

# Sierra Nevada Academy Charter School



*Bringing the Small School Community back to the Neighborhood*

## **FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM**

*FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IS KEY TO STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT*

# SNACS Charter based on 1 Goals



At SNACS, we pioneer to reach one underlying federal charter school goals in striving to:

- Providing Innovative Public Education

# SNACS Federal Charter Goal 1



- **Providing Innovative Public Education – school model**
  - Target students at-risk for not graduating HS based on state definition
  - Personalized Learning Plans (PLPs)
  - PLAY – acronym for Promoting Learning and Accountability for Young children/Youth (depending on age) – through hands on standards-based play and exploration
  - Choice – using Interactive Choice Boards
  - Ability group model – small group direct instruction for intervention
  - Instill a sense of belonging and school community through our model
  - PBIS - Positive behavior intervention system with 3-tiered use of positive reinforcement (whole & small groups, and individualized)

# SNACS Federal Charter Goal 1



- **Providing Innovative Public Education - families**
  - By the nature of the organizational structure, charter schools provide families a voice and a choice in public education.
  - Families must choose to attend a charter school and provide transportation therein.
  - Families are treated as part of the school community and as clients.

# SNACS Federal Charter Goal 1



- **Providing Innovative Public Education-accountability**
  - Charter schools bring a market economy to public education.
  - Public schools cater to meet individual student needs.
  - Public charters schools in Nevada are often held to a higher level of accountability in organizational structure, business & finance, programs, academics, behavior, services, special needs, facilities, professional development, etc. than other public schools

# SNACS Federal Charter Goal 1



- Providing Innovative Public Education - Innovative teaching Teachers are highly qualified
  - All Teachers HQ
  - Provide Personalized Learning Plans (PLPs)
  - PLAY – through hands on standards-based play and exploration
  - Choice – using Interactive Choice Boards
  - Ability group model – small group direct instruction for intervention
  - Instill a sense of belonging and school community through our model

# SNACS Federal Charter Goal 1



- **Providing Innovative Public Education - Create new professional opportunities for teachers**
  - Teacher Leaders were embedded by the nature of choosing to teach at a charter school.
  - SNACS was first to develop and implement Team Leader meetings. This has evolved to what is known today as a Professional Learning Communities (PLCs).
  - Teachers had a voice in all aspects of start up and initial implementation in starting the charter school.

# SNACS Federal Charter Goal 1



- **Providing Innovative Public Education - Encourage community and parent involvement in public education**
  - SNACS was first to implement parent involvement and family engagement opportunities.
  - SNACS families help plan, design, and build many parts of the school (including the playground).
  - SNACS families have always been expected to volunteer their time at SNACS and to be part of their child's education.
  - SNACS families are a valued asset to the school community and make relevant and important contributions.



# Nevada Family Engagement Council



- Founded by Legislature, Nevada Department of Education, and 17 Local School Districts
- Build the Scaffolding necessary to unify various federal and state requirements for family engagement implementation, assessment, and accountability (AB 224 & NRS 385.600)

# Research-Based



- 30+ years of research indicated that family engagement is key to student achievement, the which is the primary goal of the Family Advisory Council
- Six Standards were developed to address the FE primary goal

# 6 standards



There are six driving principles that support family engagement:

- Welcoming all families into the School Community
- Communicating Effectively
- Supporting Student Success
- Speaking up for Every Child
- Sharing Power
- Collaborating with Community

# *Welcoming All Families*



- *Families are valued as their child's first teacher, bringing a wealth of information, which supports the whole child approach in education.*
- *Families, regardless of family structure; socioeconomic status, ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds; gender; abilities; or preferred language are welcomed and encouraged to participate in their child's education as a valued and integral member of the school community.*
- *Family support and participation is vital to every child's success in all aspects of life.*

# *Communicating Effectively*



- *Parents and families are encouraged to engage in meaningful two-way communication with educators, as partners, to enhance student learning through activities, policies, practices, and programs.*

# *Supporting Student Success*



- *Parents are partners in their child's education and work collaboratively to support student learning and a small school community.*
- *Parents actively participate in developing personal learning plans that drive their child's education.*

# *Speaking up for Every Child*



- *Every child has the right to an education that is full of rich opportunities to learn and advance in a global society. Effective parent-school partnerships foster a safe school community with access to multi-tiered support systems necessary to increase student achievement regardless of family structure, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, religious, and cultural backgrounds. SNACS faculty members provide assistance and support to families to ensure equal access to resources and services deemed necessary for students to learn.*
- *SNACS faculty members provide technical assistance and empower families to navigate complex systems (Infinite Campus grades and attendance, curriculum, etc.).*

# Sharing the Power



- ***Sharing the Power***
- *Parents and students have a voice and a choice in their child's education. We appreciate parents choosing Sierra Nevada Academy Charter School and being an active voice in all aspects of their child's education. Your contributions are priceless!*
- *SNACS faculty identify and connect with families from diverse cultural backgrounds and provide pathways to family engagement.*



# *Collaborating with Community*



- *Students and their families are supported in a P-8 system that will result in sense of community, belonging, and increased student achievement.*
- *SNACS faculty are knowledgeable about resources and services, make referrals to appropriate programs, and plan activities that provide expanded learning opportunities in the school, district, and community.*

# Volunteer Expectations



- SNACS promotes a collaborative learning environment where parents are welcomed to volunteer in and out of the classroom in a meaningful way. SNACS relies heavily on volunteers and requests that **each family volunteer 10 hours per month.**
- Volunteers play an important role and contribute valuable time towards helping our small school community. We are grateful to our volunteers and want to ensure volunteerism is a pleasurable experience for everyone.
- There are several basic guidelines and procedures to help keep our volunteer program effective and efficient.

# Safety



- In order to protect the safety of the students, **all** persons who wish to volunteer in the classroom and/or around the students must complete a Volunteer Application (at least yearly) for a background check and submit a set of fingerprints through Fingerprint Express.
- Those persons who hold other agency clearances related to fingerprints must still submit a set of fingerprints as SNACS is solely responsible for our volunteer fingerprints and may not accept other agency reports in lieu of current fingerprints.

# Safety Continued



- Fingerprint Express submits info to the NDE, who monitors and reports to the CEO any instances that may occur that could result in suspended volunteer privileges. All other agencies are not required monitor and report any such incidents to SNACS administration. Unless a background check is returned with any arrest/conviction information that contradicts the documentation provided in the Volunteer Application, volunteers may be allowed to volunteer in the classroom.

# Safety Continued



- Safety is of utmost importance and volunteers are expected to not be a distraction to the class or school environment. Volunteers must adhere to all school rules and follow proper protocols, which ensure the safety of all students and the school community.
- Volunteering is a privilege at SNACS. The CEO and/or Principal have the right to suspend, refuse, and/or terminate volunteer privileges at their discretion and during all school related activities.

# Supervision



- All volunteers must be under the direct supervision of a qualified and trained staff member. They **may not be alone** with students or unsupervised on school grounds.
- Procedure: Once approved to volunteer, SNACS Office Team must call the classroom and announce a volunteer is coming to assist in the classroom.

# Supervision



- SNACS staff members must supervise all volunteer work within the school building and be aware of any outside classroom volunteerism. KNOW what is acceptable and what is not acceptable.
- When leaving the classroom, the teacher must call the office team to notify the volunteer is returning to the office.

# Administrator Discretion



- All volunteers are permitted at the discretion of the school administrators. At any time school administrators have the right to refuse volunteerism if they deem it is in the best interest of the school.



# Behavior



- Volunteers are expected to behave in such a way that is conducive to the learning environment and not impeding the primary focus of schooling.
- Volunteering should be conducted with a positive attitude keeping the spirit of the school as a guiding principle. Those who volunteer with a positive attitude and refrain from complaining help the school climate flourish. Those who volunteer with a focus on the negative can hurt the school climate. The latter will not be tolerated.

# Behavior



- A volunteer should refrain from interference with classroom or school related issues that are the responsibility of school personnel. Ex. Behavior issues, health issues, decisions, & (protocol – refer to the teacher).
- All school rules must be followed, including the use of appropriate language, dress, and overall behavior.
- Teaching staff is directly responsible for the volunteer and their students. Proper supervision & monitoring is expected at all times.

# FERPA



- According to federal law, the Family Educational Rights to Privacy Act (FERPA), classroom volunteers are not permitted to discuss any student or student related information they witness as a result of their being in the classroom or on school grounds as a volunteer. Any volunteer violating FERPA may be asked to volunteer in situations where they are not working directly with or around children. (ex. Test scores, work samples, file information, behavior, conversations about student progress, etc.)

# Purposeful Volunteerism



- SNACS administrators and teachers have a list available for suggested ways to fulfill family volunteer requirements.
- SNACS encourages each family to use its unique talents and interests in volunteering at school. The school will benefit the most from such meaningful volunteering, and the families will enjoy volunteering more.

# Celebration of Contributions



- From time to time SNACS will send to each family, a detail of its volunteer hours.
- It is vital that each family keep accurate records of their volunteer time or donations.
- A volunteer log (computerized in the works) is available in the front office for recording hours or donations.
- Please remember that if you are making material donations, the receipt needs to be turned in to the front office.

# Sign In/Sign Out



- All visitors, volunteers and board members must sign in at the front office on the volunteer sign-in sheet & receive a badge.
- Classrooms will be called to announce a visitor before the visitor will be allowed beyond the front desk. This is a fire code requirement and safety protocol. This is not optional.
- All volunteers must be under the direct supervision of an SNACS staff member and may not be alone with students at any time.

# *Volunteerism through Celebrations and Events*



- **Daily Classroom Activities**
- **Arts Celebration Days**
- **Author's Book Publishing**
- **Outdoor Lab Experiences**
- **School Dances**
- **Fire Prevention and Safety**
- **Nevada Ranch and Farm Days**
- **Lattinberry Farms**
- **Harvest Festival**
- **SNACSGiving Festival**
- **SNACS Multicultural Celebration of Children Around the World**
- **Winter Celebration**
- **Scientific Inquiry**
- **Math Game Family Night**
- **Invention Convention**
- **Celebrating Young Children through Picture Books**
- **Celebrating Nevada Charter Schools**
- **SNACS Fun Run & Earth Day Celebration**
- **SNACS Spring Fling**
- **Cinco de Mayo**
- **SNACS Field Day**
- **SNACS Talent Show**
- **SNACS Family Breakfasts**
- **SNACS Fundraisers and Book fairs**
- **SNACS Kindergarten & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Graduations**

# Other Volunteer Opportunities



- Safety Patrol AM & PM
- Testing Support (Renaissance & Map Test Proctor Asst.)
- School Store AM, Recess, & PM
- Reading Helper
- Landscaping
- Computer Helper (various technology projects & comp. support)
- Grounds & Maintenance
- Donation Acquisition Helper
- Professional Services (DJ, Catering, Etc.)
- Community Support
- Trade (Plumbing, Electrical, etc.)
- Classroom Helper
- Front Office Reception
- Curriculum Support (making kits, etc.)
- ELOB Days Helpers (See list)
- Nutrition & Kitchen Helper
- Event Helper (organizing, gathering supplies)
- Crosswalk Duty AM & PM
- Fundraising Helper
- Recess Duty Monitor Help
- AR Case (Fridays)
- Marketing & PR
- Other (Please describe)



# Family Engagement Training



- Family volunteers will participate in the PPT Training.
- Family volunteers will sign off on all areas of training. They will be expected to participate in such training at least 1 time per year.
- Family Engagement Classes will be developed during 2013-2014 (Technology, IC, Pearson, HW, Behavior, Health, Nutrition, Resources & Referrals, etc.).
- Families are welcomed to participate in the Parent University through the WCSD. They are asked to report this to SNACS staff as we must document and track all of our FE.
- Data will be monitored and measured as part of the NSPF.

# Next Steps



- Family Engagement Classes will be developed during 2023-2024 (IC, Savvas, iReady, HW, Behavior, Health, Nutrition, etc.).
- Families are welcomed to participate in the Parent University through the WCSD. They are asked to report this to SNACS staff as we must document and track all of our FE.
- ALL FE Data will be monitored and measured as part of the NSPF.