

Stephens County School District Parent and Family Engagement Plan

2021-2022

May 13, 2021

191 Big A School Road

Toccoa, GA 30577

www.stephenscountyschools.com



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 and on advisory 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.

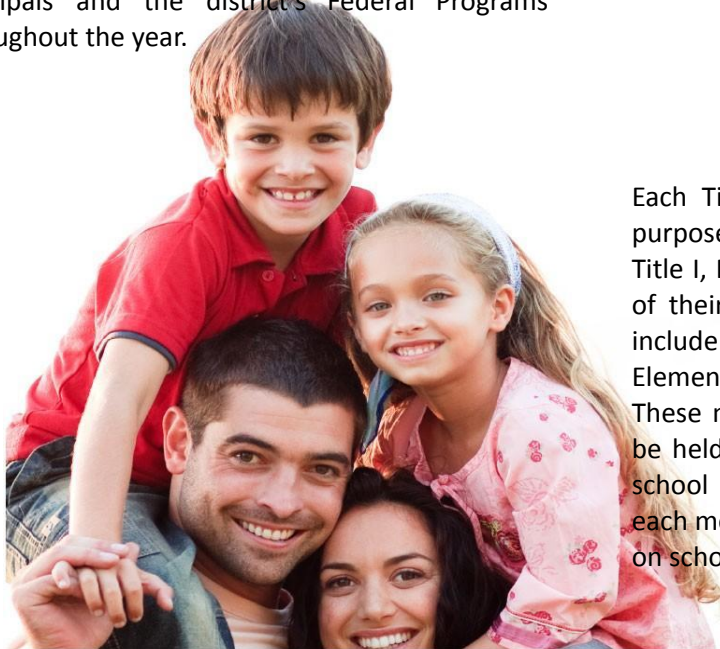
About Parent and Family Engagement

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, the Stephens County School System has jointly developed this plan to outline the strategies and resources that are recommended for strengthening school and parent partnerships in the district's Title I schools. The plan describes the district's commitment to engage families in the education of their children by building their capacity for involvement in order to help all students reach their academic achievement goals.

When schools, families, and communities work together to support learning, children will most likely achieve more academically, stay in school longer, and enjoy school more. The Title I, Part A program provides for substantive parent engagement at every level including district planning, school planning, parent-school compacts, 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 in their children's education. Consistent with Section 1116, Stephens County School System will work with Title I schools to ensure that the required policies or plans comply with Section 1116(b) and include a school-parent compact consistent with Section 1116(d) of the ESSA.

Jointly Developed District Plan, School Plans, and School-Parent Compacts

Each school plans a series of meetings and activities, including the Annual Title I, Part A Meeting, to engage parents, family members, teachers, administrators, and community members through various activities and informational sessions. Parents are invited to attend or participate. The district and schools also invite parents to participate in an annual survey for the purpose of evaluating and providing input regarding school improvement, the district plan, school plans, and school-parent compacts which are communicated in multiple ways, including being posted on each school's website. Results are analyzed to identify student needs, parent needs, and family member needs, as well as barriers to participation and are used in the revision process. All stakeholders are provided the opportunity to give input in the revision process of the district parent and family engagement plan, school parent and family engagement plans, and school-parent compacts. Discussions include the use of Parent and Family Engagement Set Aside funds for allowable expenditures. Once the revision process is complete, these documents are distributed in multiple ways to parents and families (e.g. electronic messaging, paper copies to parents at meetings, paper copies sent home in student agendas, and posted electronically on the district and school website). The district plan is also included as a part of the district's Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP) for the upcoming school year. Each year, the revised plan is posted to the district's website to ensure the plan is available to the local community. Parents are welcome to provide input to school principals and the district's Federal Programs Director throughout the year.



Strengthening Our Schools through Technical Assistance

The Stephens County School System Federal Programs Director routinely provides technical assistance and support to all Title I schools regarding parent and family engagement in the form of grant requirements, timelines, activity planning, document requirements, source documentation organization, financial resources, and purchasing guidance. Consistent communication, routine meetings, training sessions, and school visits from the Federal Programs Director help to streamline the parent and family engagement activities and processes planned by school administrators.

- Schools should send invitations to parents regarding meetings, surveys, and other opportunities to provide input
- The district plan is provided in an understandable and uniform format and provided as necessary in a language parents can understand
- Meetings are offered at various times (e.g. mornings and evenings)
- Meetings may be offered in different formats (e.g. in-person, online, group, individual, etc.)
- Services may be offered to prevent barriers to parent and family engagement
- Communications and distributions should occur in multiple formats (e.g. telephone, email, text message, flyers,

Annual Title I, Part A

Meetings

Each Title I school hosts an annual meeting for the purpose of informing parents and families about the Title I, Part A grant and engaging them in the education of their children. Title I schools in Stephens County include Big A Elementary, Liberty Elementary, Toccoa Elementary, and Stephens County Fifth Grade Academy. These meetings are usually held in October, but must be held prior to November 1 each year. Refer to local school plans and meeting schedules for the dates of each meeting. Meeting schedules and plans are posted on school webpages.



Reservation of Funds

Stephens County School System reserves 1% of the total Title I, Part A funds received for each grant period for the purpose of parent and family engagement unless the grant award is less than \$500,000. No less than 90% of these reserved funds are used by schools to promote and support parent and family engagement activities. The use of these funds is used based on input from parents provided throughout the year. Expenditures must support and be allowable as defined by federal grant requirements of Section 1116(a)(3)(D) such as:

- (1) Providing professional development to staff regarding parent and family engagement strategies; professional development may be provided jointly to teachers, paraprofessionals, administrators, parents, and family members
- (2) The support of programs that reach parents and family members at home, in the community, and at school
- (3) The dissemination of best practices focused on parent and family engagement
- (4) Collaboration with community-based organizations or employers with a successful record of improving parent and family engagement
- (5) Engaging in other activities and strategies determined to be consistent with this plan
 - a. Services necessary for barrier prevention (e.g. possible transportation costs)
 - b. Supplies needed for activities
 - c. Refreshments for activities
 - d. Parental communication supplies (e.g. copy paper, flyers, student agendas, etc.)

Coordination of Services

Stephens County School System currently is a part of the Consolidation of Funds initiative to fully consolidate Federal, state, and local funds in the district's Title I Schoolwide programs at Big A Elementary, Liberty Elementary, Toccoa Elementary, and the Stephens County Fifth Grade Academy. Currently, Stephens County School System receives funding from Title I, Part A; Title II, Part A, Title IV, Part A; and Title V, Part B, and IDEA programs. Stephens County School System currently transfers Title II, Part A and Title IV, Part A funding into the Title V, Part B program prior to consolidation. IDEA funds are not consolidated. Pre-K funds are not consolidated. The Federal Programs Director works with school principals regarding consolidated funds, reserved parent engagement funds, pre-K funds, and other relevant funds to support coordinated services for all students and encourage parental engagement. Federal funds are used to supplement, not supplant, state and local instructional funds.

Building Capacity for Parents and School Staff

The Stephens County School System Federal Programs Director will work closely with the Director for Assessment and Learning, along with Title I school administrators to review and discuss strategies, content, and other Georgia Department of Education requirements for building parent and staff capacity. Opportunities for parental assistance and understanding will be available at various school level meetings throughout the school year. Topics may include the following:

- The Georgia Standards of Excellence
- Georgia Milestones Assessment System
- Other student assessments
- The College and Career Readiness Index (CCRPI)
- Title I, Part A requirements
- Student support strategies
- Parental support strategies
- Literacy training
- Technology training
- Opportunities for families who speak languages other than English
- Required school reports
- The value of parental contributions
- Communication strategies
- Programs that link schools and parents
- Other related topics



The Stephens County School System Title I Parent and Family Engagement Brochure may be accessed on the district's website at <https://www.stephenscountyschools.or/titleia>. This document is provided so that parents may have access to information regarding Title I programs, school principals' contact information, district leaders' contact information, how to get involved with schools, along with defined roles for parents, schools, and the district. The Georgia Department of Education's Brochure and Family Engagement Crosswalk documents are also posted on the same webpage. In addition, a link to the Georgia Department of Education's Federal Programs webpage for Get Involved Parent Videos is present. Parents are also encouraged to participate with each school's governance team.

Adoption of the Stephens County School System Parent and Family Engagement Policy

The Stephens County School System Parent and Family Engagement Plan has been jointly developed by the school district and parents of children participating in Title I, Part A Schoolwide Schools (i.e. Big A Elementary, Liberty Elementary, Toccoa Elementary, and Stephens County Fifth Grade Academy) following the plan revision process as outlined in the district's Federal Programs Manual. This plan was revised on **May 13, 2021** by district staff after reviewing input from parents and schools. The plan will be in effect for the 2021-2022 school year. This policy will be distributed in multiple formats to all parents of students attending Title I, Part A Schoolwide Schools prior to November 1, 2021.