

<http://merritt-academy.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/feb12.pdf> In accordance with No Child Left Behind section 1118, Merritt Academy Parent Involvement Policy has adopted by the Board of Trustees of Merritt International Academy.

Parental Involvement

The Board of Directors believes that durable and significant learning by a student is more likely to occur when there is an effective partnership between the school and the student's parents/guardians ("parents"). Such a partnership means a mutual belief in and commitment to significant educational goals for a student, a plan for the mean to accomplish those goals, cooperation on developing and implementing solutions to problems that may be encountered, and continuing communications regarding the progress in accomplishing the goal(s). To this end, parents should be meaningfully involved in:

- developing and implementing appropriate strategies for helping their child achieve the learning objectives that lead to accomplishing the learning outcomes;
- providing a school and home environment which encourages learning and augments, at home, the learning experiences provided by the school;
- establishing the learning outcomes for their child with the goal of developing responsible, adult member of our society;
- establishing and supporting a consistent and shared approach to child guidance and discipline;
- providing for the proper health, safety and well-being for their child;
- developing English language proficiency;

The Board is committed to providing clear and concise communication to parents.

The Board through this policy directs the establishment of a parent involvement plan by which a school-parent partnership can be established and provided to the parent of each child in the Academy. The plan must encompass parent participation, through meetings and other forms of communication. The Parental Involvement Plan shall be distributed to all parents and students through publication in the Student Handbook and other suitable means.

The Educational Service Provider shall direct the development of a Parent Involvement Plan for the Academy (with building/program specific goals as desired) which may include, among others, the following strategies:

- Provide child's individual assessment results, reading results, progress reports, report cards to parents.
- Provide a description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the Academy, the form of assessment used to measure student progress and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet.
- The Academy will also provide student handbooks that outline each school's discipline plan along with the attendance plan.
- Arrange flexible scheduled parent/teacher conferences and parent requested conferences.
- Post PTA/VIP/PTSO meetings, and parent involvement meetings on the Academy website and via-email.
- Publish Academy Newsletter(s) informing parents about the parent involvement plan and other events at the school(s).

- Schedule meetings to provide parents the opportunity to share concerns and desires, to better improve the school environment and student achievement.
- Send home a parent-student-teacher compact that outlines how parents and school staff will share the responsibility for improved student achievement of their children. This compact shall be discussed and revised as necessary at least annually.
- Teachers contact new students by mailing welcome notes.
- Schedule conferences to inform parents of student's progress.
- Send folders or reports home to keep parents abreast of individual student progress and maintain open lines of communication.
- Make calls, use e-mail, and/or letters as needed for teachers and administrators to communicate with parents.
- Encourage continued positive partnerships involvement throughout the community by staff and administrators.
- Encourage active faculty participation in PTA/VIP/PTSO.
- Have students perform at various functions both at school and throughout the community.
- Encourage parents to serve as chaperones for class field trips and other school activities.
- Hold an annual recognition event for parents and volunteers who have helped throughout the year.
- Provide opportunities for dissensions between parents, administrators and staff to address problems and find solutions for students having difficulties, either academically or socially.
- Use Academy school improvement committee to review and improve the Parental Involvement Plan.

Relations with Parents

The Board needs parents to assume and exercise responsibility for their children's behavior, including the behavior of students who have reached the legal age of majority, but are still supported by the parent. During the school hours, the Board, through its designated administrators, recognizes the responsibility to monitor students' behavior and, as with all academic matters, the importance of cooperation between the school and the parents in matters relating to conduct.

For the benefit of the child, the Board encourages parents to support their child's career in school by:

- participating in school functions, organizations and committees;
- supporting the teachers and the schools in maintaining discipline and a safe and orderly learning environment;
- requiring their child to observe all school rules and regulations;
- supporting or enforcing consequences for their child's willful behavior in school;
- sending their children to school with proper attention to his/her health, personal cleanliness, and dress;
- maintaining an active interest in their child's daily work, monitoring and making it possible for him/her to complete assigned homework by providing a quiet place and suitable conditions for study;

- reading all communications from the school, signing, and returning them promptly when required;
- cooperating with the school in attending conferences set up for the exchange of information of their child's progress in school.

The academy includes parents in every aspect of the education program. The school governance structure relies on parental input and cultivates a close working partnership between staff and parents. Each year the school, in partnership with its management company (The Romine Group), will send out an annual survey to evaluate the effectiveness of school operations and the school improvement plan. Results of this survey will be compiled by the management company and shared with school administrators who will in turn share the results with the staff and parents. The school improvement team will take the results and develop action plans to address any outlying concerns and also to plan the next years school improvement plan.

Ongoing communication

Teachers regularly communicate with parents. Communication channels are established that best meets the needs of the parents. These can include phone conversations, email or quick conversations before and after school as the parents drop off or pick up their child. Teachers also generate weekly or bi-weekly class newsletters informing parents of upcoming events and classroom topics.

Report Cards and Progress Reports

Teachers send report cards and progress reports home every six weeks. These apprise the parents of the student's progress as well as help identify areas in which they need help.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent/Teacher Conferences are conducted 3 times a year. Parents are scheduled a time to meet with their child's teacher. At this time, the teacher updates the parents on the student's progress, displays students work based on their portfolios. Parents are also encouraged to set up meetings with teachers any time they are concerned about their child's progress. For students whose parents require translation services, we have hired bilingual paraprofessionals for our top three languages spoken in our student's homes. Disclaimers are added at the bottom of all our communications in the student's native language informing them of the opportunity to receive translation services. Individual student results are shared two times a year at parent teacher conferences with translators present if necessary.

Volunteer Opportunities

Merritt Academy provides the opportunity for parents to regularly volunteer in the school. Parents may assist teachers with classroom activities, chaperone on class or school field trips, assist in the main office, or provide support during our lunch times.

Parent Surveys

Parent surveys are conducted yearly to solicit feedback from parents in regards to their impression of various facets of the school. The management company will start to provide this service to provide a neutral, third party facilitator.

Principal's Breakfast

Each semester, the principal will host a breakfast that aims to bring parents to the school to facilitate a discussion about the climate of the school. This gives the parents the opportunity to bring to light any concerns or good things they like about the school.

Teacher/Student/Parent Compacts

The Merritt Academy School Parent Compact is an integral part of the parent –teacher and school relationship. Compacts are introduced and initiated during the parent orientation program and are revisited again at the all school parent-teacher conferences in late fall and early spring. Copies of the compact, after signed by the parent and teacher are retained by both parties. At the first Parent Teacher Conference, the compact is shared with the parents and signed again if necessary.

MEAP Data Interpretation to Parents

MEAP Scores are typically shared during January at Merritt Academy. MEAP scores are immediately analyzed by the administrative, instructional staff and school improvement team. The scores and information is then passed on to the Merritt staff.

Special information sessions for parents are coordinated through the Merritt Parent Organization to disseminate MEAP results. During these informational sessions, results are explained to the parents in the simplest forms avoiding the use of technical language. Teachers explain the MEAP results to the parents at parent teacher conferences in a language they can understand. This allows the parents to ask individual questions of their students in relation to their MEAP scores. At the meetings and parent teacher conferences, we provide a translator for the languages other than English most spoken by our students if requested.

Individual student reports are sent directly to the student's home with a letter. School wide results are also published in the Merritt School News Letter and shared online

Merritt Academy Family-School Agreement 2012-2013

This agreement is a voluntary commitment to create a partnership to ensure the educational success of each student at Merritt Academy.

Staff: As teachers, I/We agree to...

- respect all students
- follow Michigan's benchmarks and curriculum
- provide an orderly learning environment
- provide special assistance (tutoring) to students as needed
- provide opportunities for students to develop their own unique abilities (differentiation)
- provide useful/appropriate homework assignments
- provide a quick turn around in all grading of tests, homework assignments, and quizzes on our new grading program "Parent Portal"
- provide information in the monthly school newsletter concerning the instructional programs and happenings of each classroom
- enforce school rules and policies in class as well as on campus (including dress code)
- have high expectations of students/parents
- provide remediation to struggling students at least two times a week
- provide enrichment to students excelling above grade level at least once a week

Teacher: _____
Signature _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian: As a parent I/We agree to...

- send my child ready to learn and in proper dress code
- encourage and provide regular attendance and punctuality
- provide up-to-date information concerning my child
- attend all parent/teacher conferences and maintain on going communication with teacher
- teach the importance of self-respect
- provide a quiet place to study at home
- assist my child with his/her homework and provide additional learning opportunities whenever possible
- support school policies and procedures; If a concern arises, I will come to staff or administration to address the concern immediately
- have high expectations for my child

Parent/Guardian: _____
Signature _____ Date _____

Students: As a student, I agree to.....

- work hard each day to do my best
- attend school on a regular basis and I will try to be punctual(on time) everyday
- follow the school rules(including dress code)-Merritt Academy teachers have the right to teach and Merritt Academy students have the right to learn in a safe, positive, and orderly environment
- respect myself and the other students around me
- complete all classroom and homework assignments to the best of my ability and meet deadlines set by teacher
- respect school property
- show courtesy and cooperation
- be responsible for bringing the proper materials I need to be successful everyday
- ask for help when I need it

Student: _____

Signature _____ Date _____

_____ I want to receive a hard copy of the “Merritt Minutes” that will be sent home with my student

Please turn this compact into your child’s classroom teacher by September 10, 2012.