

PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY

Part I—School Expectations

In keeping with the founding principles of the school, Our World Neighborhood Charter School believes that parental involvement can take many different forms and is vital for the academic and emotional success of each child and the growth and success of the school as a whole. To that end, parental involvement includes but is not restricted to:

1. Membership on the governing Board of Trustees,
2. Membership and participation in the Parent Teacher Organization
3. Volunteering
4. Parent teacher conferences
5. Communications

Furthermore, Our World Neighborhood Charter School believes that positive parental involvement is essential to student achievement, and thus encourages such involvement in school educational planning and operations. As stipulated in Section 1118 (d) of the Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Our World Neighborhood Charter School will ensure that "...Each school served under Title I, Part A shall jointly develop with parents for all children served...a school-parent compact that outlines how parents, the entire school staff and students will share responsibility for improved achievement and the means by which the school parents will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve the State's high standards."

Consistent with the parent involvement goals of Title I, Part A of the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), the Board of Trustees, administrators, teachers, staff, and parents of OWNCS will develop and implement programs, activities and procedures that encourage and support the participation of students in all aspects of their child's education. The board will also ensure that OWNCS provides high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment to enable all students to achieve. Recognizing the importance of communication between teachers and parents, OWNCS will conduct at minimum two parent-teacher conferences annually during which the school's compact will be discussed in relation to the individual child's achievement. In addition to providing quarterly report cards on student progress to parents, teachers at OWNCS will make calls home and send home interim reports and other written correspondence informing parents about school and classroom level activities, and student level accomplishments.

Parents and teachers will be engaged in regular, two-way and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities.

Part II—School Parental Involvement Policy (PIP) Required Components

1. OWN parents be involved in jointly developing the school parental involvement policy by:

- a. The board of trustees will be responsible for the creation and ensuring the implementation of the PIP policy and will evaluate, revise, update the policy annually in one of its Education Committee meetings
 - b. Through participation in the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)-teachers, administrators, and *parents* will meet to create, revise, and evaluate the schools PIP. Information will be gathered from parents via the annual school survey conducted by the PTO and by the NYC Department of Education. In addition to discussing the PIP at an annual general meeting of the PTO, parents may also participate on the Education Committee of the PTO to share their ideas about how to improve parental involvement. Meetings will be held at the school and at flexible times
2. OWN will provide coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary to assist the school in planning and implementing effective parental involvement activities to improve student achievement and school performance by:
 - a. Distributing annually the PIP, School-Compact, Parent-Student Handbook, School Calendar and Staff Directory
 - b. Working with the parent leaders of the Parent Teacher Organization to create activities and agenda items of interest to the parents that are placed on the school calendar
 - c. Reporting to the school's governing body—the board of trustees the level of involvement of parents to all activities such as Back to School Nights and Curriculum Nights
3. OWN will build the school's and parents' capacity for strong parental involvement by:
 - a. Providing parent workshops and informational sessions on topics such as the New York State learning standards, Common Core Standards, Internet safety, the school's curriculum, support, intervention, and enrichment programs
 - b. Setting up parent teacher conferences, using e-mails and other forms of communication to assist parents on how they can support the school's efforts in raising student achievement
4. OWN will coordinate and integrate all parental involvement strategies across all its programs by:
 - a. Meeting regularly with parents and members of the Parent Teacher Organization to create a school calendar of events that is seamless across academic areas, support and enrichment programs, and that the goals of the programs are clear
5. OWN will conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the PIP in improving the academic quality of the school, identifying barriers to greater participation, with particular attention to sub-groups and accountability groups as designated by NCLB, using strategies for more effective parental involvement; and revising if necessary, the school's PIP by:
 - a. Holding an annual meeting of the members of the Education Committee of the Board of Trustees and the Education Committee of the Parent Teacher Organization
 - b. Administering a parent survey to get parental feedback about the learning environment of the school and their perceptions of parental involvement opportunities and ability to participate in the effective running of the school

- c. The PIP will be formally adopted at a joint meeting of the school's leadership and the parent leadership each year and will be distributed annually
6. OWN will involve parents in the activities of the school by:
 - a. Distributing information about school activities through as many ways as possible. Parents will have access to paper copy of the school calendar, in addition to the school's calendar of events on both the school's website and the PTO website
 - b. Allowing for membership on the school's Board of Trustees, which is the governing body of the school
 - c. Holding meetings and informational sessions in the morning and evenings
 - d. Creating a culture in which parents are respected as equal partners in the educational process and in which they have great access to teachers, staff, and administrators
 - e. Creating a Board of Trustees, Parent Teacher Organization, detailing ways for parents to Volunteering and Getting Involved, holding Parent-Teacher Conferences, and distributing Newsletters, Letters, and Communication

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees is the policy setting and governing body of the school. It is the fiduciary responsibility of the Board to ensure that the school is meeting the requirements and stipulations of the charter and all relevant rules and regulations that will allow the school and its students to be successful. The board is composed of nine members of whom three positions are for parents of the school who currently have children enrolled in the school.

Board meetings are held the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7pm and are open to the public. *Time is allocated for parents to express their concerns to the governing board and to learn what is happening at all levels of the school.*

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION

The PTO is the parents' organization and is designed to provide a forum for parents to participate in the programs of the school. The PTO meets monthly, usually on the first Friday of each month at 8AM. Parents should always check the PTO's website and the school website for updated calendar events. Parents are encouraged to regularly attend PTO meetings in order to stay abreast of school events and concerns. Additionally, the PTO executive committee holds monthly meetings with the Executive Director and attends the monthly meeting of the school's Board of Trustees. All parents may attend and participate in those meetings. The PTO and parents may also, through its by-laws establish committees such as the Education Committee which will allow parents to work closely with the school's leadership on issues that affect the success of the school and its students.

Parents can reach the PTO by leaving messages in the PTO box in the front office, on the phone at 718-392-3405 x 218 or by visiting www.ownpto.org. The school's leadership attends these meetings to learn about your concerns and to answer your questions. It is at these PTO meetings that parents can and will learn about programs such as the Intervention Programs that the school uses to address the needs of students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and students who are not meeting academic goals. The PTO meetings will also facilitate the dissemination of information about the school's NYC Department of Education's Annual

Progress Report and the New York State Education Department's Annual School Report Card, the School Wellness Policy, Title I funded programs, other academic and extra-curricular programs, and school evaluation reports from SUNY, Charter Schools Institute and NYSED, Title I—Schoolwide plan, Supplemental Education Services, and other mandated information including English as a Second Language programs.

VOLUNTEERING and GETTING INVOLVED

Parents are encouraged to participate in school-related activities. All parents are automatically members of OWN's Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) at no cost and are urged to become actively involved. PTO members volunteer as hall monitors, lunchtime assistants, office help, field-trip chaperones, and ambassadors of good-will to local businesses and politicians. Parents and guardians may also serve as Grade Representatives or Class Parents. These roles are key communication liaison positions between the classroom teachers, administration, parents, the Board of Trustees, and the wider school parent community of the PTO. Parents also play key roles in fundraising activities such as Book Fairs and Carnivals.

Another way to participate is by working directly with your child's teacher. This may involve reading to the class, sharing cultural information, careers, or anything else a teacher might like assistance with. In addition, parents participate in many school wide planning activities. There are at least three current parents who serve on the school's governing Board of Trustees. Parents have served on committees to develop the school's Strategic Plan, Schoolwide plan, and School Wellness Policy and will continue to play a role in the development of the school's success.

PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES

Formal parent/teacher conferences are scheduled twice each year to facilitate open communication between parents and teachers regarding students' progress. Conferences are held at the end of the first and third quarters of the school year. Parents may also schedule informal conferences or conversations with teachers or School leaders at any time throughout the year.

NEWSLETTERS, LETTERS and COMMUNICATION

An integral part of the school's parental involvement policy is the school's commitment to open and frequent communication with parents. The school may also send home a monthly letter with an updated calendar of events. It is an important document that keeps parents abreast of what is happening in school and issues that may affect their child's education and achievement.

Our World Neighborhood Charter School will disseminate to parents an annual report card with aggregate information, including student achievement (disaggregated by category) and teacher qualifications. These annual reports will take the form of the Annual Report and CIR provided by NYSED, the School Progress Report provided by NYC Department of Education and the Annual Progress Report completed by OWN and submitted to NY State Education Department and SUNY, Charter Schools Institute. Copies of the Annual Report Cards will be accessible online.

Individual student assessment reports will be sent to parents for those children who take the

NY State Mathematics and English Language Arts Exams in grades 3-8. Once those reports are available to the school from the NY State Education Department the school will send copies of those reports home. Quarterly report cards detailing children's progress towards mastery of New York State high standards will also be sent home with the children and through the mail.

Each OWN staff member is also assigned a phone extension and email address. The information is disseminated each year and also can be accessed via the school's website. Parents are encouraged to communicate with their child's teachers. The school is committed to directly responding to all parent communication within two school days. In order to facilitate and keep the lines of communication open the school will send home a requesting that parents update their contact information.

Signature Section

We agree to work together, to the best of our abilities, as educators and parents to fulfill our common goals of providing for the successful education of our children.

Signature of School Principal/Teacher

Print Name of Principal/Teacher

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Print Name of Parent/Guardian