



*Maxfield Elementary School of Academic Excellence*  
**Ryan Vernosh, Principal**

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## 2019-20 Family Engagement Plan

### OUR MISSION AND CORE BELIEFS

Mission:

Maxfield Elementary provides a restorative and nurturing learning community committed to achieving academic excellence. All are welcome here.

Core Beliefs:

- We believe in the transformative power of relationships.
- We believe every child can and will learn. No exceptions.
- We believe in the inherent innocence and good of each child.
- We believe in restoration of the mind and body.

### OUR PROGRAM

*Opened in 1890, Maxfield is a community school supported by generations of tradition. Parents, community, and staff all work together for the success of children to provide a well-rounded education that incorporates culture, focuses on creative and critical thinking, utilizes technology, incorporates both the arts and science, and provides a solid foundation in reading and math. Parents can expect excellence in teaching, multiple supports through both school and community resources and a welcoming environment.*

The Family Engagement Plan (FEP) is organized into four impact areas. We will be working together this year to build positive and goal-oriented relationships in each area. Families and staff at school developed this plan together.

<b>Welcoming Environment</b>	
<b>Our school has staff member(s) available for families to discuss this plan and ask questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family Liaison: Ankhet Hesi-Ra and Qadash Yasharala</li> <li>• Principal: Ryan Vernosh</li> <li>• Assistant Principal: James Walker</li> <li>• Volunteer and Partnership Coordinator: Deshawn Woods</li> <li>• Cultural Wellness Center Elders</li> </ul>
<b>Our school communicates with families in many ways.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thursday take home folders that include Principal’s Weekly Newsletter, student progress report/update, Teacher/Grade Level Newsletter, and additional flyers.</li> <li>• The Parent Handbook is available on the school’s website.</li> <li>• The School Calendar is available on the school’s website and the Principal’s Weekly Newsletter always lists upcoming events.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple family nights typically focus on increasing parent’s awareness of academic programs and celebrating student successes.</li> <li>• Ongoing parent/community classes offered through the Promise Neighborhood are designed to address to address Adult education (GED) and student/parent educational needs, access to community resources, promote positive parent -school relationship with staff, teachers and administrators, elder coaching and tutoring children and parents in health and wellness. These classes are offered both on-site at Maxfield and other Promise Neighborhood schools and partner sites.</li> <li>• Connect Ed phone calls, emails, and text messages regarding upcoming events are sent out on a regular basis.</li> <li>• Greeting tables are set up at the front of the school at various points in the year to share information about special events and to connect with community and parents/guardians.</li> <li>• Cultural Wellness Center staff and volunteers make individual phone calls to parents/guardians about upcoming parent classes, special events, community events, Promise Neighborhood programs and activities.</li> <li>• Maxfield website and Facebook page provide multiple types of information on both school and district events.</li> <li>• Teachers regularly connect with parents. The expectation is for at least one positive contact per month; by phone, letter, or progress report.</li> <li>• Maxfield staff respond to parent requests for information within 24 hours. If a specific request takes longer than 24 hours, an estimated length of time will be communicated to families.</li> </ul>
<p><b>The achievement gap, or rather the “opportunity gap,” between students of color and white students in Saint Paul Public Schools is unacceptable. Our school is working to change practices and systems by identifying the barriers that make it harder for students of color to succeed and for their families to support their learning.</b></p>	<p><b>For more about our work on racial equity, contact:</b>  Principal, Ryan Vernosh  Assistant Principal, James Walker  Family Liason, Ankheth Hesi-Ra, Qadash Yasharala</p>

**Transitions between schools can be challenging, and we work to help families as their children start and leave our school.**

**For new students and families, we support the transition by:**

- We invite families to stop in to meet their child’s teacher and to visit the classroom during the open house on Thursday, August 29 from 3:00 – 5:00. All classroom teachers contact their students to provide a personal invitation to stop by. In addition, all classrooms support the transition through participation in the Parent-Teacher Home Visit Project; they visit students and families in their home prior to the start of the school year.
- We hold a Family BBQ during on the first Thursday evening of the school year as an opportunity to welcome new families and to start to build connections and relationships.
- PreK students participate in multiple transition events during the spring prior to their transition to kindergarten. These include both parent and student visits to kindergarten classrooms, question and answer sessions with school administration.

**For students and families moving to the next school in their pathway, we support the transition by:**

- Grade 5 teachers and the school counselor support student’s transition to Ramsey Middle School, Maxfield’s pathway middle school. Specific activities may include Maxfield students going to visit Ramsey or Ramsey student leaders and staff coming to Maxfield.
- The Cultural Wellness Center staff maintain contacts with the families that they’ve worked with as the students transition to middle school. This is part of the work of the Promise Neighborhood and the focus on cradle to college and career.

**Family Partnerships**

**Our school-parent compact establishes the shared responsibility for student success between the school, families, and students. Families and teachers work together to develop the compact.**

- **Copies of the compact are available:**
  - All families receive a copy of the compact in the fall at the start of the school year. Copies are also available in the Cultural Wellness Center’s Parent Engagement Office and in the main office.
  - Parents/guardians can also access an online version on the school’s website.

**There are many opportunities for families to build connections to the school and to each other.**

- Title I Annual Meeting where we will share information about our school-wide Title 1 program will be held **at the September PTA meeting TBD.**
- Family specific meetings including the topics and the frequency of these sessions are based on parent requests. Parents/guardians are engaged in in-depth conversations that address community and cultural needs; we want to provide the time and space to continue the discussion as well as address additional topics raised by parents. We feel this approach better meets parent needs in a timely manner and helps in building healthy relationships between the school and the families.
- Ongoing parent/community classes are designed to address specific topics like Asthma Treatment and Prevention, Keys to Self Care, Housing, etc.
- Parent-teacher conferences. All grade levels will be moving to Academic Parent Teacher Teams for their conference format this year.
  - Fall conferences:
    - Evening of Tuesday, November 12, 2019
    - Evening of Thursday, November 14, 2019
    - All day Friday, November 15, 2019
  - APTT meeting dates: Please see Maxfield Calendar
- Parent Teacher Home Visit Project – multiple teachers have been trained and have already been participating in the Project.
- Volunteering at the school in classrooms, attending fieldtrips, and at other special events and performances.
- National African American Parent Involvement Day (NAAPID) will be on February 10, 2020.
- In 2019-20 we will continue to identify ways to celebrate additional cultural events in order to better reflect the increasing diversity of our school community.

**We work to make these meetings and events available for every family in the school.**

- Interpreters are always secured for parent-teacher conferences and special education due process meetings. Due to the wide range of languages, Maxfield is unable to have bilingual staff on site to support all families. We utilize district identified interpreters to connect with families when we know they need language support. We also utilize district

	<p>translated materials to communicate information with families.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2019-20 we will continue to refine our outreach efforts for those families for whom English is not the primary language. The number of students and families of English Language Learners is growing and we are working to develop the consistent resources to be able to meet their communication needs.</li> <li>• Multiple family nights also happen throughout the year and food and transportation is provided. Please refer to the Maxfield online calendar for specific dates and times.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Our school supports families as advocates and provides opportunities for parent leadership</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The belief in parents as advocates and leaders is central to the work at Maxfield and the work of the Promise Neighborhood. Several opportunities are available for parents to engage with staff to support their child and our school community, and also to engage with Promise Neighborhood staff to serve as community leaders.</li> <li>• There are several ways for parents/guardians to handle concerns about things at the school. Staff from the Cultural Wellness Center, school administration, and support staff (school counselor and social worker) all work with families and teachers to address concerns. School staff frequently connect with Cultural Wellness Center staff to help problem solve with parents/guardians. In addition, parents are referred to the district’s Ombudsperson if they are unable to resolve concerns at the school level.</li> <li>• Maxfield staff also participate in Home Visit Project training through the St Paul Federation of Teachers. During 2019-20 all grade level teams participate in Academic Parent Teacher Teams as a way to increase parent leadership and advocacy in terms of Parent-Teacher conferences.</li> <li>• Cultural Wellness Center staff work in the Cultural Wellness Center’s Parent Engagement Office <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Planning for school improvement and family engagement is part of the ongoing discussion held during CWC parent meetings. The goal is to stay informed so that adjustments can be made throughout the school year to better meet the needs of students and families.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Teaching and Learning

**Our school shares information about state standards, assessment and student achievement with families in multiple ways**

- **Report cards and progress reports will be distributed** in November during parent-teacher conferences and in March. If parents/guardians are unable to support a home visit conference or attend a conference at school, teachers will hold a phone conference and then send the report card home. End-of-year report cards are mailed home to families by the district in June.  
  
In addition to the trimester report cards, teachers in the intermediate grades regularly send home progress reports to inform parents/guardians if students are regularly completing assigned work. Primary grade teachers also typically send home a weekly or biweekly report on classroom behavior and work completion.
- **Parent-Teacher conferences are held in November this year and three separate APTT meetings.** Maxfield provides transportation and interpreting for conferences and offers parents/guardians the option of a home visit conference.
  - Fall conferences:
    - Evening of Tuesday, November 12, 2019
    - Evening of Thursday, November 14, 2019
    - All day Friday, November 15, 2019
  - APTT Nights: Please see Maxfield Calendar
- **Support for developing literacy skills within the school day:** Maxfield provides multiple supports for developing readers in grades kindergarten through grade 3. Partnerships with Experience Corps, MN Reading Corps, Reading Partners, and others, provide tutoring support specifically to students in these grades. Also, additional licensed staff and paraprofessional staff work with classroom teachers to develop student's literacy skills.
- **Support for developing literacy skills at home:** Students in grades 1 through 5 are expected to read a specific amount of time at home each day; the exact amount of time is dependent on the grade level and the student learning needs. Students who are learning to read are expected to practice letter sounds, memorizing sight words, and listening to others read. Kindergarten teachers provide materials for parents to work on at home with their children. As we move through the school year, the materials are differentiated to meet the needs of the child.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Additional opportunities for parents/guardians to be informed and to support their child’s learning:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Maxfield holds a Math Family Night, a Literacy Family Night, and a Science Family Night throughout the school year. These are designed to provide parents/guardians with information and to have them experience activities with their children that they can then do at home.</li> <li>○ In addition, during the Open House in August teachers provide parents/guardians with information about grade level learning expectations, typical classroom activities, an outline of the year, and homework expectations.</li> <li>○ Maxfield maintains an open-door policy and invites parents/guardians to regularly visit the school to observe their child in the learning environment.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Our school will engage families in Personalized Learning as a key strategy to accelerate student achievement, as these changes come to our school</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Parent Portal is available by contacting Linda Richie in the main office</li> <li>● Maxfield Elementary continues to participate in the district’s 1-to-1 iPad initiative and the Digital Works project. At Maxfield iPads are used to prepare students to effectively use technology to gather information, to process and analyze information, and to present what they have learned. We work to ensure our students have the technology and analytical skills they will need in the future. iPads are also used to provided customized instruction by utilizing programs like RazKids for reading and many others. The majority of programs that students use at school for individualized instruction in math and reading can also be accessed online at home, the public library, etc.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Many before- and after-school enrichment and support opportunities are available for students</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Maxfield Elementary partners with the YMCA to provide after-school enrichment and learning opportunities for all students in grades K-5. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ The YMCA School Success program is a 4-day per week program that works with the district’s Extended Day Learning program. The program typically runs for 1 hour 45 minutes and students are provided bus transportation if they are eligible for transportation. The program includes enrichment and academic support in reading, writing, and math.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

### Community Partnerships

Our school develops community partnerships to provide additional support for students and their families

Maxfield Elementary partners with several organizations to support families and students.

- Cultural Wellness Center
- Bethal University
- Saint Paul Eastside YMCA
- Community Stabilization Project
- Assistance League of Minneapolis and Saint Paul
- Center for Democracy and Citizenship Augsburg College
- Target Corporation Business Councils
- Saint Paul Promise Neighborhood Initiative Partners
- Central High School National Honor Society
- Second Harvest Heartland
- Children’s Dental Services
- Wilder Foundation
- Leonardo’s Basement
- AARP Experience Corps
- MN Reading Corps
- Reading Partners
- University of Saint Thomas

This plan is available as part of our school’s SCIP, or School Comprehensive Improvement Plan at [scip.spps.org](http://scip.spps.org), is on our school website at [Maxfield.spps.org](http://Maxfield.spps.org) and printed copies are available in the office.