

Parent Engagement Framework

Inspiring Great Minds



Queensland Academy
for Science Mathematics
and Technology



Our vision

Inspiring great minds through the provision of a world-class education that nurtures personal excellence and develops young people who are able to contribute positively to an ever-changing world.



Background

Research indicates increased academic achievement and increased student wellbeing is associated with students that have involved parents (Epstein, 2009; Greenwood & Hickman, 1991; Henderson & Berla, 1994; Rumberger et al., 1990; Swap, 1993; Whitaker & Fiore, 2001).

Research also highlights that parental involvement is most effective when viewed as a partnership between educators and parents (Davies, 1996; Emeagwali, 2009; Epstein, 2009). *Please note that the term parent in this framework refers to and includes guardians and caregivers.*

Queensland Academy for Science Mathematics and Technology recognizes this vital role that parents play in maximizing student educational outcomes, and in particular, that our students can achieve more when we work in partnership with our parent community. QASMT supports a positive student experience and personal excellence through the development of strong relationships based on open communication and mutual respect.

Purpose

This framework seeks to capture the intent and commitment QASMT brings to the construct of effective partnerships between our school team and our parent community and alignment with the [Department of Education Equity and Excellence Education Strategy](#).

The purpose of the framework is to:

- establish a climate that enables our parents to engage with the wider QASMT learning community
- work in collaboration with our parent body to support student well-being and personal success
- influence parental role construction within an atmosphere of inclusion, positivity and openness
- build parental self-efficacy, knowledge, skills and enrich social connections
- facilitate participation in learning-focused programs to assist parents in navigating the schooling experience for their student.

Research highlights that enabling factors to success include:

- a school culture that is supportive of engagement and a welcoming school environment
- the building of positive parent-teacher relationships
- models of parent engagement that are inclusive and culturally sensitive
- the establishment of clear policy and guidelines to facilitate positive parent engagement. (Woodrow et al., 2016; Fox and Olsen, 2014)

Indicators of successful parent engagement

The following indicators will be used to measure the success of the parent engagement framework:

- parent attendance at school events, meetings, information evenings and on campus opportunities
- direct feedback provided to the school through school surveys, organised forums and in-person meetings
- parent attendance at social and networking events
- registration and use of parent communication platforms.

Parent support for learning

Parents are encouraged to take a genuine and close interest in the work of the Academy. This can be achieved by:

- engaging fully with all communication received from the Academy, including parent/ teacher interviews and school appointments
- emulating respectful and caring relationships that are reflected in all staff, student and parent interactions, and ensuring that the language used in both formal and informal settings is positive and purposeful
- supporting the Academy's expectations for behaviour, uniform, attendance and learning
- supporting inclusive and respectful communication.

It is expected that parents and visitors to our school will:

- be polite to others
- act as positive role models
- recognise and respect personal differences.



Engagement Pillars

Our Parent Engagement Framework is underpinned by four pillars that constitute a foundation which to promote and build parental engagement across all levels of schooling.

QASMT Engagement Pillars



● **Pillar One: Engagement**

There is overwhelming evidence that parent engagement has a positive effect on learning outcomes and student achievement. Planned opportunities to engage as a school community build strong relationships and partnerships that nurture personal excellence for our students.

● **Pillar Two: Culture and wellbeing**

Our greatest strength as a school community is our cultural diversity, with students coming from over 55 different countries. QASMT is a place where parents and children can feel their culture and identity is visible and respected.

In partnership with parents, collaborative and inclusive practices to support the specific learning needs of our student body is a school priority. Identified strategies support the sharing of our joint body of knowledge, expertise and perspectives that assist to connect us in authentic ways and seek to bring about greater understanding and wellbeing.

● **Pillar Three: Partnership and voice**

Working in partnership with our parent body allows us to collaboratively work towards a common goal – the success and wellbeing of all our students. The harnessing of positive partnerships and ‘voice’ across our community of parents, students and educators, enables us to build collective efficacy.

While involving parents in school activities is important, it is engagement through learning partnerships which has been shown to have much greater impact on student outcomes (Harris, Andrew-Power, & Goodall, 2009, pp. 12–13).

● **Pillar Four: Communication**

Clear and respectful communication between our students, educators and parent body is foundational in the development and maintenance of productive partnerships and effective relationship building. We seek to ensure communication is positive, accurate, meaningful and respectful to nurture a shared belief in the setting of high expectations and an understanding of what personal excellence means in the context of each individual student.

● **Pillar One: Engagement Strategies**

At Queensland Academy for Science Mathematics and Technology we do this by:

Strategy one: Leveraging parent agency

Year Level Parent Representatives (YLPR)



The purpose of the Year Level Parent Representative is to help foster good communication between the school and parent community and assist in the development of a positive school community. The YLPR is a point of contact for both the parent body and school staff to ensure clear and open lines of communication.

Each year, 2-3 parent representatives from each year level, take on the role as Year Level Parent Representatives (YLPR). Parent representatives are valued volunteer members of our community and their time and commitment are very much appreciated by the school.

The role of the year level parent representative is to:

- act as liaison between parents and the year level school leader
- assist in informing parents about activities planned either by the school, the school community groups or within the year level
- organise year level functions to provide parents with the opportunity of meeting together in a relaxed and social atmosphere.

Our Year Level Parent Representatives assist our school community by:

- building a year level community
- providing connections and networking opportunities for families through social activities and informal social gatherings, such as coffee mornings or BBQ's in a local park
- providing an opportunity for parents to connect and network to support each other on issues such as transport to and from QASMT
- communicating with school year level leaders and House Deans to discuss year level needs
- encouraging families to attend school and community functions.

To enable year level representatives to engage and organise activities, the school will invite parents to join the group via a school survey manager link. This is a voluntary group and parents are not required to join. Only those parents who consent to share details will have their details provided to the year level parent representative. Parent representatives are required to consider the privacy of all school community members at all times.

Strategy 1.1: Year Level Parent Representatives Face-to-Face

Once a term the school leadership team host an afternoon tea to outline the Term Ahead, to provide an opportunity to foster dialogue and mutual understanding. The following agenda items will be tabled:

- Policy and procedure updates
- Infrastructure updates
- Upcoming school events – volunteers
- Social events for parents.

Strategy 1.2: Year Level Parent Representatives as guests at School Council meetings

In order to provide a voice from the Year Level Parent Representative group, a Year 8 and Year 11 Parent Representative will be invited to attend the School Council meetings as guests. The School Council plays a role in monitoring and informing the school's strategic direction in a way that achieves the best learning outcomes for the school's students. The functions of the school council are as follows:

The functions of a school council under s.81 of the [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006 \(Qld\)](#) [External link](#) (the Act) are to:

- monitor the school's strategic direction
- approve school plans and policies of a strategic nature, or other documents affecting strategic matters including the annual estimate of revenue and expenditure for the school
- monitor the implementation of the plans, policies and other documents mentioned above
- advise the school's principal about strategic matters.

Strategy two: Parents on campus

Parent Speaker Series

Parents are invited to attend and/or make suggestions for evening speaker events on a range of topics and issues that are pertinent to adolescent students and of high relevance to the audience. These sessions are conducted by external experts in their field of topic and operate on a termly basis. Parents are charged a small fee to cover the costs of the presenting speaker.

Showcase events and exhibitions

Showcase events and exhibitions are held throughout the year to highlight our student's talents, skills and innovative thinking.

Examples include:

- National Science Week Colloquium
- Year 9 Community Project Exhibition
- Scientific Research Poster Exhibition
- Arts Showcase
- Instrumental music concerts.

Coffee mornings and 'Meet and Greet' sessions

As part of the parent information session program, parents are invited to a range of informal, face-to-face gatherings with members of the leadership team, including Principal and Associate Principals, Deputy Principals, Heads of Department, House Deans and Guidance Officers. Parents may ask questions, seek clarification and gain information on a variety of school related topics. It is also a networking event, with our families meeting with other families of students within the same year level or House.

Strategy three: Making and maintaining connections



Outreach programs

The STEM Scholars program and Young Einstein Club are QASMT initiatives that seek to bring primary school students and their families 'to our door' through active engagement. These public facing programs promote and heighten our school profile and showcase our school operations and world-class facilities.



Queensland Academy
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Inspiring Great Minds

Primary schools within our 'connected' school network can nominate high-achieving and gifted students across Years 3-6, to join the STEM Scholars program; and students identified with IQs of 140 or above to join the Young Einstein Club. Entry to these programs is based on a school recommendation against specified selection criteria. Once enrolled in the programs, students may access after-school workshops and QASMT student-led mentoring programs at the Academy.



School Tours

Tours of our campus are held for families looking to apply to the Academy. These personalised tours allow prospective families an opportunity to explore our world class facilities and grounds at QASMT. Providing challenging and rigorous learning through the International Baccalaureate curriculum requires the creation of an inclusive and built for purpose environment that engages our learners, supports differentiation, promotes creativity and empowers student agency. Our school tours take place during the school day to allow families to see the school in action and appreciate the impressive STEM precincts, greenspaces and collaborative open plan classrooms.

Transition and Engagement Programs

Highly structured transition programs are conducted for incoming students to Years 7 and 10. These bespoke programs are developed in order to familiarise students with the school, meet their House Deans and Academy Representatives and to establish new friendships. As our students come from a variety of schools, we place high value on ensuring a strong, welcoming and inclusive transition into our school community.

At the beginning of each academic year, we hold a welcome assembly for our new students and parents followed by a morning tea where families can connect with each other and the Academy staff. Early in Term One there is a dedicated new Parent Information Evening to welcome our new families and students with a focus on settling into school life, organisational skills, learning opportunities and support systems. Throughout the year we invite parents to attend the Parent Information Evenings where they can also meet Year Level Representatives as well as the school leaders and House Deans.

Transition Year 7

Across two days at the beginning of our academic year, our new students meet their House Ambassadors, engage in a range of fun activities and team building games that promote collaboration and teamwork, familiarise themselves with the school buildings and facilities and learn all about the House System and InStep mentors who are responsible for supporting student wellbeing, monitoring academic progress and promoting House spirit.

Engagement Year 10

Our new senior students participate in an Orientation Program on their first day of school which provides them with an opportunity to meet new peers and teachers, understand the various learning platforms and school day logistics and ensures they are confident to start the new school year. For the remainder of Term One our new Year 10's meet weekly with their House Deans, as part of an ongoing Engagement Program that further supports their transition into the senior years. Students become more familiar with IB terminology and subject requirements, learn how to organise their academic schedule to optimize learning and participate in SET planning and goal setting. Importantly, the program promotes team building and student agency as the House Deans work alongside their students to explore the many leadership and co-curricular opportunities that can be pursued at the Academy.

Strategy four: Collaborative events

Working groups

Throughout each year there are many opportunities for parents, staff and students to collaborate and work together in hosting a wide range of events that promote community spirit, engagement and connectedness. It is through these partnerships that we are able to showcase and foster creativity and innovative future focused opportunities for all students.

Examples include:

- Festival of Creativity
- International Schools Science Fair
- Mother's Day Stalls
- Harmony Week events.

● Pillar Two: Culture and wellbeing

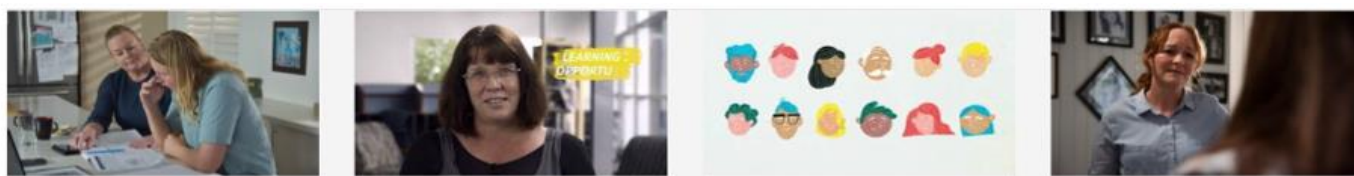
At Queensland Academy for Science Mathematics and Technology we do this by:

Strategy one: Embedding Positive Education

Our Positive Education Program is an integrated wellbeing program that is unique to QASMT and enables our whole community to flourish. Students undertake weekly PEP classes run by the House Deans. Parents are kept informed of concepts covered in class to allow at home discussion and reinforcement. This occurs through fortnightly House Newsletters and parent information evenings.



Strategy two: Positive parenting support and resources



Parents and students may access an extensive compilation of high-quality wellbeing resources located conveniently on the school website. Topics and issues addressed in the resources include those relating to mental health, wellbeing, personal health, cyber safety and positive parenting. Resources include interviews with leading youth wellbeing experts and researchers from around the world as well as related resources from key organizations including informative fact sheets, practical information, articles, apps, books, podcasts, websites, and videos.

Access to the following programs is available:

- School TV
- Kids Help Line
- Headspace
- Reachout
- The BRAVE program
- Student Well-being Hub
- E Safety
- Spotlight strategies for students.

**"The wellbeing of today's youth
has never been more challenging."**

Dr Michael Carr-Gregg

Strategy three: Demonstrating International Mindedness, and celebrating our rich, culturally diverse and inclusive school community

As a culturally diverse and inclusive school community we unite, celebrate and embrace rich and authentic experiences that promote connectedness between our students, parents and extended learning community through a wide range of events including:

- Harmony Week Assembly and Family Picnics
- Festival of Creativity
- Instrumental Music Concerts
- National Science Week.



Strategy four: Inclusive practices

The school adopts a collective responsibility approach to inclusion, whereby the Director of Inclusion and Wellbeing, House Deans and Guidance Officers work closely with our parents, students and teachers to enact a diverse range of support services for all students, including disabilities or medical conditions, mental health, wellbeing, behavioural issues and other significant needs. We promote a learning environment that fosters agency between peers, teachers, parents and communities and supports parent education of student wellbeing. Our Wellbeing Framework and Policies including; Inclusion, Gender Diversity, Language and Restrictive Practices underpin a positive school culture and can be found on the [QASMT Website](#).

● Pillar Three: Partnerships and voice

At Queensland Academy for Science Mathematics and Technology we do this by:

Strategy one: House Dean program

The House Dean, together with the InStep Mentor teacher, focus on the wellbeing of their students within the House. As the first point of contact for all parent communication, House Deans work closely with parents to support student needs and address any concerns that may arise.



Strategy two: Alumni engagement

Engaging with our alumni is very important to Academy life. Our alumni are best placed for understanding our unique culture. As IB graduates, they are outstanding role models for our students, both in terms of exhibiting the IB learner attributes plus their understanding and appreciation of the IB Diploma Programme.

We encourage our alumni to remain engaged with the whole community through the following connections:

- LinkedIn
- social media
- Learning Enhancement and Study Support tutors
- casual support staff
- guest speakers
- STEM seminar series
- CCA, sport coaches
- Open Days.



Strategy three: Parent survey/forums

Queensland Academy for Science Mathematics and Technology encourages meaningful decision-making between parents, students, community members and the school. We believe in providing genuine opportunities for consultation, to ensure that decisions reflect local needs. Encouraging greater community ownership of Academy direction and decision making allows open and authentic consultation with all members of our parent, student, staff and parent community.

We do this by:

- ensuring information regarding consultation opportunities is widely circulated using a variety of communication tools
- consulting the wider community using multiple platforms of communication to ensure true representation of community. For example, surveys distributed in various ways to reach a good cross-section of students, parents and school staff
- encouraging student participation in the decision-making process
- encouraging parents to complete the School Opinion Survey with reminders across communication channels.

School Council

The School Council plays an important role in monitoring and informing the school's strategic direction in a way that achieves the best learning outcomes for the school's students. School Council meet on a termly basis and parent representatives form part of this decision-making team by communicating relevant and/or timely information from the school to the parent body. Year Level Representatives support the process of communication to their parent groups as required.

The functions of a school council under s.81 of the [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006 \(Qld\)](#) are to:

- monitor the school's strategic direction
- approve school plans and policies of a strategic nature, or other documents affecting strategic matters including the annual estimate of revenue and expenditure for the school
- monitor the implementation of the plans, policies and other documents
- advise the school's principal about strategic matters.

At the Academy we value all opportunities to work together in partnership with parents, teachers and students. Our working groups provide rich learning experiences where participants are able to share their expertise and skills, strengthen communication through purposeful and collaborative meetings and work toward reaching common goals across the school and wider community.

Parent involvement may include:

- event planning meetings
- annual committees.

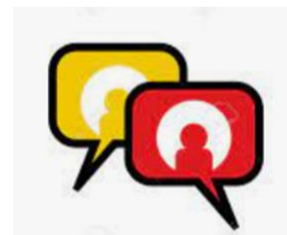


● Pillar Four: Communication

At Queensland Academy for Science Mathematics and Technology we do this by:

Strategy one: Communication strategies (Public)

A range of communications strategies are engaged to inform parents and community members about upcoming school activities, developments and school initiatives.



Examples include:

- Newsletters [QASMT Website - Calendar/News and Newsletters](#)
 - *The Term Ahead* and *The Term in Review* (Termly)
 - *The House Newsletters* (Fortnightly)
 - *The Fortnight Ahead* lists upcoming events, reminders and important dates (Fortnightly)
- School website [QASMT Website](#)
- School blog [QASMT Website - School Blog](#)
- School Policies [School policies](#)

Strategy two: Communication strategies (Email)

Goal setting and career planning

Parents are actively involved across the school year in goal setting and career planning discussions with House Deans and Guidance Officers.

Reporting to parents

Students in Years 8 through 12, receive an Academic Achievement Summary each term and in Term 2 and 3 they also receive an Engagement Report. However, Year 12 students do not receive any report in Term 4.

Students in Year 7 receive an Academic Achievement Summary in terms 2, 3 and 4 and receive an Engagement report in term 1 and 3.

Assessment Schedules

Assessment schedules are published and issued to all students at the beginning of each term. These schedules detail the type, title and timing of the assessment items for each subject.

Strategy three: Communication strategies (Learning Management System)

- Daymap – provides access to parents on the school-based operational and curriculum information
- QParents – provides parents with secure online access to information about their child's schooling.

Strategy four: Celebratory events and special occasions

A range of special events and special occasions allow our students, staff and parents to celebrate and acknowledge the hard work, creativity and individual pursuits of all students at the Academy.

Examples include:

- Valedictory dinner
- Awards evenings
- Awards ceremonies.

Strategy five: Information evenings, subject selection and parent and teacher meetings

Parent information evenings

Information evenings are held throughout the year. These evenings provide valuable information tailored to the needs of each cohort of students. At least one parent from each family is encouraged to attend. Information sessions include IB information, study skills, leadership opportunities, camp information and wellbeing support information. Year Level Parent Representatives and School Leaders are also in attendance. Parent questions are welcomed at parent information evenings.



Parent Teacher Interviews

Parent Teacher Interviews are held twice a year, in Term 2 and Term 4. At this time, parents have the opportunity to meet with their child's teachers and discuss their progress. Teachers will discuss student work at these meetings and a wide range of strategies to assist and further develop students. As outlined in the [Assessment Policy](#) these provide valuable opportunities that maximise the collaboration and sharing of knowledge between families and school to support the learning and development of all students.






Parent and Community Code of Conduct

Supporting learning, wellbeing and safety in every Queensland state school

We welcome parents¹ and other members of our diverse community into schools across Queensland.

Working together with their school community², school staff support the learning and wellbeing of every student, and are entitled to a safe work environment.

Parents and other visitors to schools support safety by ensuring their communications and conduct at the school and school activities is respectful.

Elements of engagement	It is expected that parents and visitors to our school communities will:	Parents and visitors to our school communities demonstrate this by:
Communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be polite to others • act as positive role models • recognise and respect personal differences • use the school's communication process to address concerns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using polite spoken and written language • speaking and behaving respectfully at all times • being compassionate when interacting with others • informing staff if the behaviour of others is negatively impacting them or their family • respecting staff time by accepting they will respond to appropriate communication when they are able • requesting a meeting to discuss any concerns about their child's education — allowing staff time to prepare and appreciating their time may be limited
Collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (parents) ensure their child attends school ready to learn • support the Student Code of Conduct 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • taking responsibility for their child arriving and departing school safely on time every day • reading and encouraging their child to understand and follow the Student Code of Conduct
School Culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognise every student is important to us • contribute to a positive school culture • work together with staff to resolve issues or concerns • respect people's privacy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • valuing each child's education • acknowledging staff are responsible for supporting the whole school community • speaking positively about the school and its staff • not making negative comments or gossiping about other school community members, including students — in person, in writing or on social media • understanding, at times, compromises may be necessary • considering the privacy of all school community members at all times, and understanding that the school cannot share confidential information.

¹The term 'parent' refers to parents, carers, guardians and people who exercise parental responsibility for a child.

²The term 'school community' refers to staff, students, parents, local business and community organisations and visitors to the school.