



Book	Policy Manual
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Title	PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IN THE SCHOOL PROGRAM
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2111 - PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IN THE SCHOOL PROGRAM

The School Board recognizes and values parents and families as children's first teachers and decision-makers in education. The Board believes that student learning is more likely to occur when there is an effective partnership between the school and the student's parents and family. Such a partnership between the home and school and greater engagement of parents in the education of their children generally result in higher academic achievement, improved student behavior, and reduced absenteeism.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA), defines the term "parent" to include a 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). This definition is consistent with F.S. 1000.21, which defines the term "parent" as "either or both parents of a student, any guardian of a student, any person in a parental relationship to a student, or any person exercising supervisory authority over a student in place of the parent".

For purposes of this policy, the term "family" is used in order to include a child's primary caregivers, who are not their biological parents, such as foster caregivers, grandparents, and other family members and responsible adults who play a significant role in providing for the well-being of the child.

In cultivating partnerships with families and communities, the Board is committed to the following:

A. Relationships with Families

1. cultivating school environments that are welcoming, supportive, and student-centered;
2. providing professional development for school staff that helps build partnerships between families and schools; ^{2,3}
3. providing family activities that relate to various cultures, languages, practices, and customs, and bridge economic and cultural barriers; ^{2,3}
4. providing coordination, technical support and other support to assist schools in planning and implementing family engagement activities. ³

B. Effective Communication

1. providing information to families to support the proper health, safety, and well-being of their children;
2. providing information to families about school policies, procedures, programs, and activities; ^{2,3}
3. promoting regular and open communication between school personnel and students' family members;
4. communicating with families in a format and language that is understandable, to the extent practicable; ^{2,3}

5. providing information that will enable families to encourage and support their child(ren)'s academic progress, especially in the area of reading; ¹
6. providing information that will enable families to encourage and support their child(ren)'s citizenship, especially social skills and respect for others; ¹
7. providing information that will enable families to encourage and support their child(ren)'s realization of high expectations and setting life-long learning goals; ¹
8. providing information and involving families in monitoring student progress; ³
9. providing families with timely and meaningful information regarding Florida's academic standards, State and local assessments, and pertinent legal provisions; ^{2,3}
10. preparing families to be engaged in meaningful discussions and meetings with school staff. ^{2,3}

C. Volunteer Opportunities

1. providing volunteer opportunities for families to support their children's school activities; ^{1,3}
2. supporting other needs, such as transportation and child care, to enable families to participate in school-sponsored family engagement events. ³

D. Learning at Home

1. offering training and resources to help families learn strategies and skills to support at-home learning and success in school; ^{1,2,3}
2. working with families to establish learning goals and help their children accomplish these goals; ¹
3. helping families to provide a school and home environment that encourages learning and extends learning at home. ^{1,2}

E. Involving Families in Decision Making and Advocacy

1. involving families as partners in the process of school review and continuous improvement planning; ³
2. involving families in the development of its District-wide parent engagement policy and plan, and distributing the policy and plan to families. ^{2,3}

F. Collaborating with the Community

1. building constructive partnerships and connecting families with community-based programs and other community resources; ^{2,3}
2. coordinating and integrating family engagement programs and activities with District initiatives and community-based programs that encourage and support families' participation in their children's education, growth, and development. ^{2,3}

Implementation

The Superintendent will provide for a comprehensive plan to engage parents, families, and community members in a partnership in support of each student's academic achievement, and to improve parent-teacher cooperation in such areas as homework, school attendance, and discipline. As required by F.S. 1014.05, the plan will include, but not be limited to, the following elements:

- A. A procedure for parents to learn about their child's course of study, including supplementary educational materials. See also Policy 2220, *Adoption of Courses of Study*; Policy 2521, *Instructional Materials Program*.
- B. A procedure for parents to object to instructional materials and other materials used in the classroom. Objections may be based on beliefs regarding morality, sex, and religion, or on the belief that such materials are harmful. See also Policy 2520, *Selection and Adoption of Instructional Materials*.
- C. A procedure for parents to withdraw their child from any portion of the comprehensive health education that relates to sex education or instruction in acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) education or any instruction regarding sexuality if the parent provides a written objection to their minor child's participation. Procedures must provide for parents to be notified

in advance of such course content so that they may withdraw their minor child from those portions of the course. See also Policy 2417, *Comprehensive Health Education*.

D. A procedure for parents to learn about the nature and purpose of clubs and activities offered at their minor child's school, including those that are extra-curricular or part of the school curriculum.

E. Procedures for parents to learn about parental rights and responsibilities under general law, including:

1. To opt their minor child out of any portion of the District's comprehensive health education that relates to sex education instruction in AIDS education or any instruction regarding sexuality. See also Policy 5780, *Student/Parent Rights*.
2. A plan to disseminate information about school choice options, including open enrollment. See also Policy 5121, *Controlled Open Enrollment*.
3. To exempt their child from immunizations. See also Policy 5320, *Immunizations and Health Examination*.
4. To review Statewide, standardized assessment results. See also Policy 2623, *Student Assessment*.
5. To enroll their child in gifted or special education programs. See also Policy 2460, *Exceptional Student Education*.
6. To inspect District instructional materials. See also Policy 2521, *Instructional Materials Program*.
7. To access information relating to the District's policies for promotion or retention, including high school graduation requirements. See also Policy 5410.01, *Promotion, Acceleration, Placement and Retention*, and Policy 5460, *Graduation Requirements*.
8. To receive a school report card and to be informed of their minor child's attendance requirements. See also Policy 5200, *Attendance*, and Policy 5420, *Reporting Student Progress*.
9. To access information relating to the state public education system, state standards, report card requirements, attendance requirements, and instructional materials requirements.
10. To participate in parent-teacher associations and organizations that are sanctioned by the Board or the Department of Education. See also Policy 5780, *Student/Parent Rights*.
11. To opt out of any District-level data collection relating to their minor child not required by law. See also Policy 2605, *Research and Evaluation*.

The information required in this policy may be provided electronically or by posting on the District's or school's website.

The plan will provide for annual evaluation, with the involvement of parents and families, of the plan's effectiveness and identification of barriers to participation by parents and families. Evaluation findings will be used in the annual review of the parent and family engagement policy and to improve the effectiveness of the District plan.

Pursuant to State law, the Superintendent shall develop and annually disseminate:

- A. a parent guide to successful student achievement, consistent with the guidelines of FLDOE, which address what parents need to know about their child's educational progress and how parents can help their child(ren) achieve in school; and
- B. a checklist of parental actions that can strengthen parental involvement in their child's educational progress, consistent with the guidelines of FL DOE, to focus on academics, especially reading, high expectations for students, citizenship and communication.

¹Indicates Florida Statutory Requirements

²Indicates IDEA 2004 Section 650 & 644 parent involvement requirements

³Indicates Title I Section 1118 parent involvement requirements

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