community collaborate to support students' learning and overall well-being, both in the school environment and beyond.

5. Collaborating with Community Resources

The school connects with Alliance française and other Francophone organisations in New Zealand, as well as the Charter School community, local organisations, services, and civic opportunities to expand learning experiences and provide additional support for students and families.

6. Advocating for Every Student

Community members are empowered to advocate for the success and equitable treatment of all students, ensuring they have access to opportunities that promote their learning and development.

This approach emphasises the vital role the community plays in creating a supportive, inclusive, and successful learning environment for every child.

Actions to Achieve Results - The School's Commitment

Welcoming Every Family

- Establish a network of mentor parents to guide new families in understanding the school's culture and systems.
- Organise special traditional celebrations after school hours or on weekends to foster community connections.
- Offer family-friendly school tours led by the Principal or a staff member to showcase the school in action and encourage meaningful discussions.

Two-Way Communication

- Conduct a family engagement survey at the beginning of the school year, use the results to make improvements, and follow up with an end-of-year survey to assess progress. Share findings with all families.
- Provide parents with clear information on curriculum expectations, regular progress reports, and opportunities for conferences, ensuring follow-up as needed.
- Maintain up-to-date contact information for parents, staff, and teachers, including their preferred methods and times for communication.
- Utilise all available communication channels (newsletters, emails, social media platforms) to keep families informed and engaged.
- Encourage open communication between parents and teachers to celebrate students' positive behaviour and achievements.
- Facilitate informal interactions between families, staff, and school leadership to build stronger relationships.
- Share detailed information about expectations, student placements, school programmes, activities, and available support services.
- Regularly send student work home for review and feedback from families.

Sharing Power

- Create opportunities for parents to participate in school committees that shape policies, set goals, and evaluate programmes.

Supporting Student Success

- Encourage teachers to communicate regularly with families and students about homework through multiple channels, such as email or class newsletters.

- Provide resources and tools to support non-Francophone families in helping their children improve their French skills.
- Offer information sessions or training for parents on various types of assessments, helping them understand testing purposes and how results contribute to academic success.
- Share an annual school calendar featuring important dates and events, and maintain an updated, user-friendly website with contact details and essential information.
- Develop a database to identify and capture families' skills and availability for volunteering or contributing services to the school.
- Provide training for parents who volunteer at the school and create opportunities for those unable to volunteer during school hours to contribute in other ways.

Collaborating with Community

- Use local community facilities (such as the Alliance Française, libraries, community halls, parks, and reserves) for learning opportunities.
- Inform local agencies and businesses about school events and initiatives.
- Encourage community members to volunteer in school activities and programs.
- Participate in community clean-up and beautification projects to foster a sense of shared responsibility.
- Partner with community organizations to offer leadership training for parents and promote collaborative initiatives.

Advocating for Every Student

- Conduct regular reviews of school policies and practices to ensure they are inclusive, equitable, and supportive of all students.
- Use data to identify gaps in student achievement or access to resources, and develop targeted interventions to address them.

Actions to Achieve Results - Family-Level Actions to Support Student Success

Collaborative Relationships with the School:

- Establish a positive and open relationship with your child's teacher and principal early in the year.
- Share your high expectations for your child's academic and personal growth with their teacher.

Welcoming Every Family:

- Build connections with other families and share ideas on how to support one another in helping children succeed.

Two-Way Communication:

- Keep teachers informed about any significant family changes or circumstances that might affect your child's learning.
- Let the teacher know if your child is struggling with homework or specific assignments.
- Read all school communications thoroughly and seek clarification on anything you don't understand.

Shared Decision-Making:

- Participate in setting goals and developing an individualized learning plan for your child in collaboration with teachers and staff.

Supporting Student Success:

- Attend meetings and workshops on learning expectations, assessments, and curriculum updates.
- Establish consistent routines at home, including set times for meals, homework, and sleep.
- Create a quiet, well-lit space for your child to complete their homework.
- Talk with your child daily about their school experiences and progress on homework.
- Emphasize the importance of regular school attendance, allowing absences only when your child is unwell.

- Explore extracurricular or non-academic activities that ignite your child's interest in learning.
- Regularly discuss the importance of education and how it impacts their future opportunities.
- Attend school events and parent training sessions to better support your child's learning journey.
- Make reading a daily habit, both individually and together with your child.
- When helping with homework, guide your child toward solutions rather than providing answers.

Collaborating with the Community:

- Encourage your child's participation in community activities such as local sports, arts, or youth programs.
- Express appreciation to local businesses and community members who support school initiatives.

Advocating for Every Student:

- Work within the school's processes to advocate effectively for your child and other students, fostering a collaborative and respectful approach.

Conclusion

These actions have been shaped through numerous formal and informal discussions and meetings with educators, teachers, support staff, students, parents, and community members of Ecole Française Internationale Auckland.

We recognize and value the diversity within our families and communities, understanding that each has unique perspectives on education and that many speak different languages.

We also honor the shared aspiration of all families to see their children succeed.

Students excel when they feel supported by everyone in their lives—at home, in the community, and at school—and when high expectations are set for their behavior, academic achievements, and sense of citizenship.

Our Community Engagement Plan emphasizes that by building strong partnerships with families and respecting the unique culture of each household, we can create the conditions for every student to thrive.