



# CLASSICAL

## CHARTER SCHOOLS

### THE ROLE OF FAMILY

#### **Introduction**

South Bronx Classical believes that parents and families are an indispensable component in our scholars' academic and behavioral success. We have accordingly created mission-aligned rules, organizations, and systems that enhance school-family-scholar communication and support in those areas where scholars need it the most.

The journey of becoming a South Bronx Classical parent starts during the enrollment process, when parents of accepted scholars are required to attend one of several orientations run by the Operations Manager. During this orientation, parents learn about the school's mission, policies and procedures and how by supporting or reinforcing these concepts at home, they ultimately are supporting and contributing to their child's development and academic success. Parents are encouraged to fully consider what saying "yes" to a South Bronx Classical education really means. Ideally, they then leave the orientation with an understanding that the job of making their child-scholar successful needs to be a joint effort of both the school and the parent.

#### **The '5 Non-Negotiables'**

The '5 Non-Negotiables' are designed to give parents a clear vision of their responsibility, ensuring that they're doing everything they can to support the school and their scholar. Our experience demonstrates that parents who are most invested in the school's mission produce the most successful scholars. We believe that the following elements represent those areas on which parents must focus in order to ensure their scholar's academic success and that they are "non-negotiable":

- Scholars must arrive at school on time, every day, ready to learn.
- Scholars must wear a complete, neat and clean SBCCS uniform every day.
- Parents must provide a quiet area for their scholars to complete homework.
- Parents must ensure that their scholars get a good night's sleep.
- Parents must support the school they chose!

#### **Family Advisory Council**

As noted, South Bronx Classical Charter School recognizes the pivotal importance of the parental/familial voice in contributing to a school's culture and a child's education. And we recognize that frequent and relevant

communication is necessary for their being able to do so. To this end, a Family Advisory Council (FAC) has been created, whose primary goal is to develop and enhance communication among SBCCS families and between the families and the school.

The FAC is governed by a president, vice president, and a secretary, and FAC meetings are held twice a month. Parents attend meetings to discuss school-wide issues, upcoming events, and initiatives to increase student achievement through parent involvement. The FAC also organizes our monthly Parent Academy (see below). This serves as an accessible and positive network for parents to obtain and share information, one that fosters a culture of comfortable, open communication and mutual respect.

### **Parent Academy**

The Parent Academy, led by FAC members, the Dean of Students and a social worker, is a monthly meeting that offers support and education to families within the South Bronx Classical community. The mission of the Parent Academy is to provide families with the resources they need to support and teach their children while they attend South Bronx Classical. Every month, the FAC hosts a Parent Academy workshop centered around a specific topic designed to improve parenting skills, which in turn help scholars become better citizens. Example of topics that have been addressed include:

- Creating an Effective Learning Environment at Home
- Discipline and Management Styles
- Understanding your Scholar's Learning Style
- Financial Planning

Workshops are led by our Deans of Students, Social Workers, Counselors, Psychologists, Health Care workers, or other trained experts within the community.

### **Community Gatherings**

Also monthly, the school holds Community Gatherings in which the South Bronx Classical community celebrates our scholars' successes (and our parents' sacrifices) by coming together to hear scholars recite their work, listen to teachers "shout out" their scholars, and learn more about the "character pillar" of the month. The school community thus comes together as one to recognize and celebrate another month of successes.

### **Family Day**

Every June, we invite all the stakeholders in the school together for a celebration. The school day ends at 1pm. Parents, scholars, teachers, and staff enjoy outdoor activities, contests, and games for the rest of the afternoon. This event bring a festive end to a year of hard work and success!