

***STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING PARENT & FAMILY INVOLVEMENT AND
THE ATLANTA NEIGHBORHOOD CHARTER SCHOOL PARENT/FAMILY
INVOLVEMENT POLICY***
Reviewed August 23, 2013

The parents who founded our school intended ANCS to be more than a place of academics for our children. ANCS is a school community where we welcome and actively seek the involvement and input of members to provide the best possible environment academically and socially for our children. Research has shown that children who see their parents engaged in their school perform better in school. This is why parent involvement is a critical element of ANCS.

Upon enrolling a child at ANCS, each family signs a Family Contract that has been developed by the school's leadership and PTCA. This contract outlines the responsibilities of parents/guardians at ANCS, details specifics about volunteering at school and signifies understanding of the commitment families have made. All families who return the signed contract will receive an ANCS pen and pencil!

Outlined below are some of the many ways parents can be involved. If there are other ways that you would like to be involved please contact the office, your teacher, classroom parent or the Parent and Family Involvement committee chair and share your ideas. Families can also visit the school's Parent and Family Room for various resources, including: Volunteer Hour tracking information, a monthly calendar of meetings and school & community events, committee & governing board information, a copy of our charter, contact information, a comment box, Box Tops & food label box, high school transition information, extra-curricular programs and an area with toys and books for younger siblings. This resource room is located just off the school's main office and is open during regular school hours each day school is in session.

1. Involvement in Classrooms
 - a. Volunteer to help in the classroom as a substitute teacher.
 - b. Share your knowledge and expertise on topics being taught in class.
 - c. Help to organize and chaperone field trips.
 - d. Serve as a student tutor.

2. Involvement outside Classroom

- a. Volunteer in main office. Help make copies, filing, answering phones etc.
- b. Assemble the weekly courier on Thursday mornings.
- c. Volunteer in the Media Center.
- d. Take classroom projects home.
- e. Volunteer on weekends for Building and Grounds workdays.
- f. Assist with childcare for workdays and school events.
- g. Coach a school athletic team or cheerleading team.
- h. Assist with After School clubs.
- i. Assist with School and PTCA Fundraisers.
- j. School nurse coverage (must be a RN)
- k. Volunteer for taskforces or for short term needs (grant writing, event planning)

3. Serve on a Committee

All families are encouraged to actively participate on at least one committee.

The Governing Board Committees include:

- a. Finance
- b. Parent and Family Involvement [PFI]
- c. Personnel

The PTCA Committees include:

- 1. Diversity Awareness
- 2. Communication
- 3. Fundraising
- 4. Related Arts

4. Serve on Governing Board

- a. Serve on the Governing Board.
- b. Serve as Board Chair.

Student Volunteer Opportunities

- a. Volunteer on weekend for cleanup of grounds of ANCS.
- b. Assist with childcare for workdays and or school events.
- c. Assist with cleanup of school after school events.
- d. Volunteer at a Feed The Hungry Program.
- e. Assist at Youth or Religious organizations.

Parents are invited to a parent meeting at the start of each school year to hear more about the requirements of the school's Title I program and the importance of parent and family involvement.

Throughout the year, other parent meetings are held on various topics related to student achievement and parent involvement. These meetings take place in the mornings and the evenings, and parents are notified via school newsletter, the school's website, and emails from

advisory parent representatives. The school's principal works with the PTCA president and the parent and family involvement coordinator to plan and review the effectiveness of these meetings and other parent involvement programs. This group reviews the annual parent survey results to find ways to improve parent involvement programs at the school.

Throughout the school year, the school, through meetings, letters, and the school's website, provides parents at the school with information about:

- Title I program
- Annual school improvement plan
- Individual student assessment results and interpretation guide
- An overview of the school's curriculum and assessment system, including student promotion requirements
- Addressing issues of parenting young adolescents
- Providing parent feedback about the school and its programs

Parents are also given assistance in understanding:

- National and state education goals and standards
- The schoolwide Title I program
- State and national assessments, such as the CRCT and ITBS
- Ways to monitor student progress at home
- Ways parents can be involved in decisions related to the education of their students
- Other ways parents can support students outside of school

The principal and PTCA leadership works with the school's faculty and staff to understand the best ways to reach out to parents and to build home-school connections. As well, this same group works with the school's partners in education, such as Zoo Atlanta, to strengthen the bond between school and parents.

The Parent, Teacher, Community Association (PTCA)

ANCS is able to provide an incredible environment for our children, in part, due to its many active, engaged families. Our PTCA is the primary way families can become involved and support our school community. It is expected that all families will join the PTCA. It is the PTCA and its members who plan, fund and provide the enrichment opportunities so critical to the school's instructional program. The PTCA funds teacher and staff appreciation projects and provides need- based scholarships for extracurricular programs. The PTCA meets monthly during school sessions; these meetings include curriculum showcases, informational speakers, the annual board election, plus numerous social events throughout the year.

The PTCA works closely with the Parent and Family Committee of the board to ensure that all families, students, staff and teachers have a role and a voice within the ANCS community. As ANCS continues its successful growth, the PTCA looks forward to offering both opportunities for service and enhanced benefits for the school.

A partnership with families will be forged to encourage and build active participation by family members in their children's learning and success as students. Families will have an active role in shaping the school's programs and practices. There will be a person or a committee that is responsible for coordinating parent and community volunteer and other parent involvement opportunities at the Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School.

Parents are also encouraged to make use of two statewide parent involvement resources:

- The Georgia Parent Advocacy Network (G-PAN): mygpan.org
- The Georgia Parent Involvement and Resource Center (PIRC): georgiapirc.net

Please note that this policy is available in the school's Family Handbook and also on the school's website in the school policy manual.