



Mount Vernon City School District

Parent Involvement Policy - #3170

Adopted: July 12, 2006

Revised: March 2, 2011, September 15, 2020

Revised & Approved: January 7, 2025

The Mount Vernon Board of Education believes that positive parent and family engagement is essential to student achievement and thus encourages such involvement in school educational planning and operations. The Mount Vernon Board of Education also believes that ongoing parental engagement is a responsibility that is shared by both the school and family during the entire period the child spends in school. Parent and family engagement may take place either in the classroom or during extra-curricular activities. However, the Board also encourages parent and family engagement at home (e.g., planned home reading time, informal learning activities, and/or homework "contracts" between parents and children). The Board directs the Superintendent of Schools to develop a home-school communications program to encourage all forms of parent and family engagement.

Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy

Consistent with the parent and family engagement goals of Title I, Part A of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the Board of Education charges the school district staff and parents with the development, implementation, and regular evaluation of a district-wide and individual school parent engagement program that encourages and supports participation of parents and family members of students eligible for Title I services in all aspects their children's education. Further, as required by federal law, the Board of Education will ensure that all its schools receiving Title I, Part A funds develop and implement school-level parent and family engagement procedures.

Purpose:

This policy seeks to strengthen the partnership among parents/caregivers, the community, staff, schools, the Superintendent, and the Board by providing for parent and family involvement on multiple levels throughout the District. This partnership will be further strengthened by expanding learning opportunities that help individual parents support their children at home. Such learning opportunities shall be offered at, but not limited to the Mount Vernon City School District Parent Teacher Association Council, school-based and community-based parent/family engagement teams led by MVCS D Parent Liaisons, the Special Education Parent Advisory Council, the Bilingual & English as a New Language Parent Advisory Council (BEPAC), and other parent groups. This policy outlines areas in which parents (families) can participate in local school and district-wide matters and is supplemental to rights of parents guaranteed by Board of Education policy and state and federal laws.

This policy in no way eliminates an individual parent's right to make his or her feelings known at any level in the District on any topic of concern, nor does it prevent the District from involving individual parents in appropriate situations.

The Mount Vernon Board of Education 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, including ensuring-

- a) *that parents and family members play an integral role in assisting their child's learning.*
- b) *that parents and family members are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's learning.*

- c) *that parent and family members are full partners in their child's education and are included as appropriate, in decision-making and on committees to assist in the education of their child.*
- d) *the carrying out of other activities, such as those described in ESSA Section 1116.*

The federal definition of the term “parents” refers to a natural parent, legal guardian or other person in parental relation (such as grandparent or stepparent with whom the child lives, or a person who is legally responsible for the child’s welfare).

District and school-level Title I (ESSA) parent and family engagement programs, activities and procedures will provide full opportunities for participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children, including providing information and school reports required under the law in a format and, to the extent practicable in a language parents understand.

As further required by federal law, parents and family members of students eligible for Title I services will be provided an opportunity to participate in the development of the District’s Title I plan, and to submit comments regarding any aspect of the plan that is not satisfactory to them. Their comments will be forwarded with the plan to New York State Education Department. Additionally, parents and family members of students that attend a school that fails to make adequate yearly progress for two consecutive years and is identified as a school in need of improvement will be provided the opportunity to participate in the process of developing a school improvement plan.

Parent and Family Participation in Development of District-Wide Title I Plan

The Board, along with its Superintendent of Schools and other appropriate District staff will undertake the following actions to ensure parent and family involvement in the development of the District-wide parent and family engagement plan:

- ◆ Meetings and parent workshops will be held during flexible times and at accessible locations within the District to provide greater access.
- ◆ The District will communicate with its families/stakeholders via phone, written notices, mail, e-mail and/or by posting on the District’s website and/or social media periodically throughout the year.
- ◆ Parents and family members will be offered opportunities to participate in various committees at the schools and District-wide.
- ◆ The District shall work in partnership with the Mount Vernon PTA Council.
- ◆ Families will be surveyed at least yearly to determine the level of satisfaction with parent and family engagement activities.
- ◆ The District will develop both appropriate collaboration and roles with community-based organizations and businesses to support parent and family activities.
- ◆ The District will conduct the Annual District-wide Title I Parent Meeting.

Development of School-Level Parent and Family Engagement Plans

The Superintendent of Schools or other designated personnel will ensure that all District schools receiving federal financial assistance under the Title I, Part A, are provided technical assistance and all other support necessary to assist them in planning and implementing effective parent and family engagement programs and activities that improve student achievement and school performance. Individual schools are encouraged to develop and maintain programs and activities to meet the needs of their parents and families.

As appropriate, to meet individual local needs, the Superintendent of Schools or designated personnel will:

- ◆ Offer parent and family workshops on literacy and math strategies for parents.

- ◆ Invite parents and families to celebrations and family activities.
- ◆ Provide consistent and accurate translated documents.
- ◆ Offer workshops by ENL staff on how to support first and second language development in the home.
- ◆ Offer programs, activities, and procedures that will assist in training and supporting parents and families to increase engagement.

Each Title I school, in consultation with parents and family members of participating children, shall adopt the District-wide policy as its school level policy or develop its own school level policy in compliance with the requirements of ESSA.

Building Capacity for Parent and Family Engagement

To build parent capacity for strong parent and family engagement to improve their child's academic achievement, the District and its Title I, Part A schools will, at minimum:

- 1) Assist parents in understanding such topics as the state's academic content and student achievement standards, state and local academic assessments, Title I requirements, how to monitor their child's progress and how to work with educators to improve the achievement of their child. To achieve this objective, the District and its Title I schools will:
 - a) Offer parent and family workshops at both the school level and District-wide.
 - b) Provide parents with a bi-annual progress report from their child's Title I support teacher.
 - c) When requested and/or if necessary, offer parent-teacher phone conferences in addition to regular parent-teacher conferences.
 - d) Provide informational materials and/or resources to assist parents in playing a role in their child's learning.
 - e) Offer parents and family members training on how to access the parent portal, which allows them to view report cards in their native languages.
 - f) Utilize the District's website.
- 2) Provide materials and training to help parents and family members work to improve their child's academic achievement. To achieve this objective, the District and/or its Title I schools will:
 - a) Offer parent and family workshops at both the school level and District-wide.
 - b) Assist parents and family members in supporting the instructional practices used in the schools at home, particularly in the areas of math and literacy.
 - c) Forge community partnerships that will help support the school-home connection.
 - d) Encourage parents and families to participate in library programs and to access books, articles, and other media to extend and enrich the District's core curriculum in literacy as well as the other content areas including math, social studies, and science.
 - e) Post resources on the District website and/or social media as well as disseminate resources to parents, families, school principals, and the Mount Vernon PTA Council/Parent Teacher Associations/Parent Teacher Student Associations.
- 3) Educate teachers, Student Services personnel, principals, and other staff in understanding the value and utility of a parents' contributions and on how to:
 - a) Reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents and family members as equal partners.
 - b) Implement and coordinate parent and family programs.
 - c) Building relationships between parents/families and the schools.
 - d) Encourage parents and families to utilize the public library system

To achieve this objective, the District and its Title I schools will work closely with parents and family members through a variety of means to provide support and assistance related to student academic/development progress.

- 4) Ensure that information related to school and parent-related programs, meetings, and other activities is sent to the parents and families of children participating in Title I programs in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request, and to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand.
- 5) Provide such other reasonable support for parent and family engagement activities in accordance with this Policy as parents may request.
- 6) The District shall reserve one percent (1 %) of its Title I allocation for the purpose of promoting parent and family engagement. Not less than ninety-five percent (95%) of the one percent (1%) reserved shall be directly distributed to Title I schools

Coordination of Parent and Family Engagement Strategies

The District shall, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate strategies adopted to comply with Title I, Part A parent and family engagement requirements with early childhood program(s) currently within the District. The District will coordinate and share early literacy practices with preschool partners such as, Head Start, Reading First, Early Reading First, Even Start, Parents as Teachers, Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters, and/or State-operated preschool programs.

The District will do this by:

- ◆ offering parent workshops at the school level and District-wide on topics such as literacy and math based on community needs.
- ◆ offering family engagement workshops on child development, mental health care, and stress management; and/or
- ◆ building and strengthening relationships among early childhood program(s) within the District, parents, and the public library system.

Review of District-Wide Parent and Family Engagement Policy

The Board, along with its Superintendent of Schools and other appropriate staff, will conduct, with the involvement of parents and families, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this Parent and Family Engagement Policy in improving the academic quality of Title I schools. This review shall include identifying barriers to greater participation by parents and families in activities under this policy, assessing the needs of parents and family members to assist in their child's learning, and determining strategies that will support successful school and family interactions.

To facilitate this review, the District will annually monitor through surveys and feedback, parent and family participation at school events the effectiveness of the District's Title I parent and family engagement policy. The survey shall be coordinated by the Office of School Improvement. The findings of the survey shall be reviewed and evaluated by the District and will be used to design evidence-based strategies for more effective parent and family engagement. Following the review, and if necessary, the policy shall be revised.