

Ouachita Parish Schools

District Policy on Parent and Family Engagement

The Ouachita Parish School System believes that good communication between the school and the family must exist and is vital to the success of each child. The Ouachita Parish School System also recognizes that an emphasis on academic achievement alone will not ensure that all students are able to achieve a high level of performance and meet challenging content standards. An effective home-school partnership for learning must be developed at each school to ensure student success and achievement.

All parents and stakeholders are invited to participate and to provide suggestions or ideas to improve this District Parent and Family Engagement policy.

Part I: GENERAL EXPECTATIONS:

The Ouachita Parish District Title I Program agrees to implement the following statutory requirements:

- A. The school district will put into operation programs, activities and procedures for the involvement of parents in all of its schools with Title I, Part A programs. Those programs, activities and procedures will be planned and operated with meaningful consultation with parents of participating children.
- B. Consistent with section 1118, the school district will work with its schools to ensure that the required school-level parent and family engagement policies meet the requirements of section 1118(b) of the ESEA, and each include, as a component, a school-parent compact consistent with section 1118(d) of the ESEA.
- C. The school district will incorporate this district-wide parent and family engagement policy into its LEA plan developed under section 1112 of the ESEA.
- D. In carrying out the Title I, Part A parent and family engagement requirements, to the extent practicable, the school district and its schools will provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children, including providing information and school reports required under section 1111 of the ESEA in an understandable and uniform format and, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand.
- E. If the LEA plan for Title I, Part A, is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, the school district will submit any parent comments with the plan when the school district submits the plan to the State Department of Education.
- F. The school district will involve the parents of children served in Title I 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 (95) percent of the (1) percent reserved goes directly to the schools.

- G. The school district will be governed by the following statutory definition of parent and family engagement, and expects that its Title I schools will carry out programs, activities and procedures in accordance with this definition:
Parent and family engagement means the participation of parents in a regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring-
- (a) *that parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning;*
 - (b) *that parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school;*
 - (c) *that 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.*
 - (d) *the carrying out of other activities, such as those described in section 1118 of ESEA.*
- H. The school district will inform parents and parental organizations of the purpose and existence of the United States Department of Education Website that provides several resources to help local education agencies, schools and parents in meeting the requirements for parent and family engagement required under Title I, Part A. These include archived webcasts and templates for practitioners, recent research, guidebooks for parents, and links to related websites. The page can be accessed at:
<http://ed.gov/admins/comm/parents/pntinv.html>

Part II. DESCRIPTION OF HOW DISTRICT WILL IMPLEMENT REQUIRED DISTRICT WIDE PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT COMPONENTS

- 1. The Ouachita Parish School System will take the following actions to involve parents in the joint development of its district-wide parent and family engagement plan under sections 1112 of the ESEA.**
- The District will enlist the services of parents, educators and community leaders to participate in the Title I District Parent Advisory Council, whose purpose is to participate in the joint development and implementation of the district-wide parent and family engagement plan and involve parents in the school review and school improvement process.
 - The District Title I Parent Advisory Council meetings will be scheduled at least four times per year to discuss requirements and updates to guide schools in implementation on all matters related to parent and family engagement in Title I, Part A programs.
 - Parents, educators and community leaders will be encouraged to participate in the annual business meeting held at the Ouachita Parish Media Center to jointly review, reorganize, and evaluate the parent and family engagement policy/program, handbook, and improvement plans, adjusting the components as necessary.
 - Comments and suggestions taken from the annual Title I Parent Survey will be utilized during discussion and evaluation of the plan at district and school meetings. The plan will be revised based on the annual evaluation.
 - The district-wide parent and family engagement plan will be presented during any other district-wide meetings involving parents in order to obtain any additional parental input on the plan. The plan will be posted in the *District Title I Parent Handbook* and *OPSB Website* for any additional parent input or comments.

2. The Ouachita Parish School System will take the following actions to involve parents in the process of school review and improvement under section 1116 of the ESEA.

- The district will enlist the services of a School Improvement Team at each school to coordinate and develop a School-Wide Plan designed to meet the school's current needs based on the latest information from the individual School Performance Score Report, to increase parent participation at each school and to promote greater awareness to diminish barriers for the disabled and economically disadvantaged.
- The district will ensure that each Title I school has a written comprehensive parent and family engagement policy and school-parent compact that meets the needs of all students participating in the Title I program and is developed and evaluated with parents.
- The School Improvement Team, at each Title I school, will take responsibility for assessing present practices, including school improvement, implementing selected activities, training faculty on working with parents and coordinating practices for all six types of parent and family engagement.
- Periodic meetings and activities will be provided throughout the year to assist parents in understanding the federal, state, and local academic content and student achievement standards. Meetings will focus on how parents and teachers can work together to monitor their child's progress in order to improve student achievement.
- The Parent Engagement Survey will be on each Title I school's website and distributed to parents annually to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the district and school parental involvement plans and adjust the components as necessary.
- A Parent and Family Engagement Handbook will be disseminated to each parent containing the District Parent and Family Engagement Policies, Parent's Right to Know Policies, information about the Title I program and procedures through the OPSB website, parent meetings, grade level workshops, parent/teacher organization/ association meetings and parent conferences.
- The District will highlight activities at each school through social media, parent contact apps, school websites, newsletters to parents at the district and school level, school marquees and through broadcasts on radio and television.
- The district will send information on academic assessments and yearly progress home with each student to the extent possible, in a format and language easily understood by parents. This information will be disseminated and discussed at district-wide meetings involving parents: The Title I District Parent Advisory Council, PTO and School Improvement Team committees.

3. The Ouachita Parish School System will provide the following necessary coordination, technical assistance/support to assist Title I, Part A schools in planning and implementing effective parent and family engagement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance.

- The district will meet with Title I campus administrators yearly to disseminate current information, documentation, forms, and guidelines for Title I schools regarding parental engagement.
- The district will meet with Title I administrators and Title I Coordinators/School Liaisons to conduct a parent and family engagement training, which includes the necessary campus requirements for parent and family engagement, as well as strategies for effective parent and family engagement.

- A Title I Coordinator/Liaison will be provided to each Title I school for technical assistance and support in effectively planning and implementing parent and family engagement activities designed to improve student academic achievement and school performance.
- The District Parent Engagement Coordinator will provide monthly newsletters online for parents, students and educators that will support in planning and implementing effective parental engagement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance.
- Continuous communication will be provided to assist parents in understanding the school curriculum and in monitoring student progress through newsletters, handouts, the school handbook, student achievement reports, the *Student Progress Center*, the OPSB website and/or the school report card in a format and language that is easily understood by all parents.
- Parent and family engagement strategies, such as the Family Resource Centers, the Read With Me program, newsletters and meetings, will be coordinated and integrated with other agencies, including Head Start, public preschool and other programs that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children.
- Two-way communications (home-to-school and school-to-home) about programs serving Title I students, student progress, school curriculum, and the assessments used to measure student progress will be promoted.
- Collaboration to jointly develop and follow a school-parent compact outlining ways that parents, the entire school staff, and students can share the responsibility for improved 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.
- Meetings, workshops, and training will be offered at flexible times so that a maximum number of parents can be involved. Parents will be encouraged to actively participate in all district and school related programs and activities.
- Parents will be offered appropriate training in instructional techniques and support (at the school, online and in other locations) that help the school and students reach identified objectives and standards.
- Collaboration with the community and other local, state, and national agencies will offer services designed to effectively assist students, parents, and other family members.
- Information will be disseminated to parents of each student enrolled in a school identified for school improvement, corrective action, or restructuring, an explanation of what the identification means, how the schools compare to others, reasons for the identification, the LEA's and school's response, how parents can become involved, any corrective action taken, the parental choice and supplemental services options as applicable.
- Information disseminated to parents related to school and parent programs, meetings and other activities will be in a language and format that is simple and easily understood.
- Parents of limited English proficient children will be informed of how they can be involved in their child's education and active participants in helping their child attain English proficiency, high achievement levels in core academic subjects, and meet state standards, including notice of opportunities for and holding regular meetings.
- Parents of limited English proficient children identified for participation or participating in a Title I, Part A-funded language instruction educational program under Title III of the ESEA, will be informed of: reasons for the identification, level of English proficiency, methods of instruction, how the program will help the child, and other information.

- LEAs will inform parents of a child with a disability how the language instruction education program meets the objectives of the child’s individualized education program (IEP).
 - Parents of students in a Title I school and appropriate private school officials or representatives will be provided a policy and adequate information about the SEA’s written complaint procedures for resolving issues of violation(s) of a Federal statute or regulation that applies to Title I, Part A programs.
 - Assistance will be provided to parents in developing parenting skills to meet the basic obligations of family life and foster conditions at home, which emphasize the importance of education and learning.
 - A resource library of media on academic and parenting skills will be compiled for utilization for parents and schools.
- 4. The Ouachita Parish School System will coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement strategies in Part A with parent and family engagement strategies under the following other programs: Head Start, and State-operated preschool programs, by:**
- The district will invite parents to participate in the same or similar activities conducted by the district and/or schools. Invitations to programs, meetings, and other activities will be posted on the district website and/or sent home with each student. Invitations will be in an understandable and uniform format, and to the extent, practicable, in a language that the parents can understand.
 - Parents of Title 1 students will be informed about on-going activities initiated and conducted by other agencies in the district, especially Head Start, and Preschool programs.
 - Providing parents with strategies and techniques that assist their children with home learning activities that support and extend the school’s instructional program.
 - Coordinating activities for the Pre-K programs through the Family Resource Centers, the Read With Me program, newsletters, and meetings to support and assist parents and children in transitioning from Head Start, and the public preschool, and/or other programs to kindergarten.
 - Providing professional development activities to educate teachers, administrators, student support personnel, and other staff with knowledge to successfully communicate and work with *all* parents, especially addressing techniques and strategies that support parents and students.
- 5. The Ouachita Parish School System will take the following actions to conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this parent and family engagement policy in improving the quality of its Title I, Part A schools. The evaluation will include identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in parent and family engagement 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 school district will use the findings of the evaluation about its parent and family engagement policy and activities to design strategies for more effective parent and family engagement, and to revise, if necessary (and with the involvement of parents) its parent and family engagement policies.**
- An annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the district-wide parent and family engagement plan will be discussed during a regularly scheduled meeting of the District Title I Parent Advisory Council. Input from parents, educators, and the community will guide in adjusting the components as necessary.

- Parent meetings evaluation forms are distributed to parents at each parent meeting. The evaluation forms contain an area for comments, suggestions and requests by parents. They are reviewed following each meeting and suggestions are relayed to the appropriate personnel.
 - An annual Parent Engagement Survey will be online and distributed to parents at each Title I school to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the district and school parent and family engagement plans and adjust the components as necessary.
 - The Title I Coordinator, with assistance from the parents, educators and community leaders serving on the Parent Advisory Council at each school, will evaluate the results of the surveys to determine the effectiveness of the parent and family engagement program and adjust the components as needed.
- 6. The Ouachita Parish School System will build the school’s and parent’s capacity for strong parent and family engagement, in order to ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the school involved, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement, through the following activities specifically described below:**
- A. The school district will, with the assistance of its Title I, Part A schools, provide assistance to parents of children served by the school district or school, as appropriate, in understanding topics such as the following, by undertaking the actions described in these paragraphs—
- the State’s academic content or achievement standards,
 - the State and local academic assessments including alternate assessments,
 - the requirements of Part A,
 - how to monitor their child’s progress, and
 - how to work with educators:
- Parent conferences will be provided to parents at the school, where the progress of the student will be discussed, as well as the expectations for the grade level, school curriculum, test information, and any other concerns that the teacher or parent may have.
 - Continuous communication will be provided to parents in understanding state standards, the school curriculum and student achievement through newsletters, report cards, the District Parent handbook, handouts, brochures, state and district websites, mailings, School management system messages, and student achievement reports.
 - Providing parents with strategies and techniques that assist their children with home learning activities that support and extend the school’s instructional program.
 - A school-parent-student compact will be designed by parents and the school staff that outlines how parents, school staff, and students share the responsibility for improving learning.
- B. The school district will, with the assistance of its schools, provide materials and training to help parents work with their child/children to improve their academic achievement and use technology, as appropriate, to foster parent and family engagement by:
- Professional development workshops will be provided to parents by the Ouachita Parish administrators, teachers, the Children’s Coalition and/or other local agencies, to educate, involve, and support parents with appropriate training in instructional techniques and identify resources (at the school and in other locations) that help the school and students reach state identified objectives and standards.
 - The literacy program, *Read with Me*, will be implemented with students in pre-k through third grades to promote literacy skills and recreational reading at home with parents.

- The Ouachita Parish School System’s website, www.opsb.net, will offer a library of resources and information for parents entitled *Today’s Tips for Parents*, which is available and updated 7 days/week, 365 days per year, for assisting parents in developing parenting skills to meet the basic obligations of family life and foster conditions at home, which emphasize the importance of education and learning.
- 7. The school district will, with the assistance of its schools and parents, educate its teachers, pupil services personnel, principals and other staff, in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to implement and coordinate parent programs and build ties between parents and schools by:**
- The District will enlist the services of parents, educators and community leaders to participate in the Title I District Parent Advisory Council, whose purpose is to participate in the joint development and implementation of the district-wide parent and family engagement plan and involve parents in the school review and school improvement process.
 - The district will conduct an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the District and School Parental Involvement Plans, using the annual Parent Engagement Survey, to assess the effectiveness of the parental engagement programs and make amendments as necessary.
 - The district will provide monthly newsletters on the OPSB website to help promote parent and family engagement to parents, administrators and teachers to educate and encourage the use of model approaches for strengthening parent and family engagement.
 - The district will promote two-way communications (home to school and school-to-home) about programs serving Title I students, student progress, curriculum, and the assessments used to measure student progress through newsletters, reports and student management system.
- 8. The school district will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement programs and activities with Head Start, public preschool and other 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, by:**
- The district will invite parents of students enrolled in any of the above programs to participate in the same or similar activities/workshops as parents from other schools within our district. The district will encourage parents to accept and/or participate in the services provided by the community and other local, state, and national agencies.
 - The district will inform parents of Title I students about on-going activities initiated and conducted by other agencies in the district, especially Head Start and Preschool programs.
 - The district will assist all programs in developing a comprehensive parent and family engagement program that will meet the needs of the students and families served.
 - The district will provide parents with strategies and techniques that assist their children with home learning activities that support and extend the school’s instructional program.
- 9. The school district will take the following actions to ensure that 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:

- Invitations to programs, meetings, and other activities will be posted on the district website, published in the school newsletter, and/or sent home with each student. Interpreters will be provided to parents, when requested, to ensure that information is disseminated correctly. Whenever possible, and to the extent practicable, this information will be provided in a language that the parents can understand.
- The district will ensure that opportunities are provided for full participation of parents with limited English proficiency, and parents with disabilities, including information and school reports, to the extent practicable, in a language that parents can understand.

Part III. DISCRETIONARY DISTRICT-WIDE PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PLAN COMPONENTS:

- Involving parents, educators, and community leaders in the development of training for teachers, principals, and other educators to educate all stakeholders with knowledge to successfully communicate and work with *all* parents, especially addressing techniques and strategies that support parents and students of poverty.
- Training parents to enhance the involvement of other parents;
- In order to maximize parent and family engagement and participation in their children's education, arranging school meetings at a variety of times, or conducting in-home conferences between teachers or other educators, who work directly with participating children, with parents who are unable to attend those conferences at school;
- Establishing a district wide parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parental involvement in Title I, Part A programs;
- Developing appropriate roles for community-based organization and businesses, including faith-based organizations, in parent and family engagement activities;
- Providing other reasonable support for parent and family engagement activities under section 1118 as parents may request.

Part IV: Adoption

This District-wide Parent and Family Engagement Policy has been developed jointly with, and agreed on with, teachers, administrators, stakeholders and parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs. This policy was adopted by the Ouachita Parish Title I District Advisory Council on Tuesday, April 8, 2025 and will be in effect for the 2025-2026 school year. The school district will distribute this policy to all parents of participating Title I, Part A students on or before September 20, 2025.

Mr. Todd Guice
Superintendent of Ouachita Parish Schools

05/27/2025

Date

Dr. Felicia Sledge-Murphy
Director of Federal Programs

Dr. Carrie Ferguson
Title I Supervisor