Saucon Valley School District

Policy

Title – 918 Title I Parent and Family Engagement

Section – Community

Adopted – August 14, 2007

Revised – January 14, 2025

Content

Purpose

The Board recognizes that meaningful parent and family engagement contributes to the achievement of state academic standards by students participating in Title I programs. The Board views the education of students as a cooperative effort among the school, parents and family members, and community.

Definition

Parent and Family (Family Member) - these terms are used interchangeably and shall include caregivers, a legal guardian or other person standing in loco parentis such as a grandparent or stepparent with whom the child lives, a person who is legally responsible for the child's welfare, or a legally appointed Education Decision Maker of a child participating in a Title I program.

Authority

The Board directs the district and each of its schools with a Title I program to:

1. Conduct outreach to all parents and family members.

2. Include parents and family members in development of the district's overall Title I Plan and process for school review and improvement.

3. Include parents and family members in the development of the Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy. Following adoption of the policy by the Board, the policy shall be:

    a. Distributed in writing to all parents and family members.

    b. Incorporated into the district's Title I Plan.

    c. Posted to the district's publicly accessible website.

    d. Evaluated annually with parent and family involvement.

4. Provide opportunities and conduct meaningful collaborations with parents and family members in the planning and implementation of Title I programs, activities and procedures.

Accessibility

The district and each of its schools with a Title I program shall provide communications, information and school reports to parents and family members who are migrants or who have limited English proficiency, a disability, limited literacy, or racial and ethnic minority backgrounds, to the extent practicable, in a language they can understand.

Delegation of Responsibility

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that the district's Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy, plan and programs comply with the requirements of federal law.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that the district and its schools with Title I programs provide opportunities for the informed participation of parents and family members by providing resources, information and school reports in an understandable and uniform format or, upon request, in another format. Such efforts shall include:

1. Providing communications in clear and simple language.

2. Posting information for parents and family members on the district's website.

3. Including a telephone number for parents and family members to call with questions.

4. Partnering with community agencies which may include libraries, recreation centers, community-based organizations and faith-based organizations to assist in sharing information.

5. Provide language access services to families with limited English proficiency through on-site or telephonic translation and interpretation services, as appropriate.

The building principal and/or Title I staff shall notify parents and family members of the existence of the Title I programs and provide:

1. An explanation of the reasons supporting their child's selection for the program.

2. A set of goals and expectations to be addressed.

3. A description of the services to be provided.

4. A copy of this policy and the School-Parent and Family Compact.

Parents and family members shall actively carry out their responsibilities in accordance with this policy and the School-Parent and Family Compact. At a minimum, parents and family members shall be expected to:

1. Support their child’s learning.

2. Participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their child and positive use of extracurricular time.

Guidelines

Each district school operating a Title I program shall hold an annual meeting of parents and family members at a convenient time, to explain the goals and purposes of Title I programs and to inform them of their right to be involved. Parents and family members shall be given the opportunity to participate in the design, development, operation and evaluation of the program. Parents and family members shall be encouraged to participate in planning activities, to offer suggestions, and to ask questions regarding policies and programs.

The schools with Title I programs shall offer a flexible number of meetings which shall be held at various times of the morning and evening. Title I funds may be used to enable parent and family member attendance at meetings through payment of transportation, child care costs or home visits.

The schools shall involve parents and family members in an organized, ongoing and timely way, in the planning, review and improvement of Title I programs, the Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy and the joint development of the Title I Plan.

At these meetings, parents and family members shall be provided:

1. Timely information about programs provided under Title I.

2. Description and explanation of the curriculum in use, the forms of academic assessment used to measure student progress, and the achievement levels of the academic standards.

3. Opportunities to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their children.

To ensure the continuous engagement of parents and family members in the joint development of the Title I Plan and with the school support and improvement process, the district shall:

1. Establish meaningful, ongoing two-way communication between the district, staff and parents and family members.

2. Communicate with parents and family members about the plan and seek their input and participation through the use of newsletters, the district website, email, telephone, parent and teacher conferences, and home visits if needed.

3. Train personnel on how to collaborate effectively with parents and family members with diverse backgrounds that may impede their participation, such as limited literacy or language difficulty.

4. Analyze and share the results of the Title I Parent/Family Survey on School website and through the school newsletter.

5. Distribute and discuss the School- Parent and Family Compact.

6. Host various parent and family nights at each school building with a Title I program.

7. Invite participation of parents and family members at the regular comprehensive planning committee meetings, Title I budget meetings and school improvement plan meetings to obtain input and propose school improvement initiatives.

If the Title I Plan is not satisfactory to parents and family members, the district shall submit any parent or family member comments with the plan when the school makes the plan available to the Board.

Building Capacity for Parent and Family Engagement

The district shall 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 academic achievement and school performance through:

1. Providing assistance to parents and family members in understanding such topics as the academic standards, state and local academic assessments, the requirements of parent and family involvement, how to monitor a child's progress and work with teachers to improve the achievement of their children.

2. Providing material and training to help parents and family members work with their children to improve academic achievement and to foster parent and family engagement, such as:

    a. Scheduling trainings in different locations on a variety of topics including how to support their child in school, literacy, school safety, cultural diversity and conflict resolution.

    b. Providing information, resources and materials in a user friendly format.

    c. Providing, as requested by a parent or family member, other reasonable support for parent and family engagement activities.

3. Educating teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals and other school leaders and staff, with the assistance of parents and family members, on the value and usefulness of contributions of parents and family members and in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with them as equal partners, implement and coordinate parent and family programs, and build ties between parents and family members and the school.

4. To the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinating and integrating Title I parent and family involvement efforts 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 and family members in more fully participating in the education of their children.

5. Engage school organizations, community based organizations and businesses in parent and family engagement activities.

Coordinating Parent and Family Engagement Strategies

The district shall coordinate and integrate Title I parent and family engagement strategies with other parent and family engagement strategies required by federal, state, and local laws by:

1. Involving district and program representatives to assist in identifying specific parent and family member needs.

2. Sharing data from other programs to assist in developing initiatives to advance academic achievement and school improvement.

Annual Parent and Family Engagement Policy Evaluation

The district shall conduct, with meaningful participation of parents and family members, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this policy in improving the academic quality of all district schools with a Title I program.

The evaluation shall identify:

1. Barriers to parent and family member participation, with particular attention to those who are migrants, are economically disadvantaged, have a disability, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority.
2. The needs of parents and family members to assist with the learning of their children, including engaging with school personnel and teachers.
3. Strategies to support successful school and parent and family interactions.

The district shall use the findings of the annual evaluation to design evidence-based strategies for more effective parent and family engagement, and to revise, if necessary, the district's Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy.

School-Parent and Family Compact

Each school in the district receiving Title I funds shall jointly develop with parents and family members a School-Parent and Family Compact outlining the manner in which parents and family members, the entire school staff and students will share responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and parents and family members will build and develop partnerships to help children achieve the state's academic standards. The compact shall:

1. Describe the school's responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment, enabling students in Title I programs to meet the academic standards.

2. Describe the ways in which parents and family members will be responsible for supporting their child's learning; volunteering in the classroom; and participating, as appropriate, in decisions related to their child's education and positive use of extracurricular time.

3. Address the importance of ongoing two-way, meaningful communication between parents/family members and teachers through, at a minimum, annual parent-teacher conferences at the elementary level, frequent reports to parents and family members on their child's progress, reasonable access to staff, opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class, and observation of classroom activities.

Title I Funds

Unless exempt by law, the district shall reserve at least one percent (1%) of its Title I funds to assist schools in conducting parent and family engagement activities. Parents and family members shall be

involved in the decisions regarding how the Title I reserved funds are used for parent and family engagement activities.

Not less than ninety percent (90%) of the reserved funds shall be distributed to district schools with a Title I program, with priority given to high need schools. The district shall use the Title I reserved funds to conduct activities and strategies consistent with this policy, including:

1. Supporting schools and nonprofit organizations in providing professional development for the district and school personnel regarding parent and family engagement strategies, which may be provided jointly to teachers, principals, other school leaders, specialized instructional support personnel, paraprofessionals, early childhood educators, and parents and family members.

2. Disseminating information on best practices focused on parent and family engagement, especially best practices for increasing the engagement of economically disadvantaged parents and family members.

Documentation of Parent and Family Engagement Practices

Documentation to track the implementation of this policy is an essential part of compliance and may include, but not be limited to, sign–in sheets at workshops, meetings and conferences; schedules, training and informational materials; communications and brochures; and meeting notes.

Legal References
20 U.S.C. 6318
20 U.S.C. 6312
24 P.S. 5-510.2
20 U.S.C. 7845
29 U.S.C. 3271 et seq.
29 U.S.C. 701 et seq.
42 U.S.C. 11301 et seq.
42 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.