

# Family Group

At East, all are part of small “family groups” made up of 10 or fewer scholars and a Carent (staff member), who meet daily to support and ensure student success.



## OUR PURPOSE

The purpose of family group is for all to feel a sense of belonging through positive relationships, to develop healthy habits, and to empower all to have a voice.

## ALIGNMENT TO OUR MISSION


Family Group will enable the successful transition to adulthood for all our students because it provides a forum for consistent, thoughtful practice and support in the development of habits that contribute to responsible citizenship, in belongingness to a community, and in the explicit development of each student’s voice.

## OUR ROLE AS CARENTS

### CARENT

Definition: (n.) a person who guides, cares and advocates for children who are not his/her own biologically.

At East, each staff member who guides a Family Group will be known as a Carent.

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- Build relationships
  - Be available
  - Establish rituals and routines
  - Facilitate peace circles
  - Connect and engage families
  - Monitor social, emotional, and academic needs of our scholars
  - Consistently plan & implement daily lessons using the Daily Protocol & resources provided
  - Help connect scholars with extracurricular activities and support programs as needed
  - Foster the development of the 7 Habits
  - Model and reinforce expectations, habits, and growth
  - Make regular connections to the school’s mission
  - Support implementation of the school’s Code of Conduct
  - Maintain a scholar profile - interests, academics, behavior, affiliations, attendance
  - Progress monitor and facilitate reflection
  - Attend scholar extracurricular activities outside of the school day when possible
  - Commit to striving for the Level 4 values in the FG Rubric

## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- In both the Lower and Upper Schools (Grades 6-8 and Grades 10-12), Family Groups will be multi-grade groups. We foresee Carents remaining with students throughout their Lower and Upper School experiences.
- In the Freshman Academy, Family Groups will be made up of Grade 9 students only.
- Within each of the three schools, Family Groups will meet at the same time as follows:
  - ♦ Lower School Family Groups meet from 11:56-12:26
  - ♦ Freshman Academy Family Groups meet from 12:26-12:56
  - ♦ Upper School Family Groups meet from 11:52-12:22
- Annaliese Wilmarth (Lower School) and Eddie Blanding (Upper School) will be leading the Family Group effort and will be available to assist and support all staff throughout this endeavor as needed.



- **We are very conscious of the need to support all staff members**, particularly as it relates to strategic planning for Family Group time as well as varied levels of comfort in dealing with social-emotional concerns that come up as we check-in with students.
  - △ **Please note that lessons and resources will be continuously be developed and posted** via SharePoint. You can also reach out to Annaliese Wilmarth (Lower School) or Eddie Blanding (Upper School) at any time for additional support in planning and implementation or with feedback and ideas.
  - △ **Plans are meant to guide and support.** There will be planned elements that all staff are expected to implement within Family Group time balanced with opportunities for flexibility, creativity, and student-led activities.
  - △ **To support social-emotional concerns that arise, we have created a quick reference sheet** of contact information for our incredible school counseling and social work team. Additional information will be provided regarding referrals to the Student Support Center and agency resources available.
- **It is important to note that while our initial efforts will be centered around fostering a sense of belonging, developing healthy habits, and encouraging student voice within Family Groups, the idea of transfer and transcendence beyond family group for all 3 goal areas should be kept in mind, as this is what we are ultimately striving for.**
- **We continue to ask ourselves:** What do we want our compass to be? What can we do differently at East in Family Group that will influence and change student outcomes in a way that hasn't been done before?
- **We thank you for your commitment to this endeavor, your patience in accepting that it won't be perfect right off the bat, and your willingness to adjust as the year unfolds!**

# Communication

Carents should establish mutual, two-way communication with both students and their families, including:

- Making contact with each of their Family Group scholars prior to September 8 - including a personalized post card and phone contact.
- Reaching out to their Family Group scholars if absent and documenting attendance outreach efforts in Attendance Actions in PowerSchool.
- Making personal contact with families in advance of each school-wide parent engagement event (such as Parent Teacher Conference nights and Open House) to extend a personal invite.
- Keeping families informed of what is going on with their child at school.



**Confidentiality**  
**All voices heard**  
**Respectful collaboration**  
**Engagement by All**



**One of the foundational protocols of Family Group time will be the restorative practice of circling. Give some thought to talking pieces. Suggestions:**

- ♦ Have each scholar bring in an object to be kept in the room and take turns with whose get used.
- ♦ Provide scholars with materials to create or decorate talking pieces as an opening activity (e.g. students could paint rocks or talking sticks to represent something about themselves).

This binder belongs to: \_\_\_\_\_