

Parent and Family Engagement

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, Bismarck Public Schools, which receives Title I, Part A funds, hereafter referred to as “District,” 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 the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The policy establishes the district-school’s expectations and objectives for meaningful parent and family engagement and describes how the District will implement a number of specific parent and family engagement activities.

Definitions

This policy defines the following:

- **Parent** means a biological, adoptive, step, or foster father or mother, or any other individual who stands in loco parentis to the student.
- **Parental involvement** 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; and
 - d. Other activities are carried out, such as those described in ESSA.
- **Family/family members** are adults living in a student’s household who are related to the student.

Parent and Family Engagement Policy Requirements

The District agree to implement the following requirements as outlined in law:

1. Put into operation programs, activities, and procedures for the engagement of parents and family members in all of its school with Title I, Part A programs. These programs, activities, and procedures must be planned and operated with meaningful consultation with parents and family members of participating children;
2. Work to ensure that the required Parent and Family Engagement Policy meets the Title I, Part A requirements, and includes as a component, a school-parent compact;
3. Incorporate this Parent and Family Engagement Policy into its District Title I plan;
4. Involve parents in an organized, ongoing, and timely way, in the planning, review, and improvement of programs under Title I, Part A, including the planning, review, and improvement of the Parent and Family Engagement Policy and the joint development of the targeted assistance or schoolwide program plan;

5. Update the Parent and Family Engagement Policy periodically to meet the changing needs of parents and the school, distribute it to the parents of participating children, and make this policy available to the local community;
6. 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 ESSA in an understandable and uniform format including alternative formats upon request and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand; and
7. If the plan for Title I, Part A is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, the District shall submit any parent comments with the plan when the District submits the plan to the Department of Public Instruction.

Required Parent and Family Engagement Policy Components

The Parent and Family Engagement Policy includes a description of how the school may implement or accomplish each of the following components:

1. Joint Development

The District shall take the following actions to involve parents and family members in jointly developing its district-school plan, and in the development and review of support and improvement plans:

- Hold annual meetings with stakeholders to review the policy and parent involvement budgets/activities at each Title I school building.
- Distribute the Title I District Parent and Family Engagement Policy annually.

2. Annual Title I, Part A Meeting

Each District school who receives Title I, Part A funds shall take the following actions to conduct an annual meeting, at a convenient time, and encourage and invite all parents of participating children to attend to inform them about the school's Title I program, the nature of the Title I program, the parents' requirements, the Parent and Family Engagement Policy, the schoolwide plan, and the school-parent compact.

- All Title I schools will hold their Annual Title I meeting in September or October. The Policy, Compact, and Parent's Right to Know information will be shared and distributed.

3. Technical Assistance

The District shall 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 involvement 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:

- Provide support from Title I parent involvement staff to promote family engagement efforts.
- Build awareness of community resources.
- Ensure that the Title I budget provides funds for parent engagement activities.
- Provide technical infrastructures and supports for communication and academic reporting.

4. **Annual Evaluation**

The District shall take the following actions to conduct, with the meaningful involvement 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 must 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 must 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 District may use the findings of the evaluation about its Parent and Family Engagement Policy to design evidence-based strategies for more effective parental involvement, and to revise, if necessary, its Parent and Family Engagement Policy.

- Review and revise, as necessary, the policy with the District title staff and families annually.
- Survey parents about Title I, share and utilize the results to implement changes.

5. **Reservation of Funds**

If applicable, the District shall involve the parents and family members of children served in Title I, Part A schools in decisions about how the 1 percent of Title I, Part A funds reserved for parent and family engagement is spent and will ensure that not less than 90 percent of the 1 percent reserved goes directly to Title I schools.

6. Coordination of Services

The District shall, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement programs and activities with other relevant Federal, State, and local laws and programs that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children by:

- Enhancing family engagement programs by collaborating across federal, state, and local programs through monthly meetings to exchange ideas and develop best practices.
- Collaborating with parents and specialists to provide intervention for students as needed.
- Collaborating with the Bismarck Early Childhood Education Program (BECEP) on providing smooth transitions into kindergarten.

7. Building Capacity of Parents and Family Members

The District shall build the schools' and parents' capacity for strong parent and family engagement by providing materials and training on such topics as literacy training and using technology 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:

- a. The challenging State academic standards;
- b. The State and local academic assessments including alternate assessments;
- c. The requirements of Title I, Part A;
- d. How to monitor their child's progress; and
- e. How to work with educators to improve the achievement of their child.

The District shall provide parent and family engagement of participating children, if requested, opportunities for regular meetings to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their children, and respond to any such request as soon as practically possible.

8. Building Capacity of District Staff

The District shall, 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:

- Organize professional development for teachers, principals, and other staff on effective parent communication and engagement strategies, as needed.
- Utilize school social workers in each school who support and maintain effective communication with parents.

The District shall provide other reasonable support for parent and family engagement activities as parents may request by:

- Utilize school-based surveys to identify areas of need.

9. School-Parent Compact

Each District school who receives Title I, Part A shall take the following actions to jointly develop with parents of participating children a school-parent compact (KAB-E) that outlines how parents, the entire school staff, and students may share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and parents may build and develop a partnership to help children achieve the state's high standards.

- Meet annually with staff and parent representatives from each building to review and revise the compact, if necessary.

10. Communications

Each District school who receives Title I, Part A shall take the following actions to provide parents of participating children the following:

- a. Timely information about the Title I programs;
- b. Flexible number of meetings, such as meetings in the morning or evening, and may provide with Title I funds, transportation, child care or home visits, as such services relate to parent and family engagement; and
- c. 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.
- d. The Parent and Family Engagement Policy will be distributed through email as well as at the fall Annual Title Meeting.

Building Capacity for Engagement

The Parent and Family Engagement Policy may include additional paragraphs listing and describing other discretionary activities that the District, in meaningful consultation with its parents, chooses to undertake to build parents' capacity for involvement in the school to support their children's academic achievement, such as the following discretionary activities listed in ESSA. The District shall implement the following Parent and Family Engagement Policy components to improve family-school partnerships:

1. Pay reasonable and necessary expenses associated with local parent and family engagement activities, which may include transportation and child care costs, to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions;
2. Provide necessary literacy training for parents from Title I, Part A funds.

3. Maximize parent and family engagement and the participation in their child's education, arrange school meetings at a variety of times or conduct in-home conferences with teachers or other educators who work directly with participating children and parents who are unable to attend conferences at school;
4. Adopt and implement model approaches to improving parent and family engagement;
5. Establish and maintain a Districtwide parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parent and family engagement in Title I, Part A programs.

Policy Adoption and Dissemination

The Superintendent shall annually review this policy and any associated policy templates. The District will distribute this policy annually to all parents of participating Title I, Part A schools.

Complementary Documents

- KAB-E, School-Parent Compact

End of Bismarck Public School District Policy KAB

Adopted: 7/30/2024