612.1 DEVELOPMENT OF PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICIES FOR TITLE I PROGRAMS

[Note: This policy reflects recent federal statutory changes made by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) which require school districts and schools to meet with parents and jointly develop parent and family engagement policies at both a district wide and school building level. This policy lists the required components of the parent and family engagement policies described herein and serves as a framework for their development. The policies and these components are mandatory in order for the school district to receive federal funds under this program.]

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to encourage and facilitate involvement by parents of students participating in Title I in the educational programs and experiences of students. The policy shall provide the framework for organized, systematic, ongoing, informed, and timely parental involvement in relation to decisions about the Title I services within the school district. The involvement of parents by the school district shall be directed toward both public and private school children whose parents are school district residents or whose children attend school within the boundaries of the school district.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

A. The policy of the school district is to plan and implement, with meaningful consultation with parents of participating children, programs, activities, and procedures for the engagement of parents and families in its Title I programs.

B. The policy of the school district is to fully comply with 20 United States Code section 6318 which requires the school district to develop jointly with, agree upon with, and distribute to parents of children participating in Title I programs written parent and family engagement policies.

III. DEVELOPMENT OF DISTRICT LEVEL POLICY

The school board will direct the administration to develop jointly with, agree upon with, and distribute to parents and family members of participating children a written parent and family engagement policy that will be incorporated into the school district's Title I plan. The policy will establish the expectations for meaningful parent and family involvement and describe how the school district will:

A. Involve parents and family members in the joint development of the school district's Title I plan and the development of support and improvement plans;

B. Provide the coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary to assist and build the capacity of all participating schools within the school district 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;

C. Coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement strategies with similar strategies, to the extent feasible and appropriate, with other relevant federal, state, and local laws and programs;

D. Conduct, with the meaningful involvement of parents and family members, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the parent and family engagement policy in improving the academic quality of the schools served, including identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in parental involvement activities (with particular attention to, parents who are economically disadvantaged, disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or who are of a racial or ethnic minority background); 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;

E. Use the findings of such evaluations to design evidence-based strategies for more effective parental involvement and to revise, if necessary, the district-level and school-level and family engagement policies; and

F. Involve parents in the activities of the schools, which may include establishing a parent advisory board comprised of a sufficient number and representative group of parents or family members served by the school district to adequately represent the needs of the population served by the school district for the purposes of developing, revising, and reviewing the parent and family engagement policy.

IV. DEVELOPMENT OF SCHOOL LEVEL POLICY

The school board will direct the administration of each school to develop (or amend an existing parental involvement policy) jointly with, and distribute to, parents and family members of participating children a written parent and family engagement policy, agreed upon by such parents and families, that shall describe the means for carrying out the federal requirements of parent and family engagement. Parents shall be notified of the policy in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, provided in a language the parents can understand. Such policy shall be made available to the local community and updated periodically to meet the changing needs of parents and the school.

A. The policy will describe the means by which each school with a Title I program will:

1. Convene an annual meeting, at a convenient time, to which all parents of participating children shall be invited and encouraged to attend, to inform parents of their school's participation in Title I programs, and to explain to parents of participating children the program, its requirements, and their right to be involved;

2. Offer a 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 parental involvement;

3. Involve parents in an organized, ongoing, and timely way in the planning, review, and improvement of the parental involvement programs, including the planning, review, and improvement of the school parent and family engagement policy and the joint development of the school-wide program plan, except that if a school has in place a process for involving parents in the joint planning and design of the school's programs, the school may use that process, if such process includes an adequate representation of parents of participating children;

4. Provide parents of participating children with: timely information about Title I programs; a description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the school, the forms of academic assessment used to measure student progress, and the achievement levels of the challenging state academic standards; if requested by parents, opportunities for regular meetings to formulate suggestions and to

participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their children, and ~~to~~ respond to any such suggestions as soon as practicably possible; and

5. If the school-wide program plan is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, submit any parent's comments on the plan when it is submitted to the school district.

B. As a component of this policy, each school shall jointly develop with parents a school/parent compact which outlines how parents, staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve the state's high standards. The compact shall:

1. Describe the school's responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables participating students to meet state student academic achievement standards;

2. Describe the ways each parent will be responsible for supporting his or her child's learning by volunteering in his or her child's classroom and participating, as appropriate, in decisions relating to his or her child's education and use of extracurricular time.

3. Address the importance of communication between teachers and parents on an on-going basis through the use of:

   a. Annual parent-teacher conferences to discuss the compact and the child's achievement;

   b. Frequent progress reports to the parents; and

   c. Reasonable access to staff, opportunities to volunteer, participate in the child's class, and observe in the child's classroom.

   d. Ensuring regular two-way, meaningful communication between family members and school staff and, to the extent practicable, in a language that family members can understand.

C. To ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the school, parents, and community to improve student academic achievement, the policy will describe how each school and the school district will:

1. Provide assistance to participating parents in understanding such topics as the state's academic content standards and state academic achievement standards, state and local academic assessments, Title I requirements, and how to monitor a child's progress and work with educators to improve the achievement of their children;

2. Provide materials and training to assist parents in working with their children to improve their children's achievement, such as literacy training and using technology, as appropriate, to foster parental involvement;

3. Educate school staff, with the assistance of parents, 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 school;

4. Coordinate and integrate parental involvement programs and activities with other federal, state, and local programs, including public preschool programs, and conduct other activities, such as parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children to the extent feasible and appropriate;

5. Ensure, to the extent practicable, that information about school and parent meetings, programs, and activities is sent ~~home~~ to the parents of participating children in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand; and

6. Provide such other reasonable support for parental involvement activities as requested by parents.

D. The policy will also describe the process to be taken if the school district and school choose to:

1. Involve parents in the development of training for school staff to improve the effectiveness of such training;

2. Provide necessary literacy training with funds received under Title I programs if all other funding has been exhausted;

3. Pay reasonable and necessary expenses associated with parental involvement activities, including transportation and child care costs, to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions;

4. Train parents to enhance the involvement of other parents;

5. Arrange meetings at a variety of times or ~~have~~ conduct in-home conferences between teachers or other educators, who work directly with participating children, and parents who are unable to attend such conferences at school in order to maximize parental ~~opportunities for~~ involvement and participation in school-related activities;

6. Adopt and implement model approaches to improving parental involvement;

7. Develop appropriate roles for community-based organizations and business in parental involvement activities; and

8. Establish a district-wide parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parental involvement in Title I programs.

E. To carry out the requirements of parent and family engagement, the school district and schools, to the extent practicable, will provide opportunities for the informed participation of parents and family members (including parents and family members who have limited English proficiency, parents and family members with disabilities, and parents and family members of migratory children), including providing information and school reports in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language that is understandable by the parents.

F. The school district and each school shall inform parents and parent organizations of the existence of family engagement in education programs.

The policies will be updated periodically to meet the changing needs of parents and the school.

Legal References: 20 U.S.C. § 6318 (Parent and Family Engagement)

Cross References: None