

## How the ANCS Guiding Principles Support the School-Home Partnership - *DRAFT*

The mission of the Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School (ANCS) is to “use the principles of the Coalition of Essential Schools to:

- **BUILD** an empowered and inclusive community of students, parents, and educators
- **ENGAGE** the whole child—intellectually, social-emotionally, and physically
- **HELP** all students to know themselves and to be known well by their community
- **CHALLENGE** each student to take an active role as an informed citizen in a global society
- **COLLABORATE** with the larger community to advocate for student-centered schools”

Carrying out this mission requires **a strong partnership between our school and the parents/guardians whose children we serve**. Several of the [CES common principles](#) give guidance about the relationship between school and home:

- Teaching and learning should be personalized to the maximum feasible extent. To capitalize on this personalization, ***decisions about the details of the course of study, the use of students' and teachers' time and the choice of teaching materials and specific pedagogies must be unreservedly placed in the hands of the principal and staff.***
- The tone of the school should explicitly and self-consciously stress values of unanxious expectation (“I won't threaten you but I expect much of you”), of trust (until abused) and of decency (the values of fairness, generosity and tolerance). Incentives appropriate to the school's particular students and teachers should be emphasized. ***Parents should be key collaborators and vital members of the school community.***
- The school should demonstrate non-discriminatory and inclusive policies, practices, and pedagogies. ***It should model democratic practices that involve all who are directly affected by the school.*** The school should honor diversity and build on the strength of its communities, deliberately and explicitly challenging all forms of inequity.

So what does this all mean for how parents and adults at the school—teachers, staff, administrators—should partner in service to our children and students? **To help provide more guidance about what these principles look like in practice day-to-day at ANCS, the remainder of this document uses our [ANCS Guiding Principles](#) to give examples of how parents and faculty/staff can partner effectively in service to our students.**

*1) We come to school and every class prepared to learn and do our best.*

**As a school (administrators, teachers and staff) we will....**

- provide clear weekly communications through a variety of media to keep parents informed about what is happening at school and in the classroom

- give regular updates about each student's progress through report cards, standardized assessment results, and conferences
- aim to respond to emails and phone calls from parents as quickly as possible (and at most within 2 school days)
- provide opportunities for parents to learn more about the practices and concepts used with students at school so that they may support learning at home

**As parents we will...**

- regularly get our children to school on time and ready to do their best learning
- read the communications sent home from the school and posted on blogs
- communicate with our child's teacher if there is a question or concern that we have about our child or material being discussed in class
- learn more about the practices and concepts used with our children at school by regularly attending PTCA meetings, workshops, curriculum night

2) We respect each other, our surroundings, and ourselves.

**As a school (administrators, teachers and staff) we will....**

- respect the diverse needs of parents by scheduling events, meetings, and conferences to accommodate a variety of schedules whenever feasible and if possible provide child care
- seek out ways to learn more about parents' perspectives on their children in order to better support them
- involve parents in the decision-making process as appropriate in a way that respects their input and values their experiences

**As parents we will...**

- respect the schedules of teachers and staff by trying to find times to meet that work best for all parties
- appreciate the professional expertise of teachers and staff in our child's education participate constructively in opportunities to give input into decision-making processes
- report to a teacher or staff member when we suspect a child in our school community is being abused or bullied

3) We take responsibility for our actions and learning.

**As a school (administrators, teachers and staff) we will....**

- admit when we make a mistake and seek to learn from it
- carry out the responsibilities of our jobs with a focus on doing what is best for students
- respect decisions that may not always be ones with which we agree

**As parents we will...**

- admit when we make a mistake and seek to learn from it

- respect decisions that may not always be ones with which we agree
- vote for PTCA executive committee members and ANCS Governing Board members and seek to understand the role of the PTCA and the board and their activities and policies by regularly attending meetings and/or reading meeting agendas and minutes

4) We resolve conflicts in a peaceful, meaningful, thoughtful way

**As a school (administrators, teachers and staff) we will....**

- assume goodwill and seek to understand when resolving a conflict with a parent
- seek to address an issue directly with a parent first before asking for assistance
- recognize that we may not always agree with a parent but work to seek a resolution that addresses their concerns
- keep our discussions of a conflict limited to those directly involved

**As parents we will...**

- assume goodwill and seek to understand when resolving a conflict with a teacher or staff member
- seek to address an issue directly with the teacher or staff member first before asking for assistance
- recognize that we may not always agree with a teacher or staff member but work to seek a resolution that respects their professional expertise
- keep our discussions of a conflict limited to those directly involved with it

5) We celebrate our individual and collective successes.

**As a school (administrators, teachers and staff) we will....**

- show our appreciation for the efforts of parents to support their children and the school by...
  - providing opportunities for parents to be involved at school
  - expressing our thanks to parents when they volunteer their time
  - sharing good news with parents about their child's progress including regularly sending home completed work and/or sharing student work via class blogs
  - regularly attending community events and celebrations when possible

**As parents we will...**

- show our appreciation for the efforts of teachers and staff to support our children and the school by...
  - expressing our thanks to teachers and staff
  - sharing with teachers good news about our child's progress in areas outside the school
  - regularly attending community and celebratory events