

Section 3.4t Parent/Family Engagement Policy

On December 10, 2015, the **Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)** was signed into law. Passed with bipartisan support, ESSA represents a shift from broad federal oversight of primary and secondary education to greater flexibility and decision-making at the state and local levels. The law replaces the No Child Left Behind Act.

The Butler County Board of Education is committed to the goal of providing quality education for every child in this county. Research has proven that when schools and parents form strong partnerships, all children's potential for academic success improves significantly. In accordance with the Every Student Succeeds Act, Title I Part A, Section 1116 (e), all parent involvement programs, activities and procedures will be planned and implemented using meaningful consultation with parents of participating children and follow all requirements of the Title I, Part A regulations. The LEA (Local Education Agency) and the schools in the system will establish objectives, programs, strategies, and activities that enhance parent involvement and reflect the specific needs of students and their families.

The school system will be governed by the following statutory definition of parental involvement, and expects that its schools will carry out programs, activities, and procedures in accordance with this definition. The statute defines parent and family engagement as the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, ensuring:

- That parents and families play an integral role in assisting their child's learning;
- That parents and families are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school;
- That parents and families 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; and
- That other activities, such as those outlined in section 1116 (e) (1-14) of ESSA, are carried out that will build the capacity of all parents and families.

The LEA will involve parents in the development of Title I School-Wide Plans at each school, in the development of the Federal Programs Consolidated Plan, and in the process of school review and improvement if and when a school is identified for Title I school improvement. The LEA also supports the development, implementation, and evaluation of a parent involvement plan in each school, which will involve parents of children in a variety of grade levels in a variety of roles.

Although most objectives, strategies, and activities are planned at the local schools, others are addressed system-wide. The LEA will provide coordination of funding, technical assistance and other support necessary to assist the schools in planning and implementing effective parental involvement. Representatives from the LEA will: (1) work closely with the school's parent involvement committees, the faculty and staff at each school, and the school's Title I SchoolWide Committee to ensure that local, state, and federal guidelines are addressed, (2) will schedule on-going in-service sessions to educate teachers and support personnel on methods, strategies, and activities to improve parental involvement, (3)

will work cooperatively with community agencies and businesses in order to form partnerships which will encourage parental involvement and services to families, (4) will provide parenting education classes, family literacy classes, workshops, and training for parents, (5) will provide parenting materials, supplies, and scientifically research based parenting curriculum, and (6) will provide a system-wide committee of parents, teachers, and administrators to guide the LEA's overall parental and family engagement efforts.

The parent and family engagement program will be comprehensive and collaborative in nature and will include, but not limited to, the following objectives:

- Provide opportunities for all parents to become involved in decision-making about how the parent/family involvement programs will be designed, implemented, evaluated, and revised
- Promote activities and programs for families to become involved in the educational process in order to provide academic assistance at home and at school
- Promote and support parenting skill instruction
- Utilize a variety of communication tools on a regular basis to facilitate effective home/school communication
- Link parents to programs and resources within the community that provide services to families
- Provide professional development and in-service for teachers and staff to enhance their effectiveness with parents
- Disseminate information on discipline procedures, assessments, school reforms, safety, curriculum, policy, etc. to parents on a timely basis
- Support administrative leadership in setting expectations and creating a climate conducive to parental participation
- Support involvement of parents of children at all ages and grade levels
- Recognize diverse family structures, circumstances, and responsibilities, including cultural differences, and work to eliminate barriers that hinder participation in parent/family involvement programs
- Assess the effectiveness of parental participation activities, strategies, programs, and policy and parenting education classes in the improvement of schools
- Report and use evaluation findings to revise the school-level parent involvement plans and the system-wide parent involvement policy in order to effectively improve student academic achievement, the social and emotional welfare of students, and the school's educational environment

The following activities and others will be utilized to provide parental involvement in the system: · parent surveys · parent compacts · open forum discussion groups · newsletters · parenting classes and workshops · home visits · Statewide Parenting Day · “make and take” workshops · PTA meetings · Accelerated Reader Family Night · Family Literacy Programs · parent/teacher conferences · website · Parent University · timely notification to parents of students who are experiencing difficulties · volunteer programs · Parent Resource Centers · Parent Involvement Committees at each school · Open House · Family Fun Day · Special Award Programs · Title I School-wide Committees

An open door policy for prospective students and parents to visit a school before enrollment is encouraged. Students and parents will be assisted in making a transition from preschool to kindergarten, elementary to middle, or middle to high school by being invited to attend activities including: (1) tour of the school, (2) orientation programs, (3) PTA Open House, (4) Special programs, (5) workshops, and (6) a summer program for preschool students and their parents for transitional activities at the elementary schools. The system collaborates with the countywide Head Start Program.

The school system will, with the assistance of its schools, provide assistance to parents of children served by the school system or school, as appropriate, in understanding topics such as the following:

- The State's academic content standards
- The State's student academic achievement 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 carrying out the Title I, Part A parent and family engagement requirements, to the extent practicable, the school system and its schools will provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, parents of homeless children, and parents of migratory children, including providing information and school reports required under Section 1116 of the ESSA in an understandable and uniform format, and including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand.

It is the position of the Butler County Board of Education that all persons will be afforded equal access or participation on the basis of selection criteria included in the law. This includes gender, race, religion, national origin/ethnic group, color, disability, or age. Butler County Public School System assures that all parents will be given equal access to parental involvement programs. Any instance to the contrary will be thoroughly investigated by the superintendent's office and resolved in a timely manner to the advantage of any qualifying person.

Engaging parents and families is essential to improving student achievement. The Butler County Board of Education will foster and actively support parent involvement. If the LEA's Parent Involvement Policy or the Title I school-wide/school improvement plans (located at each school and the Butler County Board of Education Central Office) are not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, the school system will submit any written parent comments with the plans when the school system submits the plans to the State Department of Education. Written parent comments can be sent to the Federal Programs Coordinator, at Butler County Board of Education, 211 School Highlands Road, Greenville, AL 36037.

Adopted January 19, 2006; Revised June 28, 2022