

SCHOOL VISITORS AND PARENT-FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

TITLE I POLICY

The Bluffton-Harrison Metropolitan School District (“BHMSD” or “Corporation”) will involve parents and families in jointly developing, and agreeing on, the Corporation’s policy and local plan in accordance with the guidelines below. Each Title I school will create a building-specific parental and family engagement plan in accordance with the guidelines and each of the students participating in Title I program will receive a copy of the parental and family engagement policy and plan guidelines.

I. Policy Guidelines

- a. Involve parents in jointly developing the Corporation’s policy and local plan and in the process of school review and improvement;
- b. Provide the coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary to assist and build the capacity of all participating 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;
- c. Build the schools’ and parents’ capacity for strong parental involvement by providing parents with the following, if appropriate:
 - i. Providing assistance to parents of children served as appropriate, in understanding such topics as the State’s academic content standards and student academic achievement standards, and how to monitor a child’s progress and work with educators to improve the achievement of their children.
 - ii. Providing materials and training to help parents to work with children to improve their children’s achievement, such as literacy training and using technology, as appropriate to foster parental involvement.
 - iii. Coordinate and integrate parent involvement programs with the activities of Head Start and public preschools that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children.
 - iv. Educate educators 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 the school.
 - v. Ensure that information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children.
 - vi. Other reasonable support for parental involvement activities under section 1118 as parents may request.

- d. To the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement strategies with other federal, state, and local programs, including public preschool programs, and conduct other activities that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children;
- e. Conduct, with the meaningful involvement of parents and family members, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the parental and family engagement policy in improving the academic quality of the schools served with Title I, Part A funds, including the following:
 - i. 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;
 - ii. The needs of parents and family members to assist with the learning of their children, including engaging with school personnel and teachers, and
 - iii. Strategies to support successful school and family interactions.
- f. Use the findings of the evaluation to design evidence-based strategies for more effective parental involvement, and to revise, if necessary, the parent and family engagement policy; and
- g. Involve parents in the activities of the participating 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 Corporation to adequately represent the needs of the population served by the Corporation for the purposes of developing, revising, and reviewing the parent and family engagement policy.

II. Expectations of Parent and Family Engagement

- a. Parents and families of participating students be provided with frequent and convenient opportunities for full and ongoing participation in the Title I program.
- b. The Title I program must be designed to assist students to acquire the competencies and achieve the goals established by law, as well as the goals and standards established by the Corporation. These goals and standards must be shared with parents in a manner that will enable them to (1) participate in decisions concerning their child's education and (2) monitor and improve the educational achievement of their child.

This policy will be incorporated into the local plans, which is submitted to the State Board. In accordance with IC 31-42 the Corporation may not substantially burden a parent's fundamental right to direct the upbringing, religious instruction, education, or health care of the parent's child, unless the burden, as applied to the parent and the child, is required to advance a compelling governmental interest and is the least restrictive means of advancing the governmental interest.

In accordance with IC 31-42, the Corporation may not advise, direct, or coerce a child to withhold information from the child's parent or deny a child's parent access to information that is in the control of the Corporation, is requested by the child's parent, and relates to the child's health care or social, emotional, and behavioral well-being, unless the parent's access to the request information is prohibited by state or federal law or a court order, or a law enforcement officer requests that the information not be released because the parent is subject to a criminal investigation related to the child.

SCHOOL VISITOR POLICY

The Corporation welcomes and encourages visits to school by parents, guardians, and others, but in order for the educational program to continue undisturbed when visitors are present and to prevent the intrusion of disruptive persons into the schools, it is necessary to invoke visitor controls. Disruptions to the educational environment will not be tolerated.

Visitors must register at the school office and seek permission to see a student or employee, participate in an activity, or observe. All visits are subject to the approval of the Superintendent, building principal, or designee. The prohibitions and expectations governing classroom observations are equally applicable to online instruction. Specifically, visitors are reminded:

- Visitors are to be silent observers and not create any kind of disturbance or distraction.
- Statements and actions of other students (or statements by an instructor to other children) are to be maintained in confidence.
- Instruction and services may not be recorded in any manner (audio, video, cell phone, use of Alexa, etc.) unless first receiving approval from the Principal and instructor.

Persons seeking to provide professional services, including observations, are not permitted without the express consent of the Superintendent, building principal, or designee.

The Superintendent, building principal, or designee has the authority to prohibit the entry of any person onto school property, or to expel any person, when there is reason to believe the presence of the individual would be detrimental to the good order of the school. If the individual refuses to leave the school grounds or creates a disturbance, the School administrator or designee is authorized to request assistance from law enforcement to remove the individual.

The Superintendent is authorized to develop administrative guidelines to promulgate this policy.

20 U.S.C. § 6318(a)(2)

Bluffton-Harrison Metropolitan School District

Adopted: May 13, 2024

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