



Walker County School District

Parent and Family Engagement Policy

2023-2024
Revised June 2023
201 South Duke St
La Fayette GA 30728
www.walkerschools.org

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 Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

Acronyms

ESSA

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is the reauthorization of the original *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965*. This is the law that governs Title I and other federal educational programs

LEA

Local Education Agency refers to the school district.

FEC

Family Engagement Coordinator

The person who coordinates the Title I requirements for parent and family engagement at a Title I school with the cooperation of the Title I school principal.

CLIP

Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan

This plan is made up of 5 documents: District Comprehensive Needs Assessment, District Family Engagement Plan, District Improvement Plan, Foster Care Transportation Plan, and the Migrant Education Plan.

CNA

Comprehensive Needs Assessment

About the Parent and Family Engagement Policy

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, the Walker County School District (WCSD) has developed this parent and family engagement policy that establishes the district's expectations and objectives for meaningful family engagement 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 in its Title I 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, stay in school longer and enjoy school more. Title I, Part A provides for substantive 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 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. The WCSD will work with its Title I schools to ensure that the required school-level parent and family engagement policies meet the requirements of federal law and each include, as a component, a school-parent compact.

Jointly Developed

Parents provide feedback about district parent involvement using the Title I and Title II Survey. The Title I Survey is provided by electronic survey and/or paper and is translated into families' home languages. This feedback is used to guide the annual revision of this District Parent Involvement Plan and provides feedback for the District Comprehensive Needs Assessment. The revised plans are presented for final feedback from the public at a special meeting in July. The district notifies parents of this meeting through SchoolMessenger call/text services and social media. All feedback received by July was included with the plan for this school year. The district parent/family engagement plan was posted on district website, distributed during the annual Title I meetings early this school year and made available in the schools' parent resource centers.

Strengthening Our School

This year, the Title I Coordinator 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 Title I Coordinator to help them improve and strengthen family engagement. In addition to frequent communication and school visits, the Title I Coordinator will hold monthly meetings and trainings with FECs to ensure consistent implementation of Title I requirements regarding Section 1116 of ESSA. The Title I Coordinator will hold quarterly meetings with Title I school principals and school FECs to review family engagement requirements, plans and activities.

Reservation of Funds

The WCSD will reserve 1 percent from the total amount of Title I funds it receives in FY24 to carry out the parent and family engagement requirements listed in this policy and as described in Section 1116 of the ESSA. Furthermore, the WCSD will distribute at least 90 percent of the amount reserved to 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 will consult with parents of enrolled students in April to obtain feedback and suggestions on how these family engagement funds will be used in the upcoming year at the district and school-level. Comment cards and minutes from these meetings or survey results from surveys will be reviewed by the district to determine areas of need for the upcoming school year and consider changes to the family engagement budget.





Opportunities for Meaningful Consultation

Input and suggestions from parents 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 Improvement Forum- July 2024

All parents are welcome to hear the latest updates from the Walker County School district as well as review and provide input into the District CNA, District Improvement Plan and District Family Engagement Plan for the 2023-2024 school year. Notices regarding this meeting will be posted on the WCS website, WCS Facebook, and sent through text messages using our School Messenger calling system.

Schoolwide Planning Meetings- Spring 2024

During the spring, each Title I school will host a meeting for parents to participate in reviewing the school's schoolwide Title I plan, the school's parent/family engagement plans, and provide input on the parent/family engagement budget and programs. Each Title I school will send a letter home to parents notifying them about the date and time of the meeting. Information regarding the meetings will also be available on the school web sites.

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

Unable to attend these meetings? Please visit www.walkerschools.org in the Spring of 2024 to review the meeting documents and minutes and leave your input. Please direct any questions or feedback about the District Family Engagement plan to Sha Cumbee, Family Engagement Specialist at shacumbee@walkerschools.org.

Scan the code with your smartphone or tablet to access family engagement information from the WCSD website.

Building Capacity

The WCSD will build the schools' and parents' capacity for strong family engagement, in order to ensure effective involvement of parents and family members and to support a partnership among the Title I schools, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement through the following district-wide activities and programs such as Academic Parent Teacher Teams (APTT) , Data Nights and All Pro Dads. APTT is an evidence-based family engagement model that builds partnerships with parents. With the teacher, families set student academic goals to be addressed through at-home learning activities and strategies. Chattanooga Valley Elementary is currently implementing APTT and many of our other schools do a similar data event for all of their parents. All Pro Dads is an one hour per month program that promotes engagement of fathers/male family members/male figures with their child and the child's school. Rossville Elementary School, Stone Creek Elementary School, Rock Spring Elementary School, and Saddle Ridge Elementary and Middle School are offering All Pro Dads meetings.

Of Parents - The WCSD will work as a district and through its Title I schools to provide assistance to parents in understanding state and district academic information connected to their student's learning and progress, as well as information regarding the Title I program and APTT. The WCSD will provide classes for parents to gain knowledge about the challenging state academic standards, local academic assessments, as well as the required assessments for Georgia students including alternative forms of assessment. The dates and locations for these classes and APTT meetings will be posted on the district website and shared through each Title I school's newsletter.

The WCSD will also coordinate pages on the district and school websites that will contain resources and materials, including parent guides, study guides, practice assessments, and APTT activities, 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 Spanish. 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 technology specialists will partner with Title I schools to host workshops for parents. Dates and times for these workshops will be determined and announced by each individual school.

The WCSD 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 we will have central enrollment at the AEC but each school will have their own Kindergarten Readiness event to allow parents the opportunity to meet the administrator, teachers, and other key staff members. They were also able to tour the building and were provided resources to help the parents and students to prepare for the next step in the education process. The WCSD will also coordinate with these programs to ensure that parents are informed about available resources.

Of School Staff - The WCSD will conduct monthly trainings during the school year for school FECs to learn and discuss strategies to increase family engagement, improve school-family communication, and build ties with parents and the community. These trainings will be redelivered to the faculty and staff of Title I schools. If the school is newly implementing APTT, the WCSD Family Engagement Leadership Team (FELT) will conduct an APTT training for the entire school staff. The purpose of the FELT is to coordinate the sustainability and growth of APTT in the district. The WCSD will also host a training for appropriate school staff and faculty that will focus on creating welcoming environments and improving two-way communication with families.

To ensure that information related to district, school, parent programs, APTT meetings, DATA Nights and activities is available to all parents, each Title I school is required to send home and post online 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 parent notifications and resources to be sent home in parents' native language, where applicable, and providing interpreters at parent events and APTT meetings. Information posted on the district website will be translated to the extent practicable. The district will also utilize school phone call systems, district and school websites, local news media, and other school message systems to post information for parents.

Parent and Family Engagement Evaluation

Each year, the WCSD will conduct an evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this parent and family engagement policy and the family engagement activities to improve the academic quality of the Title I schools through an annual parent survey and the School Improvement Forums.

Beginning in April, each Title I school will send home a survey and email a link to the survey for parents to provide valuable feedback regarding the parent and family engagement activities and programs. These surveys will also be posted on the district and school websites for parents to complete. In addition to the annual survey, each Title I school will also use the Spring Annual Evaluation

to facilitate group discussions to discuss the needs parents of children eligible to receive Title I services to design strategies for more effective family engagement.

The WCSD will use the findings from the Spring Annual Evaluation and the survey results 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 Title I Coordinator will inform the school principals of relevant federal laws 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

Mark Your Calendars

For Parents

Annual Parent Survey
March-April 2024

District Improvement Forum
July 2024

For Schools

Welcoming Schools Training
August 2022

Principal Meetings
Individual Meetings at each school

FEC Meetings
August 2023, September 2023, October 2023, November 2023, December 2023, January 2024, February 2024, March 2024, April 2024, May 2024

Adoption

This districtwide parent and family engagement policy has been developed jointly and agreed upon with parents and family members of children participating in Title I, Part A programs as evidenced by the collaboration of parents, school, and district personnel through surveys, comprehensive needs assessment meetings, and the CLIP review meeting.

This plan was adopted by the Walker County School District on July 2023 and will be in effect for the 2023-2024 academic 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 September 1, 2023 which includes posting on the district website, a paper copy distributed with school level family engagement information at each Title I school, and on file in the reception area of the Department of Education at 201 South Duke Street, LaFayette, GA. Walker County School District welcomes feedback on this plan throughout the school year: in writing at our Title I schools, in writing at the Department of Education Building and via email to Sha Cumbee at shacumbee@walkerschools.org.

