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District Policy

2415.04 - TITLE I – DISTRICT-WIDE PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Section: Program
Date Created: June 2014
Date Edited: June 2022

[See POLICY ALERT Nos. 191 and 227]

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, each school district that receives Title I, Part A funds must develop jointly with, agree on, and distribute to, parents of participating children a written parent and family engagement policy that contains information required by Section 1116(a)(2) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). This Policy establishes the school district's expectations for parent and family engagement, describes how the school district will implement a number of specific parent and family engagement activities, and is incorporated into the school district's Annual School Plan (ASP).

A. General Expectations

The school district agrees to implement the follow statutory requirements:

1. The school district will put into operation programs, activities, and procedures for the involvement of parents in all its schools with Title I, Part A programs, consistent with Section 1116 of ESEA. These programs, activities, and procedures will be planned and operated with meaningful consultation with parents of participating children.
- b. Consistent with Section 1116 of the ESEA, 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 ESEA, and each include, as a component, a school-parent compact consistent with Section 1116(d) of the ESEA.
- c. The school district will incorporate this district-wide parent and family engagement policy into its school district's plan developed under Section 1112 of the ESEA.
- d. 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, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children, including providing information and school reports required under Section 1111 of the ESEA in an understandable and uniform format and, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand.
- e. If the school district's plan for Title I, Part A, developed under Section 1112 of the ESEA, is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, the school district will submit any parent comments with the plan if requested by the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE).
- f. The school district will involve the parents of children served in Title I, Part A schools in decisions about how the one percent of Title I, Part A funds reserved for parent and family engagement is spent, and will ensure that not less than ninety percent of the one percent reserved goes directly to the schools.
- g. The school district will be governed by the following statutory definition of parent and family engagement, and expects that its Title I schools will carry out programs, activities, and procedures in accordance with its definition:
 - (1) "Parent and 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) 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 at school;
 - (c) That parents are fully 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
 - (d) The carrying out of other activities, such as those described in Section 1116 of the ESEA.
- h. For states where a Parental Information and Resource Center is established, the school district will inform parents and parental organizations of the purpose and existence of the Parental Information and Resource Center in the state.

B. Description of How District Will Implement Required District-Wide Parent and Family Engagement Policy Components

1. The school district will take the following actions to involve parents in the joint development of its district-wide parent and family engagement plan under Section 1112 of the ESEA:
 - a. Open forums for parent's/community members will be conducted by surveys, principal(s), and/or the Title I Director (ongoing).
 - b. Parents/community members serve on committees as needed (ongoing).

2. The district will take the following actions to involve parents in the process of school review and improvement under Section 1116 of the ESEA:
 - a. The district website will provide information related to staff, Title I, and which New Jersey Student Learning Standards are targeted at each grade level in the curriculum.
 - b. Presentations to update parents are made at Board of Education meetings, parent interaction meetings, family nights, on the district website, and/or news blasts.
3. The district will provide the following necessary coordination, technical assistance, and other support to assist Title I, Part A schools in planning and implementing effective parental involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance:
 - a. Annual planning meetings
4. The school district will coordinate and integrate parental involvement strategies in Part A with parental involvement strategies under the following other programs: (Insert programs, such as: Head Start, Reading First, Early Reading First, Even Start, Parents As Teachers, Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters, and State-operated preschool programs), by:
 - a. Home and School Council meetings
 - b. The WTSD Preschool Program
5. The school district will take the following actions to conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this Parental Involvement Policy in improving the quality of its Title I, Part A schools. The evaluation will include identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in parental involvement 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 school district will use the findings of the evaluation about its Parental Involvement Policy and activities to design strategies for more effective parental involvement, and to revise, if necessary (and with the involvement of parents) its parental involvement policies.

(List actions, such as describing how the evaluation will be conducted, identifying who will be responsible for conducting it, and explaining what role parents will play):

- a. District Title I stakeholder meetings
- b. Feedback forms and surveys, as needed
 - (1) Title I Stakeholder meetings (Person responsible: Title I director coordinates stakeholder meetings; parent representatives are invited to attend and provide feedback).
 - (2) Feedback from surveys (Administrative team develops and sends out surveys via Blackboard to elicit feedback from all families).
6. The school district will build the school's and parent's capacity for strong parental involvement, in order to ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the school involved, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement, through the following activities specifically described below:
 - a. The school district will, with the assistance of its Title I, Part A schools, provide assistance to parents of children served by the school district or school, as appropriate, in understanding topics such as the following, by undertaking the actions described below:
 - (1) The challenging State academic standards;
 - (2) The New Jersey and local academic assessments including alternate assessments;
 - (3) The requirements of Title I Part A;
 - (4) How to monitor their child's progress; and
 - (5) How to work with educators:
 - (a) Workshops
 - (b) Curriculum Articulation,
 - (c) PLC
 - (d) Parent/family in-district programs
 - (e) State endorsed conferences
 - b. The school district will, with the assistance of its schools, provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's academic achievement, such as literacy training, and using technology, as appropriate, to foster parental involvement, by:
 - (1) Parent Interaction Meetings
 - (2) Stakeholder Committee
 - (3) Family Nights/Workshops
 - c. The school district will, with the assistance of its schools and parents, educate its teachers, student services personnel, Principals and other staff in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to implement and coordinate parent programs and build ties between parents and schools, by:
 - (1) Stakeholder meetings

(2) Supporting attendance at local, state, and national conferences/workshops.

d. The school district will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parental involvement programs and activities with Head Start, Reading First, Early Reading First, Even Start, Home Instruction Programs for Preschool Youngsters, the Parents as Teachers Program, and public preschool and other programs, and conduct other activities, such as parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents in fully participating in the education of their children, by:

(1) Publicizing talks, workshops and opportunities for educating parents about the importance of literacy and math.

e. The school district will take the following actions to ensure that information related to the school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities, is sent to the parents of participating children in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand:

(1) Providing relevant information on the district website.

(2) Sending hard copies of communications home to families.

(3) Mass communications via Blackboard.

C. Discretionary District-Wide Parent and Family Engagement Policy Components

The District-Wide Parent and Family Engagement Policy may include additional paragraphs listing and describing other discretionary activities that the school district, in consultation with its parents, chooses to undertake to build parents' capacity for involvement in the school and school system to support their children's academic achievement, such as the following discretionary activities listed under Section 1116(e) of the ESEA:

a. Involving parents in the development of training for teachers, principals, and other educators to improve the effectiveness of that training;

b. Providing necessary literacy training for the parents from Title I, Part A funds, if the school district has exhausted all other reasonably available sources of funding for that training;

c. Paying reasonable and necessary expenses associated with parent and family engagement activities, including transportation and child care costs, to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions;

d. Training parents to enhance the involvement of other parents;

e. In order to maximize parent and family engagement and participation in their children's education, arranging school meetings at a variety of times, or conducting in-home conferences between teachers or other educators, who work directly with participating children, with parents who are unable to attend those conferences at school;

f. Adopting and implementing model approaches to improving parent and family engagement;

g. Establishing a district-wide parent advisory council to provide advice to all matters related to parent and family engagement in Title I, Part A programs;

h. Developing appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses, including faith-based organizations, in parent and family engagement activities; and

i. Providing other reasonable support for parent and family engagement activities under Section 1116 as parents may request.

This District-Wide Parental Involvement Policy has been developed jointly, and agreed on with parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs. This Policy will be distributed to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents understand, at the beginning of each school year or when the child is determined eligible and begins participating in Title I, Part A programs.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title I, Section 1116(a)(2).

Adopted: 25 June 2014

Revised: 29 April 2020

Revised: 15 June 2022

