

PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

The Board of Education believes that positive parent and family engagement is essential to student achievement, and thus encourages such involvement in school educational planning and operations. Parent and family engagement may take place either in the classroom or during extra-curricular activities. However, the Board also encourages parent and family engagement at home (e.g., planned home reading time, informal learning activities, and/or homework “contracts” between parents, family members and children). The Board directs the Superintendent of Schools to develop a home-school communications program in an effort to encourage all forms of parent and family engagement.

Title I Parent and Family Engagement- District Level Policy

Consistent with the parent and family engagement goals of Title I, Part A of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the Board of Education will develop and implement programs, activities and procedures that encourage and support the participation of parents and family members of students eligible for Title I services in all aspects of their child's education. The Board also will ensure that all of its schools receiving Title I, Part A funds develop and implement school level parent and family engagement procedures, as further required by federal law.

For purposes of this policy, parental involvement refers to the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication, involving student academic learning and other school activities.

At a minimum, parent and family engagement programs, activities and procedures at both the district and individual school level must ensure that parents and family members:

- Play an integral role in assisting their child's learning;
- Are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school; and
- Are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child.

The federal definition of the term “parents” refers to a natural parent, legal guardian or other person standing in *loco parentis* (such as a grandparent or stepparent with whom the child lives, or a person who is legally responsible for the child's welfare).

The district will use the Family and Community Engagement Standards – Rubric (Maria Paredes, Copyright 2012) to guide assessment and framework for enhancing student success. The eight areas of focus are:

1. The school provides a welcoming and engaging environment for all families

2. Every family is personally invited by the classroom teacher to participate in student centered activities linked to academic achievement
3. Families have regular access to clear and actionable student performance data
4. Teachers and families set and evaluate short term and long term student academic goals
5. All families are provided with the necessary information, strategies and tools to be meaningfully engaged in grade-level student learning
6. The school creates opportunities for families and teachers to develop trusting and collaborative relationships
7. The school partners with community agencies and organizations that assist the school in meeting its improvement goals
8. The district adopts performance evaluations, policies and procedures that support high impact family engagement efforts.

The rubric will be used to assess the framework.

The rubric can be found at:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/10OJEYgbqkdMPSL_IxqVWKMYjXCe0e1-L/view?usp=sharing

District and school level Title I parent and family engagement programs, activities and procedures will provide opportunities for the informed participation of parents and family members (including those who have limited English proficiency, parents and family members with disabilities, and parents and family members of migratory children.)

As further required by federal law, parents and family members of students eligible for Title I services will be provided an opportunity to participate in the development of the district's Title I plan, and to submit comments regarding any aspect of the plan that is not satisfactory to them. Their comments will be forwarded with the plan to the State Education Department.

Parents and family members also will participate in the process for developing either a comprehensive or targeted "support and improvement plan" when the school their child attends is identified by the State as needing this plan.

Parent and family member participation in development of district wide Title I plan

The Board, along with its superintendent of schools and other appropriate district staff will undertake the following actions to ensure parent and family member involvement in the development of the district wide Title I plan:

Specific actions to take:

- hold meetings at flexible times: 8am, 2:30 pm, and 6 pm
- survey all parents by school mail (student backpacks)
- directly solicit comments and suggestions from families in person or by phone
- Invite online, through newsletters, newspaper and in person, to meetings
- Develop and implement programs, activities and procedures that encourage and support the participation of all parents

- Ensure that all schools develop and implement school level parent involvement practices

Development of school level parent and family engagement approaches

The superintendent of schools will ensure that all district schools receiving federal financial assistance under Title I, Part A are provided coordination, technical assistance and all other support necessary to assist them in planning and implementing effective parent and family engagement programs and activities that improve student achievement and school performance. As appropriate to meet individual local needs, the superintendent will:

Specific actions to take:

- Hold meetings at flexible times: 8am, 2:30 pm, and 6 pm
- Design effective communication tools for student programs and academic progress
- Directly solicit comments and suggestions from families, in person or by phone
- Invite online, through newsletters, newspapers and in person, to meetings
- Guide parents to establish home environments to support children as students
- Include parents in school decisions
- Collaborate with the community to offer resources to families for academic and social Success
- Provide information and ideas to families about how to help students with homework and curriculum related activities, decision making and planning.

Building capacity for parental involvement

To build parent capacity for strong parental involvement to improve their child's academic achievement, the district and its Title I, Part A schools will, at a minimum:

1. Assist parents in understanding such topics as the state's academic content challenging academic standards, state and local academic assessments, Title I requirements, how to monitor their child's progress and how to work with educators to improve the achievement of their child.

To achieve this objective, the district and its Title I school may:

Develop Parent and Family engagement through strategies and information provided with

- Web Cart Books
- Pre K and K Screening Packet
- Grade Level Brochures
- Read 500 books by 5 Program
- Parent / Teacher Conferences
- Adult Education Classes
- Fall Festival
- PTO
- Open Houses
- Read
- Parent Advisory Meetings

2. Provide materials and training to help parents work to improve their child's academic achievement such as literacy training and using technology (including education about the harms of copyright piracy). To achieve this objective, the district and its Title I schools may:

Provide information, modeling, monitoring and opportunities for discussions with

- Read Alouds
- Summer Library Hours
- Schooltool Parent Portal
- Reports on child's progress
- Adult Education Classes
- Think Central online access
- NY State curriculum resources available on our website
- News and Notes
- Read 500 books by 5 Program
- Parent / Teacher Conferences
- WEB Cart Books
- Open Houses
- School report card on website

3. Educate its teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals and other school leaders, and other staff, with the assistance of parents, in understanding the value and utility of a parent's contributions and on how to:

- reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners;
- implement and coordinate parent programs; and
- build ties between parents and the schools.

To achieve this objective, the district and its Title I schools may:

- Employ district communication tools such as; Annual Calendar, District Website, and Social Media
- Share at Faculty Meetings – Topics – Conference Formats, Postcards for Good News, Happy Grams
- Survey Teachers, Parents and Children about School Climate
- Provide Fall Festival Tables for Title I and Community Partners
- Offer Adult Education Classes
- Collaborate with the PTO
- Provide professional development to staff on diversity to assist in their ability to work in partnership with families from diverse backgrounds

4. Ensure that information related to school and parent-related programs, meetings and other activities is sent to the parents of children participating in Title I programs in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats, upon request, and to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand.

Coordination of parental involvement strategies

The district will coordinate and integrate strategies adopted to comply with Title I, Part A parental involvement requirements with parental involvement strategies adopted in connection with other Federal, State, and local programs, including public preschool programs. It will do this by:

- The district is the recipient of a NYS EPK grant. We work with JCEO as our Community Business Partner. The Head Start Program operated by JCEO incorporates a home based family component. The district works with the Head Start family worker to support parent and family engagement in the district's programs as well as the Head Start Program. The principal will collaborate with the Head Start Program.
- The district also has a partnership with the local Department of Social Services. We work to integrate the services of the Preventative School Partnership Program in our Title I building four days a week. The principal will collaborate with the PSAP worker to coordinate services provided to parents.

Review of district wide parent and family engagement policy

The Board, along with its superintendent of schools and other appropriate staff will conduct, with the meaningful involvement of parents and family members, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this parent and family engagement policy in improving the academic quality of Title I schools, including the identification of barriers to greater participation by parents in activities under this policy, and the revision of parent and family engagement policies necessary for more effective involvement. To facilitate this review, the district will conduct the following activities:

The annual Parent Advisory Meetings are held in June each year. Parents/ families will be invited to the annual meeting by invitation. Prior to the annual meeting, the student body will receive a survey to collect barriers to participation, identify needs of parents/ families to assist with the learning of their children and suggestions for amendment to the policy that will further allow for successful interactions between families and schools. Additional meetings will be held as necessary to review and amend the parent and family engagement policies. The information will be posted in several locations. After the Parent Advisory Meetings, the reviewed policy will be presented to the Board of Education for further review. This public meeting will provide additional opportunity for community discussion and to continue updating the plan, if necessary. A translator will be made available, if needed.

The superintendent of schools assure that all District schools are provided with technical assistance and support to assist them in planning and implementing effective parent involvement policies identifying programs and activities that improve student achievement and school performance. The Family and Community Engagement Standards- Rubric will be used to plan and provide teachers with evidence strategies to enhance engagement.

Cross-ref: 4010, Equivalence in Instruction

Ref: 20 USC §§6318(a)(2); 7801(38), Every Student Succeeds Act (§1116 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act)

U.S. Department of Education, Parental Involvement, Title I, Part A, Non-Regulatory Guidance, April 23, 2004

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