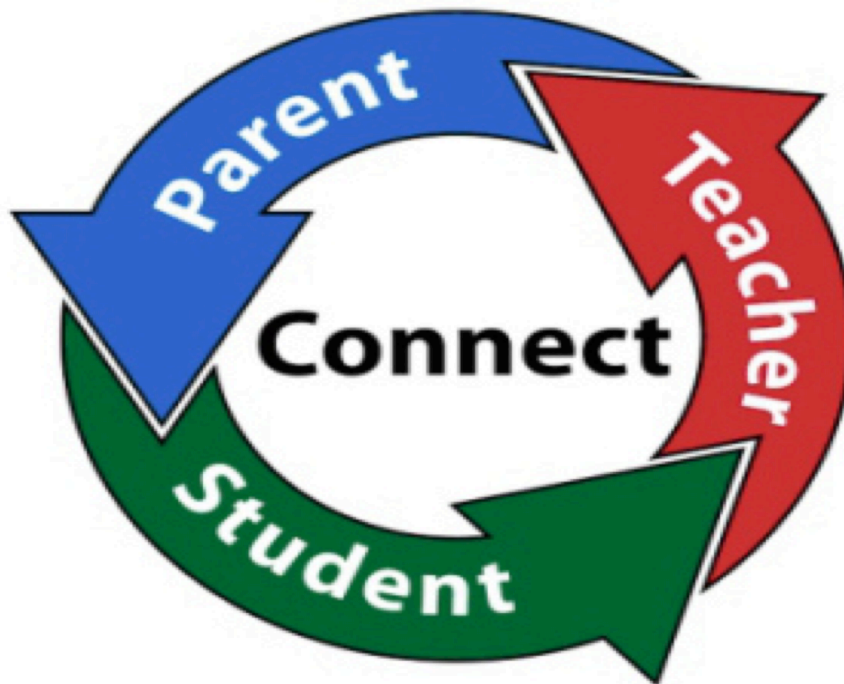


FCE Parent Survey

First Semester Results

Fall 2014-2015

Number of Respondents: 116



School Responses to Parent Feedback and Questions Included

In order to be clear about the programs and reasons why certain protocols are in place, FCE administration has prepared responses to some of the questions and input from parents. This is done to clearly communicate with all stakeholders about our efforts to improve and why some things are done in certain ways.

All school responses are provided in blue.

Survey Questions and Parent Responses

1. Please check the events you have attended, or would be interested in attending (or supporting) this year, and feel free to write in any other ideas you may have for Parent and Family Engagement.

Fall Carnival: 83

Movie Night: 32

Awards Assemblies: 73

Walk-a-thon: 26

Parent Conference Week: 69

Muffins w/Moms: 22

Family Reading Night: 68

PTO Meetings: 15

Book Fair: 70

Coffee Talk w/Principal: 12

Student Music Programs: 50

Doughnuts w/Dads: 11

Family Math/Science Night: 46

Work Day Inside School: 11

Spirit Night: 32

PTO Grounds Day: 8

Written Parent Responses: We love roller skating night; More student music programs; Silent auction at the carnival; Christmas play for all grades; 5th grade day; School dance

- **School Response to Survey:** Silent auctions require state paperwork with specific rules. PTO has opted NOT to do silent auctions due to the limitations recently put into place by the state. Ms. Cook, our music teacher, alternates music programs each year for grade levels. This is typical for schools our size. Thanks to Ms. Gilbert, our PE teacher, for organizing our skate nights. PTO is considering school dances and movie nights for the future.

2. We have had more parent involvement this year for PTO events and attendance at FCE Family Events! Do you volunteer at FCE? In what way? Check all that apply.

No, I do not volunteer: 50

Help w/PTO events: 20

Help in the classroom: 30

Help recruit people: 4

Help w/jobs teacher sends home: 26

3. If you do NOT volunteer at FCE, what is the reason?

I work, no time: 38

I am busy w/other commitments/activities: 23

I'd like to vol., but don't know how to get involved: 6 (Send a note to your child's teacher, call the school office at 689-1445, or contact Wendy Williams at wendy.williams@knoxschools.org.)

I do not want to volunteer: 1

- **School Response to Survey:** We respect every parent's decision whether to get involved or not. If someone wants things to change or new ideas presented, then we want them to be involved in helping things change and presenting new ideas in a positive way.
- 4. A lot of our staff members are full-time working moms and dads. We understand how busy families can be. What can we do to involve working parents in our goals and vision for FCE? (all written responses)**

- **School Responses in Blue:**

*not sure, I have babies so there's not much I can do

*make PTO meetings later We have changed them from 3:00 p.m. last year to 5:00 p.m. this year.

- *have more things in the evening Almost everything we do is in the evening. This requires our staff to work overtime and to sacrifice time with their own families. We gladly do this, but we are selective about the events we choose, due to respect for our hardworking staff members.
- *I work 3 jobs, but would love to be able to help with anything I can from home
- *weekend events PTO Grounds Days are on Saturdays. School events are held during the evenings on school days.
- *if I had a month in advance notice, I could make arrangements accordingly
Beginning last year (2013-2014), there has been a major effort to provide parents with AT LEAST three weeks notice for events. This occurs with our FCE Family Newsletters each month and flyers for events sent out three weeks ahead of time. This should be plenty of notice for event planning. However, we are considering sending out events listed by semester. The dates listed would be subject to change, if circumstances change throughout the school year. This would give parents a semester at a glance, in order to plan ahead.
One event that does NOT ALLOW us to give three weeks notice to parents is the Awards Assemblies. Grades are not calculated until the end of the nine weeks period. Once grades are calculated, then students who will receive awards are determined. The Awards Assemblies are the following week. The timeframe does not allow us to give more than a few days, or a week's notice, for the awards.
- *some parents work weekends and do not get off until after 7pm
- *be more on time with events We always begin events on time. We are uncertain to what this comment is referring.
- *I feel like things done first thing in the morning can work better for working parents Events in the evening was one of the biggest requests on last year's FCE Parent Survey (2013-2014). We will continue to provide events in the evening, but will revisit options to consider events during the school day as well.
- *holding mtgs after 6, or letting us know several weeks in advance Again, PTO has moved their board meeting to a later time. They will continue to consider other options. The goal is NOT to interfere with dinner and family time as much as possible. We have had many more participants since moving the time this year. PTO meetings are advertised more effectively than last year. These dates will be advertised along with regular school events by semester next year.
- *work from home activities Please contact your child's teacher. Contact PTO. This is very do-able. ☺
- *offering dinner has proven to be a big boost for attendance; it's a nice treat
- *have parents send times they are able to help, or attend This has been requested regularly from our parents by classroom teachers. Parents can choose to do this whether or not teachers or PTO asks for this information. PTO has advertised this opportunity often this year.

5. We have made extra special effort to communicate more clearly & effectively to our FCE families. Please check all the ways you have been informed of events and information about your child (check all that apply):

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Parent/Family Newsletter: 104 | Email from PTO: 28 |
| Classroom Newsletters: 92 | PTO Information flyers: 28 |
| School Messengers from Principal: 86 | School Sign on Grove Drive: 21 |
| Flyers to advertise events: 81 | Parent/Teacher Phone Calls: 20 |
| Parent/Teacher Conferences: 54 | Signs throughout the school: 18 |
| Email from Teacher: 28 | |

- **School Response to Survey:** If you are NOT getting the School Messenger phone calls from Ms. Holt, then your emergency card information is not updated in the system. Please contact the main office to update your phone numbers, etc. We cannot change this unless a parent comes in to make the change or sends in a signed parent note stating the change to be made. Grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc. are NOT able to make these changes. Only the student's legal parent or guardian can make changes with the appropriate ID.

6. Considering all communication, conferences, and school events, what events do you feel LEAST informed about at FCE this year (please check as many as needed):

How FCE is measured by the state: 22 Reading Curriculum: 8

How parents can help at home: 20

Bullying Policy: 6

Security and Safety at FCE: 14

How to be a part of PTO: 5

TCAP Testing: 13

Behavior. Rules and Expectations: 4

Special Events: 12

Policies and Procedures: 3

Math Curriculum: 10

Title 1: 3

Technology available for student: 10

Arrival/Dismissal: 0

- **School Response to Survey:** There is a planned structure for next school year to more effectively support parents in how they can help at home. Our Parent Involvement must be more than just getting parents to come to events. It must include an effort to educate parents on how they can help us reach and surpass our academic goals for our boys and girls. Parents are invited and encouraged to be our partners in education, not just bystanders. More to come next year! ☺

7. FCE has purchased online reading and math programs...students are able to login at home...is your child using these FCE online programs at home (check all that apply):

Ticket-to-Read: 60

No computer access at home: 18

Reflex Math: 31

Front Row Math: 7

Not Using: 28

- **School Response to Survey:** We anticipate creating a more targeted way to share information regarding opportunities for students to access school-purchased or school-focused technology at home. This has not been done in the past, but students have been aware they can access these programs at home. We are thinking of ways to inform parents more effectively about these forms of access, so parents can monitor their use at home in a stronger way. This will result in stronger support of our school academic goals! More to come next year! ☺

8. What are things you have observed as GREAT things about FCE? (all individual responses written)

*22 surveys used these adjectives to praise faculty and staff: *friendly, dedicated, caring, awesome job, enthusiasm, love them, kind, great, helpful, involved, great with communication, concerned, protective*

*3 surveys mentioned parent/teacher communication as being a great thing

*Teachers work hard to give the students a great education as well as a loving environment

*Small class size, terrific teacher's commitment to students

*We love FCE! Especially Mrs. Holt's morning announcements

*Small school means more one on one teacher/student interaction

*Great scores academically

*Walk-a-thons, field trips

*Drop off/pick up procedures, staff activities, special days they have in school, readiness of teachers

*Mrs. Officer is amazing!

*Principals are doing GREAT things, very proud to be an FCE family, facility improvements show pride in our school, there is a real team spirit evident

*The use of technology and the events such as carnival and family nights

*The new fence and Officer Todd

*The staff always has the best interest of the children at heart and goes above and beyond to enforce that

*Kid's Place, grade level weekly newsletters, limiting awards to 2x a year

*Administration seems to have great leadership and trying to form a team at FCE

*We love the way our daughter is learning

*Each teacher has spent time recognizing my child's skills

*I like awards ceremonies and keeping families involved all the time

*Principal Holt's willingness to work with families

- *Great activities for the kids
- *More principal involvement
- *The last Family Reading Night was awesome! Kudos to the 5th grade teachers who were very creative with the living wax museum
- *Kid's Place after care
- *How they are always looking to improve
- *Community feel
- *I never worry about my child at school. FCE has a great anti-bullying policy. My child is very happy at FCE
- *Programs to help students who are struggling in certain areas
- *Positive environment, striving for excellence
- *The reading intervention. She loves to read
- *Teacher and student working together better
- *Love both my sons' teachers this year

- **School Response to Survey:** We are so pleased with all of the positive comments that recognize our hard work this year! Thank you to our families for supporting needed changes, but also sharing new ideas to make our Peocat Family and school the BEST in Knox County! 😊

9. What are some things FCE needs to work on for the future? (all responses written)

- **School Responses are in Blue:**

- *4 surveys mentioned FCE needed improvement in communication (w/community, parents)

- *I would actually do more if the parking situation was better. I have a hard time walking.

- *Calling a parent when a child is sick or needs inhaler or prescribed meds

Parents are asked to have their child's doctor complete the medication form and provide medication that has a prescription label on it. This allows us to give the medication at school, so a child can recover quickly and return to instruction. Any other time, a child must show signs of sickness (fever, throwing up, etc.). We follow protocol for calling parents when children are sick, and our school nurses are involved in any concern/event when necessary.

- *Lunches having water for classes. Have students understand they can have it.

- *Personality. Sometimes all the rules and regulations don't leave room for a personal touch. Everyone is individual.

We work very hard to see each staff member and student as a special individual. However, we are legally bound to follow the rules and regulations set by the State and district. If we did not follow regulations, then we could be accused and liable. Our staff does a great job of giving a personal touch each day! This is one area we have heard a great deal of feedback in over the past year and a half that strong positive growth has occurred.

- *Maybe sending home a log sheet saying you and your child read at home for 10 mins each night.

- *Something to help those who do not have computers at home.

FCE does not have the resources to help with financing technology at home. This would be a resource that would have to be found outside of the school.

- *I don't understand why my child has to be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school and it's not an excused absence.

It is Knox County Schools Board policy for students to be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school. However, a parent is required to send either a parent note or doctor's note explaining the absence. If a student goes home early due to sickness, then that early leave is excused for that one day. It is not the school's job to track days for students. Parents must send in a note anytime a student misses a full school day or if a student misses an additional day due to illness after being sent home early the day before. 10 parent notes is the limit, and doctor's notes can be accepted at any time. Please refer to the FCE Family Handbook for details of approved reasons for absences.

- *It would help to know events a couple months ahead of time to plan for time off work

As stated earlier, we are planning on sending an event calendar home per semester next year. However, it is with the understanding that dates are **subject to change** due to circumstances throughout the school year.

- *Access to forms online (i.e. medicine at school form) Many forms are available online at our school website. If they are not on our school website, then they are accessible on the Knox County Schools website. The medication form, in particular, is posted on the KCS website for parents.

***Keeping parents informed more about their child**

Behavior folders go home each week with Friday Folders. Graded student work should be included in the folders. Comments or concerns about students to parents should be included in this weekly communication format. Parents are always encouraged to write notes, etc. to teachers and include them in the folders. If parents do not get a response, then a phone call message left for the teacher in the front office is in order. If parents still do not receive a response, then a phone call message for the principal team is warranted. Sometimes we find that notes get lost, or they are removed before the teacher gets the folder. Please be sure to continue to seek a response. We will do all we can to respond within 24-48 hours of your phone call or note.

***Maybe bully issues**

We have a strong anti-bullying policy here at FCE. Each child and parent is required to sign the anti-bullying contract/agreement at the beginning of every school year. Severe consequences are in place for bullying. Our guidance counselor implements classroom lessons to identify bullying correctly and provides strategies for students to use when reporting and dealing with bullying situations. Bullying is not tolerated at FCE.

***I wish turnover of staff would slow down. There is a sense of low morale.**

Being the 3rd principal in three years (last year) has created the need to build a team of staff members who have the same vision and mission in mind for our students. To build a team of like-minded staff, this often results in changes. Parents are encouraged to be patient as our staff works to build a strong team. I would also disagree that low morale is present. I would say that staff morale is stronger than in recent years, due to the positive people we have hired to make FCE the BEST in Knox County!

***Letting grandparents know about events.**

Parents/Guardians are our primary focus for information. Legally, these are the only people we can discuss any concerns with regarding a student. It is the parents' responsibility to inform extended family and grandparents of any events or student progress.

With that said, we certainly want to invite grandparents into our school for lunch or volunteering. We implemented our FCE Grandparents' Week this year just for this reason.

***This school really needs extracurricular activities, like Chess club, band, or orchestra. This may be a problem with Knox Co. elementary schools in general.**

Opportunities for extracurricular activities are not budgeted. Any extra activities would have to be led by a teacher (who would donate their time for free) or a parent who would be willing to invest the time for free. Our teachers work overtime at night and on weekends planning, grading, etc. They also head up event committees, stay for programs, and participate in Spirit Nights (cooking pizza at Papa Murphy's). Any additional extracurricular activities would have to be approved by administration and organized on a volunteer basis.

***Maybe a weekly email**

We collected emails this year and only have less than half of the school population on file. We certainly see this as an opportunity to communicate with families that can grow in the future.

***STOP USING STYROFOAM TRAYS!! Bad for our Earth!!**

This is a district decision, not a school decision. Parents are invited to contact the Knox County Schools' Food Services Department to share additional concerns in this area.

***PTO numbers. Some people do everything.**

This is also our concern! This is why we have worked very hard this year to get people who are willing to volunteer some of their time to PTO or classroom events. The more people who help, the less each person has to do! ☺

***Making sure advanced students are challenged.**

In the summer of 2014 during FCE planning for this school year, our teachers stated strongly the need for our advanced students to progress in an obvious way. Our goals do not only include intervention in reading and math for struggling students, but also lessons, projects, and activities for challenging our advanced students. This has been consistently a focus of our efforts throughout this year. Teachers are expected to differentiate content, process, and products for ALL levels of students. They are supported in these efforts through weekly professional development meetings, called PLCs (Professional Learning Communities). Our instructional coaches and administrators lead these weekly meetings in literacy and math and focus on tracking weekly student performance in each classroom. Classroom data is analyzed and a plan is made for reteaching and enriching instruction for students in the days following.

*Maintaining teachers. My daughter has had amazing teachers but they leave shortly after the start.

*More teacher contact. If this is a concern for any parent, then parents are encouraged to contact their child's teacher. If there is no response, then please call and leave a phone message for the principal team. Any time a parent calls the administrative team, the parent will be asked if they have attempted to talk to their child's teacher first. This is a requirement. Most issues or concerns can be cleared up with a conversation with the student's teacher and do not require administrative involvement. However, administration is happy to assist in parent conferences with teachers and parents at any time.

*Actually announce my child's name when they have received an award. This has happened more than once! We announce all students' names on announcements when special awards are given. 1st and 2nd semester PTO Awards Assemblies are the time for announcing academic awards, and each child's name is said and awards received at the event. Teachers announce students' names in the classroom for each nine weeks grading period and hand out certificates as students are recognized by their peers. Staff and student birthdays are announced each morning over the intercom.

If a child's name was left off of a list, then parents are encouraged to contact the child's teacher to inform the school of the mistake. We would NEVER intentionally leave a student off of a list or not call his/her name when an award is being given. Again, contacting the school immediately would result in allowing us to correct any mistake we have unintentionally made.

*Allow Kid's Place to be at school on off days

Knox County Schools has a contract with ALL daycare providers. This contract is followed by FCE. Protocol at this time states that daycare providers do not have access to schools when there are no school personnel on site. This would include those days when school is not in session. However, in-service days and Summer Break are days that daycare providers can offer services to families.

*We need more chairs for awards/events or separate grades on different nights. Would help with parking, too. We have budgeted some money to purchase new chairs for parent events. Currently, we schedule the beginning of the year Curriculum Nights by separating grade levels to ease parking issues. Family Reading and Math Nights are currently scheduled with K-5 grades.

Parking continues to be an issue over the years. We are land-locked and there is limited access to building in more parking.

*Can't access Ticket-to-Read; more info on student's progress/daily activities

*Possibly arranging a form of transportation for families in need so they can be more involved

This can be discussed on a case-by-case basis with families by contacting our school Social Worker, Ms. Cathy Bolton. There are multiple resources in our community that can address needs like housing, food, and transportation. Parents can call and leave a message for Ms. Bolton at any time. However, she works with multiple schools and may not be able to respond immediately. Our office staff can certainly share the request with Ms. Bolton if she is serving at other schools for the day.

*Classroom behavior rules and expectations—informing parents

We have a school-wide behavior system. Classroom behavior rules and expectations are sent home to parents at the beginning of the year or when they register and attend class that first week. The behavior reports in Friday Folders should sufficiently provide weekly information about each child's behavior in the classroom and around the school building. If parents want more information, they should contact their child's teacher with specific questions. We are always eager to answer questions parents have and seek to clearly communicate our expectations.

*I would like FCE to participate in Knox County Cross Country.

Leading this team would be completely voluntary. Parents who may be interested are encouraged to invest time in setting up this team at FCE. Our PE teacher, Ms. Gilbert already coordinates several healthy activities for our boys and girls:

Walk to School Day

Run for the Schools (February)

FCE Track Team (May)

FCE Field Day (May)

Walk-a-Thon (PTO Coordinates)

*Text messages are an easy way to communicate

We encourage teachers to communicate with parents in as many ways as possible. However, teachers have the right to keep their cell phone information private. Parents can always be confident that a phone message will be given to teachers by calling the school main office at 689.1445. Administrators and teachers work to return parent phone calls within 24-48 hours. If a phone message is left on a Friday, the return call will be made that day or the following week.

***Salad bar, choir, and band**

Our cafeteria serves salad as a side often. There are days when a Chef Salad is offered as an option for a main meal.

FCE students present three music programs every year: Fall (3rd grade), Spring (1st grade), and May (5th grade). These programs introduce students to singing in a choir and performing in front of a live audience. All students are taught how to play general classroom percussion instruments, in addition to general piano keyboard skills. 4th and 5th grade students learn to play the recorder, a pre-band instrument, which encourages them to pursue band/orchestral instruments in middle school.

Knox County elementary schools do not teach band or chorus as separate classes, but allow students to pursue a general music education encompassing everything from music history & theory, to connecting music to their academic classes. Once students enter middle school, they are then able to pursue band or chorus as part of their related arts classes.