



Ware County School District Parent and Family Engagement Plan

What is Family Engagement?

Family Engagement means the participation of parents and family members in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring:

- a) that parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning.
- b) that parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education.
- c) that parents are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making committees to assist in the education of their child.
- d) the carrying out of other activities, such as those described in Section 1116 of the ESSA.

About the Parent and Family Engagement Plan

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, the Ware County School District (WCSD) has developed this parent involvement plan that establishes the district's expectations for parent involvement and guides the strategies and resources that strengthen school and parent partnerships in the district's Title I schools. This plan will describe WCSD's commitment to engage families in the education of their children and to build the capacity of schools to implement family engagement strategies and activities designed to achieve the district and student academic achievement goals.

When schools, families, and communities work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, to stay in school longer and to school more. Title I, Part A provides for practical family engagement at every level of the program, such as in the development and implementation of the district and school plan, and in carrying out the district and school improvement provisions. Section 1116 of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) contains the primary Title I, Part A requirements for schools and school systems to involve parents and family members in their children's education. Consistent with Section 1116, the WCSD will work with its Title I schools to ensure the required school-level parent and family engagement plans meet the requirements of Section 1116(b) and each includes, as a component, a school-parent compact consistent with Section 1116(d) of the ESSA.

Jointly Developed

Spring stakeholder surveys were conducted and stakeholder meetings were held. All parents were invited to participate and provide suggestions or ideas to improve this district parent and family engagement plan for the 2019-2020 school year. Parents received text messages, emails, and phone calls to inform them of the meetings and surveys. Additionally, meetings were announced in the newspaper and posted on school marquees. During this meeting, parents also reviewed and discussed the Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP).



Stakeholders are invited to offer comments, ideas, and feedback regarding the plan at any time by submitting written comments to their child's school or by participation in the district parent survey. All feedback received by May 27, 2019, was considered when revising this plan.

Upon final revision, the district parent and family engagement plan was incorporated into the CLIP which was submitted to the state. Parents are welcome to submit comments and feedback regarding the policy at any time on the school district website or by submitting written comments to your child's school.

The district parent and family engagement plan was posted on district and school websites, distributed during the annual Title I school meetings held early in the school year and is available in the school office or parent resource centers.

Strengthening Our School

This year, the district family engagement coordinator (FEC) will provide assistance and support to all Title I schools to ensure family engagement requirements are being satisfied and that family engagement strategies and activities are being implemented. Title I schools will receive notifications and resources from the district and the FEC to help them improve and strengthen family engagement. In addition to frequent communication and school visits, the district FEC will provide periodic training to representatives from the Title I school.

Additionally, the district will convene a meeting in the spring with school representatives to review parent and family engagement requirements, discuss opportunities for family engagement activities, and activities for the remainder of the school year.

Reservation of Funds

The WCSD will reserve one percent from the total amount of Title I funds it receives in FY19 to carry out the parent and family engagement requirements listed in this plan and as described in Section 1116 of the ESSA. Furthermore, the WCSD will distribute 90 percent of the amount reserved for Title I schools to support their local-level family engagement programs and activities. The district will provide clear guidance and communication to assist each Title I school in developing an adequate family engagement budget that addresses their needs assessment and parent recommendations.

Each Title I school hosts a Stakeholder Input Meeting in the Spring for parents to provide suggestions on how family engagement funds will be used in the upcoming year. Comments from meetings are considered when determining areas of need for the upcoming school year and considering family engagement set-aside spending.

Opportunities for Meaningful Parent Consultation

Input and suggestions from parents and family members are an essential component of the district and school improvement plans that are developed each year. All parents of students eligible to receive Title I services are invited to attend two meeting opportunities described in this section to share their ideas and suggestions to help the district, schools, and students to reach our student academic achievement goals.



District Parent Involvement Meeting

In the Spring, all parents are invited to hear the latest updates from the WCSD, provide input for the 2019-20 CLIP, and participate in revising the district parent and family engagement plan. Spring survey data is also shared during the meeting. Electronic billboard, electronic messages and newspaper articles are some examples of how the meeting is advertised.

School Improvement Meetings

Each Title I school will host a meeting in the Spring for parents and stakeholders to participate in revising the school's parent and family engagement plan, programs, and budget and participate in the development of the schoolwide plan. Meetings are announced in a variety of forms such as an electronic billboard, One Call Now, flyers sent home with students, and newspaper articles. Comment cards and minutes from these meetings will be reviewed to determine areas of need for the upcoming school year and to consider changes to the parent involvement budget.

Parent input on the use of Title I funds to support parent involvement programs may also be provided through the annual parent survey. The survey will contain questions related to the parent involvement budget as well as a section for parents to provide their comments.

Unable to attend these meetings? Email comments and suggestions to your school principal or Dean Moody at dmoody@ware.k12.ga.us.

Building Capacity

WCSD will build school and parent capacity for strong family engagement. This capacity will ensure effective engagement of parents and family members in supporting partnerships among the Title I schools, parents, and the community with the goal of improving student academic achievement. Teachers and families establish student academic goals to be addressed through at-home learning activities and strategies.

Of Parents - The WCSD will work through its Title I schools to assist parents in understanding state and district academic information connected to their student's learning and progress, and information regarding the Title I program. The WCSD will provide opportunities for parents to gain knowledge in improving communication between the school and home and in supporting students at home. Information about the opportunities will be posted on school websites, sent home with students, and advertised in the local newspaper.

The WCSD will also support Title I schools in posting to school websites resources and materials, including parent guides, study guides, and practice assessments, to help parents work with their children at home. Copies of these materials will be made available at all Title I schools for those families who may have limited internet access, including copies in other languages as requested. To assist parents with understanding the online student information system and other digital educational resources (including education about the harms of copyright piracy), the WCSD will partner all schools to provide information to parents. The dates and times for these workshops will be determined and announced by each school and made available to parents.



The WCSD has a district-wide Parent Advisory Council comprised of parent representatives that include community leaders and business partners to provide input on all matters related to family engagement in Title I, Part A programs and other school programs.

The WCSD along with the Title I schools will coordinate and integrate the district's family engagement programs with the local preschool program and other federal and state-funded preschool programs in the district by inviting faculty and staff from those programs to attend planning meetings focused on family engagement activities. In the spring, schools will host transition events for rising kindergarten students, rising sixth-grade students, and rising ninth grade students.

Of School Staff - The WCSD will conduct periodic training with representatives from all schools to promote and increase family engagement, school-family communication, and community ties. Training will be redelivered to the faculty and staff of Title I schools.

To ensure that information related to the district and school parent engagement programs and activities are available to all parents, each Title I school is required to send home and post to the school website information for parents and family members in an understandable language and uniform format. At the beginning of the year, school staff will be trained on the capacities for parent engagement. One Call Now, district and school websites, local news media, and other school message systems will be used to provide information to parents and families.

Parent and Family Engagement Evaluation

In the Spring of each year, the WCSD will conduct an evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this parent and family engagement plan and the activities to improve the academic quality of the Title I schools through an annual parent survey and Stakeholder Input Meetings.

Each Title I school will conduct a survey to gather feedback and input on the parent and family engagement activities and programs. In addition to the annual survey, each Title I school will also schedule Stakeholder Input Meetings to discuss the needs parents of children eligible to receive Title I services to design strategies for more effective family engagement. Surveys will be posted on school websites and set home with students. One Call will be used to notify parents of the survey and to remind parents of the opportunity to participate. Notice of Stakeholder input meetings will be sent home with students, posted on school websites and marquees, and advertised in the newspaper.

The WCSD will use the findings from the school and district meetings and the school and district surveys to design strategies to improve effective family engagement, to remove possible barriers to parent participation, and to revise its parent and family engagement plans.

Accessibility

In carrying out the parent and family engagement requirements established by Section 1116 of the ESSA, the district family engagement coordinator (FEC) will communicate and collaborate with the Office for Student Services to ensure full opportunities for participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities and parents of migratory children including providing information and school reports in a language parents can understand.

Adoption

This districtwide parent and family engagement plan has been developed jointly and agreed upon with parents and family members of students participating in Title I Part A programs as evidenced by the collaboration of parents, stakeholders, and school and district personnel at the Spring Stakeholder Input meetings. This plan was adopted by the WCSD on May 28, 2019, and will be in effect for the 2019 – 2020 school year. The school district will distribute this plan in multiple ways to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children on or before October 1, 2019.