

Dodge County Schools



2023-2024

Title I

Parent and Family Engagement Plan

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In support of strengthening student academic achievement, Dodge County School District receives Title I, Part A funds and therefore must jointly develop with, agree on with, and distribute to parents and family members of participating children a written parent and family engagement policy that contains information required by Section 1116(a)(2) of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The policy establishes the LEA's expectations and objectives for meaningful parent and family engagement and describes how the LEA will implement a number of specific parent and family engagement activities, and it is incorporated into the LEA's plan submitted to the Georgia Department of Education.

The Dodge County School District agrees to implement the following requirements as outlined by Section 1116:

- The school district will put into operation programs, activities, and procedures for the engagement of parents and family members in all of its schools with Title I, Part A programs. These programs, activities, and procedures will be planned and operated with meaningful consultation with parents and family members of participating children.
- The school district will work with its schools to ensure that the required school-level parent and family engagement policies meet the requirements of Section 1116(b) of the ESSA, and each include as a component a school-parent compact consistent with federal law.
- In carrying out the Title I, Part A parent and family engagement requirements to the extent practicable, the school district and its schools will provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, limited literacy, disabilities, of migratory children, who are economically disadvantaged, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background, including providing information and school reports required under Section 1111 of the ESSA in an understandable and uniform format including alternative formats upon request and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand.
- If the LEA plan for Title I, Part A, developed under Section 1112 of the ESSA, is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, the school district will submit any parent comments with the plan when the school district submits the plan to the state Department of Education.
- The school district will be governed by the following definition of parental involvement/family engagement and expects that its Title I schools will carry out programs, activities, and procedures in accordance with this definition in Section 8101 of the ESSA:

What Does Family Engagement Mean?

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

- (A) Parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning
- (B) Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school
- (C) 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) Other activities are carried out, such as those described in Section 1116 of the ESSA.

What is Parent and Family Engagement?

DCSS provides stakeholders e.g., parents, teachers, students, school officials, and community partners multiple opportunities to jointly develop, review and revise Title I documents including the Parent and Family Engagement Plan.

The Federal Programs department provides Shared Decision Making (SDM) opportunities annually. Stakeholders are notified and invited via announcements posted on the district and school websites, social media, and fliers in Title I schools. Participating stakeholders will receive information and will be able to provide suggestions and ideas to improve the Federal Program Plans and Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP). Stakeholders are welcome to complete an on-line feedback form and/or at any time on the district website.

All feedback received will be considered when revising the plans for the 2024-2025 school year. Upon final revision, the district Parent and Family Engagement Plan will be incorporated into the CLIP which is submitted to the state. The District Parent and Family Engagement Plan will be made available on the district and Title I schools' websites, during the Annual Title I meetings.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The Dodge County School District will provide the following coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary to assist and build capacity of all Title I, Part A schools in planning and implementing effective parent and family engagement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance, which may include meaningful consultation with employers, business leaders, and philanthropic organizations, or individuals with expertise in effectively engaging parents and family members in education:

At the beginning of the school year, the Federal Programs Director and the PFE Coordinator facilitate a technical assistance meeting with the administrators and at each school. On-going and new parent and family engagement requirements are discussed during this meeting. The PFE Coordinator also distributes the Systematic Family Engagement Handbook from the GaDOE and current templates/checklists. Each school receives a Parent and Family Engagement documentation box at this time. The box contains file folders that coordinate with the Parent and Family Engagement requirements in the Systematic Family Engagement Handbook and monitoring requirements.

Each semester the schools and PFE Coordinator review documentation boxes during a desktop monitoring. A corrective action form is completed for any incomplete or inaccurate documentation. During the school year, the Federal Programs Director and the PFE Coordinator monitor the implementation of the federal programs at each school.

The PFE Coordinator offers TA to the schools by sending compliance information as well as parent engagement best practices to the principals throughout the year. The PFE Coordinator also helps facilitate parent meetings and activities at each school.

During the compact revision process, the PFE Coordinator gathers input from teachers, parents, and students for the revision of the compacts. A summary of results is created for each stakeholder group that completes the survey.

ANNUAL EVALUATION

The Dodge County School District will take the following actions to conduct, with the meaningful engagement 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 its Title I, Part A schools.

The evaluation will include identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in activities (with particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background).

The evaluation will also include identifying the needs of parents and family members to assist with the learning of their children, including engaging with school personnel and teachers and strategies to support successful school and family interactions.

The school district will use the findings of the evaluation about its parent and family engagement policy to design evidence-based strategies for more effective parental engagement, and to revise, if necessary, its parent and family engagement policy.

Each spring the PFE Coordinator creates a family engagement survey for each school. She also creates a Spanish version of the parent survey. All families in the system have the opportunity to complete the survey.

The survey is posted on the school website and on the schools' Facebook pages. The survey will contain questions to help identify barriers to greater participation by families in parental and family engagement activities.

It will also contain input questions about funding and building staff capacity for better communication with families.

The results are tallied and a summary of results is created for each school.

RESERVATION OF FUNDS

The DCSD 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 federal law.

Furthermore, the DCSD will distribute 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 host an annual SDM meeting and conduct a parent survey in the spring to gather input and suggestions on how these family engagement funds will be used in the upcoming year at the district and school level.

Feedback and minutes from these meetings will be reviewed by the district to determine areas of need for the upcoming school year and consider changes to the parent engagement budget.

Coordination of Services

The Dodge County School District will coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement strategies with parent and family engagement strategies, to the extent feasible and appropriate, with other relevant Federal, State, and local laws and programs: Dodge County Head Start, Dodge County Pre-K, Eastman First United Methodist CMO, Migrant Education Program, ESOL Program, and the Wee Injuns Program that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children by:

The Dodge County School System maintains a Parent Resource Center at each facility. The Parent Resource Centers will be open from during school hours. Families can contact the PFE Coordinator to make an appointment if they need to visit the center before or after its normal hours of operation. Parents are invited to the center and encouraged to check out resources throughout the year.

A portable resource center is also located in the media center at DCES. In the spring of each year, Dodge County Primary School Invites students from local daycares and the community to visit Kindergarten in order to help with transition to the new school. Pre-K parents are invited to a Kindergarten Orientation meeting as well. Students from Dodge Head Start are also invited to visit the Kindergarten classrooms in the spring.

The PFE Coordinator assists in coordinating parent activities with the Migrant Education Program and the ESOL Program to ensure that parents of students in these programs have the opportunity to be involved at school. The ESOL Coordinator is available to interpret during parent conferences and parent activities. Parents are invited to come by her office or call to receive support with translations, to ask questions about homework, and to send messages to teachers. Parents of migrant and ESOL students are invited to all Title I parent meetings and activities.

The ESOL Coordinator also works with Dodge Head Start to ensure that three and four-year-old (P3/P4s) migrant participants are served when possible. She also collaborates with Head Start to contact all Spanish-speaking parents on behalf of Dodge Head Start when needed. She also helps facilitate enrollment of migrant participants in the three-year-old Wee Injun Program each year.

Building Capacity of Parents

The Dodge County School District will, with the assistance of its Title I schools, build parents' capacity for strong family engagement by providing materials and training on such topics as literacy training and using technology (including education about the harms of copyright piracy) to help parents work with their children to improve their children's academic achievement. Assistance will also be provided to parents in understanding the following topics:

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 - The challenging State academic standards
 - The State and local academic assessments including alternate assessments
 - The requirements of Title I, Part A
 - How to monitor their child's progress
 - How to work with educators

- In the Parent Resource Center, families have access to brochures, flyers, educational games, videos, and books.
- Technical assistance meetings will be scheduled to keep administration and staff up to date on Title I, Part A requirements.
- Families will receive information on how to monitor their child's progress using PowerSchool Parent. Support is also available for English and Spanish-speaking parents who request help with the initial set-up and usage.
- During the Title I Parent Conference, parents will receive information about the Title I Program and its requirements.
- Parents will also receive information on successful parent teacher conferences, talking to their child about going to college, school attendance, and study skills.
- The PFE Coordinator posts information on helping students be successful on the school websites and social media as well as sends information home in handout form.
- The district will provide web content resources for families on the school websites in English and Spanish.
- The PFE Coordinator will support schools as they host activities and Academic/Department Nights to increase parents' knowledge about working with teachers, supporting students with homework, understanding standards and assessments, and understanding their child's progress.

Building Capacity of School Staff

The Dodge County School District will, with the assistance of its schools and parents, educate its teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals, and other school leaders, and other staff in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in 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 schools by:

Each school year, teachers, administrators, counselors, para-professionals, and other staff will participate in professional development focused on Parent and Family Engagement.

At least two building staff capacity activities will be provided each semester. At least one of these activities will be facilitated in person. Attendees will provide a sign-in sheet and feedback about the professional development activity.

During the activity, the following topics will be discussed:

- the value and utility of contributions of parents
- how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners
- how to implement and coordinate parent programs and build ties between home and school
- how to provide information in a format, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand
- how to respond to parent requests for parental involvement activities.

Building Capacity for Involvement

- Involving parents in the development of training for teachers, principals, and other educators to improve the effectiveness of that training
- Providing necessary literacy training for parents from Title I, Part A funds, if the school district has exhausted all other reasonably available sources of funding for that training
- ✓ Paying reasonable and necessary expenses associated with family engagement activities, including transportation and child care costs, to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions
- Training parents to enhance the engagement of other parents
- ✓ Maximize family engagement and participation in their children's education, arranging school meetings at a variety of times or conducting virtual conferences between teachers or other educators who work directly with participating children, with parents who are unable to attend those conferences at school
- Adopting and implementing model approaches to improving family engagement
- Establishing a district wide parent advisory council (PAC) to provide advice on all matters related to family engagement in Title I, Part A programs
- ✓ Developing appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses, including faith-based organizations, in family engagement activities

- The Dodge County School District is committed to maximizing families' participation in students' education.
- The district and schools will host activities and meetings at a variety of times to allow all parents the opportunity to be involved.
- A hybrid model of in-person and virtual activities will be used in order to engage the greatest number of families.
- We hope to foster a partnership between the schools and parents that will improve student success.

Appendix: List of Acronyms in the District Parent and Family Engagement Plan

1. BOE = Board of Education
2. GSE = Georgia Standards of Excellence
3. CLIP = Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan
4. SDM = Shared Decision Making
5. ESSA = Every Student Succeeds Act
6. ESOL = English to Speakers of Other Languages
7. LEA = Local Education Agency
8. PAC = Parent Advisory Council
9. PLC = Professional Learning Community
10. TA = Technical Assistance
11. CNA = Comprehensive Needs Assessment
12. DCSD= Dodge County School District
13. PFE= Parent and Family Engagement

